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# THE LIVES

OF

## EARLY METHODIST PREACHERS.

CHIEFLY WRITTEN BY THEMSELVES.

EDITED, WITH AN INTRODUCTORY ESSAY,

BY

THOMAS JACKSON.

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FOURTH EDITION, WITH ADDITIONAL LIVES,  
IN SIX VOLUMES.

VOLUME V.

LONDON:  
WESLEYAN CONFERENCE OFFICE,  
2, CASTLE STREET, CITY ROAD;  
SOLD AT 66, PATERNOSTER ROW.

1873.

E 23201

BX8491

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LONDON:  
PRINTED BY WILLIAM NICHOLS,  
HOXTON SQUARE.

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THE LIFE

OF

MR. THOMAS TAYLOR.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

I WAS born November 11th, 1738, in the parish of Rothwell, near Leeds, in Yorkshire. I was the youngest of eight children, seven of whom were sons, and the eldest a daughter; so that I was a seventh son. My father was a tanner, and had something considerable to begin the world with; but, proving unfortunate in business, he brought his family into a low condition, especially the younger part; and this fell particularly on me, who was the youngest of all by six years. I have heard much said in praise of my mother; but she died before I was a year old, which, I apprehend, was no small loss to me. I can but just remember my father; so that I was bereaved of both father and mother before I was six years of age. I then fell into the hands of a step-mother for some time, who took care of me, as if I had been her own child. I had, rather early, something of a desire and turn for learning. My father and mother being Presbyterians, I got the Assembly's Catechism off by heart, when I was but

able than I expected : the next day I was treated civilly, so that I began to hope that I was to stay there, which I greatly desired. But, alas ! on the third day I was escorted back to my former quarters, though much against my inclination. Nevertheless, I determined to make my escape again the first opportunity ; which in a fortnight after I effected.

I remembered my nurse used to show great fondness for me : I therefore set out, and marched to her, about nine or ten miles off, in the same garb in which I had fled before. Though I was received tolerably well, yet my dress showed me to be a runaway ; so that the family were at a loss how to treat me. This was not far from that brother's house where I fled before, to whom I now paid another visit ; but here I was treated roughly, and in a few days was, by main force, conducted back to the place from whence I came. Yet I was determined not to stay there. But I thought I should succeed better if I could decamp in a better dress ; and therefore considered how to get some of my better clothes. I got a quantity of them together, and resolved to march by night, seeing there was no probability of doing it by day. This was a somewhat daring attempt for a boy of ten years old. But the clothes were found before night, and the cause suspected, for which I underwent a severe beating. This was one of the worst methods that could have been taken ; for it only confirmed my resolution not to stay. I then thought the likeliest way to effect my escape would be to go on a Sunday, when trimmed in my best fashion. This I therefore resolved upon, and accordingly I put on two shirts that I might have a change ; but unfortunately it was discovered as soon as I came down stairs, so that I was

ordered to strip, and underwent again a severe discipline.

I was now a rather close prisoner, and especially on Sundays. However, one Sunday, being equipped in my best, I waited all day for the opportunity, but could not get my hat. Finding that to be the case, I set out bare-headed, and ran for life; determining that night to go to my old nurse, and then to ramble where I should not be known. I got thither, and was vastly pleased with myself, thinking now I should gain my utmost desire; but while I sat by the fire, who should come riding to the door but my brother, who had taken horse and pursued me; and though it was now night, yet some people had taken notice while it was daylight of a strange boy going in great haste without a hat. By this means he easily guessed where I was gone. Back again I was brought; but with as fixed a resolution as ever, that I would not stay. Being now almost a close prisoner, I was kept in a mean habit; but that was nothing to me. A day or two after Christmas-day, I made my final escape. And now I entered upon a scene of distress indeed! What I endured from hunger and cold, no one knows but myself. My case was singular; I had relations living in affluence, on the right hand and on the left, while I should have been glad of the fragments which their servants, yea, perhaps their dogs, despised. That winter was particularly severe, and it was just in the depth of it. My friends thought to starve me back again to my eldest brother; but I had an unconquerable aversion both to him and his trade. I would just remark here, the impropriety of fixing boys in any business which is so much against their inclinations. It seldom fares better with them than with me, and sometimes proves their ruin.

Finding that nothing could make me submit to return to my eldest brother, the other, to whose house I first fled, took me, and after some time put me to a business that I less disliked, though not quite to my mind. Indeed, my mind inclined more to learning; but as I could not have my wish, I was willing to comply.

As I grew up, my habits of sin multiplied, and my mouth was fraught with oaths, lies, and deceit. I loved sinful recreations and foolish pastimes to an excess, and soon became a dexterous gambler, especially at cards. Having much pride and little money, I was the more intent upon furnishing myself in that way. I wished to associate with those whose circumstances were better than my own, and strove to equal them in dress and everything else. During this time the Spirit of God strove with me, and sometimes good resolutions took place for a season; but no sooner did a horse-race or party of pleasure offer itself, than my resolutions died away, and I was worse than ever. Yet I read the Bible, and got much light into many things. I knew that I had not faith; and when at church, (for I went to church sometimes,) I durst not repeat the Creed: for I knew I was no believer; and though I could lie at other times, I would not lie there. I likewise knew that I was not born again; but what the new birth was, I knew not, nor had I any to tell me. I knew that I was far from being what I ought to be; but I thought I would be better when I was a little older.

When I was about seventeen I heard that eminent servant of God, Mr. Whitefield. The first sight of his countenance struck me. There was an immense multitude, and his voice was like a trumpet. His

text was Rom. xiii. 11 : "It is high time to awake out of sleep." The whole of the discourse was attended with an amazing power, I believe, to many. I am sure it was to me. When he addressed himself to people of several ages in the large congregation before him, and among the rest, to the young people, that took great hold of me. I did not observe anything extraordinary in what he said, as to his matter ; but there was such an unction in his word as I had never felt before. I went home full of good resolutions, now to break off all my bad practices. But, alas ! this also proved as a morning cloud. I was surrounded by such as were utterly abandoned : so I soon returned with the dog to his vomit. Nay, I was worse than ever ; till happening to read the "Pilgrim's Progress," I had another powerful visit from the Lord. But that also remained only a short time ; for my passions hurried me on with surprising impetuosity.

I now left off attending any place of worship, and gave full scope to every wretched disposition. I had a brother living at some distance, who had been awakened some time. But I had long taken my leave of him, as his conversation did not at all suit my inclination. I used to wrangle with him as well as I could, yet this generally left a good impression upon my mind. But now I never came near him, being wholly taken up with things of another kind. In the midst of my career I was very miserable ; and when I was among my jovial companions, and saw everyone around me all joy and gladness, I was often exceedingly melancholy and dejected, though I assumed an air of cheerfulness. And often have I lain down in great terror, thinking, "Perhaps I may awake in hell !" A whim now came into my head to

go into the army. And a party of horse being at this time recruiting in Wakefield, and an acquaintance of mine entering himself a volunteer, I needed but little solicitation to follow his steps. I therefore went to the officer, and, being young and pretty well made, was very acceptable. But, upon trial, I was about half an inch beneath the standard, and therefore he could not take me.

This gave a check to my career in some measure; but I soon returned to my former conduct, abandoned to everything that my age and circumstances could admit of. I cannot say that drinking had much influence over me; yet I have been intoxicated several times: and once, not long before I was awakened, and coming home in the night with others, we had a ferry to cross; while the boat was coming, being bereaved of my senses, I stumbled, and had it not just then come to shore, I should have fallen into the water, and in all likelihood have been lost eternally. I took my leave of getting drunk, and do not remember that this sin ever took me captive again. Nevertheless, in other respects I was as bad as ever,—nay, even worse; for, as I was now grown up, my habits of sin were stronger and more numerous.

As I had ceased to go to any place of worship, I had in a good measure dropped my reading too. Still my conscience was not quite asleep: I had very uneasy moments. But I ran into wild company and diversions as soon as I could; and it was a mercy that I had not more money, for that would have added fuel to the fire; and though nothing is impossible with God, yet, in all human probability, I should never have been saved. Thus lay my poor soul in ruins, when, in the beginning of the year 1758, the

Lord, by a kind chain of providences, was pleased to arrest me in my full career of sin.

There was a young man with whom I had been a companion for several years : he had been in a fever, and during his illness was awakened, and had contracted an acquaintance with the Independents. He persuaded me one Sunday to go and hear their minister, whom he was accustomed to hear : to oblige him I went. The text was, "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." While the preacher was describing the maladies of a sick soul, several drunken men came in, and were very rude. Partly with what the minister said, and partly by being struck with their behaviour, I never felt myself so affected in all my life. I plainly saw there must be a change, or I was undone for ever. Yet I cannot say that I was in such terror as might have been expected from so stubborn a sinner. The usual temptation awaited me when I came home ; nor did I wholly escape free. But my desires and convictions continued all that week, and on Sunday I went to the same place of worship again ; and I now plainly saw that I must give up my companions, or I could not be saved. But here was a difficulty : though very young, I had contracted an acquaintance with a young person who was as thoughtless as myself. Being brought up in the same neighbourhood, a fondness had insensibly stolen upon us both. Yet as I was determined to save my soul, and as she had a perfect antipathy to everything of the kind, it was not long before I got disentangled : so that snare was also broken.

I now began to cry to God in private, but was sorely tempted the first time I went to my knees. I was afraid, either that I should drop down dead, or

that the devil would appear to me, if not take me away. I frequently thought that Satan was behind me when I was praying, and was afraid to open my eyes lest I should see him. Indeed it is an exercise which the devil does not love, and which he will use every means to prevent. I began now to contract an acquaintance with the people of the meeting, and was much noticed by them. Several of them had been joined with the Methodists, and gave such an account of them that I had no desire of being acquainted with them. One Methodist lived near me, and had a public meeting at his house every Sunday evening, to which I sometimes went. He was useful to me, and might have been more so; but being more attached to the other people, I kept company with them only. Alleine's Alarm now fell into my hands. It described my case as exactly as if it had been written on purpose; so that I prized it above rubies. I had gracious visits from the Lord, exceedingly sweet to my soul; but no one said, "Now believe, and thou shalt be saved;" so that I was like Samuel, I knew not the voice of the Lord. I began now to meet with a good deal of opposition: my acquaintance laughed me to scorn; though whenever they came near me, the Lord opened my mouth in such a manner, that I could easily put them to silence. My master (for I was not yet out of my apprenticeship) was sour, and much out of humour at times. He, and others, whom I was in some measure under, had no objection to a reformation in me; but now they supposed I was as mad one way, as I had been the other. I continued to press forward, and the Lord continued to visit me with tastes of His love, which were exceedingly precious to me. The time of Wakefield

ances drew on: many expected that my religion would then be at an end, as they knew how passionately fond I was of those vanities: and indeed I was not without fear myself; not that I found the least inclination to anything of the kind; yet I knew not how it might be when the time came. But God took care of that: that fear was of His planting, and was a means of driving me nearer to Himself.

One Lord's-day evening I retired to my apartment for my usual exercise of reading and prayer. While I was calling upon the Lord, He appeared in a wonderful manner, as with His vesture dipped in blood. I saw Him by the eye of faith, hanging on the cross; and the sight caused such love to flow into my soul, that I believed that moment, and never since gave up my confidence. I had not then any particular promise applied; but was enabled to cast my soul upon that atoning sacrifice which I saw was made for my offences. I had nothing to trust in but the blood of sprinkling which speaketh better things than that of Abel. But,

"O the rapturous height  
Of that holy delight,  
Which I found in the life-giving blood;  
Of my Saviour possess'd,  
I was perfectly bless'd,  
As if fill'd with the fulness of God."

As I had no one near to tell them what God had done for my soul, I was in a short time brought into doubts; but yet I could not give up my confidence. Some time after, the two following scriptures came to me with remarkable power: "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly;" (John x. 10;) and, "Blessed and

holy is he who hath part in the first resurrection ; on such the second death shall have no power." (Rev. xx. 6.) These two testimonies were indeed words in season, and very precious to my soul. I had some difficulties soon after to grapple with, and at times was brought very low ; but still His grace was sufficient. I often thought, if I was to live at Leeds, where there were such plenty of religious means, it would be almost as the gate of heaven to me : and in particular, I expected great assistance from the fellowship of those who were strong in grace. But God would have me dependent on Himself alone ; for though I went to Leeds, as I was of a shy disposition, I had no fellowship with anyone. I was then tempted to think that there was not much life there : at least, I found very little. It was a very dull time with me : yet I kept close to God in prayer ; and He kept my soul in a measure of peace.

From thence I removed to another place, where there were few that pretended to religion. I feared lest now I should be overthrown ; but I found here two or three Methodists, who had preaching sometimes. I soon got among them, and often found it a blessing to my soul : particularly once in hearing that plain, honest man, Paul Greenwood, whose word left a lasting impression on my mind. But though I met with them at times, yet there was a discord in our manner of speaking, which prevented my close union. From thence I removed to Wakefield, where my first religious acquaintance lived, and with whom I had the greatest union. I kept on in much simplicity, watching unto prayer, and still found reading very profitable ; as indeed it was from my first setting out in the ways of God.

But now a new scene opened : I began to think

that I was called to preach. This had in a measure been pressed upon my mind for some time; but whether it was a delusion from Satan, or a call from the Spirit of God, I knew not. I dreaded the thoughts of running before I was sent.

I likewise thought that a preacher should have learning, which had been much neglected in me. Yet the impression grew stronger and stronger. I wanted to recommend my Lord to ruined sinners, and thought I could rejoice if I was torn in pieces for so doing. I had neither ease, nor honour, nor profit in view; but wanted to be an instrument in God's hands of saving souls. The word of the Lord was as a fire shut up in my bones. At the same time I was so conscious of my inability for the work, that I was ashamed to intimate my thoughts to anyone. O, how have I agonized with God, not to suffer me to engage in such a work unless it was His will; and if it was, to point out my way! That awful declaration, Rev. xxii. 18, 19, stood seemingly in my way: "For I testify to every one that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book." It is probable I might understand these words in too general a sense; but they seemed as if they pointed out a very narrow path for a Gospel minister to go in, and made me cry out, "Who is sufficient for these things?"

But God answered for Himself from the first of Jeremiah: "Then the word of the Lord came unto

me, saying, Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations. Then said I, Ah, Lord God! behold, I cannot speak: for I am a child." (My very objection!) "But the Lord said unto me, Say not, I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak. Be not afraid of their faces: for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the Lord. Then the Lord put forth His hand, and touched my mouth. And the Lord said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth." Now, if any passage was ever applied to anyone by the Spirit of God, surely this was to me. Therefore, I determined to make the attempt: but still I knew not how to set about it; for I was ashamed to declare my mind to any one, from a sense of my absolute unfitness for the work. I had never spoken a word in the way of exhortation, but had frequently prayed in public. At length one or two of my acquaintance asked me if I did not think I was called to preach. With much confusion, I answered in the affirmative.

From that time I determined to make an attempt; but the question was, where? At last I resolved to begin on a Sunday evening, and pitched upon a very profane place to make my first effort; thinking an ignorant place was the fittest for an ignorant preacher. When I came within sight of the village, my spirit was ready to sink within me; not for fear of persecution, though the place was rude enough, but from a sense of the importance of the undertaking. When I came to the place, the heart of the honest man who had invited me failed him; therefore I found his house was shut up. This rather damped me; but an-

other door being immediately set open, I went in. A house-full of people gathered: I stood up, sung a hymn and prayed, but did not give out a text; for as I had never before opened my mouth to exhort in public, I did not know whether I could say anything or not. But I found assistance in giving a word of exhortation, and I believe it was accompanied with the power of God to many present. I appointed to go again the next Sunday; and then chose Matthew v. 3 for a text, and found life and liberty in speaking, and a blessing attended it.

The tidings of my preaching soon reached the congregation where I was a hearer; and happening to have no preacher the following Lord's day, they requested that I would supply the place of one. This was a hard task, for there were several before whom I was much afraid to stand up; however, I durst not decline the offer. I spoke from John i. 29. Here again my mouth was opened, and my tongue was loosed, so that they objected nothing: undoubtedly they made allowance for a young speaker. Being now in some measure satisfied that I ought to speak in God's name, I embraced many opportunities of going to several places.

I now wanted to improve my little learning; and, having a trifle of money, I entirely devoted myself to that purpose, not knowing nor caring how I might be disposed of, only I wanted to be useful.

After some time, being destitute of a minister at the place where I was a hearer, they desired I would accept the place: accordingly, I undertook to preach to them a while, till we should see a little farther. The congregation was but small: however, I had the satisfaction to see it increase, and some sinners were convinced. But some of the leading men, having fre-

quently veered about from one system to another, seemed now mightily charmed with Antinomianism. Dr. Crisp and Mr. Saltmarsh's works were highly approved of, and some of Dr. Gill's writings. But a Mr. Reilly was the great apostle among them, on account of his famous Hymn-book, and his Treatise of the Union of Christ and His Church. He came into the country a few weeks; and by him I was much blinded, and for a time all seemed right which he advanced. But in one particular sermon he explained his sentiments freely, when I was fully satisfied that he had sadly perverted the truth. I went to him the next day, and ventured to object against what he had advanced the preceding night. He was not prepared to answer some things which I had objected, but attempted to puzzle me by starting other questions. I gained but little satisfaction from this interview: but still I was rather tinctured with Antinomianism; yet I laboured to live near to God. I earnestly begged to be entirely right, both in principle and practice.

A particular providence now occasioned my coming among the Methodists. I went one time to hear Mr. Whitefield; and Mr. Hanby, who was with him, I was informed, was to preach the next Lord's day. I determined to hear him, as the time did not interfere with our time of worship. When I went, I was amazingly struck to find him in a far more evangelical strain than I expected. I had now and then gone to hear the Methodists before, but was generally disgusted. But the present sermon had quite a different effect. I was now more reconciled to the Methodists than I had been, and began to be acquainted with the people. Reprobation was what I never could digest; and I was not without my doubts

concerning final perseverance, but could not endure to hear it spoken against. But I was most rooted in the doctrine of the imputed righteousness of Christ, taking it for granted that it was true, because Mr. Hervey had written in its defence.

About this time, being invited to preach in the Methodist preaching-house, I accepted the invitation. This gave great offence to my own people, several of whom were run-away Methodists. Meantime I began to think of joining the Methodists, which my congregation suspected: the heads of them met me, and made me some offers of a temporal kind. But I told them, I thought Providence called me to an itinerant life, and I wished them to look out for one who might suit them. As I knew few of them would go with me, I recommended Mr. Ingham to them, who had formed an itinerancy, and wrote to Mr. Ingham myself on their behalf. He came, and several of the preachers in his Connexion; but as Mr. Ingham's people soon after broke in pieces, the meeting relapsed into its former state of Independency. Being now disengaged, I preached up and down among the Methodists. But being in principle partly a Calvinist, and having been accustomed to read Calvinian books, their phrases were become very familiar to me. However, I aimed at doing good; and when any of the preachers were sick, or had anywhere to go, I readily supplied their place; and I have reason to believe my labour was not in vain.

The summer being arrived, and Mr. Wesley coming into the country, I met him at Birstal. He received me with that affability and condescension for which he was so remarkable. I heard him preach in several places; but I cannot say that I could cordially receive the doctrine of perfection. As the

Conference was drawing near, he advised me to attend it at London. I intimated a desire of spending a year in that place, that I might be fully informed both in the doctrines and discipline of the Methodists. Accordingly, I disposed of some small effects which I had, and set out on foot. When I came thither I expected to undergo a close examination, with regard to my principles, experience, and abilities; and therefore, as I did not in everything agree with Mr. Wesley, it was a doubt with me whether I should not be rejected. But, to my surprise, I was not asked one question relative to any of these things; but was appointed for Wales, and was the only travelling preacher of our Connexion in those parts. This I have sometimes thought was not prudently done, as I was but just come into the Connexion. However, I set out for Bristol, and so into Wales; and truly a rough region it was. A preacher at Bristol said to me, "You seem pretty well dressed, and will hold out well enough for a year; but you must expect nothing to buy any more clothes with when those are worn out." However, I did not regard that; for I was determined to spend and be spent in doing all the good I could. I therefore began preaching out of doors in the first town I came to, which was Chepstow, and determined to do so in every town I came to. Thus I went on till after Christmas, and endured a good deal of hardship from hunger and cold; especially in passing those dreadful mountains from Neath to Brecon, which were nearly forty miles over, and have a most dismal aspect in winter. On these I travelled a long way, and saw neither house nor field, hedge nor tree; nor yet any living creature, excepting here and there a poor sheep or two, nor scarcely any visible track to know my way by. This

was not pleasing to flesh and blood ; but still I determined to go on.

In February there seemed a prospect of much good in a large tract of land called Gower, in Glamorganshire : the inhabitants of it were nearly heathens. I went down into this miserable country in very cold, rainy weather : the people flocked to hear, but we were ill provided with convenient places to preach in. Meantime the rain was excessive, and the cold intense, while we had but little fire ; so that I put on my wet clothes several days successively, yet without any inconvenience afterwards. Here God blessed my word : I collected several societies, and many were at this time brought to experience the knowledge of salvation by the remission of sins.

Towards summer, a circumstance seemed to open my way sixty or seventy miles farther down to Pembrokeshire : I went thither, and preached at Carmarthen in my way. Afterwards I preached at Pembroke, and had multitudes to hear, who behaved in a respectful manner, and generously paid all my expenses ; for at this time there was no provision made for missionaries. I preached in several places round Milford-Haven, and had many to hear. Indeed, the prospect was so promising, and the people were so loving, that I was almost tempted to embrace their pressing invitations to stay with them. But I thought that would be a betrayal of my trust ; so I returned to my own Circuit, promising that I would return again after the Conference was over. When I returned into the old Circuit, I was seized with a slow fever. I believe it was in some measure occasioned by fatigues. But Providence was kind to me : for though I was in a poor place, where little

assistance was to be had ; yet, by the blessing of God, I did without it. Mr. Mather then came from Staffordshire, to help me to put things into some order, and went with me through the rambling Circuit ; and indeed his advice has been of use to me ever since.

I attended the Conference at Leeds, in August, 1762, and was sent back into Pembrokeshire. But though I had three hundred miles to ride, and a new work to begin, I had nothing allowed me either to take me thither, or support me when I got there. But of this I took no care ; and, through a kind Providence, I wanted nothing. Another preacher being sent into the old Circuit, I had my full scope in the new one. Things turned out beyond my expectation. The Lord blessed the word. I several times visited the societies in Gower which I joined the year before ; for the other preacher had not time. I endured a good deal of hardship and danger in passing and repassing from Gower to Pembrokeshire in winter ; there being several dangerous waters to cross. Sometimes a stranger is surrounded by the tides, whilst he is crossing the sands, and knows nothing of the matter till he finds himself hemmed in on every side. This I once narrowly escaped. I had once a long day's journey, when, coming to one of the ferries, which is a mile over, I found the boat was broken. I had nine miles to ride up to Carmarthen, where the bridge was, and nine miles on the other side back again ; this added eighteen miles to my journey. I just got over the last ferry in the evening ; but which was my road I knew not, and the people could not or would not speak English. But they pointed me up a dark lane, which at length brought me to a wild moun-

tain. It being quite dark, I knew not which way to go; for there was no road. At length my mare sunk down in a bog, and stuck fast. Here I was at a loss what to do; for if I left her, it was ten to one if I should find her again. As I knew not which way to go for help, I shouted till I was weary; but to no purpose. I pitied the poor creature, that after so long and fatiguing a journey, had such a stable at night.

After some time I took hold of the bridle, and pulled her head; being strong, she made a vigorous struggle, and got her foreparts above ground, and, after taking breath, made another stout spring, and got entirely free. At this I was not a little glad; but, not knowing the ground, I judged it safest to lead her after me. I was weary, cold, and hungry; and where or when my journey should end, I knew not. At length I discovered something like a house, at which I was exceedingly glad: but my joy was soon over; for, making up to it, I found it an old ruin uninhabited; so my poor weary companion and I set out again.

At last I saw a man, and prevailed upon him, for sixpence, to show me the way from the common, which was not a quarter of a mile; for it happened that I had come the direct road. But when I came to the place I aimed at, some time in the night, there was nothing to eat for either man or horse. I got the poor beast to a farm-house at some distance. My lodging was but indifferent, yet very agreeable, as I was weary; and I know not that either I or my beast ailed anything after we had got into good quarters.

The Lord prospered my undertaking in Pembroke-shire; so that by Christmas I had eight or nine

societies ; and as the people were remarkably loving, my time went on comfortably. It is true I often met with things that were not agreeable ; for I was continually ranging about to beat up fresh ground, and Wales is not the most pleasing part of the world for a stranger to wander in, especially on the errand which I was upon. But I cared very little about the matter, provided I could see some fruit of my labour. I could rest upon straw, when needful, and be well content.

A little before the Conference, I went to Tenby, where the people had held out stoutly for their master, and boasted that no preachers had ever come there, neither should they, but at the price of their lives. I was determined to make the attempt. So a few friends accompanied me, one Sunday morning, from Pembroke. We arrived there by eight o'clock, and, after putting up our horses, went to the Cross. I gave out the Hundredth Psalm. The people flocked together amain, and all behaved very well. But they presented a strange figure ; some looking through their windows, naked as they had jumped out of bed ; some running to the Cross with part of their clothes on. After singing and praying without interruption, I gave out my text, and all was quite still. By and by I observed a person with an air of importance, walking up and down, who, I soon learned, was the mayor. He would fain have got some of the crowd to pull me down ; but all the people stood staring with their mouths and eyes open, as if they would have devoured every word. Finding the town's people took no notice of him, he addressed a couple of sailors who stood by themselves ; desiring that they would take that fellow down. But the honest tars answered in their own

style, "The devil shall take him down for us." He then fetched out the Riot Act, and came into the midst of the crowd to read it: so I ceased speaking until he had concluded. I asked if he had done reading. He said he had. "Well, then," said I, "I will begin again:" so I went on, and concluded in peace. After sermon the constables came to fetch me before the mayor. When I came thither, I found the rector, the curate, and the town-clerk there. Mr. mayor insisted that I had been making a riot. I denied the charge, and desired him to prove it. He said, he would not stand proving the matter with me; but, says he, "Show your authority, or to prison you shall go." I told him, "I have been preaching, and have a licence so to do;" which I then produced. This being read, "These justices,"\* said he, "are Methodists, every one of them. Well, but is this all you have to show?" I answered, "Yes." "Then," said he, "you must go to prison. Let his mittimus be made out." For which purpose, pen, ink, and paper were brought. But he was informed there was an Act of Toleration. This was produced; in which it was asserted, that a qualified preacher might preach in either house, field, or other place. This seemed to puzzle Mr. mayor a little; and he thought it best to dismiss me, on condition that nothing of the kind might be attempted again. I told him I intended to preach again at two o'clock; which I did to well-nigh all the town, and had no interruption. I went again that day fortnight, and preached three times, and had very large congregations each time. Presently after I left the country, and must confess I cannot help blaming those who came after me for not following the blow. I was

\* The justices who signed the licence.

much importuned to stay in the country. However, I tore myself from them, and hastened to the London Conference.

From thence I was appointed for Castlebar, in Ireland, and made the best of my way thither. As I sailed up the Bristol Channel, I looked with a wishful eye to Pembrokeshire; and if I could have got on shore, I should have been tempted to stay with the people. But we stretched over for Dublin, where I stayed near a fortnight, and preached with some degree of satisfaction, especially in the Royal Square, belonging to the barracks, where many of the soldiers attended and behaved remarkably well, as they do in every place in Ireland. As we seldom preach in country-places in Ireland, the people being generally Papists, and often strangers to English, except in the north; so in towns there are always soldiers quartered, and generally some in our society. From Dublin I set out for Castlebar, quite on the other side of the kingdom, preaching at Drumcree, Athlone, Augrim, and Holy Mount by the way, and found the people very hospitable and loving, as they are indeed all over Ireland wherever I have been; so that, if in everything the Irish excelled as they do in freedom and hospitality, we might give it its ancient name, "a nation of saints." Being arrived at Castlebar, my principal place, I found myself not only in another country, but amongst another sort of people. Instead of having crowds following me, as in Pembrokeshire, I was shut up in a little dark corner, and had but three small congregations in the Circuit: and being entirely surrounded by Papists, there was no probability of enlarging my sphere of action; for they neither understood English, nor durst they come to hear, if they had been ever so

desirous. Here I was warmer than wise, in my zeal against the Papists; and had it not been for three troops of dragoons who lay in the town, and were constant hearers, I know not but I should have paid for my rashness. It is certainly beginning at the wrong end with the generality of Roman Catholics, to attack their principles, as this raises prejudice in them immediately, and then all reasoning is at an end. If we mean to do them good, it must be by lovingly introducing the experimental and practical parts of religion. I once preached out of doors, at a place called Drumasnare, at the time of a Papist visitation, and a large concourse of people: here I imprudently entered into the controversies of priestly absolution, purgatory, transubstantiation, praying to saints, &c. This was ill-timed, and only stirred up rage and indignation. Some of my friends were alarmed, expecting that some mischief would ensue, either openly or secretly; and I was not without apprehension: but I received no harm, and learned to be wiser; for I see we must not provoke those whom we intend to profit.

Finding I could not enlarge my bounds of preaching, I determined to improve my little learning. I did not like to be at the mercy of every pretender, with regard to the original Scriptures, and was much excited to aim at a little more knowledge by reading Mr. Wesley's Address to the Clergy. I saw every reason assigned for their knowing Greek and Hebrew was doubly applicable to me. Indeed it was my desire from the time of my first engaging in the work of God, to show myself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

Very providentially, there was a grammar-school

in Castlebar, in which some gentlemen's sons were instructed in the learned languages. The master very freely assisted me; so that I preached night and morning, devoted the forenoon to study, and spent the afternoon in visiting the sick, and reading English; and the evening I spent with my friendly schoolmaster. This has proved very useful to me ever since. Some good was done during my stay here: the numbers in the societies were a little increased, and the congregations much enlarged.

From hence I removed into the Athlone Circuit. I still attended to my studies, but had not the same opportunities as before. I here got a sore illness by lying in a damp bed,\* so that my speech and hearing were well-nigh taken from me. But this was a necessary visitation, and what my carelessness deserved. However, when I was able, I preached abroad in most of the towns, and I hope not in vain; though I did not live so near to God as I ought to have done.

My next remove was to Cork. Here a blessed work was begun under that indefatigable servant of God, Mr. Penington. It did not decrease during my stay, but increased more abundantly. I preached abroad in every part of the city. Prayer-meetings were regularly kept up. I met the class-leaders every Saturday night, and appointed each his work for the ensuing week. Strict discipline was observed. Not a class-leader or steward was permitted to enter the society-meeting without producing his ticket; and the work of the Lord prospered on every side. In this agreeable manner things went on, when Mr. James Morgan came to help me. He was the older

\* This, I believe, has been the death of several of the preachers; and yet some of the people are not careful in this point.

preacher, though the care of things was, in some measure, committed to me. I could soon see a party gathering against me, who did not like that strictness of discipline. At length he insisted on a person's being admitted to the lovefeasts and society-meetings who would not meet in class. To this I could not consent. I insisted on poor and rich meeting in class, or not to have any privilege of meeting in society. Letters were sent to Mr. Wesley, and his answers were construed in their favour. However, I stood to what I saw was right. They then alleged, her husband would not let her meet in class. To cut off this pretence, I went and asked him if he did hinder her. His answer was, "She is at her own liberty." Then Mr. Morgan was obliged to submit. This, however, caused a shyness betwixt him and me, which cast a damp upon the work. Yet I kept up, at all events, the same discipline as long as I stayed at Cork.

At the beginning of the year 1765 I removed to Limerick, where I found matters in a very different state from what I found them in Cork. The people were very languid and lifeless, and my own spirit was rather irritated; so that I did not see much fruit, except at a place called Killfinnen. In July I came over to England, to the Manchester Conference. After seeing some of my relations in Yorkshire, I set out for Scotland, preaching at Keighley, Blackburn, Kendal, and Cockermouth, and so on to Dumfries, the first town of note in Scotland. Resting on the Sunday at Dumfries, I preached in the ball-room, the day being rainy, so that I could not preach out of doors. Here I was much importuned to stay; but my destination was to Glasgow. When I arrived, I entered on a scene which I had never witnessed

before. The winter was at hand ; I was in a strange land ; there was no society, no place of entertainment, no place to preach in, no friend to communicate my mind to. I took a private lodging, and gave out that I should preach on the Green, a place of public resort, hard by the city. A table was carried to the place, and at the appointed time I went, and found two bakers' boys and two old women waiting. My very soul sunk within me. I had travelled by land and by water near six hundred miles to this place ; and behold my congregation ! I turned upon my heel to go away. No one can tell but they who have experienced it, what a task it is to stand in the open air to preach to nobody ! more especially in such a place as Glasgow. However, at length I mounted my table, and began the singing, which I had entirely to myself. A few more kept creeping together, all seemingly very poor people, till at length I had about two hundred hearers. But this was poor encouragement. The night following, I had a more promising congregation ; yet nothing to what I expected. The third night we had heavy rain. This quite cast me down again. O, what a day of distress was that ! I had not learned in all states to be content. The enemy assaulted me sorely, so that I was ready to cry out, "It is better for me to die than to live." But God pitied my weakness : the next day cleared up, and I was never prevented from preaching out of doors for eleven or twelve weeks after.

On the Saturday evening I had a large congregation, and on Sunday morning a larger ; but such a one on Sunday evening, as I do not remember ever seeing before, excepting one. I mounted my table, but was quite too low still. I set a chair upon it,

but was quite too low still. I then mounted upon a high wall, and cried aloud, "The hour is coming and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live." All was still as night, so that I conceived great hopes of this opportunity. But when I had done, they made a lane for me to walk through the huge multitude, while they stood staring at me; but no one said, "Where dwellest thou?" I walked home much dejected.

One great obstacle in my way was, a new edition of the "Eleven Letters," ascribed to Mr. Hervey, had just come out, prefaced by a minister in Edinburgh, a man much esteemed in Scotland. These Letters fully answered their design. They carried gall and wormwood wherever they came. So that it was a sufficient reason for everyone to keep his distance, because I was connected with Mr. Wesley. I laboured to keep as clear as possible of controversy, dwelling chiefly upon repentance, faith, and the new birth. Indeed, as I then leaned much both to the doctrine of the imputed righteousness of Christ, and final perseverance, I had no temptation to bring in controversy.

I soon found that persons may easily learn to cover several Gospel topics,—such as original sin, the offices of Christ, His being the only Saviour, and the like,—and yet be haughty, self-sufficient, unbroken-hearted sinners. This I saw, and levelled all my powers against it. I soon found their pharisaic hearts could not brook it. Hence I drew their resentment upon me, and plenty of lies and calumnies were soon spread abroad.

I continued preaching night and morning, when opportunity offered; and tried much to procure a

place to preach in, as the winter was now come on. I believe I was disappointed in ten or twelve different places. I sold my horse; and a preacher who passed through Glasgow, to Ireland, having his horse lamed, and little money left, I spared about three guineas to help him on his way. This brought my stock into a small compass; and having everything to pay for, I was reduced to a short allowance. I paid three shillings per week for my room, fire, and attendance; but I really kept a very poor house. I confess that I never kept so many fast-days, either before or since. But how to keep up my credit was a difficulty; for I was afraid my landlady would think me either poor or covetous. I frequently desired her not to provide anything for dinner; and a little before noon, I dressed myself, and walked out, till after dinner, and then came home to my hungry room, with a hungry belly. However, she thought I had dined out somewhere; so I saved my credit.

About this time a poor man was executed for the murder of his wife. I attended him several weeks in the prison, and likewise at his execution, which had a circumstance I never saw before: they chopped off his right hand, before his execution, with a great axe, just as a butcher would chop a piece of beef with a cleaver. It is the law of Scotland, for every murderer to have his right hand struck off before his execution, and to be stuck upon the pole where he is gibbeted. As I had reason to believe that the Lord had plucked him as a brand from the burning, I published a short account of his case. It is amazing what a cry this raised up against me, to say that God had mercy on such a sinner! Scurrilous papers were cried up and down the streets

against me, filled with lies of all sorts. Nay, so zealous was some poor creature, that he began publishing weekly numbers, and had no better subject than myself. My case was now deplorable: I had famine within doors, and plenty of reproach without. And yet I might have prevented it all; for just at this time there was an elegant place of worship building, called a kirk of relief. Formerly the inhabitants of Scotland had the privilege of choosing their own ministers: of this privilege they are now debarred, and the gift of a living lies in the hands of a patron. But frequently the parishioners unite, build a place of worship, which they term a kirk of relief, and call a minister themselves; leaving the old kirk to the patron and his friend. This was the case in Glasgow: the church was built, but they had not chosen their minister. One of their leading men was one of my greatest intimates. He said, he would engage me three hundred votes, which would be a majority. This was an alluring bait, considering my present circumstances; a place of one hundred and forty pounds per annum, with honour and credit, on one hand, and hunger and contempt on the other. But I thought it would be betraying the trust which was reposed in me. Afterwards some of that party desired a meeting with me; but I so satisfied them, that I heard no more from that quarter.

At length I procured a place to preach in, and my hearers furnished it with a pulpit and seats. I saw now a little fruit of my labour: as I had a place to preach in, and a little society, which kept continually increasing; some of whom stand to this day, while others are gone to rest.

I observed above, how kind Providence was in regard to the weather; for though it was a remark-

ably wet season, yet I never was but once prevented from preaching abroad till the middle of November, and then only one night: so that it became a kind of proverb among the people, "If it rain all day, it will be fair at night for the *load*," that is, the lad, "to preach on the Green."

One little circumstance I cannot omit. Some time after my arrival at Glasgow, I found myself at a loss what to do in respect to the singing, having but a poor voice for this exercise; and as the people knew nothing of our hymns, I was obliged to sing the Scotch psalms. One of my hearers told me, if I pleased, he would be my precentor, that is, my clerk, to lead the psalms. At this I was glad; so we went on pretty well: but at length he made a demand of thirteen shillings and fourpence for his work, which was just fourpence a time. This did but ill suit my circumstances. However, I paid him his demand, and dismissed him and the Scotch psalms together. I now began to sing our own hymns; the people liking them right well; and in a little time I taught them to sing several of our tunes.

After the society was increased to forty or fifty, some of them began to inquire how I was maintained. They asked me if I had an estate, or some supplies from England. I told them I had neither; but having sold my horse, I had made what little I had go as far as I could. I then explained our custom to them. I told them of the little matter we usually received from our people. The poor souls were much affected, and they very liberally supplied my wants, as also those that came after me. I stayed with them till the middle of April, and then bade them an affectionate farewell; leaving about seventy

persons joined together. Though I had many trials in Glasgow, yet I had much opportunity to pursue my study; and the privilege of the college library was of singular advantage to me. But I own I did not live so near to God, the latter part of my time, as I did in the beginning. I seldom enlarge my acquaintance, but I find it enlarges my temptations: so I found cause to cry out, "Lord, pardon my trifling and want of deep seriousness!"

From hence I went to Edinburgh, and in my way turned aside to Stirling, where I spent three nights. On the Sunday, preaching under the side of an old uninhabited building, some young men got into the inside, and, going up stairs, threw off a number of the slates; but, though they fell just by me, I was not hurt, nor anyone else. Leaving Stirling, I came to Edinburgh, where the brethren received me gladly. The Octagon was not quite finished, but the congregation was miserably small. Several things had concurred to reduce both the society and congregation, particularly Mr. Hervey's Letters. I had soon the pleasure of seeing the congregation increase, yet not as I could wish; the place was never above half filled, even on Sunday evenings. I was therefore determined to take a new step.

The Castle-hill being the place of general rendezvous for all sorts of people, after they came out of the churches, about twelve o'clock, I was determined to preach there just at that time. It was disagreeable to stand up bareheaded in the blazing sun; but this I regarded not. My method was to preach in the Octagon in the morning, on the Castle-hill at noon, in the High-School yard at four o'clock, and in the Octagon at six in the evening. As I generally spake with all my might, this was rather too hard

for my constitution. However, by this means, I got the Octagon well filled on Sunday evenings, and helped the society a little. In order to establish societies betwixt Edinburgh and Glasgow, I preached in several towns which lie between, such as Burrowstounness, Linlithgow, Falkirk, and Killisyth; but I fear with little fruit. The Scots are naturally shy, and suspicious of strangers; and anything in religion that appears new, or not agreeing with their established forms, they are exceeding jealous of. Hence class-meeting has the appearance of novelty, and has often been suspected to border upon the Popish auricular confession of sins, though a different thing: hence many in Scotland have been startled at it, and very loth to engage in it.

In October I left my much-esteemed friends at Edinburgh, and removed to Aberdeen. In crossing the Forth, which is seven miles from Leith to Kinghorn, I know not that I was ever nearer being drowned. There were several friends from Edinburgh, and, it being a fine calm morning, the regular passage-boat being gone, we hired a small pinnace; but when we were about half-way over, such a sudden squall of wind arose, that we were in danger of being overset every minute. But by a merciful providence we got safe over. That evening I arrived at Dundee, and preached three nights, having the place well filled with attentive hearers each night. At Aberdeen I met with a loving people; but, as the winter was at hand, I had no opportunity of enlarging my sphere of action. I was therefore determined to apply myself to study, and to live nearer to God than I had done. But a family residing in Aberdeen which came from Leeds, I immediately contracted an acquaintance with them;

and this led me into company, which was a great loss to my soul. After I had spent some time, being fully convinced of my danger, I judged it best to flee; and a ship being ready to sail for Leith, I went on board immediately, taking an abrupt leave. Having scarcely any wind, we had a very tedious passage, as we could make but little way; but I never was with such a ship's company before. Everyone on board, both sailors and passengers, came upon deck to prayers, and all kneeled down, except the man at the helm. After a slow passage we reached Leith. I hastened to Edinburgh, anxious to see my friends; the generality of whom were glad to see me.

As soon as the season would permit, Mr. Olivers being my colleague, we took our station on the Castle-hill, hoping for the same success which I had the last summer. But a circumstance happened which hindered our usefulness.

There had been, a few years before, a young man in that college, who met in our society. He appeared to be much alive to God, and was the leader of one of the classes. He had been in England for some time, had got ordained, turned predestinarian, and affected a popular character. He now came to Edinburgh, partly to do us harm, and partly for another purpose. In the latter design he failed; but in the former he was too successful. He would not preach in our place, nor even come to hear us; but preached at our usual times, and by this means drew away much people from us. There was neither matter nor method in his preaching; but he was loud and quaint; so he was much admired. It has fared with him as it has done with several others. He first turned Calvinist, and then to nothing. It is

plain, a man with little parts and little religion may do that harm in a short time, which men of far greater parts and deeper religion cannot repair in a long period. For though my colleague was a man of good abilities, and did all in his power, as well as myself, yet could we not either prevent or remove the harm which one shallow young man was doing.

During my stay in Edinburgh this season, my time went on but heavily. I saw little good done; the congregations were small, and the society was very cold, and did not increase. It is really very heavy with me when I see God's work at a stand; everything has but a gloomy aspect; my spirit sinks, and my soul is pained within me.

In September, 1767, I left Edinburgh, and at Dunbar was seized with an obstruction in my bowels, which seemed to threaten me with a final period to my feeble endeavours. I do not remember ever passing so dreadful a night. Being very providentially in the house of Dr. Hamilton, he took the right method with me, and in a few days I was enabled to set forward, though it was some time before I was free from the effects of that attack. The kind and genteel usage I received both from the Doctor and Mrs. Hamilton will not soon be obliterated from my grateful heart.

I preached at Alnwick, Newcastle, Darlington, and Knaresborough, and so on in divers parts of Yorkshire, being glad to see my native country and former acquaintance; and they appeared equally glad to see me. Blessed be God for Christian fellowship, and for Christian friendship! It has a tendency to soothe some of the rugged paths which we meet with in this wilderness, and perhaps may increase our gratitude in the bright realms of eternal day.

Before I dismiss Scotland, I would just take notice, that I have reason to bless God, some good was done by my poor endeavours: some sinners were brought to God; my labours, in the general, were acceptable; and the people gave me many proofs of their friendship, although my entrance among them was unpromising. On the other hand, I see much cause for humility and deep self-abasement. I see that I might have managed my mission abundantly better; I really was neither so holy nor steady as I might have been. I have reason to cry to the Lord, and also to apply to the blood of sprinkling, or I should be an outcast from God, and an heir of eternal misery.

This makes me now with bended knees,  
 Thy daily care implore;  
 Confine me, Lord, if it Thee please,  
 And let me rove no more.

O cause the golden girdle, love,  
 To bind my heart to Thee;  
 Let me Thy little captive prove,  
 Become Thy spoil Divine.

I'll bless my sweet captivity,  
 The cord that binds me fast  
 To Him who living loved me,  
 And died for me at last.

My next remove was to Chester, where a change took place of such consequence to me, that I should be much wanting in gratitude to a kind Providence if I passed it over in silence. I found it was expedient for me to marry, but it appeared a matter of great importance. Only two things in all my life had given me greater concern; namely, my acceptance with God, and my call to preach. What I wanted was, a person of grace, of good understanding,

of a good natural disposition, (for my own is violent,) and one who had been well educated. I had contracted an acquaintance with one while in the city of Cork, in whom I had reason to believe the above properties met; she was descended from an eminent French Protestant family, whose grandfather, among many others, had fled from the rage of Louis XIV., and had left his estate behind, only taking what effects he could carry along with him. She was early bereaved of her father, and not long after of her mother. My great objection was, the bringing of a person of her delicate constitution and education into such a way of life as she must expect if she became my wife. This I feared would be more than her spirits could bear. Besides I found a great aversion to bring any more burdens upon the societies; for she was left an orphan, and her affairs were very ill managed. Yet, believing it to be the will of God, I at length ventured upon this important step; for which I have abundant reason to bless God, and hope I shall do it for ever.

Here I became acquainted with that amiable pattern to all young females, I mean Miss Gilbert, who was born in the West Indies, and came to England to finish her education, and also to finish her life in the bloom of her days. She kept a daily journal for several years; and at the age of seventeen, a fever sent her to Abraham's bosom. I visited her in her illness, and was therefore a witness of that sweet resignation and consolation with which she was favoured. At the request of her friends I preached a funeral sermon on the occasion of her death from the affecting words of our Saviour, Luke xxiii. 28: "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children."

The chapel was much crowded, and the congregation much affected. I printed the sermon, which I hope has been a word in season to many a troubled soul.

Before the end of the year, I preached one Sunday morning in the market-place at Salop, and met with no other molestation than a few clods and small stones. I gave notice that I would preach again in the evening, at a place called the Quarry. "We will be ready for you," said the people: and so they were; for when I drew near the place, there was a little army gathered together with clubs. They did not stay till I came to the place, but came on furiously, so that I was soon hemmed in on every side. They seemed a little at a stand when I demanded to know what they wanted. However, they rallied; and though they did not strike me, they kicked me about to some purpose. By degrees they hurried me into the town, up to the door of a house which belonged to a justice of the peace. I thought there might be something providential in this; and took the liberty of going in to desire his protection. The justice was at the coffee-house; but I sent for him. The mob by this time had filled the street, and were roaring like lions. At length the justice came. He said, "Tell me who have hurt you; and I will send for a warrant for them;" and after a little incoherent talk fairly shoved me out of doors into the midst of the mob. Providence held them from striking, or a very few blows might have ended the business. I likewise kept on my feet; for if I had once been down, there was no likelihood that I should have risen again. But I was covered with dirt from head to foot. All the filth they could scrape up was thrown, and when I attempted to

turn my face on one side, I met it on the other. Which way to go I knew not; nor indeed could I go any way, but just as my masters drove me. At length I heard some cry out, "For shame, for shame!" This occasioned a quarrel among themselves. Meantime, an honest man opened his door: so I slipped in, and went out by a back way, not much hurt, but dreadfully bedaubed; so that I really "needed much washing to be touched."

The next year, the society in Dublin being in much confusion, Mr. Wesley desired me to go thither. My affectionate partner was in a very unfit situation for crossing the water. The ship was so crowded, that we could obtain no beds, though they had promised one to us; yet they were taken up before we got on board; so that it was no small grief to me to see my dear partner three days and nights without a place where to lay her head. When we got thither, I was in great hopes, for several weeks, that the desired end would be accomplished. But my former antagonist coming to Dublin, who had been the occasion of the confusion, I had all my work to do over again. But he is gone, and I hope to paradise. He occasioned my path to be very rough in Dublin.\*

Notwithstanding some cross things, I met with many friends, who showed themselves very affectionate, and did everything in their power to strengthen my hands, to help me in whatever I stood in need of, and to comfort my afflicted wife. The Lord reward them for their kindness in that great day.

\* Though it was my misfortune not to agree with Mr. Morgan, yet there were many excellent things in him, such as I wish to imitate; and my reason for mentioning the above, is to caution myself and others against discord.

While we were there, my wife was delivered of her first child; and not being skilfully treated, she had such a complaint in her breast as was supposed to be a confirmed cancer. The anguish which I saw her daily in was such an affliction to me, as I never experienced before. This continued nine months, during which every means was tried that could be devised. At length, partly by a very abstemious diet, partly by taking quicksilver, with the application of boiled hemlock outwardly, through the blessing of God, a perfect cure was effected. But before this we removed to Cork, leaving our infant above a hundred miles from us. Though the nurse was a Papist, I have reason to believe that she did her duty to the child.

I found Cork was not as I had left it about four years ago. Then everything appeared lively: now, all was dull and languid; the prayer-meetings were dropped; discipline was not kept up; and the society was much decayed. I laboured with my might to revive the former flame; but hard it is to regain the ground which is lost.

A little before I left Cork, I was at Bandon one Sunday. It happened there was to be a review, on the Monday, of a regiment of light-horse. While I was preaching in the street, Colonel Walpole and all the officers came, and behaved in a most indecent manner. On my speaking to them, the colonel ordered four trumpeters from the barracks into the middle of the congregation, and commanded them to sound. I gave out the stanza beginning,—

“Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;”

and when it was sung, began again: so that the poor trumpeters sounded till they were black in the

face, and at last were fairly worn out. This so enraged the colonel, that he even foamed with indignation and blasphemies, and I expected every moment his cane would have been laid upon the poor men's heads. However, at last, they all retreated, and got little but shame for their trouble. As the colonel was in liquor, I took the liberty to send him a few lines the next morning, and was told he said, he would not be guilty of such an indiscretion again for twenty pounds. But as I was preaching in the market-house the next night, the officers came again. They stood a while pretty attentive, and then broke out into horrid blasphemies, and were for forcing their way through the people to pull me down. But a large number, chiefly old women, violently engaged them, and gained a complete victory; so that I was left in peaceable possession of the field, and finished my discourse quietly. The history of this engagement was published in the Freeman's Journal, and sent all over the kingdom.

In July, 1770, I left Cork, and set out for England, taking Dublin in the way. Here I stayed a few weeks, and opened the new chapel in the Gravel-walk; and received our child from the country, where she had been at nurse during our absence at Cork.\* We embarked there in a small cutter for Liverpool, taking our little child with us. After we had got out to sea, there fell a dead calm, so that we could not move forward at all. Our provisions fell short. As for my wife, she, being sick, could eat nothing; and as for myself, I was not anxious. But

\* She lived to be married to a kind husband, and bore seven children; and on the 27th of June, 1801, finished her course in peace, and entered her rest, where I hope to meet her, never to part again.

I felt for the poor child, only seventeen months old. We had only a little very bad bread, and some stinking water ; but the patient little creature would take a morsel of the bread, and drink a little of that water, and so lie down again quite content. The vessel was full of the most abandoned clowns, chiefly new recruits ; so that their oaths and vulgar obscenity made it a kind of floating hell.

We spent the Sabbath at Liverpool, where I preached to a large congregation out of doors. From thence we went to Chester, where we spent two or three comfortable days ; and so on to Manchester, the place of my destination for the year. I was glad that I was in England again, where I expected to find genuine religion. I found my diligent and indefatigable predecessor, Mr. Mather, had done all that a laborious man could do to put the Circuit into order, excepting that he had left a family in the preacher's house, which neither suited them nor us. Indeed the house wanted furnishing ; but everything needful was easily granted. I have much reason to acknowledge the kindness of the people there ; for I was more expensive to them than I have been to any Circuit before or since. Yet everything was done without grudging. Here my dear partner had a long and dangerous fever ; but no assistance was wanting, and all expenses cheerfully paid. They did the same when she lay-in ; so that I had no weight or care on that head. Here I spent two comfortable years, and had the satisfaction of seeing some fruit of my labour ; especially during the latter year.

While I was in the Manchester Circuit, I published the discourse upon thoughts, words, and actions, entitled, "A Cry to the Professor's Conscience," &c.

I have the comfort to find that this plain tract has been useful; touching the very causes of backsliding from the living God. It pretends to nothing high or elegant, but purely that which is experimental and practical, and, as such, has answered the end which I proposed. To God our Saviour be the praise!

My two years being expired, I left this agreeable Circuit with much regret. I came into the Birstal Circuit, expecting I was going into the land of Goshen. But, O, the amazing difference! There was a general dulness; no discipline, and not one class met well. I scarcely ever came into so dreary a region. The singing of the people indicated the condition they were in; for the few that did sing, sung as if they were half asleep. The congregations were so shrunk at Birstal, that the preaching on a Thursday evening was in the kitchen; and they had plenty of room.

The house was in great want of necessaries; for there was not one decent thing in it. It was highly necessary, if possible, to awaken the people. I began at Birstal, and so proceeded; but I soon found myself in hot water. When I wanted things a little more decent in the dwelling-house, the Circuit echoed from side to side with my pride and lordliness; and many ill-natured things were said, which made my way very troublesome. One cause of this was, that I thought it my duty to keep close to my study, except when preaching, visiting the sick, &c., or other necessary business called me out. This was construed into pride and stateliness. I think, for the first half year, I never had such a time in my life. However, being sensible I was doing my duty, I determined to continue the same conduct. Rather

than alter my plan, I would choose to leave the Circuit.

Towards the latter end of the year, great numbers began to have a more favourable opinion of my conduct: they believed that I acted from principle; and God owned my poor labours. However, prejudice continued in many to the last; and when the Conference drew on, I found a letter was privately sent against me, in which my pride and niceness were not forgotten, and several surmises added, as if I was a Calvinist, and an enemy to the Church. They had their desire; and I had the happiness of being removed to Bradford.

My last year's treatment had left a soreness upon my mind; but it was soon healed by a kind people. I did not find much life amongst them at first; but whatever I said was well received; my fellow-labourers also joined hand in hand, so that the work of God was greatly revived. This year I was visited with a fever, but found God very present and precious; so that this also was for my good. The second year we had a blessed outpouring of the Spirit; believers daily were multiplying, so that during these two years, above six hundred souls were added to the societies, and many, nay, most of them, continue to this day. This was printed in 1780: since then many of them are gone to glory. Great numbers were likewise renewed in love, and enabled to "rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and in everything give thanks."

My next remove was to Keighley. This Circuit was a mere scarecrow on various accounts; so that I entered into it with little less than horror. There was a family in the preacher's house, which I was obliged to remove. The house was to furnish, and

put into repair ; and I had to beg the money up and down, which is not pleasing work.

The Circuit was a large rambling range. I was to be but three or four days at Keighley in six weeks ; and many of the congregations were very small ; all of which were completely disagreeable circumstances. However, I entered upon my work in the best manner I could. I soon got the house put into good repair, and well furnished ; so that my family were comfortably situated. God likewise revived His work in many places, so that between four and five hundred were added to us during the year ; and the greater part were able to give a reason of the hope that was in them. A little before the Conference, having to preach one Sunday evening at Padiham, the house was by far too small for the congregation. It being a fine evening, we chose a convenient place to preach on out of doors. While I was preaching to a large congregation, the minister came at the head of a mob, in his gown and cassock, and dragged me down. As soon as I could, I mounted again, and again was jostled down. I attempted standing up a third time, but to no purpose ; so we adjourned to the preaching-house.

Perceiving the Bible so much neglected, I preached from Psalm cxix. 11, at Heptonstall : "Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against Thee." The people would take no denial, but insisted on my printing the sermon ; which I have done, entitling it, "The Word of God a hid Treasure." I have reason to hope it has also been useful. That is my great end both in speaking and writing.

In July, 1776, I went to the Conference at London, preaching at several places by the way, espe-

cially Nottingham, where there is a loving, sensible, judicious people; and at their request I preached in the market-place to a large attentive audience, all as peaceable as if they had been in the most solemn temple. Surely God has something to do in this town. From London I rode to Bristol, preaching in several places, with some degree of satisfaction, especially at Bath and Bristol; so in like manner in going from Bristol I preached at several places, as Gloucester, Worcester, Birmingham, Derby, and Sheffield, meeting with loving people, and liberty in speaking to them. To God our Saviour be all the glory!

Returning to Keighley, I divided the Circuit into two very compact rounds, making Colne and the societies which surrounded it into a Circuit by itself; by which means both the Circuits are become very agreeable. But an unhappy affair happening at Colne put a great damp on the work there.

We had with much difficulty raised a fine large chapel; and being completed, Mr. Wesley came to open it. Being much crowded, both above and below, and the timber of the galleries not being sufficiently strong, just when Mr. Wesley and I had got into the pulpit, before he began, all of a sudden one of the galleries sunk down, and abundance of people had legs, arms, or thighs broken. The confusion, as may easily be imagined, was very great; and the cries of such as were maimed, and such as were frightened, were truly piercing. Many false reports were spread concerning this awful adventure. Some said the whole chapel was in danger, and therefore durst not come into it. By one means or other, the work got a dreadful stun, which I fear it will not recover very soon.

After spending my second year at Keighley, among a simple and loving people, in 1777 I set out for the Conference at Bristol, taking Manchester in my way; and there I preached in an open place near the Infirmary, to a large and well-behaved congregation. From thence I preached at Macclesfield, Wolverhampton, Worcester, Gloucester, &c.; I hope not in vain: and after the Conference I removed to Wednesbury in Staffordshire, where I had the less hopes of doing good, because my predecessor had done all that I could do in any respect. I found the house bare of furniture, the Circuit poor, and trade bad; so that it was hard to put things in order. However, I set about it, and got my design completed in that respect. But still, the great business gave me much uneasiness; the societies were dull, and the congregations miserably small. Calvinism, Antinomianism, and downright Ranterism, had so laid waste this country, that there were small hopes of doing much good. My very soul sunk within me, so that at times it seemed as if I must faint. I cannot tell how they get their time over, who can drag on and see no fruit. Were that my case, I should be ready to conclude, that I was out of my place. To me this was a bitter and a trying season, going round and round, and seeing no good effect. However, when the new year came in, God revived His work. The preaching abroad, in the latter end of the summer, had excited many to come and hear. By hearing they were convinced, and many were brought to the knowledge of the love of God. I think near two hundred were this year added to the societies.

Birmingham, which is a principal place in this Circuit, had for many years been very turbulent, by

reason of the mobbing rabble; but at length an honest justice let them know their place, so that we have peace now. I preached one Lord's-day evening in a large square, called the New Market. I had much enlargement, and the multitude was still as night. I spoke from Luke xvi. 8: "The children of the world are wiser in their generation than the children of light." I have reason to hope this discourse has not been printed in vain; for it has been much read in various places. I have reason to think that our preaching out of doors in Birmingham was a happy means of increasing the blessed work: for before that time we were cased up in an old shabby building, in an obscure, dirty back street; but soon after our going out of doors, a large new chapel was built; and since that two more.

After the next Conference, in 1778, I was appointed for the Birstal Circuit, into which I came with fear and trembling, remembering the days of old. As my worthy predecessor, Mr. Pawson, had been much blessed among the people, and was much esteemed by them, it made my entrance the more difficult. He had much improved the dwelling-house, and had regulated several things, so that all who come after him will reap the fruit of his labour. I endeavoured to complete what he had left undone. There had been a blessed work in Birstal, where many were suddenly brought in; but the fire had not spread much farther. And as these were young converts, and not established, I feared we should have a sad falling away. But this was not the case: some few dropped off, and but a few. On the other hand, the awakening spread into most of the societies; so that I scarcely ever saw so extensive a work. We joined above seven hundred this year, and the

greater part alive to God. I never knew so simple means made use of, in the hand of a gracious God, to bring sinners to Himself. Prayer-meetings were singularly useful, and so was the preaching; but thunder and lightning, dreams and visions, singing and praying, were all made use of for the awakening of sinners. I returned again into that Circuit, and what Providence has yet to do in me or by me, I cannot tell. But here I am, a monument of amazing mercy, willing to lie in His blessed hands as clay in the hands of the great Potter, so that I may in all things be a vessel meet for my Lord's service; wishing only to finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received from Him.

This year being attended with much unction of the Spirit in the Circuit, by bringing many poor wanderers to the fold of the true Shepherd, I had some sharp trials to grapple with, in some private affairs: among other things, I had a fine boy seized with fits in a violent manner; for one whole day he had them almost without intermission; for no sooner did he recover from one, than another seized him. I was several times fetched home, as it was supposed that he was dying. One time, being fetched home near twenty miles off, on the same mournful occasion, and riding sharply upon a high causeway, and a hollow road on my left hand, my horse took fright at something, rearing upon his hind feet, turned round, and fell down into the hollow way upon me. The man who was with me attempting to dismount his horse too hastily, his foot hung fast in the stirrup, and he could not come to my assistance; only his horse was quiet and stood still, or his case might have been very bad. In the mean time my horse lay upon me as if he were dead: and it was well he

did so ; for had he attempted to rise or struggle with his fore feet, he would have struck me even in the face, and might have killed me on the spot. I thought one of my legs was broken in pieces, as it lay under the horse upon a stone. However, with hard struggling I got myself from under ; and after the numbness was gone, I found I could stand, though much crushed. One circumstance upon another began to impress my mind with uneasy sensations ; but, riding in a lonely place, I saw a strip of clean paper lying on the ground : curiosity led me to alight and see what it was. The words written were verbatim thus : “The love of Christ is a correcting love ; whom He loveth He chasteneth, and correcteth every son whom He receiveth.” This was really a word in season, a sweet reviving cordial ; and I know not that my mind has ever been so harassed since. By what hand the bit of paper was dropped, I cannot tell ; but the hand of a kind Providence directed it to me.

Before I close this part of the narration, there are two things which in gratitude to my God I cannot omit.

I mentioned before, how desirous I was of improving myself in the original languages. After I had made some progress in Greek, having gone through the Greek Testament, and two or three of the classic authors in that language, I wanted to get an acquaintance with the Hebrew. I procured several books ; but they did not answer my purpose. While I was in Edinburgh, I employed a Jew, a professed teacher of Hebrew, at an extravagant rate : but I soon found he was utterly insufficient for what he undertook, as he knew nothing of the grammar ; so that his teaching was a mere imposition. I began

to despair of attaining it, when Robinson's Key came in my way, by which I readily went through the Psalms. I procured his *Manipulus Linguae Sanctae*; and by the assistance of that, with Buxtorf's Lexicon, I can read my Hebrew Bible with pleasure. I have a particular method of spending my time, which I have found of the utmost importance.

My method of spending my time is this. The time before breakfast is wholly devoted to my Hebrew Bible, comparing the original text with the Latin and English translations. I did, for some time, carry about with me the Septuagint translation, that is, the Hebrew Bible translated into Greek by seventy Jews; but finding it to be so wide of the Hebrew, I have laid it aside, only consulting it occasionally.

After breakfast I write, or read in some Latin author, till it is time to take horse. If I do not ride, I visit the sick, and others, till dinner. After dinner I generally read divinity, history, geography, or philosophy, till five; and then spend some time in my Greek Testament, and considering the subject I shall preach from that evening. After preaching, and the society-meeting, I spend the little remains of the evening in friendly conversation with such as happen to be present, till I retire. I then note down what has occurred in the day, and commit myself into the hands of my gracious God. This is my general manner of spending my time; but I find a good deal of difficulty in keeping to it. Sometimes I want convenient retirement; so that I am obliged to pursue my study in the midst of children, noise, and confusion.\*

\* The sole reason for inserting this, is a wish to stir up some of my brethren to redeem their time; and what may seem a reflec-

There is a gross error which some of our people labour under; namely, that we are not to premeditate on what we are to preach; that God is to assist us in an extraordinary manner; and that all study and meditation are taking the matter out of His hands. Such a practice serves to patronize a sluggish, lounging temper; and is evidently productive of confusion, rhapsody, and nonsense. Indeed, if anyone comes to me for advice, or in distress of mind, I directly lay aside everything else, and apply myself wholly to the case; but otherwise I keep to my regular plan. I wonder that every preacher does not keep something of a daily journal; more especially of what passes in his own mind. This I have found so useful, that I repent I did not adopt it sooner.

The other circumstance which I cannot omit is, my commencing, what is called, an Arminian. I observed above, that my first religious acquaintance were Calvinists, some of whom had been joined among the Methodists; from these I received such accounts as gave me a prejudice against them. I likewise read little else than Calvinian authors, and was much delighted with what is called "moderate Calvinism." Indeed there is one branch of Calvinism, I mean "reprobation," what Mr. Fletcher calls its "left leg," which I never could cordially embrace. But still I hung in suspense till I read Mr. Wesley's "Predestination calmly considered." Then I bade a final adieu to the damning of infants, and the consigning of unborn souls to hell. His "Appeals" likewise (which I heartily wish every person, not entirely drunk with prejudice, to read over and over) tion in the preceding narrative, is but applicable to very few. My brethren in the Gospel I esteem above all men.

were of great service to me. I was now a kind of Baxterian, or rather Miltonian; for I saw first the scheme in "Paradise Lost." And I still confess much may be said for that scheme of thinking, as it solves many difficulties, and tends to moderation; but still I held fast by Calvinian imputed righteousness, and Calvinian final perseverance. I call them "Calvinian," to distinguish them from scriptural imputed righteousness, and scriptural perseverance. In this mongrel state I was, when Mr. Wesley published his "Abridgment of John Goodwin on Imputed Righteousness." I had never so much as heard of his name; and no wonder, for he was a condemned heretic among the Calvinists. This book I read; but I did not like it, as he was so unmerciful to my favourite scheme, so warmly set forth in my favourite author, Mr. Hervey. However, after some time I determined to give him a fair reading; and that I might be thoroughly satisfied, I read him over twice. I saw the truth as clear as the shining sun. I saw Calvinian imputed righteousness is downright Antinomianism. I still hung in suspense about final perseverance, and knew not which side of the question to take. The authors which I had been accustomed to read were all warm advocates for it, and brought such texts, with their comments upon them, as seemed unanswerable. But Goodwin's "Redemption Redeemed" fell into my hands; towards the latter end of which he considers the Scriptures alleged, and the arguments brought, for final perseverance, and answers them in so masterly a manner, as has not left the shadow of a doubt upon my mind. So that I am firmly persuaded a man may make shipwreck of faith and a good conscience.

But though my own principles are fixed, I wish

heartily that we could agree to grant each other liberty of conscience. There is no forcing of the understanding; the attempting of it has frequently lighted up the dreadful flames of persecution. I must confess, the ungentle, unchristian, scurrilous treatment which Mr. Wesley has received from several of the opposite party, has given me a very unfavourable impression both of them and the cause in which they are embarked. It is most certain, that the giving of hard names, with a deal of low buffoonery, will never advance the cause of the meek and lowly Jesus.

My next remove was to the York Circuit, in which I met with many kind friends. They had just finished a neat, genteel house for the preacher's residence, and made everything very convenient. A small spot of ground before the front, I turned into a neat little garden. I found the people very loving, and the congregations increased; and I and my fellow-labourers were received with very great affection. I preached abroad in several parts of the city, especially in the Thursday-market, being very willing to stir up the inhabitants to seek salvation.

Preaching, one Lord's day, in the Thursday-market, the Lord Mayor sent his officers to forbid me, and to insist upon my coming down. I let the speaker deliver his message, and then resumed my discourse, taking no notice of what was said to me, as indeed it meant nothing saying anything to the officers, seeing they only did as they were commanded. I happened to be speaking from a text that was somewhat singular: "These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also." (Acts xvii. 6.) Our brethren thought it highly advisable to publish the sermon, as we expected to hear

further from the magistrates. Accordingly, I wrote it down while everything was fresh upon my mind ; and I have reason to hope it was useful in York, as numbers read it who perhaps never heard one of us preach in their lives ; nor did I hear any more from the Lord Mayor.

The most disagreeable thing in this Circuit is, the smallness of the congregations : hence one is almost buried alive. There is but little trade in any part of the Circuit ; and where there is little trade, there is seldom much increase in religion. The people are chiefly farmers, and in general in a state of great bondage to their wealthy landlords, to whom they are a kind of vassals, and in general dread them more abundantly than they do their Maker : and though some of them have got money upon their farms, with a deal of care and hard labour, yet there are others who are very hard set to live ; and certainly they are some of the greatest slaves in England, for they labour hard, and live very poorly. In short, they seem to have little comfort here, nor any bright prospect of faring much better hereafter. However, there are a few who labour to keep their garments undefiled, and who are very loving to such as are sent to preach the Gospel among them. I felt much union of spirit with them, and hope to meet them in the region of eternal bliss.

My two years being expired in this quiet Circuit, I set out for the Conference at London, and took the road through Lincolnshire, and was truly pained to see how religion lay in ruins all the way to London. I preached in several places ; but the congregations were pitifully small, and very languid and dull. From Huntingdon I crossed the country to Bedford, and preached there, and the next day at

Luton; where I found my worthy friend Mr. Cole had built a small chapel, and it was well filled. During the Conference week I preached in most of our chapels in London, and found much liberty, especially at West-street, Seven-dials; and was glad to find the people in London love plain, simple preaching. I think the preachers, by labouring more for accuracy than life, miss the mark in London; and perhaps that may account for the deadness which hath been complained of in that city for many years. I find the people of London want and love something which will affect their hearts, and stir up their souls.

In my return I took Luton, Bedford, and Leicester in my way, and had a comfortable time at Nottingham. The people seemed to drink in the word as the parched ground drinks in the vernal showers. O, it is a pleasing task to preach to a judicious lively people! Such the people at Nottingham seem to be. I do not wonder that their chapel is too small, and that they are engaged in building one larger, and in a more convenient part of the town, which I hope will prove a blessing to many that are yet unborn.

My destination this year was Sheffield, a place which will be dear to me while I can remember anything. In general I found things at a low ebb, and did not wonder much at that. However, I and my fellow-labourers set about our work with great unanimity of spirit; and our different gifts seemed happily blended, and suited to the people. The large chapel was well filled; and though several detached parties set up, yet it seemed to affect us very little. It is true, there were several unpromising places in the Circuit; and some towns, especially

Doncaster, a pretty, genteel town, but very destitute of religion. Since that time there is a blessed change in Doncaster for the better; insomuch that it is become the head of a Circuit. Indeed, the chapel is in a very disagreeable part of the town, and the little society chiefly very poor. In winter evenings they are pestered with the rabble, and in summer time few will come near. I tried to preach out of doors, but I fear it was to little purpose. However, Sheffield made an ample amends; and as we were a whole week in the town at a time, we had time upon our hands. We were three preachers, and managed with two horses; a scheme which is highly advantageous wherever it takes place. Add to this, there is a cordial love to their ministers: they really "know them that labour among them." They are loving and friendly, and whatever is wanted they are ever ready to supply, and take a delight in making their preachers happy. They do not look upon the cause in which they are embarked, as something by the by, which they are at liberty to let sink or swim; but they look upon it as the cause of God, the business for which Christ Jesus laid down His life; and as such they consider it as their duty, yea, their privilege and honour, to support and propagate it with all their might.

There is also a number of serious, sensible leaders, who interest themselves in carrying on the work of God; and though there are nearly thirty of them, yet for the two years which I had the happiness of being among them, we always met and parted in much peace.

Our Quarterly Meetings were conducted with great harmony and concord: everyone took such care that we never ran short of money, so that there were no

complaints, nor was there cause. As they felt and cared for their ministers, so they considered everything in the way of housekeeping was become dear, and with great cheerfulness augmented the assistance to support the preachers and their families. For my own part, I have much reason to acknowledge the many favours, both public and private, which I and my family received from that affectionate and liberal-hearted people. May the Lord abundantly reward them! Indeed, I believe He does: many He blesses in their basket and in their store in an ample manner.

In Rotherham, in like manner, there are a few particularly dear to me, whose friendship and happy fellowship gratitude will ever oblige me to acknowledge in the most affectionate manner.

I have reason to bless God that I ever came into this Circuit: His presence I have often experienced; and, glory be to His adorable name! I did not labour in vain; good was done; sinners were convinced and converted; believers were strengthened and edified, and backsliders healed. Finding the glorious Godhead of Christ struck at by a number of men united, who called themselves "the Unitarian Club," I preached and printed a sermon to prove that He who died for us is, in the most unlimited sense, "over all, God blessed for ever."

Application would have readily been made for my continuance another year; but as I knew it would be in vain, I desired them not to do it. And here, friendly reader, with the conclusion of my labours among this friendly and much-esteemed people, I will conclude this part of my narrative. May they, may you and I, happily meet in the kingdom of our Immanuel! Amen.

PART II.  

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MANY years are now elapsed since I published a narrative of the most remarkable occurrences which had befallen me for the space of forty years; nor had I any intention of troubling the world any farther with my history, which may appear to have very little of an interesting nature in it, except to myself. But the part already published having been out of print for some years, and several wishing for another impression, I have determined to reprint it; and several changes having taken place in the body of people with which I am connected, and some in which I am a little implicated, I think it may be of use to add what I call "a second part," in which I may throw a little light upon some recent occurrences. Perhaps some may think, that my attaching other things to my own narrative may be a deviation from the rules of strict biography. But I have observed, in the reading of the lives of others, and in particular that of Mr. Baxter, that a variety of other circumstances are interwoven therein. I may venture to follow so good an example. The death of Mr. Wesley, the agitations which we have had respecting the Lord's Supper, service in what are called church-hours, and the attempts which have been made to rend and divide us, have happened in

the space of a few years, and have troubled the body in no small degree.

I removed from Sheffield to Halifax, in the year 1784; and having had much comfort in that Circuit in years past, I removed with some degree of satisfaction. But there had been a falling away; some had even grown cold and indifferent; and some, I doubt, were quite fallen asleep. I found cause of mourning, that many had departed from the faith, and the greater part had left their first love. Indeed, it is no new thing. Whoever will read the Epistles to the Corinthians, Galatians, and the Hebrews, will find the same complaints; and looking into the epistles to the seven Asiatic churches, we see but two, that of Smyrna, and that of Philadelphia, which were free from blame, even in the apostolic age; and what a dreadful falling away soon after ensued, all that have any acquaintance with church-history cannot be ignorant of: all of which shows the propriety of that solemn admonition, "What I say to one, I say to all, Watch."

We were three preachers in the Circuit; but one, Mr. Valton, out of three, was laid up almost the whole year. I think he did not go through the Circuit once. He was a gracious man, and an exceedingly useful preacher; so that want of his labour was a great check to our success. However, some souls were gathered in, and the work a little revived.

My next remove was to Leeds; which proved a trial to my patience, especially the first year. I always find where the reins of discipline are slackened, it sinks the state of vital religion very much. I found it so here: and the mischief is, there is in people an unwillingness to be brought into order, when they

have been accustomed to live without it; and the minister who attempts the reform must bear his cross. There were several local preachers who ought not to have been private members, whose conduct was even immoral. I am at a loss to know what can induce men to preach, who are destitute of the life and power of godliness. However, there were several very excellent characters among the local preachers; several of whom are gone to their everlasting reward. But very great care should be taken that men of unblemished characters alone be employed in the ministry of the word. The same care should be taken respecting the class-leaders; and then there is some hope that they will labour to make the people like themselves. Indeed, it is natural for the people to take the tinge of their guides. There were many excellent persons in the society at Leeds. I was well aware that many of our people seldom went to church, and received the Lord's Supper nowhere. Truly they had lost sight of it; there might have been no such command in the New Testament as, "Do this in remembrance of Me." Knowing this, I exhorted the people to attend the Lord's Supper, and happened to say, the time would come when the Methodists would enjoy that ordinance among themselves, and in the mean time I wished them to receive it in the best manner they could. The very intimation of any such thing was as bad as high treason, and I soon found myself in hot water. However, in the midst of trouble some good was done; and the second year was more peaceable, and consequently more comfortable.

In the month of November I was seized with a rheumatic fever, the severest affliction of body I ever remember labouring under. The pain was such that

I could compare it to nothing, but as if my limbs were tearing or twisting off. It brought me very low, and was the only time that I can remember when anyone had to sit up in the night with me; and this laborious task my dear partner chiefly undertook. In the beginning I felt much comfort and confidence in God; but towards the latter end my head was considerably affected, and the slumbers I had were disturbed with wild and incoherent ravings; and very weak indeed I was. However, the Lord raised me up again; but the effects of that disorder, I suppose, I shall feel till the dust shall return to the dust again. It renders walking particularly fatiguing; for after I have walked a few hundred yards, the pains in my knees, ankles, &c., are so acute, that I am soon in a bath of sweat, and am obliged to sit down upon anything that I can find in my way. I have considerable difficulty in getting on horseback; so that I am not well qualified for travelling, either on horseback or on foot. I was obliged this year to submit to spectacles. I had perceived my sight gradually to fail for some time. This I attributed to the close attention which I had paid some years before to the compiling "the Concordance" which I published; and being rather straitened for time, I did much of the work by candle-light, without using a screen,—a circumstance which I advise everyone to attend to, who either reads or writes much by candle-light. I once thought my sight would last to the end of my days; but by making too free with it I am mistaken.

My next remove was to Manchester. I had laboured many years ago in this Circuit with much satisfaction, and left it with regret. As there will be a thorn in every rose, so I found it here. A few who

affected to be righteous overmuch, that is, who set up themselves as judges of other people, gave us some trouble; so that I was under the disagreeable necessity of putting two of those troublesome men out of the society. However, we had a considerable ingathering of precious souls, especially in Saddleworth; so that it was a pleasure to me to go into these rough valleys. But in every stage of life we have need to watch: so I found it in this Circuit; and not being always on my guard, I sometimes gave way to trifling circumstances, which brought my mind low. Satan will make a corrupt heart subservient to his devices, without due care. No matter how trivial a thing may be, if it stand between God and the soul, it does much mischief. May I ever learn wisdom from slips and blunders; for I have many of these to bemoan. It is well there is a never-failing Intercessor, an Advocate with the Father, who can pity poor mortal worms, whose grace is sufficient to heal backsliding souls, and to help in time of need. I may say, "Enter not into judgment with Thy servant, O Lord; for in Thy sight I can neither justify myself, nor another."

My next remove was to Hull; hoping that bathing in salt water might be of some use to my poor disordered son. Whether it was owing to the low damp country, and scarcity of fire, or some other cause, I knew not; but my rheumatic complaints were troublesome, so that I could but walk very poorly. Indeed, in some places, the roads were so bad, that it was impossible to go any quicker than a slow footpace, and then I was much pinched with the cold. In Hull, the congregations were large, and pretty well in Beverley; but in other places they were small and dull enough.

In the beginning of my second year, soon after the Conference, I had two providential escapes; and I should be very ungrateful to my gracious Preserver, were I to forget them. In my return from the Bristol Conference, I took Sheffield in my way, and so through Rotherham and Doncaster, to Thorne; and there, hoping to save time and expense, I took a small boat, expecting to get down to Hull in one tide. But the boatman trifled away so much time in the morning, that the tide was spent when we got to Brough, twelve miles short of Hull. My youngest daughter was with me; and in this place, when the tide is out, it leaves a very large space covered with mud and slime, so that it is very difficult to get on shore, especially for women; and as we had to wait here more than six hours, I was sure it would be improper for my daughter to remain on the water all that time. I having my boots on, with the help of a staff, got on shore; but, it being so slippery, I durst not take my daughter on my back, lest I should fall, and throw her in the mud; the boatman being old, and rather feeble, I durst not trust her with him, for the same reason. However, I saw a stout man, who had been catching eels, without shoes or stockings, and one that was accustomed to walk on those slippery places, and got him for sixpence to fetch my daughter, and he brought her safe on shore: thus far we were safe, and I was thankful. But still we were a little at a loss how to dispose of ourselves, for six or seven hours, till the tide should turn. There was but one poor little alehouse in the place; and that was crowded with men drinking, and far from being agreeable. However, we passed the time as well as we could, till eight in the evening, when we weighed anchor and embarked again. Heavy rain

came on, and it was very dark ; but we had no shelter, being in a little open boat. The wind meeting the tide, made our little bark toss to some purpose. A young woman in the boat screamed out amain : my dear girl said not a word, though she apprehended we should be upset ; but commended herself into the hands of our gracious God. Perhaps there was not much danger, but we thought there was, and at any rate our situation was very unpleasant ; the waves tossed, the night was dark, and the rain was heavy. About midnight we arrived in the port of Hull ; and here, having to climb over the ships in the dark, I was very near falling into the hold of a large empty ship. I felt a touch of impatience at the man for bringing us into such a disagreeable situation. However, after some delays, we got safe to our habitation. Thus will the storms of life end ; and may we reach the haven of eternal repose !

“ 'Tis there I'll bathe my weary soul  
In seas of endless rest ;  
And not a wave of trouble roll  
Across my peaceful breast.”

The next kind interposition of Providence was as follows :—A part of the Circuit lies in Holderness ; a large tract of low, marshy country ; and, in order to drain it, there are large canals cut in different directions. They are so large that boats go on them, by which they carry the people's manure from place to place ; and over these canals are bridges built of brick, in convenient places, for horses and carriages to pass over. Coming to one of these bridges, which was newly built, a man standing by the side of the canal said, “ Sir, I am doubtful if that bridge is not giving way. I think it is hardly safe for you to

attempt passing over." As I saw no danger, I feared none; and, thinking I should have a long way to go round to another bridge, and perceiving carriages had gone over, I went on; but before I got over, the whole fabric came down as if it had been cut off at each end. It sunk under the horse: he dropped down perpendicularly; and I very gravely sat on his back. It had been dry weather for a long time, so that the water in the canal was low; which was very providential, or very likely both the horse and myself would have been lost. Another circumstance was very favourable; that is, a considerable number of men were at work in the field; and, hearing the crash of the bridge, they ran, and gave all assistance to help the horse out, or the water might have risen by the current being stopped, so that the poor animal might have been drowned before I could have got assistance, as the place was at a considerable distance from any houses. There was another circumstance which I considered as providential; and that was, had the horse taken a step or two more before the fall of the bridge, his fore-feet would have been on firm ground, and, the bridge giving way behind, he would very likely have tumbled backward, and fallen upon me; and if so, it is very easy to judge what would have been my situation. But my gracious God gives His angels charge over His followers; for they are all ministering spirits sent forth to minister to them who shall be heirs of salvation. In these circumstances, I am persuaded of their kind interposition. It is true, God does not need their interference; nor does He need men to preach, seeing He can convert souls without them; nor does He need men to till the ground, seeing He can cause the earth to yield her

fruit without the tiller's toil; but He is pleased to use His creatures as instruments, that thereby they may be stimulated to diligence, and excited to love one another, seeing that all are made subservient to the good of the whole: insomuch that the different members of society are all useful, even as the different members of the body are to the whole. In the most opulent city, the humble chimney-sweeper is as useful in his place as the chief magistrate.

In March 2d, 1791, that great man of God, the Rev. John Wesley, paid the debt of nature. He ended his long, laborious, and useful life comfortably. That I had a crowded audience, far more than the large chapel in Hull could contain, was not to be wondered at; as I suppose that was the case in every place where a funeral sermon was preached on the occasion, which I apprehend was all over the three kingdoms. It was thought great changes would take place after his death, and various things were prophesied by people of warm imaginations. We had some little stir; I believe chiefly through a printed circular which was issued from Hull. I suppose it originated from some persons who professed to be warm advocates for the Church, and persuaded others to sign it. This document was sent to every Circuit in the kingdom, and called an echo back from many Circuits; so that it was thought there would be a division at the Conference; and perhaps steps by some were prepared for such an event. A scheme had been previously taken to divide the kingdom into Districts; and accordingly the preachers in the several Districts met, and did what they could to prepare matters for the Conference, which assembled at Manchester. We had a large assembly, as might be expected; and many things

were said *pro* and *con*, and in much better humour than might have been hoped. In the issue, it was determined by the majority to take up the plan just as Mr. Wesley had left it. This I saw would be a bone of contention the ensuing year, as it left our affairs in a very unsettled state. Vast numbers of people, besides preachers, attended at this Conference, that is, came to Manchester, all anxious to hear what the result would be. I was certain that such a decision would leave us worse than it found us; and so it proved. Indeed, we had a troublesome year. Printed letters were issued out on all sides, and all companies were taken up with debates upon old and new plans, to the injury of brotherly love.

My appointment was for Liverpool, where there were two warm parties. Not knowing what sort of provision there was for a family, or what kind of reception I should meet with, I judged it prudent to go alone, and leave my family at Manchester, where my eldest [daughter] was married, and had been settled some time.

When I came to Liverpool, things had but a discouraging aspect. I found the dwelling-house shut up, and had been so for some time; everything looked very cold and naked, all just as it had been left; no steward nor any other person came near me. It was Saturday when I arrived. I preached that evening. On the Lord's day a friend invited me to dine; and I preached morning and evening with some degree of liberty.

On the Monday morning the steward called upon me, and appeared in a friendly mood. He told me, that if I would let things go on in the old plan, everything I wished for, I should have; but if I

made any alteration, I must shift for myself; or to that effect.

After some days I received an address from ten leaders, vehemently requesting that there might be no service in church-hours, nor sacrament. About the same time I received another address from thirteen leaders, (and, as I remember, three names besides, who stood neuter,) who begged, in the name of their people, that I would let them have service in church-hours: they did not want to compel the rest of their brethren, but only pleaded for themselves, that they might have liberty of conscience, and an opportunity of bringing their families to the public worship at a convenient time. What made the matter more in their favour was, a new chapel was built rather on one side of the town; and some said, they subscribed on purpose to the building, that it might be opened at that time of the day. On the present plan, it was of very little use, except on a Sunday evening; for on a Sunday morning very few indeed attended. We were two preachers in town, and had nothing to do, from the preaching at seven in the morning, till six in the evening; and our people were running hither and thither, hearing what was far from profiting them, or else staying at home; and two chapels were shut up during the best part of the day. Had not a large body of people requested it, however reasonable the thing itself might be, I should have let things go on in the same channel, for the sake of such as desired it. In a few days after, came six of the leading men of the Church party, and wished to converse with me on the subject. We had a long conversation. I used every argument that appeared to be scriptural and reasonable; but it made no impression: all they

could say was, that it was the old plan, and God had blessed it; and Mr. Wesley had said, "If the Methodists leave the Church, God would leave them." I had another difficulty in my way. We had a new dwelling-house covered in, but it wanted finishing, and we were paying rent for another house in the mean time. The present steward would take no active part in it, unless I would promise that no alteration should be made; and no one could interfere in the business but the man in office, so that we were at a stand. I knew that things ought not to continue thus; therefore, in a full vestry-meeting, I was determined to have the matter settled, and urged the steward to set the business forward, that we might not be paying rent for a house, and let our own run to ruin. After much reasoning, and even entreating, he utterly refused to act: so I was obliged to appoint other stewards, to see our business carried on.

I was now urged to open the new chapel in the forenoon: and having waited several months, and used every argument, in which I believed both Scripture and reason would support me, to reconcile the contending party, but to no purpose; and perceiving that two-thirds of the society were grieved and hurt; I, on the 16th day of November, 1791, began the service at half-past ten in the forenoon. The ten leaders immediately withdrew, and took as many of their people with them as they could prevail upon. Several persons were set at liberty in that chapel in the forenoon service, and the society rapidly increased from that time. However, it was a time of much trouble to my mind. But if ever I did anything with a single eye in my life, it was my conduct at this time; for I am sure I had

neither ease, honour, nor profit in view. As the body was convulsed, and as those throughout the nation who wanted the service at a convenient hour, and to have the Lord's supper according to our Saviour's institution, were quite willing that their brethren should enjoy their liberty in going to church, &c. ; as every other circumstance belonging to Methodism, both in doctrine and discipline, was to stand as it had done, nothing being altered, changed, or dropped ; it seemed unreasonable, that any part of the Connexion should put a yoke upon the necks of their brethren, which they themselves were unwilling to bear. I published a pamphlet as a vindication of our conduct, and showed some weighty reasons for our proceedings. I hope it was useful.

As our brethren had lived so long without the communion, they wished for that ordinance, knowing it to be the command of Christ ; and they solicited me to administer it to them. I believed that I had a perfect right to do so. Moreover, when I was appointed by the Conference for Liverpool, I understood there were two parties ; I therefore desired the Conference to give me my orders, so that I might know what it was expected that I should do. The answer was, that I might just act as I thought proper, when I came thither, as I should be then capable of judging when I saw how the circumstances stood. Hence I judged that I had full power to act according to the best of my judgment ; and that was my rule.

But there was one difficulty in my way, respecting the Lord's supper : though I had been a preacher thirty years or more, yet I had never received any formal ordination by the imposition of hands ; and

although I believed it lawful, yet I did not think it expedient, to celebrate the Lord's supper without some formality of that kind. I own I had some hesitation in my mind concerning the propriety of submitting to a human form, after being owned so many years by the chief Shepherd without it. I am certain that such a ceremony is not essential to a Gospel ministry; and likewise the solemn admission into the awful office by a number of old, well-trying, and aged ministers of the New Testament, appears to me a real scriptural ordination. However, I submitted to a formal ordination. But there was another obstacle in the way. Our people have been exhorted to go to the Lord's supper; but numbers are very ignorant of the nature and design of the solemn ordinance. I therefore considered what I could recommend to them upon the subject. I could not recollect one single tract that was sufficiently explicit, clear, and concise. I therefore wrote one upon 1 Corinthians xi. 28, delivered it in the chapel, and afterwards published it. I have the confidence to think, I have seen nothing upon the subject that states that important ordinance in a clearer light.

The time of our District-Meeting drew on, where I attended. My conduct at Liverpool was examined and approved; and, farther, it was agreed that I should administer the Lord's supper at Liverpool. Accordingly, I gave public notice that I should join with them in breaking bread in remembrance of Him who died for us. It was a blessed season in the general; and two poor captives were set at liberty, who desired thanks to be given in the evening to their gracious Deliverer.

The affair at Liverpool made so much noise, that some of the preachers in the District would have a

meeting upon the spot. I made no objection, though I deemed the meeting very needless. Six preachers came, three from our District, and three from other Districts. There were several things that I might have objected to, but I really wanted peace, consistent with a good conscience. After a day's talk, it was agreed to drop the Lord's supper till the Conference. This I submitted to. I did it for peace.

The Conference met in London in 1792; and I was of course arraigned at the bar for my conduct at Liverpool. However, I pleaded "not guilty." I could not see that I had committed any crime. I asked, Had I not full power given me from the Conference to act as I judged for the best? Had I not done so? But I had caused a division in the society. I answered, "There would have been a greater division if I had acted otherwise, and a greater cause for it." After various things had been said *pro* and *con*, the matter dropped, only my brethren in the opposition urged my removal from Liverpool the ensuing year. This I would not consent to, for two reasons: 1. My removing would imply that I had acted amiss,—a thing that I was not conscious of; and, secondly, as I had taken much pains, and suffered much, in procuring the people what I conceived to be their just liberty, I was not willing that anyone should be sent who would undo all, and drive two-thirds of the people from us. At length that matter was settled, and I was permitted to return again. Mr. Joseph Bradford was appointed to be my colleague. As he had professed himself to be on the side of the Church, it was thought he was appointed as a check upon me. However, I knew him to be an upright, worthy man, and therefore

made no objection against him ; and as it was determined to have no sacrament that year in our chapels generally, I resolved to keep the order. We passed the year very agreeably, and had not one word of contention either about the sacrament or anything else. Nor do I remember ever passing an easier year in all my life. We began preaching at Ormskirk, got a place to preach in, fitted it up with a pulpit and benches, and a couple of rooms adjoining, one of which we got furnished for the preacher, whenever he came. A man and his wife occupied the other, and looked after the little chapel, and did what the preacher had occasion for while there. We also formed a small society. A considerable sum of money was begged for the above purposes ; but I was heartily sorry that it was given up some time after we left the Circuit. We had contended with much opposition by mobs and riots ; but even these were quelled. A ringleader was taken up, and sent to prison ; but, for the sake of his family, even our people begged him off, so that he was not tried at the sessions, to which he was bound : yet after the way was thus made, and matters in a fair way of being successful, it pained my mind to find that all was abandoned ; and if ever the place is attacked again, very likely the rabble will renew their opposition.

I observed before, that our numbers through the Connexion were less by three hundred than they were the year before : such a reduction I cannot remember we ever had. It was therefore determined at the next Conference that some places should have the Lord's supper ; and Liverpool was one. My appointment was Bolton, to which place I came in very great hopes of peace and quietness. We had a good work at

Bury, especially the first year: that society had been brought very low; but we had a gracious ingathering. Also at a place called Radcliffe we began a society.

Our Conference was this year at Bristol, and an uncomfortable time it was. We had much debate, and to little purpose. As our matters were not settled, and vast numbers of our brethren were still dissatisfied, a meeting was projected to be held at Lichfield, to see if some mode could be hit upon for the general good, to be offered at the ensuing Conference. Who was the author of the meeting I never knew to this day. Being not only invited to this harmless convention, but strongly urged to go, I attended. We met at an inn, supposing that we could meet without being taken notice of, as Lichfield is a place where no Methodists reside. I feared that the scheme would do more harm than good; and so it proved. As for our assembling there in secret, that was very improbable, as we were all preachers of long standing, and very much known all over the kingdom. My sole intention was to try any scheme that could be agreed upon to give our brethren, who desired it, all the ordinances of Christ. But when we were together, another thing was started: it was thought in many instances the Districts were not sufficient for the necessary discipline in certain cases, and therefore it was judged that some other mode should be thought on; which was, that a number of superintendents should be appointed by the Conference, to have the inspection of the whole Connexion. There was not so much as a thought that anything should be done without the concurrence of the Conference. For my own part, I was indifferent about the matter; and whether such a scheme would be for the better or no, I cannot say: it might have its use,

and certainly would be liable to great abuse. However, the whole of this meeting gave great offence: the secret manner of holding it, and the place where it was held, all contributed to raise suspicions in the minds of the preachers who were not there. So that I may say, in the softest language, that little conventicle, though very harmless, did no good.

In 1795 our Conference was held at Manchester; and at the same time and place a meeting was held by many trustees and others, who were strenuous for what they termed the "old plan." Several messages passed to and fro, from that meeting and the Conference, to little purpose. At length nine preachers were chosen to draw up a Plan of Pacification, in which all were supposed to agree.

A scene opened this year which threatened the most terrible rent that had ever befallen the Methodists. It was introduced by a succession of productions under fictitious names, as Martin Luther, Paul and Silas, Aquila and Priscilla, &c. They were drawn up with no small degree of art, and calculated to gain the affections of such as received them. There appeared much truth and a pretence of uprightness to run through the whole, so that many were highly prejudiced in favour of the writer. At length he appeared openly, by publishing a pamphlet, entitled "The Progress of Liberty." In this virulent production, many things were published for facts without any proof. Many hints were thrown out calculated to prejudice the minds of the public against the preachers, especially the seniors. This pamphlet was eagerly bought up. Such as wished to find some objections against the preachers thought they now had the desired occasion. The preachers in London wrote to the chairman of the District in

which Mr. Kilham, the author of the above pamphlet, was, to call a meeting, and try to make him sensible of the impropriety of his conduct, in publishing a pamphlet calculated to asperse the whole body of preachers in so scandalous a manner. The meeting was called; but it answered no other end, than that of giving him fresh matter for slander and reproach; and, finding that he had won over a considerable party to espouse his cause, it made him the more confident, insomuch that he appeared bold enough to set all his adversaries at defiance; and, I suppose, he thought, either that the Conference durst not exclude him, or, if they did, that he would become the leader of a large party both of preachers and of people. Thus matters went on till the Conference; and many of the preachers thought very favourably of him till his trial came on; but then, hearing him make so poor and lame a defence, and owning that he had asserted many things without any sort of proof, they saw a little more into the man and his motives, and of course their minds were changed: they viewed him in a proper light. Much lenity was showed him, he owned; but he demurred to the legality of the court. He pleaded for a public hearing; that is, that his trial should be in the public chapel, and that all might come forward to hear and see, and all that chose might be permitted to speak. This by no means could be admitted; for every united body have a right to try their own members: and as for witnesses, there needed none; for the witnesses against him were his own books. If he could vindicate them, he was clear; if not, there could only be two things, one of which must be done: the one was, to own his fault; the other was, for the Conference to pass what censure or judgment they

thought proper. Several days were taken up in labouring to convince him, that he had acted wrong in publishing so many things calculated to prejudice the whole nation against the preachers, and thereby to render their labours ineffectual ; and the greatest part of what he had written was either conjectural, or upon misinformation. But though he was confounded, and had little to say for himself, he appeared confident enough, judging from his abettors that he had little risk to run ; for it seems that he had been encouraged on his way from Alnwick to London. Indeed, some hints were thrown out that the Conference durst not expel him ; his party was so strong, that, let his cause be what it would, he must be kept in, or we must sink. At length the vote for his expulsion passed the Conference, without a single voice to the contrary. In giving our vote in Conference, all that are for the question stand up : it is then reversed, and all who are against it stand up. The vote of his expulsion passed both ways ; and, to render the matter more firm, the sentence was written in a book, and laid on the table ; and all who believed his sentence just were requested to sign it, which was done by the whole body, I believe every individual, except myself ; and the reason why I did not was, because it was my office to deliver the sentence of Conference to him, which if I had not believed to be just, I should not have done. Such was the conduct of the Conference with respect to Alexander Kilham ; and I firmly believe, that all who took the lead in that transaction were led by the strictest uprightness, and acted in the fear of God.

We had really a troublesome year, and much hurt was done, but more especially when a majority of trustees could be found on his side : there they

violently took our chapels from us, and herein showed that they were unfaithful men. It was once thought advisable to commence a suit in the King's Bench, to try the legality of such unjust proceedings; but, considering the tediousness, expenses, and uncertainty of litigations, we judged it best to try to build new chapels where we had a prospect of doing good, and so leave the robbers in possession of their spoil.

The Conference came on at Leeds in 1797; and it was confidently given out that a vast number of preachers would join what was called the "New Connexion." A vast concourse of people assembled at Leeds, and Mr. Kilham and his friends took a vacant Baptist chapel, and formed themselves into a Conference: several of our preachers seemed to waver, and, as we understood, attended their meetings as well as ours; and several we thought would join them; but in the issue three, and only three, travelling preachers actually joined them.\* In the latter end of December an accident happened to Mr. Kilham, which took him off. A small bone stuck in his throat; and though it was extracted, yet some vessel broke, so that it proved his end. A life thus closed in the very height of so much disturbance raised in the church of God would naturally lay a foundation for various reflections; and various things were said: however, his friends said he died in much peace. Before I close this unpleasant subject, I would make a remark or two.

We see that however obscure or useless a person may be in the church and state, yet he may be extremely hurtful; and though not an instrument of good, yet an instrument of much harm. We have

\* Two of whom have left them.

many instances of this in history. It is certain that, during the twelve years that Mr. Kilham travelled in the Connexion he was of little use, as Mr. Pawson has made appear from the Minutes, tracing every place where he travelled, and the numbers in the societies; and truly, he made so small a figure, that I am inclined to think many preachers did not know him. I never heard him, but I have been told that his gifts as a preacher were rather beneath a mediocrity. But I am not acquainted with any man that ever entered our Connexion that ever did half the mischief. I fear that in Lancashire and Yorkshire many are driven into infidelity and to eternal ruin. A fool may so fire a house or a town, that all the wise men in it cannot extinguish the flames.

Again: I would observe, suppose I am in one of the most regular families in the kingdom, and am determined to act the dark ill-natured spy: I have my doomsday-book, in which I mark every little slip, in word or deed. I put it down with my own meaning, or comment upon it; after I have waited for a convenient season, I bring into judgment this partial chronicle against the person or persons, with all the ill-natured reports that I have been capable of scraping together: might not the most innocent characters be thus made to appear as black as midnight? Now, if that may be the case in a private family, what shall we say concerning so large a body as the Methodists? That this was the case and conduct of Mr. Kilham must appear to every impartial inquirer into his proceedings.

I would further observe, that when persons become advocates for a party, they will act very inconsistently with their natural turn of mind. From

Mr. Kilham's pamphlets many were made to think that Methodism was a very expensive system, and that the people were fleeced and half plundered. He has thrown out many hints, as if the preachers were really making a gain of the people, and more especially the old preachers. There are none who travel in the Connexion that have been longer in it than myself: of course, I am implicated in this condemnation. I now write in the presence of Him who sees the secrets of all hearts, and shall fairly represent my own case; and very likely it may be nearly that of many senior preachers.

I began to preach among the Methodists occasionally in the year 1760. In the beginning of the year 1761 I might be said to begin to travel; that is, I supplied the lack of service of several preachers, when they were sick, or went to see their friends at a distance, and particularly in the Birstal Circuit, which was then of great extent, and also in Leeds; and this I continued to do till August, when I set out for the Conference at London. What I did was gratis, not even having a penny for the turnpikes; except that the steward of Bradford Circuit gave me once half-a-guinea; and when I set out for the Conference, the steward of Leeds Circuit gave me fifteen shillings. I had a little money of my own, and some articles to dispose of: the latter I left in the hands of a person to sell for me, which he did, and, being poor, he disposed of the money, and soon after died; so that business was settled.

I set out for London, and from thence into Wales: here my work was rugged and disagreeable enough. I had no quarterage, no travelling expenses, but now and then a shilling or half-a-crown was put into my hands. Sometimes I was obliged to dine

and lodge at an inn, and to pay both for my horse and myself. In this manner I passed the year, preaching as I could, sometimes under cover, and often in the open air, even throughout the winter, which, some may remember, was very severe. Some time before the Conference, I made an excursion into Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire, counties in which none of our preachers had ever set foot. It appeared to me, that in Pembrokeshire there was a probability of doing good, as I preached several times in Pembroke town, and in various other places: accordingly, I was sent from Leeds Conference back to Pembrokeshire, where everything was quite new, nor had I one shilling given me, either for the expense of my journey thither, or for my support when I got thither. But it may be said, "How did you live?" I lived upon my own stock, till Providence raised me friends. I formed a Circuit, including about two hundred and fifty persons by Christmas; and at the end of the year I went to the London Conference; but still at my own expense, except some small matters which a friend here and there might give me, which could not amount to much, as the people were generally poor. From the Conference at London, I was appointed for Castlebar, in Ireland. Here for the first time I received thirty shillings from Conference, for my expenses on the way. Fifteen shillings I paid for a place on the outside of the coach to Bristol, besides the expenses on the road; twenty-seven shillings I paid the captain for my passage to Dublin, besides provision, mate, sailors, &c. When I got to Dublin, I had about a hundred miles to travel to Castlebar; and even there my allowance was very short. I think when I left Wales, my stock was about thirty pounds. It was

considerably reduced by the time I got to Castlebar. I stayed two years in Ireland; and from Limerick I came to the Manchester Conference. My stock of money was now reduced to about fifteen guineas. It was thought there was a probability of raising a society in Glasgow, and I was appointed to make trial; and out of my fifteen guineas, I gave nine pounds for a horse, saddle, &c. I received from the Conference three guineas to take me to Glasgow,—a place where we had no society, no place to receive me, no place to preach in; strong prejudices to oppose; and a long, cold, dark winter before me. How I passed my time there is already related. My second year in Scotland was agreeable, particularly in Edinburgh: there all my wants were abundantly supplied.

In 1767 I left Scotland, being appointed for Chester. I bought a horse out of my own pocket, nor do I remember that I had anything for travelling expenses. When I came to Chester, my property amounted to six guineas. Judge now, how rich I was become, after near seven years of hard toil and labour. In Chester I married a wife with a little property, the greatest part of which I have lost by a person breaking. From Chester we were appointed for Dublin, and had two guineas to take us thither: there we had all things richly to enjoy. From thence we removed to Cork. Meantime my wife bore a child, which we were under the necessity of putting out to nurse, my wife being so greatly indisposed. All I received that year for my wife, and the nursing of the child, was either four pounds or four guineas. From Cork we were appointed to Manchester; and I think it was either three or four guineas that I had, to take my wife and child thither. I will further

add, for twenty years, what I have received for preaching has not kept my family with food; and I can assure my reader, we do not keep an extravagant table.

Now let any of Mr. Kilham's abettors judge what cause there is for all the reproach and slander which he has raised against the old preachers. Nay, let them judge between him and me, in one instance. He was appointed from Newcastle to Aberdeen, where everything was provided, a house, fire, candles, stipend, for himself and family; a large friendly society, and fifteen guineas to take him thither. I was appointed from Limerick in Ireland, to Glasgow, above six hundred miles,—no society, no lodging, no place to preach in, no friend to advise with, nothing for either board or quarterage; and three guineas were all I had for the whole. Now, I say, let his friends judge between us. He came among us a poor servant; and it is surprising to me, if by one means or another, he has not left some thousands behind him. If it should be objected, I am boasting, I may say that matter of fact has compelled me; and I write thus in the just vindication of myself, and my fellow-labourers who have borne the burden and heat of the day. Mr. Kilham and many others have entered into and enjoy the fruit of our labours, which many of our junior brethren gratefully acknowledge.

Several things concurred to make the years 1796 and 1797 a trying season to me, such as I pray God I may never meet with again. But they are over; yet the remembrance is bitter to me. I have been foolish enough to expect fair gales, till I arrive at the haven of eternal repose; but I have in this been disappointed.

However, in those stormy days, we had some fruit

in Oldham Circuit, especially in Saddleworth. I left that rough valley in a very promising situation in 1789; but there had been a withering time, and we found them very low; but the Lord revived His work amazingly, so that the chapel was far too small on the Lord's day; and in different places where we preached in private houses, on the week-days, we had good congregations, and not without fruit.

My next remove was to Halifax. Here I had laboured in years past with much satisfaction. I might have expected something extraordinary, as we had heard of a wonderful revival, and of scores being converted in an evening: but if so, there had been a dreadful falling away; for certainly they were in a very low condition. The matter was, that during the noisy time, which was called "the revival," all discipline was laid aside; sensible people were shocked and disgusted at seeing such irregular and unscriptural proceedings; little fruit appeared; many poor men ran themselves out of breath in staying late at nights, and neglected their families, and even their labour, and of course got into debt, without taking conscientious care to discharge it. I doubt that is an evil too general. I believe oftentimes God begins a good work, but poor ignorant men will needs take it out of His hands; and by noise and clamour, striving to work upon the passions of people without their judgments being informed, bring it into confusion and contempt; and by this means the enemy gains no small advantage. I have ever been fearful of damping or hurting the work of God, and therefore have borne with things which I did not approve of; thinking there might be more of God in those irregularities than I was aware of. But, to speak in the softest terms: many, very many, of those hasty

converts have proved like the stony-ground hearers, —in the time of temptation they have fallen away. Now, if there is indeed a work of grace upon their hearts, inquiry should be made whence they came, and how that work began, and appoint a time and place where they may be farther instructed, by having their judgments informed in things which are essential; and, if they can read, they should be pointed to suitable passages of Scripture, and directed to meet in class with some proper leader, so that the work may be established, and the Divine seed nourished, and the work confirmed in their souls.

In 1799 I removed to Bristol. I could have wished to find this venerable mother-church in a more lively situation than what it was really in. The wound which was made by the division of a few years before was not healed. I think both I and my colleagues did what we could to bury old grievances; but the deadly effects of the old enmities were not destroyed. My hands hung down, fearing I was labouring in vain, and spending my strength for nought. Week-night congregations were small, the classes did not meet so well as I thought they might; this bowed down my spirit, and often made my hands weak, and my knees were feeble. And yet there are many excellent ones in this city, whose names will be found in the book of life.

In the month of May I made an excursion into Cornwall; in which I confess I was highly gratified, both there and in my way thither, particularly at Plymouth-Dock. On the Lord's day I preached in the forenoon at the Dock, and at two at Plymouth, and administered the Lord's supper to a considerable company of communicants, and returned to the

Dock, and preached at six. Being under the necessity of being at St. Austle the next day, and the coach setting out the next morning at six from Tar-Point, which lies on the other side the water, a friend sent me word that he should be glad if I would take a bed at his house. The evening being fine, about a dozen, chiefly young persons, took a boat, and, being singers, they sung several hymns, which I felt very sweet; and as we passed by several first-rate men-of-war, which lay at anchor, it brought the men upon deck, but I did not hear one scoffing word from any of them. I do not remember ever to have enjoyed a little trip with greater satisfaction in all my life. I likewise met with very kind treatment at the house of my kind host, and slept comfortably for the first night in Cornwall. The next morning at six I set out for St. Austle; and when I came to Liskeard, I found that preaching was published for me there that evening. I was sorry I could not stay; for it is a noted place for Deists, as I am told, and especially for the disciples of Mr. Paine; and, as it was known that I had answered his "Age of Reason," I understood many of that fraternity intended hearing me. I met with very kind treatment at St. Austle, and had their chapel well filled two nights. A kind friend took me in his carriage on the Wednesday to Truro, where we had a crowded audience, and a good congregation the following morning. I feared my time would not allow me to get so far as Penzance, and the Land's End; but the kind friends so ordered matters that my wish was gratified. On Thursday I came to Falmouth, where Mr. Wesley had like to have lost his life; but all is peace now. We had a full chapel, and several preachers were so kind as to give me the meeting.

Friday, May 16th, I came to Helston ; but the night was very stormy and rained much, and, the people living wide, our congregation was not so large as was expected.

Saturday, 17th.—I came to Penzance ; and, as in every place before, was received with much kindness. In the evening I walked to Newlyn, the native place of Mr. Jaco. On Sunday morning I had a sweet season at Penzance, in speaking from Phil. ii. 5. In the evening we were a little at a loss how to proceed : the chapel was too little, and the wind was so high that there was no preaching abroad ; but they removed such benches as were movable, as many got into the house as could, and the remainder stood at the windows. But we were warm enough within. However, I hope the labour was not in vain. May 19th, I was resolved to gratify my curiosity with a sight of the Land's End ; and really a tremendous sight it is : the high rocks, with the deep caverns, caused by the turbulent waves, made everything look awful. Here Mr. Charles Wesley made the verse,—

“Lo! on a narrow neck of land,

“Twixt two unbounded seas I stand,

Secure, insensible,” &c.

I wished to have made a little trip to the isles of Scilly, but time would not permit. From the Land's End I went to St. Just ; and although they had just enlarged their chapel, it was well filled. One would wonder where the people came from ; for St. Just is but a village, which lies on a point of land among rocks and mines, and appears to have few inhabitants near it. I returned after preaching to Penzance ; and on Tuesday I went to St. Ives, one of the most agreeable towns for situation in Cornwall. It is in

the form of a crescent in the bottom of a fine bay, which opens into St. George's Channel, and a place of considerable trade. The chapel is large; and it was well crowded with many of the better sort, and I think some clergy. I had liberty in pointing out the Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world. I partly expected to preach the day following at Copperhouse, a place so called on account of many copper-works in the neighbourhood; but as I could only preach at noon, and the people could not leave their work at that hour, I passed on to Redruth. Here the enlarged chapel was well filled, and I was entertained with much kindness and respect by a family whom I have heard much spoken of, namely, the Harpers; and a number of Christian friends gave me the meeting. The Methodists have Redruth to themselves: theirs may be called the established religion; for the church is a considerable way out of the town; and there are no Dissenters, except a very few Quakers.

Thursday, 22d.—I preached at Gwennap, and the enlarged chapel would not hold the people; but the wind was so high that I could not preach abroad; so as many crowded in as possible, and the rest around the windows. The next day I went to St. Agnes. Cornwall abounds with saints; and I hope with many of the right sort, even such as God hath made saints. This is a small town, which lies among rocks and mines; and the people have enlarged their chapel, which was well filled; and as there had been a considerable work of God, I enforced Heb. ii. 1, and hope it was not in vain, though I was sorry to hear of a refractory spirit manifested in some. However, as my visit in Cornwall was that of friendship, and in no official capacity, I did not think it proper to

interfere in any disputes, except by giving a word of advice where I thought it was likely to do good. From thence I returned through Redruth to Tuckingmill, a small village containing but a few houses; yet there is a chapel, which will contain, perhaps, twelve hundred hearers; and although the afternoon and evening were exceedingly stormy, yet the chapel was well filled, and I had much liberty. The night continued very stormy, and there was no probability that either the chapel in Redruth or Gwennap, where I was to preach on Sunday, would contain half the people that were expected to attend; for it was given out twenty miles round about, that I should preach in what the Cornish term "the Pit," but Mr. Wesley calls an "amphitheatre;" that is, a large hollow, which will hold abundance of people; and it is astonishing how it excites the country to flock together, when it is reported that anyone is to preach there. Moreover, it is remarked, that it is sure to be a fair day when there is to be preaching in the Pit: however, my faith was put to the stretch, as it was so stormy a night. But I was told, a number of young men spent a part of the night in prayer. Yet in the morning it looked very unpromising, and was so wet, that I was obliged to preach in the chapel at Tuckingmill, and we squeezed as many in as we could. However, before I had done, it cleared up, and, the sun breaking out, the street in Redruth was quite dry at noon, and at half-past one thousands were gathered. I stood in the most vacant place, and urged upon them that awful passage, Job xiv. 10. All were still as night, listening with deep attention; even the Quakers mixed in the crowd. From thence we hastened to the Pit; and, to be sure, it was amazing to see horse and foot

flocking from all parts, and some carriages. My friend who accompanied me said, he thought there were a thousand horses: however, I suppose, there might be some hundreds; and a multitude of poor little ragged boys on all sides came to earn a penny by holding the horses, so that they were kept at a proper distance from the congregation. I do not remember to have preached to so great a multitude, except once on the Green at Glasgow. It was truly an awful sight. But I cannot say that I had that liberty which I have sometimes. Indeed, I had a charming time at Tuckingmill in the morning, and at Redruth at noon; but I seldom find that sweetness three times running. Besides, I had exerted myself the two former times, particularly in the street at Redruth, so that my strength rather failed me, insomuch that I grew somewhat hoarse; and perhaps my gracious Lord might see it meet to leave me a little to myself, seeing He takes gracious methods to hide pride from our eyes, and keep us dependent upon Himself. It is amazing how such a spot should ever be chosen for a place to preach in, amid rocks and mines, and scarcely a house near it; and that it should continue to excite the curiosity of people to come from such a distance to hear the word of God in a wilderness. As I had a considerable distance to travel, and preach twice the next day, it was thought advisable to proceed to Truro, as that would shorten my journey nearly ten miles; so here I rested in peace and plenty; humbled under a sense of God's amazing goodness and my own vileness, yet hoping I had done something for Him.

Monday, 26th.—We set out rather early, and stopped at a place called the Indian Queens, to

breakfast. From this neighbourhood came that worthy man, John Murlin; and I saw his elder brother, a serious old man, ripening for glory; though I could perceive him very anxious respecting the legacy left by his brother. I told him, it was in safe hands, and would be paid at the appointed time. What a temptation, or a snare, is this world, even to good men! We got to Bodmin by twelve o'clock, twenty-three miles from Truro, where I preached to the smallest congregation I had in Cornwall. Though it is a principal town, and where the assize is held in summer, yet I find our interest is small in it.

From Bodmin I crossed the country, about fifteen miles, to Port-Isaac. The road was so very bad as almost to set us fast in some places; and very hilly. However, we got in time to preach to a crowded audience, and were cordially received by an old disciple, an Israelite indeed. The situation of this small town is singular. It lies at the bottom of a narrow creek, and in a narrow compass, surrounded on all sides by very high hills, except the opening to the sea; and it does not appear that it can be enlarged, it is so enclosed on every side. However, the Gospel has found its way thither for many years, and not in vain.

Tuesday, 27th.—We had to remount the hills out of Port-Isaac to Camelford, where I was to preach at noon; and although it was the middle of the day, and not many Methodists in the town, yet we had the chapel filled: and a precious time it was, I believe, to the people as well as myself; so that I trust my labour here was not in vain. But, having a stage of sixteen miles to Launceston, where I had to preach in the evening, we did but just arrive in time

to preach to a crowded audience; and I had considerable liberty in describing the way to the kingdom to be through tribulation. Here I hope the word was made profitable; and here ended my excursion through Cornwall. This I must say for the Cornish, both preachers and people, they treated me with very great kindness, and showed me much greater respect than I deserved. There would be no great cross in itinerating in this manner, where in every place all things we wish for are made ready to one's hand. Groups of kind friends waiting in every place to receive one, and crowds assembling to hear, are exceedingly pleasing; and all the company in every friend's house looking up to one, as to a superior species of being. How flattering to vanity! and what need of an humbling ballast! How different is this state of things from that of our Circuits in the general, where we must experience an humbling reverse! Amid all the kindness in Cornwall, the Lord gave me a sense of my own unworthiness, which kept me low in my own esteem.

I wished to pay another visit to the loving society at Plymouth-Dock, on my return, but time would not permit; and I did not know but that I was to preach at Tiverton in Devonshire the next day. It was necessary that I should be at Exeter by noon, a distance of forty-four miles. I therefore rose early; and truly the morning was lovely, and the front of my chamber opened into a fine country; the winged choristers were all awake, and their different notes were charming; but my business required haste. I got to Exeter by one o'clock; but hearing nothing from Tiverton, I was very glad to rest where I was. Exeter is delightfully situated. I walked through the spacious cathedral, saw the monuments, the

library, the skeleton of the young woman who was executed some years ago, as I was told, for the murder of her child. But, however agreeable the situation of this city is, religion is at a very low ebb in our Connexion: I had the smallest congregations here that I have seen since I left Bristol. Yet there are a few sensible lively souls even in Exeter.

Thursday, 29th.—I preached at Taunton, and looked into the large church from whence that great and good man Joseph Alleine was ejected. I venerate the places where those worthy men laboured; and what a loss did the Church of England sustain when her rulers expelled from her pulpits two thousand good men, among whom were Joseph Alleine, Richard Baxter, and Philip Henry!

Friday, 30th.—I came safely to Bristol, and found my dear family all tolerably well. All thanks be to God! I stand amazed at His goodness to me: even this little tour impresses a fresh sense of His mercies upon my mind. But I feel pain that the work does not thrive as I could wish to see it in this Circuit; and yet there are many precious souls, whom I have cause to love, and who, I believe, walk humbly with their God. The Conference drew on; and a brother having been dead some time at Lambeth, and leaving me joint-executor with his widow, the property being in London, in different hands, and a considerable number of legatees, it seemed necessary that I should be on the spot, in order that I might do my best to see the property collected, and the legacies paid. I therefore left Bristol after being one year there, and removed to London, where I and my family arrived August 20th, 1800. Having now taken notice of the most material matters which have occurred during forty years of my ministry,

and sixty of my life, I must here close, perhaps finally. The above space of time has been filled up with mercies innumerable from my gracious God. He hath borne with my numberless blunders, inconsistencies, and imperfections; and I hope the time and labour have not altogether been in vain. A vast number of my junior brethren have got before me, having finished their course, and entered into the joy of their Lord, while I am still in the wilderness, still in the field of battle. They have entered the haven of rest, while I am

“Still toss’d on a sea of distress,  
Hard toiling to make the bless’d shore.”

Too, too many, during the above period, have turned aside, and plunged back into the world again, while I, O infinite mercy! O boundless love! have been happily preserved; preserved even when I otherwise should have departed from the living God.

“Turn aside, a sight admire,  
I the living wonder am;  
See a bush that burns with fire,  
Unconsumed amidst the flame.”

As it is highly probable I may never trouble the public with any farther account of so unworthy a subject as myself, there is one thing which I would pointedly notice to all my brethren in the ministry; and that is, to beware of spending too much time in company among their richer acquaintance; but spare a little to look into the habitations of the poor. The poor have the Gospel preached to them; our Lord was poor; He associated with the poor; and, I can assure my brethren, we have the greatest number of pious souls among the poor. Do look into their

poor habitations: they cannot invite you to a dinner or a supper; they have it not in their power; but if you look into their cottage or garret, they will receive you as an angel of God: and, as I hope you wish to do them good, I can assure you that a few words spoken to them personally will do them more good than a hundred pompous and popular harangues. If this method of visiting the poor in their own habitations were more attended unto both by preachers and leaders, it would have a blessed effect, and save many from backsliding, and consequently from eternal destruction. What I recommend to others I try to do myself, and always have satisfaction therein. My day is far spent; and I wish to do all the good I can, so that I may fight the good fight of faith, and finish my course with joy, through my never-failing Redeemer.

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THE following account of Mr. Taylor's death was given in the Methodist Magazine:—

DIED at Birch-House, near Bolton, in Lancashire, on Tuesday morning, October 15th, 1816, the Rev. Thomas Taylor, aged almost eighty years. From the year 1761, when he was appointed by Mr. Wesley to a Circuit, he continued his itinerant labours till the last Conference. Then the pressure of age, with the effects of fifty-five years' hard ministerial labour, obliged this holy, faithful, and resolute minister of Christ to acknowledge that he was no longer able to fill the place of an effective man in the Connexion. But in ceasing to be an itinerant, he remitted no labour to which his strength was

adequate; nay, about the close of his eminently useful life, he exerted himself beyond his strength. But his heart and soul were in the work of God; and hence, when labouring under that complaint which terminated in his death, he would ascend the pulpit to preach "the unsearchable riches of Christ."

Having engaged to preach in the Bolton chapels on Sunday, the 13th of October, and the following day, he arrived at the house of his esteemed friend, Roger Holland, Esq., on the preceding Tuesday. The following account of the remaining days of his life is taken from a letter written by Mrs. Holland to his son-in-law, Mr. Robert Miller:—

"ON Tuesday evening, October 8th, Mr. Taylor arrived at Birch-House, in his usual state of health and cheerfulness. Wednesday morning, he observed that he did not think he had passed so comfortable a night for twelve months. He attended to his studies as usual, and occasionally walked to see a few poor people.

"On Saturday night he had two violent attacks of his complaint, which obliged him to sit up till he was a little recovered; but though he felt himself much enfeebled, he accompanied Mr. Holland to Bolton the next morning, where he preached from, 'Our light affliction,' &c. (2 Cor. iv. 17, 18.) It was observed by his hearers, that he was particularly animated, and that his views of glory, in the discussion of his subject, were more than usually bright. He dined at Mr. Rothwell's, where he evidenced a spirit of lively gratitude and animated praise. But the effects of his morning exertions soon became so visible in much weakness and bodily pain, that his

friends judged it improper for him to undertake the evening service; Mr. Holland, in particular, was very importunate in dissuading him from the attempt. No entreaties, however, could dissuade him from his purpose of setting out for the old chapel; in going to which, he was obliged frequently to pause, and once for the space of nearly a quarter of an hour. Having arrived at the chapel, he went into Mr Grindrod's, where he remained a short space, in order to gain breath; during which time, a local preacher began the service. When he had concluded prayer, he found the veteran saint ready to enter upon his office, which he did, by taking these words for his text, 'Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee.' He seemed to have forgotten all his weakness, and to be unusually led out, whilst explaining the passage. In one part of the discourse, he raised himself, and said with great emphasis, 'I should like to die like an old soldier, sword in hand.' That night he had another attack in his breast, which painfully interrupted his sleeping, and caused considerable exhaustion the following morning; notwithstanding which, he spent two hours in visiting the sick, but the effort was attended with a great deal of difficulty. He again preached with animation in the evening, from 1 Corinthians ii. 12.

“Through the whole of the evening he was particularly cheerful, and often very spiritual. He retired about eleven; and intending to accompany Mr. Holland to Manchester the next morning, he shaved before he went to bed. On Tuesday morning Mr. Holland, thinking that he lay longer than usual, as he did not hear him stir, tapped at his door; but no answer being returned, he entered the room, and

found him lying by the bed-side at full length, more than half-dressed, but perfectly composed, as in a quiet sleep: the chariots of Israel and the horsemen had come, and the prepared saint had ascended with his bright convoy."

Grateful to Mrs. Holland for the foregoing account, and for the honourable testimony which she has given in favour of Mr. Taylor's eminent piety and usefulness, we shall briefly mention a few particulars relative to his character.

1. Throughout the long course of his ministry, so uniform was his Christian walk, that he never brought the slightest reproach upon his sacred profession. The present race of Methodist preachers know, from experience, little or nothing of the difficulties with which the first race had to contend. Hunger, cold, weariness, bad lodgings, and persecution, in various forms, were their lot; and of each of these Mr. Taylor had his share. He lived long enough to see Methodism in comparative honour, and himself and brethren, in general, comfortably provided for. But so great a change in his circumstances had no bad effect upon his spirit, temper, or conduct. He was the same man of God, when in London, Manchester, Liverpool, &c., that he had been when subjected to more than ordinary privations. A great change in outward circumstances, especially from penury and reproach to plenty and honour, has frequently proved fatal to many; but from such a change Mr. Taylor suffered no physical, mental, or moral injury.

2. The diligence which he used for the purpose of improving his mind, that he might be able to feed the people with knowledge and understanding, is

highly creditable to his memory, as a Christian minister. He drew his divinity from the sacred volume; and such was the estimate which he set upon that pure source of truth, that, in addition to his perusing particular parts of it, upon numberless occasions, there is sufficient ground to believe that he read the whole of it regularly through upwards of fifty times. But his extraordinary attention to the Scriptures did not make him inattentive to those works with which a minister of Christ ought, if possible, to be acquainted. Hundreds upon hundreds of ancient and modern publications on theology, sacred and profane history, natural and moral philosophy, &c., he read with care and attention.

3. He was a man of strict order, punctually attending to whatever he took in hand; and perhaps few have ever excelled him in the practice of that very important, but much-neglected duty, the redeeming of time. He was too sensible of its value, to waste any part of it in trifling conversation, or mere complimentary visits. His not ordinarily suffering his hours of study to be broken in upon may possibly have induced some to imagine that his prevailing disposition was unsocial, if not morose; but those who knew him well were of a different opinion.

4. His devoting two hours every day (Sundays and Conference time excepted) to visiting and relieving poor and afflicted persons, proves that he was a true philanthropist.

5. To the doctrines and discipline of the Methodists he was a steady and firm adherent; and he manifested, upon all occasions, a sincere and cordial love to the objects of his pastoral care. Meantime he was so far from being a bigot, that he esteemed and loved as brethren all, however opposed to him in matters

of opinion, who, he had reason to believe, were true followers of the Lord Jesus.

6. By continuing to walk humbly and closely with God, and to be diligent in reading and study, he retained to the last the spirit of preaching, as well as the talents, by which he had been enabled so long to feed those of the flock of Christ who sat under his ministry.

7. Mr. Taylor's views of both the law and the Gospel were clear and distinct; and hence, while he maintained that evangelical obedience is not only a fruit of faith, but indispensably necessary in order to its being retained, he did not neglect to inculcate, as a truth of vital importance, that the holiest men on earth are every moment indebted to the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ, for their continuance in a state of acceptance with God. He did not glory in his works; for he well knew that, however sincerely and conscientiously performed, they could not stand the rigour of Divine justice; and therefore he availed himself of the covenant of mercy, not that he might sin with impunity, but that, notwithstanding all his defects, of which he had an exquisite and humbling sense, he might still be able to "worship God in the spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." Some preachers, by not entertaining similar views, have exhibited the Gospel in a mutilated state, and preached it in a dry, cold, and unedifying manner. So did not the venerable Thomas Taylor: hence the Divine unction which generally accompanied his sermons.

We cannot see the heroes of Methodism, however aged, drop one after another into eternity, without being sensibly affected. We love, nay, we venerate the memory of those men of God, who, with little

less than apostolical intrepidity, in breaking up the ground which we now peaceably occupy, endured many a fight of affliction. But they rest from their labours, and we are hastening to the conclusion of ours.

“Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints,” whether occasioned by the lapse of “slowly-rolling years,” or an acute or lingering disease. The time, place, and circumstances of the death of each of them are all under the control and direction of Him who, for the welfare of His people, regulates and overrules every event. Mr. Taylor’s death was so sudden, that he experienced little or nothing of the formality of dying. His strong and well-formed body was greatly worn by age; but, like a machine well constructed in all its parts, and all those parts so skilfully united as to wear alike, it continued to be a suitable and, upon the whole, a comfortable habitation for his spirit, till at last

“The weary springs of life stood still.”

Next to Mr. Wesley, he filled the place of an effective man considerably longer than any other Methodist preacher.

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THE Conference thus speak of this excellent man in their annual Minutes:—

THOMAS TAYLOR, who was brought to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus in early life. He commenced his itinerant career in the year 1761; and was a most laborious, faithful, and eminently successful minister of Christ, for the long space of

fifty-six years. In the early part of his public life, when Methodism was but in its infancy, he had, together with his contemporaries and fellow-labourers in that great work, to endure much from hunger, cold, weariness, and persecution; but he met and surmounted those difficulties with a truly apostolical intrepidity; and, under circumstances which would have overwhelmed a mind of ordinary energies, he pursued, with indefatigable assiduity, a course of study and labour of uncommon magnitude. Though for many of the first years of his ministry he had to take long and frequent journeys, and to preach a great number of sermons, yet, by habits of early rising, and a diligent improvement of his whole time, he acquired a respectable share of useful literature. To this, however, he conscientiously avoided giving a prominence in his preaching, and made it strictly subordinate and subservient to the doctrines of the Gospel. His discourses, which were always short, were chiefly of a practical and experimental character; and to the last he was very fervent and impressive in the pulpit. He was a lover of Christian discipline, as established among the Methodists; and was zealous and firm in its enforcement. As a pastor, he evinced the most commendable diligence, visiting, where it was at all practicable, every part of the flock of Christ under his care; for which purpose he generally set apart two hours in the day: and this practice he continued to the last week of his life. In his family, he set the Lord always before him, studying how he might best promote the salvation of his household; and in the worship of the family he was most regular, and delightfully solemn. In the private circle of his friends he was cheerful and improving, knowing well how to combine

rational instruction with spiritual edification. His natural temper was independent and irritable; but these imperfections were so habitually under the subduing influence of Divine grace, as to be rarely perceptible even to his most intimate friends; and in the decline of life, he imbibed a heavenly sweetness of spirit which was seldom interrupted. In short, the good degree of learning which he attained, his extensive labours, his unceasing activity in the best of causes, the almost unparalleled length of his course of efficient ministerial duties, and, above all, his close and constant walk with God, and universal devotedness to His glory, placed him in the highest class of the servants of God on earth; and, we have no doubt, he is now found near the throne of Him in whose blood he had washed his robes. His death was sudden, and to his friends unexpected; but, with respect to himself, it was doubtless followed by an abundant entrance into the kingdom of God. He died at Birch-House, near Bolton, the residence of his friend Roger Holland, Esq., on the 16th of October, 1816, in the seventy-ninth year of his age; having, only a few hours before his departure, in an animated sermon, set forth the deep things of God.

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## THE CHRISTIAN SOLDIER'S DEATH.

TO THE MEMORY OF THE REV. THOMAS TAYLOR.

BY JAMES MONTGOMERY.

SERVANT of God! well done,  
Rest from thy loved employ;  
The battle's fought, the victory won,  
Enter thy Master's joy;

—The voice at midnight came,  
 He started up to hear;  
 A mortal arrow pierced his frame,  
 He fell,—but felt no fear.

At home amidst alarms,  
 It found him in the field;  
 A veteran slumbering on his arms,  
 Beneath his red-cross shield:  
 His sword was in his hand,  
 Still warm with recent fight;  
 Ready that moment at command  
 Through rock and steel to smite.

It was a two-edged blade,  
 Of heavenly temper keen;  
 And double were the wounds it made  
 Where'er it glanced between:  
 'Twas death to sin,—'twas life  
 To all that mourn'd their sin;  
 It kindled and it silenced strife,  
 Made war and peace within.

Stout hearts before it fell,  
 Subdued by wrath and love;  
 'Twas dreadful as the flames of hell,  
 Bright as the beams above:  
 Heroes were wont to name  
 The weapons of their might;  
 This was a brand of matchless fame,  
 —The word of God, in fight.

Oft with its fiery force  
 His arm had quell'd the foe;  
 And laid, resistless in his course,  
 The alien armies low:  
 Bent on such glorious toils,  
 The world to him was loss;  
 But all his trophies, all his spoils,  
 He hung upon the cross.

At midnight came the cry,  
"To meet thy God prepare;"  
He woke,—he caught his Captain's eye;  
Then, strong in faith and prayer,  
His spirit with a bound  
Burst its encumbering clay,  
—His tent at sunrise on the ground  
A darken'd ruin lay.

The pains of death are past,  
Labour and sorrow cease;  
And life's long warfare closed at last,  
His soul is found in peace.  
—Soldier of Christ, well done!  
Begin thy new employ;  
Sing, while eternal ages run,  
Thy Master and His joy.

THE LIFE  
OF  
MR. JOHN FURZ.

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WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

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1. I WAS born in the year 1717, at Wilton, near Sarum. My parents were honest, but ignorant of true religion. My father never went to church; my mother and her children did. When I was about ten, I began to be afraid of death and hell, and prayed to God to have mercy upon me. At eleven I durst not keep company with boys that cursed and swore. I gave myself to reading, and went constantly to church. Yet I was more and more uneasy, and had sometimes no sleep in the night, through the dread that was upon my spirits. At fifteen I became a constant communicant. At seventeen, wherever I was, in bed, within the house or without, I had something speaking within me, "One thing is wanting." I read more, and prayed more; but so much the more did this cry echo within me. In this state I continued two years, having no kind shepherd to guide me. I was one day standing in the house, when this inward voice was repeated oftener than usual. I looked up, and

said, "O God, what is this one thing?" It was instantly answered, "Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ."

2. I was astonished; for I thought I had always believed. However, I thought, "I will read over all the Bible, and try whether I believe or not!" I took my Bible, and opened it on these words: "The devils believe and tremble." I thought with myself, "They tremble, and so do I for the same cause: I too am afraid of the judgment of the great day." I took my Bible again, and read, "We know Thee who Thou art, the Holy One of God." I laid it down again, and thought, "The devils know Him, and tremble; I tremble, but I do not know Him." Now I saw that I was without God in the world; and the sorrows of my heart were enlarged. I had read, "He that believeth hath the witness in himself;" but I knew I had not the witness. I reasoned much concerning this, wishing I could find some man that could tell me what it is to believe.

3. One Sunday morning the minister's text was, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." I stood up, and looked as earnestly at his mouth, as ever a hungry man looked for food; expecting every moment that he would tell me what it was to believe. He did say something about faith, but I did not understand it. I now thought, "I do not believe; I shall surely be damned." When I came to the church-door, I could not restrain myself any longer, but burst into a flood of tears, and cried aloud. The people came about me, and asked me why I wept. I said, "I shall go to hell; for I do not believe." They answered, "Young man, if you go to hell, no one in the town will go to heaven."

4. From this time for nearly two years I was

in despair. My sleep in a great measure departed from me. My appetite was gone; my flesh wasted away, and I grew exceedingly weak. My mother observing it came to me and said, "My dear child, can I do anything for you?" I said, "Yes, carry me to Mr. Smith;" a Dissenter, to whom many that were in trouble came for advice. She carried me to him without delay. He asked what ailed me. I said, "Let my mother and the men that brought me go out, and I will tell you." They went out, and I said, "I believe I shall die soon, and I am afraid of going to hell." He answered, "You are melancholy: you must seek for some merry company." I was shocked, and called aloud for my mother, who stood without, to come and carry me home; which she did. As I sat down in the street without the door, three young men passing by looked at me, and said they were sorry to see me look so bad. They stayed some time with me, talking merrily and jocosely. When they parted from me, I thought myself something better. They called on me again. I was pleased with their conversation, and endeavoured to stifle my convictions. I recovered my strength daily; and one evening, as I was walking with them, I asked, "Where did you get all these merry jests?" They said, out of such and such books, which they named. I said, "If it please God, I will go in the morning to the stationer's, and buy one of the best of them."

5. As soon as I left my companions I went home. But I had only just sat down in a chair, when a Divine conviction seized me, and I thought, "Lord, what have I been doing?" I dropped to the earth utterly senseless. About midnight my senses returned; and I found my mother weeping at my

bed-side, attended by some of her kind neighbours. I now found such a spirit of prayer, as I never found before. My heart cried, "Lord, spare me a little, before I go hence and am no more seen." For I clearly saw, if I died in my present state I must perish for ever.

6. But it was not long before my new companions visited me, and expressed a sorrow for my late affliction. I was soon persuaded to walk with them, and in a while began to be pleased again with their company and conversation. But one Sunday morning as I was in bed, it seemed to me as if one griped me by the arm. At the same moment a voice went through my heart, saying, "Go to the meeting." I was much surprised, and felt much pain in my arm. However, it being very early, I composed myself to sleep again. But I had not lain long, when I heard the same voice as before. I rose, and walked in the garden; but still found something within me saying, "Go to the meeting." I knew not what to do. I had ever been a zealous member of the Established Church, and thought it not right to go to a Presbyterian meeting. I seemed resolved not to go; but the impression on my mind was such, that I could have no rest unless I went. When I came in, the minister was in his sermon. I had no sooner sat down than he uttered these words, "Remember the promises you made to God on a sick bed." I thought he spoke to me. I remembered how earnestly I had prayed to God to spare me a little longer. I returned home in deep distress, thinking, "I am still the same unhappy creature, lost to all sense of good. All my resolves are come to nought, my promises broken, and I am left a poor guilty sinner."

7. All my former works did now indeed appear to me no better than filthy rags. I said, "I have lied unto Thee, O God, when I said, 'My spirit doth rejoice in God my Saviour;' and when I professed, 'I believe in God the Father Almighty, and in Jesus Christ,' while I knew nothing about it." A few days after, I saw an unusual number of people flocking together, and asked whither they were going. One answered, Mrs. Hall's son is come from Oxford, and is going to preach in the Presbyterian meeting. Will you go and hear him?" After some pause I went. While I was musing with myself, he pointed out with his finger, as though he pointed at me, and said vehemently, "There are two witnesses that are dead and buried in the dust, that will rise in judgment against you." He took up his Bible, and said, "Here are the two witnesses, that have been dead and buried in the dust upon your shelf, the Old Testament and the New." I felt what was spoken: I remembered that my Bible was covered with dust, and that I had written my name with the point of my finger on the binding. Now I thought, I had signed my own damnation on the back of the witnesses.

8. I went home, no one speaking to me on the way, or I should have wept aloud. I walked in the garden; but I was afraid the earth would open and swallow me up, or that infernal spirits would be permitted to drag me to the bottomless pit. I went to bed; but the terrors I felt in the night are beyond all that I can express. About midnight I sat up in bed, and said, "Lord, how will it be with me in hell?" Just then a dog began howling under my window, and I thought, "There shall be weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth!" Every joint

now trembled; the terrors of the Lord seized my soul; the arrows of the Almighty stuck fast in me. I rose early in the morning, but did not attempt to pray, as I thought there was no mercy for me. As I walked in the garden, bewailing my misery, and wishing I had never been born, God put a desire to pray into my heart, and those words into my mouth: "Lord, are there no bowels of mercy for such a sinner as I am?" I went and kneeled down at the feet of my bed. Instantly I felt as if cold water ran through every vein. I started up, and ran into the garden, and thought, "God will not suffer me to pray. He has driven me from the throne of grace: there is no mercy for me." I went a second time, but had no sooner kneeled down, than I was surprised as before: I flew again. As soon as I came into the garden, I looked round, and said, "Who will show me any good?" I walked weeping, till I saw a dead toad, and said, "O that I had been a toad! Then I should have had no soul to lose." I then felt a fresh desire to pray. I went again into my chamber, and kneeled down. But I was more surprised than ever. I thought the earth moved under me. I leaped down stairs, and fell to the ground; but strong desire constrained me to ask, "Are there no bowels of mercy for me?" Before I could utter it, I heard a small, still voice, saying, "Thy sins are forgiven thee." What a change did I feel! My sorrow was turned into joy; my darkness into light! My soul was filled with love to God, for His unspeakable mercies. Now I did indeed draw water out of the wells of salvation. Yea, a fountain was opened in my heart, springing up into everlasting life. My tongue could not express the feelings of my heart; I was lost in speechless rapture. I now knew what it

was to believe: I knew on whom I believed; even on Him that justifieth the ungodly. Being justified by faith, I was at peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ. My bands were broken in sunder, and my captive soul was set at liberty.

9. I that before was dead in trespasses and sins was now made alive to God. I sat in heavenly places with Christ Jesus. I was as in a new world. If I walked out into the open field, everything showed forth the glory of God. If I looked at the sun, my heart said, "My God made this, not for Himself, but us." If I looked on the grass, the corn, the trees, I could not but stand and adore the goodness of God. My Bible also was become a new book: it was sweeter to my soul than honey to my tongue. I had near communion with God day and night. And O how I longed for all the world to know what I knew! I longed also for a companion in the grace of God, to whom I could communicate what I felt: yea, I thought I would tell the trees of the wood, if I could make them understand, what God had done for my soul.

10. One day as I was going across the market-place, I passed by a man at his labour. I felt all that was in me run out after him, in a manner I never felt before. I passed by him again and again; and it was still the same. I thought, "I can tell this man anything," though I only knew him by sight, and had often heard, his father used to say, with his hand on the breast, "I have Christ in my heart." I asked him, "Do you believe your father was a good man, and that he is gone to heaven?" He answered, "I do. He died singing the hundredth psalm, just as he uttered these words,

'O enter ye His gates with praise!'

I asked again, "Are you willing to live his life, and to die his death?" He answered, "The Lord knows that I am!" "But," said I, "do you believe there is any such thing as knowing our sins forgiven now?" He looked at me, and paused, and then said, "I will tell you a fortnight hence."

11. That day fortnight I went to his house, took him aside, and told him, "Now you are to answer my question." He said, "I will: I do believe that there is such a thing as knowing our sins forgiven now. I have been seeking it ever since I saw you: but I have not found it." I desired him to walk with me to my house; I took him into my chamber. We sat down together, and I told him freely what troubles I had passed through, and how God had delivered me. Then I asked, "Are you desirous of the same blessing?" He answered, "The Lord knows that I am." We kneeled down, and I earnestly prayed, that God would make him a partaker of it. When I had done, he started up, and went out of the room in haste, without speaking one word.

12. In the morning, as I was looking out of my door, I heard one man say to another, "Do you hear that John Kirby is run mad?" And about an hour after, I heard another asserting the same thing. In the evening he came to my house, looked earnestly at me, and said, "I am undone." He then instantly turned and went away, giving me no time to speak to him. The next evening he came in the same manner. I was sitting at a table, reading. He struck the table with his hand, and said, "I am undone to all eternity." He then went out hastily. I followed him to his house, and found him sitting silent, looking with an aspect of deep sorrow. His wife sat looking at him. She said to me, "O sir,

our family is ruined." I said, "I hope not." She said again, with a flood of tears, "My husband is distracted. He neither eats, nor drinks, nor sleeps." However, I persuaded him to go to bed, and went home. But I had not been long in bed, before he was knocking at the door, crying out, "For Christ's sake, quickly, quickly." I ran down undressed, and let him in. He clasped me fast in his arms, and said, "I will never go home more, unless you go with me." I put on my clothes, and led him home. As I went I advised him to pray. But he said, "I cannot: if I attempt to pray in my chamber, I am affrighted; and so I am, wherever I attempt it." When I came to his house, I found a most distressed family; his wife, his son, and his daughters all weeping. I desired him to go to bed. He said, he would never go into his chamber more, unless I would go with him. I did so, and saw him in bed, desiring his wife and children to go to bed also, and to be as still as possible. Then I returned home. But I had scarcely been in bed ten minutes, when he was knocking at the door with more earnestness than before: he again said, "I will never go home, unless you go with me." I went the third time. When I came to his house, the family was in bed. I heard his wife weeping. But he repeated, "I will never go into the chamber again, unless you go with me." I said, "O for shame! Your wife is in bed." She cried aloud, "For Christ's sake, do not mind me, but bring my husband up stairs." She was sitting up in bed, in her nightgown, bewailing herself and her family. After seeing him in bed, I kneeled down by the bedside, and commended him to God.

13. In the morning he came to my house again.

But the whole form of his visage was changed. He walked to and fro with tears dropping from his eyes. I asked, "How is it with you now?" He said, "Glory be to God! all is peace." I desired him to sit down, and tell me how this change came. He said, "As soon as you were gone, I looked up, and it appeared to me as if the roof of my house was taken away, so that I saw the firmament. While I was wondering at this, a dark cloud arose, which I thought was a thunder-cloud. The cloud was drawn aside, and left in view Jesus Christ, all besmeared with blood. He looked down upon me, and said, 'I have loved thee, and given Myself for thee.' I felt the word in my heart, and all guilt, and fear, and sorrow fled away. Now I know that I 'have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, who is the propitiation for my sins.'" We wept together for joy, and praised God for His abundant mercies bestowed upon us.

14. From this time, as the souls of David and Jonathan were knit together, so were our souls knit together in God. We had close fellowship with each other, and sat together as in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Neither of us was content to eat his morsel alone; but what was imparted to one, the other must partake of. We gladly met together every evening, to pray with and for each other, and pour out our souls before God in thanksgivings for all His mercies. Meantime our hearts burned with desire, that all men might know this love of Christ that passeth knowledge. But how to impart to others what we had received, we knew not, or which way to begin.

15. After a while I heard there was a company of Dissenters, that met together at a private house every Sunday evening. I told my friend I was in

hopes they were partakers of the same blessing that we were. I wrote a note to desire leave for me and my friend to come and sit behind them. They sent word, we were welcome to come. When we came, we found about ten of them sitting round a large table, on which were the Bible and the newspaper, with a decanter and glasses. They were quite complaisant. They all rose up, and desired us to sit in rank with them. But I refused, saying, "We will only sit in the place we named, that is, behind you." They then began their evening exercise. First, they ridiculed the vicar, particularly for his covetousness. Next, they drank one to another, and offered the glass to us, but we did not drink. Then they related the faults of the churchwardens and the overseers of the poor; till one read part of the newspaper, which gave occasion to discourse on the state of the nation. At last, one of them read a chapter in the Bible: another, looking at his watch, said, "Bless me! It is time to go home. It is past ten o'clock." "But," said one, "we ought to go to prayer first." But they were not agreed which of them should pray. At last one of them stood up against a back of a chair, spoke a few words, and concluded. My friend and I were kneeling together. I was weary with forbearing, and began earnestly to pray, that God would awaken them, and by His goodness lead them to repentance, that they might know the things which belonged to their everlasting peace. They turned about, and stared at me, as if I had been speaking Greek. However, they told us we should be welcome to come again the next Sunday evening.

16. The next Sunday evening we came again. But one of the company having told his neighbours, that I had preached, I suppose not less than a hundred

persons were standing about the door. The man of the house asked them, "What do you want?" and endeavoured to keep them out. But when he stood aside for me and my friend to come in, they poured in after us. At first he seemed displeased; but soon after called to his wife, and said, "Bring me the Testament." He opened it, sat with it in his hand some time; then, starting up, came to me, with the book open, saying, "If you have a word of exhortation, say on." The first words presented to my view were Romans viii. 1: "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." I had had no thought of exhorting or preaching to this hour; but now the power of God came upon me, and enabled me to speak from an experimental knowledge of freedom from condemnation. Now I was able to testify, "By grace I am saved through faith: not for anything that I have done; it is the gift of God." Many of them that stood before me felt the word, and wept much. And from this time, by the help of God, I have continued to preach "repentance toward God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ."

17. This same gentleman, in whose house I began to speak of the things of God, procured a licence for his house, that none might molest me. I likewise preached in my own house, to all that came and heard me. Their number continually increased: many were convinced of their evil ways; and about fourteen converted to God, who met with me daily, to spend some time in prayer. We loved as brethren, being partakers together of the same grace of God. And we began to suffer reproach together, to show us that "the servant is not above his Lord." Mr.

Conway, the vicar, sent his footman to me with this message: "My master bids me tell you, You have a soft place in your head." I said, "Be pleased to tell your master, The sheep when diseased do not run after the shepherd, but the shepherd after the sheep. Your master passes by my door almost every day. I wish he would call in, and search about my head; and find out what my disorder is, and prescribe a remedy." About two hours after I saw him coming. I opened the door, and waited for him. But when he saw me, he drew farther off, and shook his cane at me, and passed by. He went straight to the Earl of Pembroke's, (the old earl,) and told him, "There is a young fellow in the town who, under a pretence of preaching, makes three riots every week, and disturbs all the inhabitants of the town, from one end to the other." The earl said, "I will send for the young man, and talk with him myself."

18. But instead of sending for me, he sent for the mayor, with whom he used to converse frequently. He had heard me preach himself. Afterwards I learned what passed between the earl and him. "The old priest has been here," said the earl; "but I know not what he would have. He was at first a Dissenting minister. But he came to me and said, his conscience constrained him to conform to the Church, and begged I would assist him to procure ordination. Then he begged me to give him a benefice which was vacant: I did so. He came again within the twelvemonth, complaining he could not live on it. I gave him a second, of two hundred a year. Still he followed me with the same complaint, till I gave him a third: and now he comes to me with a complaint about some young man that preaches. Pray, do you know the man?" He

said, "My lord, perfectly well: he lives but three doors from me." His lordship said, "I said at first, I would send for the man: but I have thought otherwise. Take Lord Herbert and your son, who has taken his degrees at Oxford, and all the aldermen, with you: and you will judge whether it is the preacher who makes the riot, or they that come to disturb him. Afterwards come all of you to dinner with me, and give me your cool judgment."

19. I knew nothing of their coming, till they came; but according to my day, so was my strength. The people, seeing the mayor coming from his own house, attended by Lord Herbert and the aldermen, called one upon another, saying, "My lord, and the mayor and aldermen, are gone to pull down the preaching-house." The rabble ran from all quarters to lend a helping hand. I was praying, when they poured in upon us like a flood. They pushed down some that were on their knees, and trampled on them. Lord Herbert rose from his seat, and said, "I desire you will let me hear quietly." But instead of regarding it, some of the mob gave him a very impertinent answer. The mayor then rose up, and with a loud voice commanded the king's peace. I then said, "My lord and gentlemen, I and those that meet with me are members of the Established Church. We meet together every Sunday, before and after Divine service, to make prayer and supplication with and for one another. And I read a portion of Scripture, and explain it as God enables me." I paused. His lordship bowed his head, and I went on. "I will preach now, as well as I can in this confused noise." I then read, "I certify you, brethren, that the Gospel which was preached by me was not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was

I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." When I had ended, high and low went away, and I and my friends were left alone.

20. When the mayor and his brethren came to the earl's, (I was informed in the evening,) he asked, if they had been at the preaching. The mayor said, "Yes, my lord." "And what have you to say concerning the man that preaches?" The mayor replied, "My lord, I have known him from a child: he has lived an exemplary life from the beginning." The earl said, "Now that we know the truth of the case, we know how to proceed. If I was mayor of the town, the next time that young man preaches, I would go and read the Riot Act." The mayor promised he would: and the next time I preached, he came with the Riot Act in his hand. The mob gathering together, he bade them come near, and then read the Act. They quickly shrunk back: but one of them cursed the mayor, and said he was a Methodist too. He looked upon me, and said, "John, you see I have got a bad character too." I said, "I wish it was true." He said, "So do I; it would be better for me." From this time we had peace.

21. This method not succeeding to his wish, the vicar thought good to try another. He procured the Rev. Joseph Horler, to preach before his lordship. And he did preach as extraordinary a sermon as ever was heard at Wilton. His text was, "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God;" "that is," said he, "from the Church. For there is sprung up among us a new religion, called 'Methodism:' it is like the plague. They that have it infect whole families. Now in such a case, if one

were to come and warn you, to shut your door, and keep out the man and his distemper, would not you be thankful? I am now come to do you this kind office. I will describe the persons in three particulars. In the first place, they look just like toads that are crept out from under a faggot-pile. In the second place, they pretend to be led by the Spirit; and when they are 'under His guidance,' as they call it, they look like toads that are crept out of a dung-heap, and croak just like them. In the third place, they look just like toads that are dragged from land's end to land's end under a harrow." I was curious to observe what notice his lordship took of the preacher, who stood bowing at his side as he went out of church. He passed by him without making the least motion, or taking any notice of him at all.

22. After he was got home, he sent a footman to tell the preacher, "If you please, you may come and dine with his lordship." When he came, and was sat down, the earl asked his name. He answered, "My name is Joseph Horler." His lordship then asked, "Mr. Horler, what have you been doing?" He answered, "Preaching, my lord." "What have you been preaching?" "The Gospel, my lord." "I deny that, Mr. Horler: you have been preaching against the Government." He said, "I ask your lordship's pardon; I do not know that I have." "Nay," said his lordship, "have not the king, lords, and commons, all agreed that every Englishman shall worship God according to his own conscience? And are there not licences granted for this very purpose? But pray, who are those toads who creep out of the dung-heap? I hope they are not your neighbours! Let me hear of it, sir, no more. I

will hear no more of it. I will send a note immediately to the vicar, to let me know, when I am in the country, any day that you are to preach, and I will be sure not to be at church that day."

23. Some time after, that honest man John Haime called upon me, and preached at my house. Here our acquaintance and mutual love began, which has continued to this day. He gave me an invitation to come to Shaftesbury. I often went, and found much life and love among the people. I was afterwards invited to Wincanton; Robert Brockway informing me that the Dissenting minister was a pious man, and had promised me the use of his pulpit. And notice was given on the market-day, that a Methodist was to preach there on Sunday. But when Robert Brockway reminded the minister of his promise, he said, "My congregation is not willing." I asked, "Is there any among you that has courage to go through the town, and tell the people, there will be preaching on the common?" One answered, "I will for one." When we were there, a man brought me a table to stand on. Some of my friends from Shaftesbury were with me. After singing a hymn, and spending a little time in prayer, I gave out these words, "Seeing that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?" The people were as still as night, and gave good heed to what was spoken, till the minister of Brewham, with an attorney, and Mr. Ring, the town-clerk, came to the outside of the congregation. Some then cried out, "Make way, make way!" But the people stood closer and closer together, till I desired them to open to the right and left, and let the gentlemen come forward. Mr. Ring then read the Riot Act. I

said, "Sir, was there any appearance of a riot here, till you came?" He looked me in the face, and said with the utmost vehemence, "Thou rascal!" Then the blood spouted out in a stream from both his nostrils. He dropped to the earth, crying aloud, "They will say this is a judgment." (No wonder if they did.) All possible means were used to stop the bleeding; but in vain. From that time he was lunatic. He was carried to Bath, and died soon after. In about a fortnight, I was informed, the minister of Brewham died also.

24. Some time after this, one of Mr. Whitefield's preachers preached in the street at Wincanton. While he was preaching, a carrier came with a string of packhorses. The fore-horse had a strap of bells about his neck. The carrier took them off, and put them about his own neck. He then ran in among the people, jumping and dancing with all his might. While he was thus employed, the horse he took the bells from dropped down. They went to him, but he was stone dead. So God, in judgment mixed with mercy, took the horse, but spared the man!

25. Some years before I was a travelling preacher, I was invited to preach on Salisbury Plain, near the New Inn. It being on a Sunday, a very great company was gathered together from the neighbouring villages on both sides of the Plain. Here I was met by John Haime, with a few of our friends from Shaftesbury. As soon as I began to preach, a man came straightforward, and presented a gun at my face; swearing that he would blow my brains out, if I spake another word. However, I continued speaking, and he continued swearing; sometimes putting the muzzle of the gun to my mouth, sometimes

against my ear. While we were singing the last hymn, he got behind me, fired the gun, and burned off part of my hair. But he did not lose his labour; for he was so soundly beaten that he kept his bed for several weeks.

26. The occasion of my leaving Wilton was this. Hearing that Mr. Hall, after all the good he had done, had brought a huge reproach upon the Gospel, and was removed from Sarum, I went to Mr. Marsh, to know the truth of it. He said, "He is gone; but he has not carried away with him what we have received." We hid ourselves awhile; the world rejoiced, and we sorrowed. When the storm was a little over, I went often to Salisbury, and conversed and prayed with some of the poor people. After some time, I was desired to preach in Mr. Hall's chapel. More and more came, till we had a good congregation. Mr. Marsh then took part of the house adjoining to it, for me to live in, and to receive any of Mr. Wesley's preachers that could find time to call. Here I continued about five years. But some of the people being afraid lest I should follow Mr. Hall's example, I left the house, and left off preaching, till being afflicted both in soul and body, and knowing it was the hand of the Lord upon me, I made my mind known to Mr. Wesley, who advised me to go into the west of Cornwall. I did so: I took up my cross, left my wife and children, and went without delay. I was very kindly received by the people. My labours were blessed among them. My bodily strength returned; and great was the comfort that I felt in my soul.

27. Mr. Wesley sent me next into the York Circuit. I went in the simplicity of the Gospel, being only afraid lest I should not be useful. But it

pleased God to give me some fruit here also ; which engaged me to go on, and made me willing to spend and be spent for the souls of men. Afterwards I spent two years in Cheshire and Lancashire, where was the most rapid work of God that I ever saw. At a lovefeast in Manchester, we had eighteen persons justified in an hour. And many experienced a higher work of God, being cleansed from all sin. After deeply hungering and thirsting for righteousness, they were satisfied with it. Some of them, agonizing in prayer, fell to the ground, and cried out, "It is enough, Lord! My cup runs over! Withhold Thy hand, or enlarge my heart." Our leaders, feeling the weightiness of His presence, and the exceeding greatness of His power, were filled with zeal for the glory of God, and the good of souls. They dispersed themselves on Sundays, went into the country villages, sung and prayed, and exhorted the people to turn to God. Many came from those villages to hear the word, and great good was done.

28. A poor woman, that lived about ten miles from Manchester, hearing some say, "We have been there, and have found the Lord," told it to a neighbour, and said, "I wish I could go to Manchester and find the Lord." Her neighbour said, "Then why do not you go?" She said, "O dear child, I have no shoes." Her neighbour said, "I will lend you mine." She said, "Then I will go." She came to Manchester on a Sunday ; but knew not where to go. Seeing a gentleman walking in the market-place, she went to him and asked, "Where is it that people go to find the Lord?" He said, "Among the Methodists, as far as I know." She asked, "Where are they?" He answered, "Come, and I will show you." He brought her to the passage

that leads to the preaching-house, and said, "Go in there." Thomas Woolfinden came to her, and asked what she wanted. She said, "Is this the place where people find the Lord?" He went and called John Morris, one of the leaders; to whom she told all that had happened. He took her in, and placed her near the middle of the room, and advised her to look at none but the preacher. She took his advice, and about the middle of the sermon cried out, "Glory be to God, I have found the Lord!" which she repeated over and over, being filled with joy unspeakable.

29. There was likewise a glorious work of God at Liverpool. Many were enabled to repent and believe the Gospel; and many believed that the blood of Jesus Christ had cleansed them from all unrighteousness. The same flame broke out at Bolton, at Macclesfield, at Congleton, and at Burslem. One instance of the goodness of God at Congleton deserves a particular notice. Two men were there, pot-companions, David and Samuel. David made it his business to stand in the street near the time of preaching, and swear at those that were going to it. About this time we had many remarkable conversions. At this he seemed much perplexed, and asked his companion, "What can this be? What the d—l is it that they do to the people to convert them? I have a good mind to go and see." Accordingly, both of them came. But after they had sat about a quarter of an hour, David started up, and said, "I will stay here no longer." He attempted to run, but quickly dropped down. However, he rose, and with some difficulty got home. He went straight to his chamber, and got to bed. He turned himself a few times; then leaped up, saying, "I will lie here

no longer." He ran into the fields, and then wandered up and down all the night. In the morning he came home, went into his shop, and thought he would go to work. He heated his iron in the forge, and lifted up his hammer over his head. But he imagined the devil was just behind him, ready to carry him away. He let fall his hammer, ran out of the shop, and went to the fields, where he wandered all day. In the evening a farmer, passing by, said, "David, why are you not at your work? I have been three times at your shop to-day; but you were not to be found." David answered, "I think I shall work no more." The farmer asked, "Why so?" He said, "I am afraid I shall be converted." It quickly spread throughout the town, that David was going to be converted. But David protested he would not; he would go and get drunk directly. Accordingly, he went into a public-house, and with all speed drank two quarts of ale, with half a pint of brandy. Three men sitting by, one of them said, "David, you will be converted for all this." David said, "I will convert thee," knocked him down, took him by the heels, and threw him out of the door. He did the same to the second, and the third. Then he caught up the woman of the house, ran with her into the street, threw her into the kennel, saying, "Lie thou there." He went back to the house, tore down the door, broke it in pieces, and threw it into the street. Then he went home: but he was no sooner laid down in bed, than he thought, "Now I am sure the devil will have me." He leaped out of bed, took to the fields, and wandered about all the day. At last he went to his companion, and told him, "Ever since I heard that old fellow preach, I can neither eat nor sleep." "Then,"

said Sam, "take it for a warning, or I will keep thy company no more; else the devil will have us both." David said, "Then what shall we do?" He answered, "Whatever thou doest, I will join the society." David fell a weeping, and said, "If thou dost, so will I, if they will let me." As soon as their design was known, many came running to me, and desired I would not receive either of them. I said, "If they come, I will act according to the best judgment I have." A little before the preaching they came. "Sir," said Samuel, "we are a couple of desperate wicked fellows: but we want to be better. And we beg you, for Christ's sake, to receive us into your society." I said, "Yes, for Christ's sake I will receive you." They looked one at the other, with tears flowing from their eyes, and said, "For Christ's sake receive us now, and let us come in at the love-feast." I said, "I do receive you now, for Christ's sake." After the preaching one desired me to look at David. His body was writhed many ways, and his cries and groans were such as struck terror into those that were near him. I kneeled down and prayed: while I was praying, David started up, and cried aloud, "Glory be to God! my sins are forgiven." At the same time Samuel said, "O precious Lamb of God! all in a gore of blood for me!" David then broke through the people, and caught Sam in his arms, saying, "Come, let us sing the Virgin Mary's song. I could never sing it before; but now my soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit doth rejoice in God my Saviour!"

"Is anything too hard for Thee,  
Almighty Lord of all?"

I married while I was at Wilton. When I was

young, I was frequently at the Earl of Pembroke's. Here I became acquainted with one of the housemaids. We met frequently, and always parted with prayers. She seemed very religious; but when we were married, I soon found my mistake. She was fond of dress, and loved to walk about for pleasure on the Lord's day. She refused to kneel down when I prayed, saying, "I do not love such Presbyterian prayers." I took a book in my hand; but prayed as I did before. Then she kneeled. One evening she was much affected, and rose early in the morning and searched the book to find the prayer. But she could not find it; and afterwards she would not kneel down, whether I had a book or not.

31. One Sunday morning, a little before church-time, being about to go to the sacrament, I came down the stairs. She stood silent at the stair-foot, and then stepped down, struck me in the face, and beat out one of my teeth. She stepped back, sat down in a chair, and wept aloud, saying, "Lord, I cannot help it, I am so tempted by the devil." I went to her, put my tooth into her lap, and went into my chamber again without speaking. It was a sorrowful day with her. The next morning she rose before me: when I came down, I found her weeping. She said, "Can you forgive me?" I made towards the door. She said, "For God's sake, do not leave me." I said, "It is God against whom you have sinned." She wept aloud. I went out, and walked in the fields three hours, praying for her; and when I returned home, I found God had spoken peace to her soul. Nothing would satisfy her, but I must sit on her knees, and hear her praise God. I believe she never lost His love from that hour, but was daily growing in grace. When I set out as a tra-

velling preacher, leaving my children to her care, she never once asked me when I should come home ; but in all her letters said, " I find difficulties, but let not that distress you. I am content. Go straightforward in the work that God has called you to."

32. When I was informed she was very ill, I rode seventy miles in one of the shortest days to see her. I found two young women with her, who came to see her at the beginning of her illness, and never left her after. One of them asked, if they should let her know that I was come. I said, " No ;" and went in softly to her. She looked at me, and said, " My dear husband, I am going to Abraham, to Isaac, and Jacob. I am going to all the prophets, and to the spirits of just men made perfect. I am going to my dear Jesus ;" and added,

" Not a doubt can arise,  
To darken the skies,

Or hide for a moment my Lord from my eyes."

No, not for a moment!" She then paused awhile, and said,

" ' Hark ! hark how they shout  
All heaven throughout !'

Lord, let me come up !" and so departed. I found her clothes had been sold, to procure her necessaries in time of affliction. So that naked as she came into the world, naked did she return.

33. As to my mother, I was her youngest son, and she was the kindest of mothers. Yet it was not till I had preached a whole year, that she would come to hear me. After she had heard, she was all prayer, and soon found peace ; which she enjoyed without

the least interruption to her life's end. Living and dying, she was possessed of that quietness of spirit which in the sight of God is of great price. Her last dying words were, "Lord Jesus, into Thy hands I commend my spirit."

34. Many years ago, when I was at Hornby, in Yorkshire, I had a violent illness. None about me expected I should ever recover. When to all appearance I was near death, Mr. Olivers sent Mr. Mine-thorp to Hornby with a letter, to inform me he would come and preach my funeral sermon, and rejoice over me. The good women that sat round my bed said, "We never had a preacher die here before. We shall have a great company of people to hear the funeral sermon." I heard one of them say, "Now he is going." Meantime the cry of my heart was, "Lord, sanctify me now or never." In that instant I felt the mighty power of His sanctifying Spirit. It came down into my soul as a refining fire, purifying and cleansing from all unrighteousness. And from that instant I began to recover. But O, how slow of heart have I been to believe, and how hard to understand the deep things of God! Before my conversion, I thought, if I repented all my days, and was pardoned at last, it would be a great blessing. But when it pleased God to pardon me, I knew, "now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation." But I had the same conceptions of sanctification, that I had before of justification. I preached it as a slow gradual work. And while I did so, I gained no ground: I was easily provoked, which made me fear lest after I had preached to others I myself should be a castaway. But now, glory be to God, I feel no anger, no pride, no self-will: old things are passed away. All things are

become new. Now I know, he that dwelleth in love,  
dwelleth in God, and God in him!

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THE following character of Mr. Furz was given by  
the Conference of 1800 :—

JOHN FURZ, an aged servant of the Lord. He  
travelled many years in our Connexion, and was a  
zealous defender of our purest doctrines. His mental  
powers were so decayed, that, for several years, he  
seemed sunk in second childhood: but he retained  
his piety, and closed his life in holy triumph, having  
fought the good fight of faith.

**THE LIFE**  
**OF**  
**MR. THOMAS RANKIN.**

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WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

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IN the year 1778 I wrote a short and imperfect account of my life in a letter to the Rev. Mr. John Wesley, which was published in the "Arminian Magazine," in the year 1779. Since that period I have resolved to enlarge that account, by continuing it down to the present time. I have always found narratives of the experience of good men attended with a permanent blessing to my own soul; and particularly so when written in a plain and scriptural manner. I have often lamented that many excellent characters, both ministers and private Christians, have gone to their eternal reward, and have left behind them little or no trace of the dealings of God with them. In some this has been occasioned by the want of ability; and in others, an excess of diffidence and modesty has prevented the church of God from receiving that instruction and consolation which writings of this kind have afforded to thousands. It is this consideration alone which has determined me to enlarge the account of my life already pub-

lished ; as also to add something on that part of which nothing, as yet, has been written. If one soul receive any lasting benefit, to God alone be all the glory !

I was born at Dunbar, in the shire of East Lothian. My parents feared God, and endeavoured to bring up their children in His fear ; all of whom, except two daughters and myself, died young. We were early taught the principles of religion. My father used frequently in the evenings to catechise us, as also the servants. At school we were taught in the same way. By these means the fear of God was early implanted in my mind, so as to make me afraid of doing what other boys did without either fear or shame. While at school I paid close attention to my learning, and made some progress. After a season, I desired my father to let me learn arithmetic ; and, this kind of learning being congenial to my turn of mind, I advanced as far in all the different branches as my master was capable of teaching me. I can say very little about religious impressions while at school ; only I remember that I loved to hear persons converse about religion, and to be in their company. At times I used private prayer, especially when the thoughts of death and judgment came into my mind. When about eleven or twelve years of age I was deeply affected at a sacramental occasion, being permitted to stay at the administration of the ordinance. When I saw the ministers and people receive the bread and wine, and heard the address from the former to the communicants, I frequently burst into tears. At the same time I thought, " If ever I live to be a man, I will be a minister ; for surely if any persons go to heaven, it must be the ministers of the Gospel." Those impressions

often remained for days upon my mind, and led me to reading and private prayer. I believe it was about this time that there was a most tremendous storm of thunder and lightning, such as some of the oldest people had never seen before. This being in the night season made the awful scene more terrible. My sisters, with myself, cried, and prayed, and were in the utmost terror of mind. This solemn night made a deep impression upon me, and led me to prayer. The remarks my father made upon it served also to fix upon my mind the great importance of being prepared for death and judgment. It was about this time that my father had me taught music and dancing. I soon found that these things had a fatal tendency to obliterate the good impressions which from time to time I had found my mind affected with. Parents and guardians of youth are not sufficiently aware how soon young minds are ensnared and contaminated with what are called "genteel accomplishments." To such as have no savour of Divine things, the above remark may appear trifling, and they may sneer at it; but I aver that young people are in the utmost danger from dancing and music: and I have often been astonished that any parents professing godliness should suffer their own children to be taught these things, or turn advocates for them in others. I repeat once more, that a dancing-school, unless conducted by a very peculiar master, who watches over the youth entrusted to him, will soon pave the way for such scenes as both parents and children (if the grace of God do not prevent) will have cause to mourn over when too late.

In the midst of these trifling amusements the Lord in mercy did not leave me to the depravity and

vanity of my own corrupted heart. I was now thirteen years of age, full of vivacity, with good health, and a remarkable flow of spirits. I had an extraordinary dream, which made a very deep impression on my mind, the effects of which remained for a season. I dreamed that I was with some of my schoolfellows in a place which was open to the east, and I was looking towards the skies in that quarter, when all on a sudden the heavens were in a strange commotion; and soon after there appeared large balls of fire, flying from one end of the hemisphere to the other. I called upon my schoolfellows to behold the awful sight; and, while I was speaking to them, some of the balls of fire fell on the earth, and came very near us. We all then ran for our lives, with the balls of fire flying all around us; when, at last, I thought I got into a house, and felt as if I was secured from all danger. Soon after this I awoke in great agitation, but thankful it was only a dream, and not what I imagined in my sleep,—the day of judgment.

The force of education, and a fear of my father, who was very severe in the government of his children, preserved me from many youthful follies, and from sin, both in word and deed. My constitutional sin was a proneness to anger when offended. I do not recollect that I ever began a quarrel with my schoolfellows, as I always dreaded my father's resentment, and the reproof, if not the chastisement, of my schoolmaster. But if I was affronted, my passion rose so high that I regarded no consequences. The moment my passion subsided, I was ashamed and condemned in my conscience; and often resolved I would never be in a passion any more. The terror I was in lest it should come to my father's ears,

made me always ready to make up matters with the boys. He saw in me too much of his own disposition ; and as he had suffered for it in his own mind, he was the more careful to guard me against its pernicious effects. Such was his strength of body, and undaunted courage of mind, that at the time of the rebellion, in the year 1745, (when I was turned seven years old,) he offered to head a party of his townsmen, in order to attack a party of the rebels, who came to Dunbar for the sake of plunder. He had such love to His Majesty and to our happy constitution, that he was ready to spill his blood in the defence of both. I have heard him say, when he laid the matter before the provost and principal men of the town, if they would have consented, and allowed him the townsmen he would have chosen, he would have secured all the plunder the rebels had taken, and made an end of the detachment.

When I was between sixteen and seventeen years of age, my father, after an illness of some months, died in peace. For some time after his death, my mind was seriously and deeply affected ; but, alas ! youthful company, and trifling amusements, gradually drew my mind from the pursuit of those things that made for my present and eternal happiness. I heard my father's advice no more ; and the awe in which I stood of him being removed by his death, I indulged myself in greater liberties than I durst have done during his life. I began to be more fond of music and dancing ; and this led me into vain company, and meetings of young people of both sexes. My mother was too indulgent and fond of me, (as she never had any other son but myself,) and this made her authority but very light over me. I bless God, that I was mercifully preserved from

open wickedness. I do not know that ever I swore an oath in my life; indeed, I felt an entire abhorrence to this vice, and I also detested it in others.

Soon after this, a troop of dragoons came to Dunbar; among whom there were ten or twelve pious men, with several of their wives. As soon as they were settled in the place, they hired a room, and met together for prayer and hearing the word of God every morning and evening. I did not know then, but I have been informed since, that those men were part of the religious soldiers who used to meet with John Haime and others in Germany. The news of soldiers meeting for prayer and praise, and reading the word of God, soon spread through the town: curiosity led many to attend their meetings, and I was one of that number. After a few weeks, some persons had Divine impressions made upon them: the place would scarcely contain the numbers that attended; and it pleased God to make their conversation and prayers a real blessing to several souls. It was not long before several were enabled to testify that they had redemption in the blood of Christ, the forgiveness of all their sins. This soon spread abroad, and made a great noise in the town. As I loved their conversation and prayers, and continued to attend their meetings, I wished to have some conversation with them, that I might know what they meant by knowing their sins forgiven. I met with them and others; but I could not understand them when they spoke of God's Spirit bearing witness with their spirits, that they were the children of God. They urged every scripture that occurred to their minds, to prove their point; but my plea was, "that we might be in the favour of God, and not be assured that our sins were forgiven." I granted,

“that some very peculiar holy people might be assured of the Divine favour; but that it was not the privilege of all the children of God.” This, I thought, was supported by Scripture, and the experience of some whose lives I had read; as also confirmed by the conversation of others, who, I thought, were the most pious persons in Dunbar. I believed the soldiers meant well, but that they were grossly mistaken. Their number, however, increased, and the persecution of the tongue increased also; so that some who had been respectable characters had their names cast out as evil. I could not bear this, and determined not to frequent their meetings as I had done before. It was about this time that some of the Methodist preachers came from Newcastle and preached at Dunbar. This also being a new thing, many went to hear them, and I attended among the rest. I was pleased with all I heard; but I do not remember that any particular impression was made upon my mind. After several of the preachers had paid a visit to the place, and many approved of them, Mr. William Darney came and preached also. His manner was such as gave a general disgust to many of the inhabitants; and, young as I was, I joined the number. I thought, I never heard such nonsense, and such preaching about hell and damnation, from any minister in all my life.

About this time I was invited to the wedding of a farmer's daughter, whose family were intimate with my father while he lived, and the intimacy continued with my mother and myself after his death. I accordingly went, and, as usual, joined in the amusements of the day. After I had danced several times, and was now engaged in a country dance, I was overwhelmed with such dread of mind, that, as soon as

it was concluded, I walked out into the fields, (being in summer,) and felt distressed beyond measure. Several came out in search of me; and when they found me, most earnestly entreated that I would go in and join the dance once more. My answer was, "No, I will dance no more this day; and I believe I never shall dance more while I live." They asked, if I were well. I replied, I was; but was determined that no entreaties should make me alter my resolution. I thank God that I have been enabled to keep my word to the present day.

It pleased God to carry on the work of His grace in the souls of those in whom it was begun, and their number increased; so that a society was formed, and class-meetings were established. At that time I did not understand the nature of class-meetings; and therefore was ready to listen to the idle and foolish talking of those who said, "The soldiers had pardoned such and such a one, after they had confessed their sins to them." The ministers of the town had also begun to say several things from the pulpit, as well as in private, that were unfriendly to the meetings of the soldiers, and those who assembled with them. This was attended with unpleasant circumstances, and made several afraid to go to their meetings. While things were in this situation, I had occasion to call upon one who was joined to the society. She was a woman of good sense, and amiable in her manners, and had known me from a child. After the business was settled that I went about, she accosted me in a most kind and pleasing manner, by telling me she had not seen me for some time at their meetings, and asked me the reasons why I absented myself. I made a very improper excuse. I wanted to be gone; for I felt her words to make a

deep impression on my mind, and the force of truth made me very uneasy. The effects of this short conversation rested upon my mind for some time, as also the conversation of others who were members of the society. The short of the matter was this: I had a sincere desire to serve God and to save my soul, as also to be thought a religious young man; but I had not learned to "sell all for the pearl of great price." I still wanted to mingle harmless amusements with the things of God; and therefore I halted between two opinions, and trimmed between the world and the glorious liberty of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I now resolved to leave home, though much against my mother's will. I told her I could no longer bear to attend to that part of the business which obliged me to attend the public-houses to settle accounts with our customers. In short, I came to a determination to spend some time at Leith, two miles from Edinburgh. I had now an opportunity of sitting under the ministry of that pious preacher, Mr. Lindsay, of North Leith. His sermons were greatly blessed to me, and I began to see the plan of salvation with more clearness than ever I had done before. I had an uncle who lived in Edinburgh; and when I went to visit him, I had also an opportunity of hearing several excellent ministers preach the Gospel. These opportunities were not lost; but still I remained an entire stranger to the knowledge of salvation by the remission of my sins. I went on in this manner for some months, till the sacrament was going to be administered, when I determined, for the first time, to go to the Lord's table. I waited on the minister with one of the elders, with whom I was acquainted. He proposed the usual

questions to me previous to my admission to the ordinance. I replied as well as I could, and told him I had a sincere desire to love God, and walk in His commandments. I received the token, and attended on the sacrament accordingly. The sermons, exhortations at the table, and the administration of the ordinance, were attended with a peculiar solemnity, and greatly blessed to my soul. I found such a happiness as I never had known before. This continued for some weeks, and I could truly say that private prayer and reading the word of God were my delight.

It was about this time that I first heard that eminent servant of the Lord Jesus, Mr. George Whitefield. He was preaching his farewell sermon in the Orphan-House yard, in Edinburgh. I had often before had thoughts of hearing him; but so many things had been said to me of him, that I was afraid I should be deceived. I heard him with wonder and surprise, and had such a discovery of the plan of salvation as I had never known before. I was astonished at myself that I should have listened to those idle tales, and thereby have been kept from hearing this burning and shining light, who had been instrumental in the hands of God for the good of so many thousands of souls. When I understood he was going to leave Edinburgh, I was really distressed. I remembered more of that sermon than of all the sermons I ever had heard; and had a discovery of the unsearchable riches of the grace of God in Christ Jesus; as also how a lost sinner was to come to God, and obtain mercy through the Redeemer. From this time I was truly convinced of the necessity of a change of heart. I now sought the knowledge of salvation with my whole heart; and the measure of

happiness which I had for some time experienced made me to think I was in the Divine favour. I most sincerely desired to devote my soul and body to the glory of God; when I was, all on a sudden, left in darkness. I began to examine myself, if I had given way to any known sin, or neglected any known duty. So far as I had light to discern, I knew not that I had done anything to cause the amazing change I now experienced. I was indeed very unhappy, and the following lines describe my feelings at that time:—

“Driven out from my God, I wander abroad;  
Through a desert of sorrows I rove.”

What to do, or where to go, I could not tell. I thought, “The way of duty is the way of safety, and here will I hold.” I was greatly tempted to believe that all the happiness I had experienced was an entire delusion. Whether from pride or prudence, I cannot say, but I remained silent, and my sufferings were not small. The Lord well knew that it was not a little that would break a headstrong will, and bow a high and proud spirit; and therefore I had cup after cup given me to drink, in order to embitter everything that had opposed, or might oppose, my salvation by grace alone. I mingled my food with weeping, and my complaints with groans that could not be uttered. “I bless Thee for the most severe; and let this stand the foremost, that my heart has bled.”

The time was now drawing near for the sacrament to be administered again; and when I thought of going to the table of the Lord, I was seized with extreme distress. After many painful reasonings, I thought, “Where can I go for ease to my wounded

spirit but to Jesus the sinners' Friend?" I determined, "If I perish, I will perish crying out for mercy." On the Sunday morning I was early at church, waiting upon God in His public ordinances. The subject preached upon was Heb. xii. 24; and the sermon was delivered with many tears and much power from on high. I had often heard Mr. Lindsay with much profit and pleasure, but never before felt what I did under this sermon. My heart was broken to pieces, and now it was that I had a strong hope that the Lord would reveal His love to my heart. I went to the table, and received the bread with a broken, melting, and expectant heart. When the wine was delivered into my hand, the cup being full, a little was spilt on the floor; and that very moment Satan suggested that "Christ's blood was spilt for me in vain!" I scarcely knew how I got the cup to my lips, or how I delivered it to the next person, according to custom. The horror of mind that seized me was inexpressible, and the violence of the temptation continued for several hours. All my pleasing hopes of pardon and peace passed away as a dream. As soon as I got home, I wrestled with God in mighty prayer; but all was dark. Towards the evening a ray of light darted across the dreadful gloom; and hope, with its cheering rays, began to spring up in my soul. I then saw that the dreadful suggestion, that Christ's blood was spilt for me in vain, was only a strong temptation from the powers of darkness. Hopes and fears alternately prevailed, and thus I went on for several weeks.

While I was in this state of mind, I was informed that Mr. Whitefield was expected to preach in the Orphan-House yard next Lord's day. I heard him every time he preached the ensuing week, both even-

ing and morning. O, how precious was the word to my soul! It was sweeter than honey, or the honeycomb. My expectations of Divine mercy rose superior to all my fears. I heard him at every opportunity, till he went to visit Glasgow, and other parts in the west of Scotland. I now saw as well as felt, that I had nothing to do but to come to God, through the Son of His love, and by faith to lay hold on the horns of the altar. I was now led to pray and expect every day and every hour, the moment would arrive when I might say, without a doubt, "My Beloved is mine, and I am His!" O yes! "My soul broke forth in strong desires the perfect bliss to prove." Sometimes I thought I was not ready to lay hold on eternal life. At last I began to reason thus: "Why are His chariot-wheels long in coming?" It then was suggested to me, "Probably you are not one of the elect; and you may seek, and seek in vain." I tasted no pleasant food, my sleep departed from me, and my flesh wasted from my bones; till at last I sunk into despair. One morning, after breakfast, I arose and went into the garden, and sat down in a retired place, to mourn over my sad condition. I began to wrestle with God in an agony of prayer. I called out, "Lord, I have wrestled long, and have not yet prevailed: O, let me now prevail!" The whole passage of Jacob's wrestling with the Angel came into my mind; and I called out aloud, "I will not let Thee go, unless Thou bless me!" In a moment the cloud burst, and tears of love flowed from my eyes; when these words were applied to my soul, many times over, "And He blessed him there." They came with the Holy Ghost, and with much assurance; and my whole soul was overwhelmed with the

presence of God. Every doubt of my acceptance was now gone, and all my fears fled away as the morning shades before the rising sun. I had the most distinct testimony that all my sins were forgiven through the blood of the covenant, and that I was a child of God, and an heir of eternal glory. What I now felt was very different from what I had experienced of the drawings of the love of God for several years past, and when I first partook of the sacrament. I had now no more doubt of my interest in the Lord Jesus Christ, than of my own existence. I could declare that the Son of man had still power on earth to forgive sins; and that He had pardoned my sins, even mine. Now it was that

“ Jesus all the day long  
Was my joy and my song ! ”

And the cry of my soul was,

“ O that all His salvation might see !  
He has loved me, I cried,  
He has suffer'd and died  
To redeem such a rebel as me ! ”

How many times before, when under the most painful distress of mind, I had wished I had never been born ! But now I could bless God that I ever had a being, and fully believed that I should live with God while eternal ages roll. Soon after, I was sent for by a lady, who, observing that I had been in tears, inquired what was the matter. I told her they were not tears of sorrow, they were tears of joy; and then related to her what the Lord had done for my soul. She burst into tears herself, and told me she had been seeking that great blessing for years, but had not found it. She was so deeply affected with what I had told her, and by the power that attended the word, that it was some time before she could

inform me of the business she wished to consult me upon. I have reason to believe it was made an eternal blessing to her soul. As soon as I had finished a little writing which she wanted me to do for her, I went to prayer with her, and left her in tears. I could now look back, and survey the dealings of God with me, even from my childhood; and understood a little of that scripture, "When the Comforter is come, He shall bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." Those words were truly fulfilled in me, "I have girded him, although he has not known Me." How many times did I taste of His love, and how sweetly did the Lord draw me by the cords thereof! But youthful vanities and youthful company choked the good seed. Now I saw why it was that the Lord laid His hand so heavily on my soul, and gave me to feel so keenly the distress of a wounded spirit. This embittered every creature and created thing to my mind, and made me completely willing to sell all for the pearl of great price. In a word, everything, the nearest and dearest connexions on earth, became entirely and totally indifferent to me, when they stood in opposition to the salvation of my soul. I was enabled to give up all, and I found all in my adorable Lord and Saviour.

"Great is the work, my neighbours cried,  
And own'd the power Divine;  
Great is the work, my heart replied,  
And be the glory Thine."

I now embraced an opportunity of writing to one of the young men belonging to the society in Dunbar, with whom I had had many disputes upon religious topics, and informed him what God had

done for my soul. This soon spread through all the society, and afforded matter of praise to God in my behalf; but to others it was only, "Mr. Whitefield has made him religiously mad!" This was no more than I expected; and when it came to my ears, it gave me very little trouble. But I felt some concern, when I was informed that my mother, whom I sincerely loved, and sisters, were very much distressed on my account. But the providence of God soon took care for this also. I had paid very little attention to my body, so that my health had suffered, till I was not able to attend to my business, and had all the appearance of a rapid consumption. The doctor, who had given me some medicines, and found I grew worse, advised me to remove to my native air. I did so; and when I came to Dunbar, my mother and sisters were in great distress to see me so reduced that walking a hundred yards would tire me. By the use of some simple and efficacious medicines, and the benefit of my native air, after the first week, I gained strength every day; so that in six weeks' time, by the blessing of God, I was restored to my former health and strength. About ten or twelve days after I came to Dunbar, as I knew that many things were said to the minister of the parish concerning me, I waited upon him. He had known me from a child, and he was well acquainted with my parents. As soon as he was informed that I was in the house, he sent for me into his study, and desired me to take a seat opposite to him. After a few words about my health, I told him, that I supposed he had heard a variety of things concerning me. He replied, he had, and wished to converse with me himself about those things. I told him I was come on purpose; and then in all simplicity and godly

sincerity informed him of my experience, and boldly declared what the Lord had done for my soul. He heard me with great attention, and when I had done, gave me several friendly counsels; he then arose from his seat, with tears in his eyes, and put his right hand on my head, and said, "My dear Tommy, I always loved you from a child, and I now love you more than ever: may God bless you, and keep you, and make you a blessing in your day and generation!" After he had done, I thanked him, and he desired me to call upon him whenever I thought proper. My views and pursuits were now directed to one thing,—the glory of God, and the salvation of my own soul, and the souls of others. For some weeks indeed, while I remained ill, I thought of nothing but of dying, and going to heaven; but now, being recovered, I felt such love to the souls of my fellow-creatures that I longed to tell everyone what God had done for my soul. My brethren of the society, to whom I had now united myself, rejoiced over me in the Lord; and as soon as my health enabled me, they called upon me to pray in their class and prayer meetings.

It was at this time that thoughts arose in my mind, that I ought wholly to dedicate myself to God in preaching the Gospel. I had already gained some little knowledge of the Methodist economy; but however I loved the preachers and the people, I determined, if ever I preached the Gospel, it should be as a minister in the Church of Scotland; and I had purposed to go to the college in Edinburgh, in order to prepare myself for the ministry. I now had some conversation with the minister of the parish on this head, and also with the Rev. Mr. Whitefield. The result was, I determined, whether I became a

minister or not, to make it my one and only concern, to live to Him who had lived and died for me. I was enabled to do so, and to dedicate all my spare time to reading, prayer, and Divine improvement. The more I did this, however, the more the thoughts of preaching rested on my mind; but I was called to pass through another school, very different from a college, before that period should arrive.

Being now perfectly recovered, and in some degree established in the ways of God, and my parent and other relations made sensible that the change wrought upon me was from God, and not from man; I was called, by the providence of God, to spend a little time longer in Leith. I soon got acquainted with some pious people, and we frequently met together for prayer and spiritual conversation. This was the case both in Edinburgh and Leith, and was attended with a blessing to my soul. At this time we had no regular society in Edinburgh, but there were a few who were united together in Musselborough, six miles from Edinburgh. Some pious dragoons, of the same regiment with those who first brought Methodism to Dunbar, were the instruments, under God, of bringing the same to Musselborough. Several of the inhabitants were awakened to a sense of their danger, and some were also brought to a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. They were formed into a society, and the preachers visited them, as well as the society at Dunbar. I went to see them, whenever I had an opportunity, and we mutually partook of the blessing of the Lord. Thus I went on till the month of October, when the providence of God opened a new scene to my view.

I had been disappointed in my expectations of going to the college; and although the thoughts of

preaching would frequently come to my mind, yet I saw no prospect of such a thing taking place. There was, at this time, an offer made to me, of taking a voyage to Charlestown, in South Carolina. I had a cousin in Edinburgh, who was in the mercantile line; and he and another gentleman offered to send several kinds of goods under my care, to dispose of them to the best advantage in that city, and to bring such returns as were most likely to answer the markets at home. As the prospect was flattering, and I understood the business, I entered into an agreement, and accordingly sailed for that place. The passage was long and tedious, but we came at last in safety to Charlestown. One particular inducement for me to undertake this voyage was, the captain was reported to be a pious man, and of an exemplary character. Another was, that as the prospect of dedicating myself to the work of the ministry was closed, I thought it my duty to employ my time and talents in a way that might tend to my worldly advantage. I had consulted my friends and relatives, and all of them seemed to approve of the step I now took. I always had a strong desire to see foreign countries; and now, I thought, I shall have this desire gratified. I did not properly consider that I was but young in the ways of God, and wanted more establishment therein. However, I had a lesson to learn, and the Lord permitted me to take this step, in order that I might in some measure learn it. Whenever the weather permitted, we had prayers morning and evening; and all the officers, and ship's company, as well as passengers, regularly attended. This, in general, was performed by the captain; and sometimes he called upon me to read and pray also. I had been mentioned to him as a religious young

man ; and he showed a particular regard for me, both in going out and coming home. He would several times call me into his state-room, so called, and converse with me about the things of God. I soon found that he had formerly experienced a real work of grace upon his soul. I also learned that it was not with him as in times past. It was not long after our arrival at Charlestown, that I had a sad proof that he had fallen from grace. His business exposed him to the company of some merchants and captains of ships, and I observed that he came to his ship several times intoxicated. I was very much grieved to see this, and I once took the liberty to hint it to him. As I was but young, and he upwards of forty, if not fifty years of age, I was afraid he would be offended ; but I found the contrary. He was much of a gentleman in his manners, very different from most sea-captains ; which made him receive what I said in a way I scarcely expected. He candidly confessed his being overtaken with liquor, and with tears lamented it ; but, alas ! his spiritual strength was departed from him, so that I saw him, at different times after this, overtaken in the same snare.

The vessel was at Charlestown several months before her cargo was discharged, and a fresh one on board of her. I had an opportunity of taking notice of the place, its inhabitants, and their conduct. The people appeared to be a dissipated and thoughtless generation. The little I saw in public, and what I observed in private companies, made me conclude, that the world, and the things thereof, engrossed their whole attention. The cheapness of rum, and the heat of the climate, were strong inducements for the inhabitants to love drink ; and many of them

did so to excess. I also observed a very great profligacy of manners among the poor blacks, whether they were free or slaves. However, I found there were Lots, even in this Sodom. As I made it a point of conscience to attend the public worship every Lord's day, I observed the places pretty well filled, and the people seemed to hear with attention. The only minister I heard who seemed to speak home to the consciences of his hearers was a Baptist. I attended principally at his chapel, and had reason to bless God for the agreeable seasons I enjoyed under his ministry. I nevertheless found I was not at home, and I did not enjoy that depth of communion with God, either in public or private, which I had experienced before I left Edinburgh. I longed to leave the place; and when the time came, I rejoiced at the thoughts of seeing my Christian friends in Leith, Edinburgh, and Dunbar, once more. We sailed from Charlestown in the month of February, and the vessel arrived at Leith about the middle of April. We had a very stormy passage; but our gracious Lord most mercifully preserved us. Our captain was ill most of the voyage; and what was worse, he made himself too often so, by taking strong drink. He had truly been converted to God, and for years was a burning and a shining light; but that fatal opinion, that he could not fall from grace, had been the bane of his spiritual happiness. He several times took me by the hand, and thanked me; and then said, if God spared him to return home safe, he would go to sea no more.

The company that I was obliged to mingle with at Charlestown, on account of business, was far from pleasing to me; and the want of more retirement was attended with loss to my spiritual happiness.

On my return home, when I compared the state of my mind to that which I experienced before I left Britain, I found that my soul had suffered a real declension. On my knees, and with many tears, I cried to God to restore the joy of His salvation. My mind was much affected with this thought, that I had acted the part of Jonah, and had fled from the presence of the Lord, by making the prospect of gain one of the chief inducements for me to go this voyage; and this was increased, when I reflected on the conviction, that I had so deeply felt, of giving up myself to the work of the ministry. It was then that the thoughts of preaching the Gospel returned upon me with double force.

Mr. Whitefield came to Edinburgh soon after my return from abroad; and I had the pleasure of hearing him, evening and morning, for some days. The Lord, in mercy, made the word by him a great blessing to my soul; so that I soon recovered all that peace and joy in believing which I had experienced twelve months before. My cup now ran over, and the joy of the Lord was my strength. I had now an opportunity of getting acquainted with several pious persons, to whom I was a stranger before I sailed for Carolina.

Mr. Wesley had paid several visits to Glasgow, at the kind solicitation of that good man, Dr. Gillies; but no society was formed there for several years afterwards. As a society was formed at Dunbar in the latter end of the year 1755, and at Musselborough soon after, Mr. Wesley preached at both the above places in the years 1757 and 1759; and was much pleased to see the piety and zeal which the members of each society showed, as well as the congregations that attended. I was absent from Dunbar

at the time of both his visits, and I had not the pleasure of seeing him for two years afterwards. In the year 1760 an opening was made for our preachers to visit Edinburgh and Aberdeen, with some other places in the north ; but it was not till the summer, 1761, that Mr. Wesley preached in the above cities. I came to Dunbar about the month of June, 1759. It was with great pleasure I met with my relatives and Christian friends, after an absence of near ten months. The Lord enabled me to improve the time and opportunities I now enjoyed, both to my own good, and the good of others. Now it was that I first got acquainted with my valuable friend Mr. Mather. For several years there was no regular preaching at Dunbar, only the preachers paid them a visit from Newcastle as often as they could. Mr. Mather's visit was attended with a great blessing to the society at Dunbar, as also to the society at Musselborough. I was greatly pleased, as well as profited, by his preaching and conversation. I never saw anyone before that appeared so dead to all below, and so much alive to God, as also so deeply engaged in His work. I embraced every opportunity of his company and conversation, and the more I saw and heard, the more my heart cleaved to him. I was with him at Musselborough, and stood before him when he preached out of doors, and he leaned on my shoulders, which I thought a very great honour ; although I did not admire the appearance of some who were preparing to throw dirt at him. I had not learned then what it was to go through showers of dirt, stones, and rotten eggs, which I experienced several years afterwards. From the conversation I had with Mr. Mather, I had a very great desire to visit the societies of Alnwick, New-

castle, and Sunderland. In September I set off for Berwick, and from thence to Alnwick and Newcastle. I was greatly pleased, as well as profited, by all I saw or heard, whether in public, or with private individuals. Now it was that I saw Methodism in its beauty, as it reflected its doctrine and discipline, as well as the Divine power that attended the word of God preached. My soul was greatly united to the people wherever I came; and everyone I met with showed me kindness. While I was at Newcastle, in attending the preaching one Sunday afternoon, when Mr. Thomas Lee preached out of doors, he inquired who that young man was, that stood opposite to him, dressed in blue. As soon as he knew where I lodged, he sent for me, and showed me every mark of love and brotherly kindness. He said he was going to the north, in order to visit the societies in those parts, and desired me to go with him; which I most willingly complied with. When we came to one of the country places where he was to preach, he desired me to meet the little congregation that evening. I told him, that I never attempted to preach, and begged to be excused. He then asked, if I never had prayed or exhorted in public. I told him, I had, sometimes, at our little prayer-meetings: then he replied, that I should certainly speak to the people that evening. I entreated him to excuse me: but all I said was in vain; so that I was obliged to comply. I sung and prayed, and said something; but in such confusion, that I do not remember one sentence I delivered. I was heartily glad when I had done, and told Mr. Lee that I hoped he would never ask me to speak or pray any more in public.

After my return to Dunbar, I determined I would spend some time in the north of England. While

at home, my time was principally spent in reading, meditation, and prayer. The Lord was now preparing me for that work unto which He was pleased afterwards to call me. I was assured that I grew in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. In the month of November, Mr. Shent, from Leeds, called at Dunbar, and preached several times. As I had been making up my mind for some time, I now saw my way clear to go with him to Newcastle. After staying a few days there, I went to visit Sunderland, and determined to spend some time in that place. There was something in the spirit and temper of the people that was very pleasing to me, and I soon got acquainted with some who were much devoted to God. My soul increased in the Divine life; and if ever I was sensible of deep communion with God, it was now. I greatly loved the conversation of pious old professors, as I learned more from their experience of the work of Divine grace, than all that I ever conversed with before. To spend an hour with such, was truly pleasing to me; and to this day I remember with gratitude the many useful lessons I then learned. I now saw the whole economy of Methodism in the most favourable light,—the class and band meetings, meeting of the society, body-bands, lovefeasts, &c., I saw the great utility of, and it gave me the utmost pleasure to conform to every part: the whole was calculated to promote the great end for which they were designed,—the glory of God in the salvation of souls. The preachers lodged at the house where I was, which afforded me frequent opportunities of instruction; and although it is now almost forty-four years ago, yet I call to mind, with the utmost pleasure, the salutary effects of those interviews. It is with the

most cordial satisfaction that I record the names of a Cownley, Hopper, Lowe, Rowell, Lee, Oddie, Hosmer, Olivers, and some others, whose names I do not at this time remember. I most unfeignedly thank God for the seasons I enjoyed with all of them. They have all run their race, and finished their course; and as they were all burning and shining lights in their day and generation, they are now in the garner of God, where I believe I shall soon join them, with many others, to part no more for ever!

Before I came to Sunderland, I had, at times, a discovery of the remaining evil of my heart, which at seasons made me very uneasy. In reading the oracles of God, I was clearly convinced that the grand design of the Gospel was not only to bring sinners to enjoy a sense of the Divine favour, through our Lord Jesus Christ, but also to restore them to that holiness without which no man can enjoy God in eternal glory. After I came to Sunderland, I had a discovery of this important truth, in a more distinct and ample manner. I now began to seek this great salvation, as I had never done before; and the more I sought it, the more my soul grew in grace, and in the knowledge of the adorable Saviour. It was also at this time that the thoughts of preaching began to operate with more force upon my mind. This led me to much prayer, that I might not deceive my own soul. As these thoughts occurred, I was determined never to attempt any such thing, unless God should make it as plain to me as the sun at noon-day. Thus I spent the winter, and the early part of the spring, and most sensibly felt that my soul had gained ground in the heavenly race. My one desire was to please God, and to do the will of Heaven;

and I laboured to redeem the time, in the most earnest and useful manner. I frequently strove to put away the thoughts of preaching from my mind; and the more I did so, the more would they return, and penetrate my heart.

As the spring approached, I frequently walked out into the fields; and many a precious moment have I experienced in reading and prayer, at the side of a hedge, when none but the Holy One of Israel either saw or heard me. It was in one of those seasons that I was seized in a very uncommon manner. I had such a discovery of the deplorable state of the human race, by original and actual sin, that I almost fainted away. Words cannot express the view, as well as the feelings, I at that time had, which led me to more earnest prayer, searching the Scriptures, and walking more closely with God. Some time after this, as I was one evening meeting my class, and happy in my soul, I was all on a sudden seized with such horror, as I had never known from the time I knew the pardoning love of God. As soon as the meeting was finished, I went home, and retired to private prayer; but all was darkness and painful distress. I found no intercourse with heaven, and faith and prayer seemed to have lost their wings. For five days and nights I went through such distress of soul as made sleep, and the desire of food, depart from me. I could attend to nothing but my painful feelings, and mourn and weep.

On the fifth day two friends called to see me, and we joined in prayer, and I found more liberty than I had experienced during the time of this painful distress. As soon as my friends were gone, I fell down on my knees, and continued in prayer till I went to bed. I now found a degree of sweetness,

and communion with my Lord once more; and I closed my eyes with the pleasing sensation. I awoke very early next morning, and with such a change in my feelings, that I could scarce allow myself time to dress, before I fell upon my knees to praise God; and when on my knees, had such a view of the goodness and love of God, as almost overcame every power of body and soul. Soon after this, I had such a discovery made to the eye of my mind, of the dreadful state of all the human race, (who were without God, and without hope in the world,) that my knees smote together, and every joint trembled; while these words sounded in my ears, "Whom shall I send? whom shall I send?" My heart replied, "Lord, if I can be of any use, to pluck one of these from the jaws of ruin, here I am, send me." At that moment I felt such love for the souls of my fellow-creatures, as I never had done since I knew the pardoning love of God. A variety of scriptures were now applied to my mind, part of which were the following:—"Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence; touch no unclean thing; go ye out of the midst of her; be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord. For ye shall not go out with haste, nor go by flight; for the Lord shall go before you, and the God of Israel shall be your rereward!" And, "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever." My whole heart cried out, "Who am I, O Lord, or what is my father's house, that Thou shouldest employ such a poor, ignorant creature as I am?" Then it was that these words came with power to my soul: "I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that Thou hast hid these things

from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes ; even so, Father, for so it seemeth good in Thy sight."

If my cup, for some days, had been a cup of inward anguish and distress, it was now filled with joy unspeakable, and full of glory ! It was similar to the overwhelming power of Divine love, which I felt on that transporting morning, when the Lord brought my soul first out of darkness into His marvellous light. The only difference was in this,— I had such a deep discovery of the ruined and deplorable state of man, and of the unsearchable riches of Christ, as I then had no conception of. Such were my feelings, that I thought I could lay down my life, if I might but be anywise instrumental of saving one soul from everlasting ruin. It did not now enter into my mind to think about a genteel provision for the work of the ministry, or of being deeply learned in polite literature, so as to acquire the applause of men ; but only how I might obtain the approbation of God, connected with the salvation of my own soul, and also of the souls of others. In short, my will was so lost in the will of God, that the whole cry of my heart was, " Thy will be done, Thy will be done."

When the overwhelming power of God in some measure subsided, I began to reason about my weakness, and unfitness in every respect for the work of the ministry ; but how kind and gracious was the Lord, in conveying with power the following scriptures to my mind!—" No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper ; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of Me, saith the

Lord." (Isai. liv. 17.) All the above solemn transaction between God and my soul passed in the morning between three o'clock and seven, when my mind settled into a sweet and heavenly calm. Such had been my ignorance and folly, that many times I had said in my mind, "I will never attempt to take a text, or stand up to preach the Gospel, unless God shall condescend to make my call as clear as the apostle Paul's was." The Lord therefore in great mercy took this method to remove all scruples from my mind, and to make it as clear as the sun at noon-day. Who would have thought, that, after such an abundant revelation of the will of God concerning me, I ever should have feared that I had deceived myself, and that the whole was a delusion? But of this in its proper place. I now saw that all the past dealings of God, in the painful as well as the pleasing experience I had gone through, were intended to prepare my soul for this important period. When I was called down to breakfast, all the family observed the pleasing change in my countenance, but they remained strangers to the cause; only I observed, that I was delivered from my painful exercise of mind, and was now exceeding happy in the enjoyment of the love and comfortable presence of God. Indeed, if ever I lived in the suburbs of heaven, it was this day, and for several days after. On the Saturday we expected the preacher; and I could not help praying, in the simplicity of my heart, if what I had passed through was from God, that such a one might come. It was not his regular turn; but the kind providence of heaven condescended to my ignorance and weakness, in sending the very person I had prayed for. I now thought this was a token for good, and fully believed the whole I had gone

through was indeed the work of the Lord. I took the first opportunity that offered to read to him the whole of the late transaction between God and my soul. As soon as I had done it, he replied, "This may be of God, and it may not be of Him; but nothing certain can be said, or a proper judgment formed, till a trial is made." This was a wise and judicious manner of giving me his sentiments; but it cast a damp on my mind, and exposed me to painful reasonings. Nevertheless, matters were ordered so, that I went with one of the local preachers, and supplied his place on the Sabbath. I had occasionally given an exhortation before, but never ventured to take a text till this day; so that this was the first sermon I ever preached. Several of the people took me by the hand when I came down from the pulpit; but I was so ashamed, that I could not look any of them in the face. But this was not all: I had been led to think, if I really was called of God to preach, the Divine power would attend the word in a very remarkable manner, in the conviction and conversion of sinners. This arose from reading Messrs. Wesley's and Whitefield's Journals; as also in hearing Mr. Whitefield myself. I did not know the meaning of that saying, "My time is not yet." Indeed, I concluded I had been mistaken, and had deceived myself; and therefore I resolved to preach no more. In this resolution I returned from the place where I had preached to Sunderland, and was very much tempted and distressed. As soon as I came home, I retired to my room, and poured out my soul before God, most fervently beseeching Him that I might not be deceived, and thereby ruin my own soul. Those who have gone through the same fire and water will understand what I then felt.

It was strongly suggested to my mind, that if ever I attempted to preach any more, Satan would tear me limb from limb! I persevered in prayer till the sweat flowed from every pore, and till I could challenge all the powers of darkness, in the strength of the Lord, to hurt a single hair of my head.

It was about this time that I was more deeply convinced of the necessity of recovering the image of the blessed God. What by my exercise of mind about preaching, and the discovery of inbred sin, it might have been said,

“Commences now the agonizing strife,  
Previous to nature’s death, and second life!”

Sometimes I thought I would preach no more; but when I refrained, I was truly miserable. Through the mercy of God, wherever I went, the people received me with pleasure, and kindly solicited my return among them. But all this did not satisfy me: as I did not see the fruit of my labours, as I expected, I was much cast down and distressed. I did not then know that I had not wisdom or grace sufficient to bear any remarkable success in my preaching. I was enabled, however, to go on my way, if not at all times rejoicing, yet with a pleasing hope I should yet see better days. Early in the spring, 1761, another local preacher with myself resolved to spend the ensuing summer in breaking up fresh ground: a blessing attended our labours, and we were encouraged to go on in the work of the Lord. In the beginning of June, Mr. Wesley being on his return from Scotland, and as I never had seen him, I was desirous to give him the meeting before he came to Sunderland. Accordingly, five or six friends set off from Sunderland, and being informed that Mr. Wesley was to preach at Morpeth at one

o'clock, we set forward; but when we came to Morpeth, we found he had preached at twelve instead of one o'clock. We put up our horses, and hastened to the market-place, where he was giving out the last hymn. We were not too late, however, for the Divine blessing. As soon as I came near to hear the words of the hymn, I was so struck with the presence of God, that if I had not leaned on a friend's arm, I should have fallen to the ground. The words of the hymn were,

"Now, even now, the Saviour stands,  
All day long He spreads His hands."

As I had read all Mr. Wesley's Works, and in particular his Journals, I had formed a very high opinion of him; and the moment I distinctly saw him, and heard his voice, such a crowd of ideas rushed upon my mind, as words cannot express. The union of soul I then felt with him was indescribable.

I had long considered Mr. John Wesley as the father of the Methodists, under God. If Mr. Whitefield was rendered such a blessing to my soul, in my first acquaintance with God, and the things of eternity, I had since learned that Mr. Wesley had been a father to him and others, who afterwards had been burning and shining lights in their day and generation. I could not help saying in my mind, "And is this the man who has braved the winter storm and summer's sun, and run to and fro throughout Great Britain and Ireland, and has crossed the Atlantic Ocean, to bring poor wretched sinners to the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ?" I looked at him with a degree of astonishment, and from my very soul could bless God that He had so highly favoured

me, as to let me see this eminent servant of the King of kings and Lord of lords ! It was now that the foundation of that union was laid, which remained inviolate for thirty-one years, to the time he was called to his great and eternal reward ! I have a thousand times over blessed the God of heaven that ever I saw his face, or heard his voice ; and I shall continue to do so while life remains, and I hope to spend a glorious eternity with him.

As soon as the singing and prayer were concluded, I went to the friend's house where Mr. Wesley was to dine. We had the pleasure of his conversation for some little time, and after dinner rode on to Placey : he preached there at five o'clock, and then rode on to Newcastle. Mr. Wesley's company and conversation by the way made this one of the most pleasant rides that I ever had known. In the course of a few days, Mr. Wesley came to Sunderland, and I had the pleasure of hearing him, morning and evening, while he was there. His preaching was attended with a peculiar blessing to my soul, in giving me a more clear conception of purity of heart, and the way to obtain it, by faith alone ; but when he read some letters in the society, giving an account of the great work of God in London, and some other places, I was so deeply affected with a sense of inbred sin, that I was almost overwhelmed by it. For several years I had seen, and at seasons deeply felt, the need of purity of heart ; but now my soul was pierced with such keen convictions, as gave me no rest, night or day. In short, my heart was so laid open, and so completely dissected by the word and Spirit of God, that I was ready to cast away my confidence, seeing it so desperately wicked.

I wanted to open my mind to Mr. Wesley ; but

the power of temptation shut my mouth, so that I could neither inform him of what I intended respecting my call to preach, nor the present experience of my soul. The Lord in great mercy preserved me from casting away my shield, and sinking in the deep waters, which at times appeared ready to swallow me up. However, I was not suffered to sink under the pressure of this burden. There were a few that were earnestly seeking the great salvation, deliverance from inbred sin; and with them I associated. None of them appeared to me to labour under such deep distress, nor had such deep discoveries of the evils of their heart, as I laboured under. From what I heard of their experience, I was afraid to mention the whole of my feelings, lest I should stumble any of them. The Lord knew what He was preparing me for, and therefore He was pleased to give me to drink deeper of the painful cup, that I might know how to comfort and encourage others. I was also at this time strongly tempted to preach no more, till God had purified my heart, and brought me into this glorious liberty. When I gave way to this temptation, I was so much the more unhappy; and therefore I still continued to preach, and the Lord was pleased to bless my labours. It was about this time that I had an opportunity of conversing with one who professed to love the Lord with all her heart, soul, mind, and strength. Her conversation was much blessed to my soul, and I saw the way of deliverance more clearly than I had done before.

After labouring as in the fire, from the month of June to September, the Lord gave me such a discovery of His love as I never had known before. I was meeting with a few Christian friends, who were

all athirst for entire holiness, and after several had prayed, I also called on the name of the "Deliverer that came out of Zion, to turn away ungodliness from Jacob." While these words were pronounced with my heart and lips, "Are we not, O Lord, the purchase of Thy blood? let us then be redeemed from all iniquity," in a moment the power of God so descended upon my soul, that I could pray no more. It was

"That speechless awe which dares not move,  
And all the silent heaven of love!"

I had many times experienced the power of redeeming love, and in such a manner as I scarce knew whether in the body or not. But this manifestation of the presence of my adorable Lord and Saviour was such as I never had witnessed before, and no words of mine can properly describe it. I can only say "that my soul was filled with serene peace unutterable, and full of glory." It was such a heaven opened in my heart as I never expected to experience on this side eternity. The language of my heart every moment was, "O, what has Jesus done for me! O, what has Jesus done for me!" Soon after, some of the friends present asked, if I had received the blessing of purity of heart. I replied, "I cannot tell what the Lord hath done for me; but this I can say, I never felt such a change, through all the powers of my soul, as I now feel!" When we parted, I left them all in tears; but most were tears of joy. Yet, as I had no particular scripture applied, I durst not say that the blood of Christ had cleansed me from all sin. I longed to retire into private, and to pour out my whole heart and soul to my blessed Deliverer! O, what an evening did it

experience! The windows of heaven were opened, and the skies poured down righteousness, and great was my glorying in God my Saviour.

When the overwhelming power of Divine love began to subside a little, and I had no more such manifestations as I had had the first evening of my great deliverance, Satan began to suggest I had not received purity of heart. So far the tempter would allow, that I had received a very great blessing; but not deliverance from inbred sin. Having none to converse with who were established in that glorious liberty, and therefore a stranger to Satan's devices, I was ready to conclude I might be indeed mistaken. By these subtle suggestions, I was led into hurtful reasonings, and this made way for doubts concerning the glorious work which God had wrought in my soul. However, I still enjoyed liberty, and I felt nothing contrary to love arise in my heart. When I opened my mind to one of the preachers, and told him a little of my experience, he asked me if I thought God had delivered me from the remains of the carnal mind. I replied, "I cannot tell, only I enjoy such a liberty as I never did enjoy since I have known the pardoning love of God." He encouraged me to go forward, and to expect the witness of what the Lord had done for me.

I saw my great business was to keep close to God, and continue my meetings with those few who wished to be all devoted to the Lord Jesus.

In the beginning of October I wrote to Mr. Wesley, and informed him of what had passed in my soul; as also what I had gone through for near two years, concerning my call to preach. He soon answered my letter, and closed it with these words, "You will never get free of all those evil reasonings,

till you give yourself wholly up to the work of God!" Soon after this I went up to London, and embraced the first opportunity of waiting upon Mr. Wesley: he spoke to me as a father to a son, and advised me to decline all thoughts of temporal concerns, and to go into a Circuit. The importance of the work appeared to be such as made me tremble. He desired me to consider the conversation, and call upon him again. In the mean time, I embraced every opportunity of meeting with those whom I observed were all in earnest for deliverance from inbred sin. The kind providence of God soon brought me acquainted with some of the most excellent of the earth, several of whom had been brought into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. With such I constantly associated, and their prayers and conversation were a great blessing to my soul. The Lord removed all my doubts and evil reasonings, and by His grace I knew I loved the Lord my God with all my soul, mind, and strength. In short, I was not ashamed to declare, that I assuredly knew, that the Lord Jesus had purified my heart by faith in His blood, and that I felt nothing contrary to the pure love of God. What seasons of refreshment did I find in the select band, and other private meetings at this time! My soul was like a watered garden from day to day, and my cup was running over. I no longer felt reluctance to go out as a poor despised Methodist preacher; whereas, before this period, I really thought I could have chosen death as soon. I therefore embraced the opportunity of waiting upon Mr. Wesley again, and told him I was willing to labour where he thought proper. He told me, "that Mr. Murlin, who was then in the Sussex Circuit, was going down to Norwich, and that I should

go and supply his place;" and I accordingly went.

Sevenoaks, in Kent, was the first place I preached at. I had paid a very particular attention to the manner of Mr. Wesley, as also of Mr. Maxfield, when preaching in London. I took notice of the pointed and close applications they made to the consciences of the people. As I had them for a pattern, I endeavoured to tread in their steps. I enforced, as well as I could, a free, full, and present salvation. The Lord soon set to His seal, so that some were stirred up to expect pardon, and others deliverance from the remains of the carnal mind. The goodness of God was manifested in a peculiar manner, with respect to my own soul; for I had not been a week in the Circuit, before I had such a discovery of my call to preach, as confirmed all my former experience. The preaching had not been above three years in this little Circuit, and one preacher supplied the whole. I therefore attended to the discipline of the societies, as well as preaching to them; and as all the societies were but small, I always met them, by speaking to every member after I had done preaching. This I did the first time I went round the Circuit; and I soon saw the salutary effects thereof. I knew the state of every member: and this enabled me to address them in public and private accordingly. It pleased God first to visit some in Sevenoaks with a sense of pardon, as also of the virtue of the all-cleansing blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. When I mentioned this as I went round the Circuit, the flame broke out in such a manner as was never seen or felt among them before.

At my third or fourth visit, upwards of twenty found peace with God, and several others were en-

abled to testify that the blood of Christ had cleansed them from all sin. Now it was that I saw the arm of the Lord made bare, and the fruit of my labours, when God had prepared my soul, by many temptations and many blessings, to bear the same. O the wisdom and goodness of God in His dealings with His creatures!

Every day some one or another was brought to the knowledge of God; others filled with His pure love, and several awakened to a sense of their lost and undone state.

In one of those meetings at Ewehurst Cross, it pleased God to visit Mr. Richardson, who was then curate of the parish. A few months after, he came to London, and laboured as a clergyman in connexion with Mr. Wesley, and was a burning and a shining light, till called to his eternal reward. That memorable day, when the Lord visited Mr. Richardson's soul, was such a one as I had never seen. From twelve to twenty persons in the two little societies of Northiam and Ewehurst were brought to the knowledge of God. I was engaged almost the whole of the day in praying and speaking to the people. I was so filled with the love of God, that I scarcely slept the whole night; and yet I got up in the morning as a giant refreshed with wine.

I went to the Conference held at Leeds in July, 1762, where I was appointed to the Sheffield Circuit, and had for my companions John Nelson, William Ingill, and James Clough. The Sheffield Circuit at that time extended to Leicester on the south, and beyond Barnsley in the north. The work of the Lord prospered, but particularly in Sheffield and Rotherham. Many were added to the society, and several brought to know the justifying and sanctify-

ing influences of the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. Derby, Nottingham, Leicester, with several other places, partook of the revival.

At the next Conference, in London, the Fund for the old preachers was first set on foot. I was appointed to labour the ensuing year, 1763, in the Devonshire Circuit, which took in Somerset as well as Devon. My fellow-labourers were Nicholas Manners and William Menithorp. We soon began to see some fruit of our labour. Except Tiverton and Collumpton, the societies were but small, as were the congregations also. We preached a free, full, and present salvation. In some places we saw the fruit of our labours; but not without opposition from those that were without, as well as others that were within. Where we introduced preaching, we had a great deal of tumult and confusion, and also in some of the old societies, particularly in the city of Exeter. However, in most of the societies there was an increase of number; in others, many were savingly brought to the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. We had a very remarkable work in the little society of Northmoulton, both for grace and number. The doctrine, and the witnesses of purity of heart, gave much offence to a well-meaning man, who was a school-master and local preacher. He gave way to a very improper spirit, which hurt the work, and grieved the spirits of many, as well as myself. How much hurt will one jarring string cause in a society, and sometimes in a Circuit! There was one thing which had an unhappy effect on the minds of some in that society, and in other societies of the Circuit. Mr. Menithorp was obliged to leave the Circuit; the preacher who came in his place neither understood

nor loved the Methodist doctrines or discipline, and therefore the discontented found a kind of refuge in him; which hurt the work in several places, and greatly pained my mind. Nevertheless, we had such a revival of the work of God as had not been known for years.

In 1764 the Conference was in Bristol, and I was appointed assistant preacher for Cornwall. I had no sooner given my consent, than my heart was filled with the Divine Presence, and a conviction that I should see such a year as I had never done since I was an itinerant preacher. All the time I remained in Bristol, before I set out for my Circuit, I enjoyed such communion with God as I had not done in all the former part of the Conference. In this happy frame of mind I continued till I reached Redruth. I had little or no acquaintance with those who were to be my fellow-labourers, except two of them; one of whom I could truly depend on, as a man whose soul was wholly in the work of God. As soon as I had time to converse a little with our friends, I found that brother Brammah and his wife had not been idle the few days they had been in Redruth before me. The first evening I preached, the Lord was pleased to give me an earnest of what He was about to do in this town, as well as in all the Circuit. Ten or twelve were awakened under that sermon.

I looked upon this as a token for good, and I believed we should see glorious days of the Son of man. The whole county was one Circuit; but we were obliged to divide it into two: three preachers supplied the west, and three the eastern part. My companions in the west were Messrs. Brammah and Stevens: those in the east were Messrs. Oldham,

Darney, and Whitehead, who were truly alive to God, and they were blessed to the people wherever they preached. Brother Whitehead was only come out, at this Conference, on trial. Brother Darney had preached for years: he had been eccentric in his manner of labouring in the Connexion, and Mr. Wesley, with my brethren, thought I might be able to cure him. For a season he behaved pretty well, and was ready to be advised; but he relapsed into his former conduct, and advanced opinions in public contrary to the Methodist doctrine and discipline; so that we were obliged to call in a young man to labour in his place, and dismiss him from the Circuit, and that by Mr. Wesley's express approbation. The greatest hurt he did was in the society at Plymouth-Dock, where he nearly divided the people. My other fellow-labourers were steady, and alive to God, and much blessed in their labours. The work of God more or less prospered in every society in the county. In two or three months hundreds were added to the societies in the west, and many savingly brought to the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ; many backsliders were restored, and a most wonderful change took place in every parish where the Gospel was preached. Most of the country villages were like Eden, and as the garden of the Lord! It was not uncommon for ten or twenty to find peace with God in one day, or at one sermon or lovefeast, in many places.

After preaching two or three nights in Redruth, I joined about forty, young and old, to the society; and many of them had found a clear sense of the love of God previous to their becoming members. Indeed the Spirit was poured out from on high, and great was our glorying in God our Saviour.

Before I left the country, we had joined near a thousand to the different societies, most of whom were joined to the Lord in one spirit; and some hundreds were enabled to love God with all their hearts. Such a work of Divine grace I had never been witness to before; but these were only drops before the shower, when compared with the number of young persons who were deeply wrought upon, and some children also.

When the time drew near to leave the Circuit, my feelings were such as words cannot describe. The parting was deeply affecting, and in particular with my Redruth friends, who wept and mourned, as one for his first-born. Nine out of ten of those friends are gone to their eternal reward; and I hope to meet them

“ On yonder happy plains,  
Where love in endless triumph reigns.”

The Conference was this year, 1765, held at Manchester, for the first time. The ride was long, and the weather extremely hot, which afflicted me and my companions not a little. The heat was very great during the Conference, so that I was seized with fever, which confined me eight weeks at Portwood-hall, near Stockport. Mr. and Mrs. Mayer, with their kind son, paid all the attention to me in their power. My life was in great danger; but, by the blessing of God and the judicious treatment of the apothecary, the fever took a favourable turn, and I began to recover.

During my affliction, my hope was full of a glorious immortality, and I felt a desire to depart and be with Christ, which appeared to me to be far better than to live any longer on earth. The Lord, however, saw fit to protract my life; and as soon as I was

able to travel, I set out for my Circuit. I was appointed to spend part of the year in the Newcastle, and part in the Dales, Circuit.

The good air of the north had a salutary effect on my health; so that in a few weeks I was able to go through my accustomed labour. My fellow-labourers were Messrs. Robertshaw and Ellis; they were worthy, steady, and useful men. We laboured in love, and had some degree of prosperity in the Circuit; but not equal to what I had seen in Cornwall.

At the next Conference, held at Leeds, I was stationed for the Epworth Circuit. I had for my companions Messrs. Brammah and Harrison. I was remarkably well in my health when I came into the Circuit; but I had not been above two months in it, when I was seized with the fever and ague. The disorder hung about me all the ensuing year, so that my labours were rendered a burden to me. Nevertheless, the work of the Lord revived, and we saw the fruits of our labours among the people.

I went to the Conference held in London, 1767. Our friends in the Epworth Circuit having written to Mr. Wesley for me to remain with them another year, he complied with their request. My journey to London, and back to Epworth, was useful to my health; so that I had no return of my ague the ensuing year. I had abundant reason also to bless the Lord, that I saw more fruit of my labours the second year, than I had done the first. My fellow-labourers were earnest and useful men; and we went on hand in hand in love, and the blessing of the Lord attended our steps.

The following Conference was held at Bristol, where I was appointed to labour among my friends in the west of Cornwall once more. Mr. Wesley

visited Cornwall this autumn, and his visit was rendered a blessing to many. A peculiar circumstance took place this year, which I cannot pass over in silence. Among the young people who were brought to the knowledge of God when I was in Cornwall before, there was a young woman in St. Ives, about fourteen or fifteen years of age, amiable for her years, both in sense, person, and piety: she then lived with an old lady, a relation, whose fortune she would have possessed, had she survived her. When the young woman heard I was appointed to Cornwall again, she said, "Mr. Rankin is come to preach my funeral sermon;" and so it happened; but she was taken from the evil to come. Having formed a connexion with a young gentleman who was a stranger to vital religion, she was so sensible of the snare that lay before her, that she several times told me, she believed the Lord would prevent their marriage. She had suffered loss in her soul on this account; but the Lord in mercy gave her repentance before she was seized by the illness which terminated in her death. I believe I shall meet her spirit in heaven. I mention the above to show the danger which pious young persons are in from forming connexions with those who do not walk in the paths that lead to glory.

When I had gone round the Circuit, I found cause for mourning over several, who had once run well, but who had turned aside from the holy commandment delivered unto them. I determined to do all in my power to call the wanderers back. My fellow-labourers were zealous, and alive to the Lord; and we saw some fruit by a little revival in some places. Some few that were eminently useful, four years ago, had suffered loss; but it pleased God to stir them

up once more. Upon the whole, we had a pleasant and profitable year; but not to be compared with the former.

The Conference for 1769 was held in Leeds. I was stationed for the London and Sussex Circuits. Near the latter end of March I set off from the city to meet Mr. Wesley at Birmingham, in order to accompany him in his tour through the kingdom. Mr. Helton went with him also. Mr. Wesley's plan and design were, if, in any place which he visited, there was any particular Divine influence upon the congregation or society, to leave one of us there for a few days, and then we were to meet him again at a place appointed.

Mr. Wesley preached in a variety of places; but nothing very particular took place till we reached Manchester. Here there was the appearance of a revival among the people, and Mr. Wesley left me for a few days that I might endeavour to promote it. It found it a time to be remembered. I had not experienced such a season since I left London. The power and presence of God were among the people in a very wonderful manner. I afterwards met Mr. Wesley at Bolton, on his way to Glasgow. We had long and tiresome rides, and slept several times at inns by the way. Mr. Wesley left me to spend a few days at Glasgow, after he had gone for Edinburgh; and I hope my labours among the people were not in vain. After I had done preaching, and met the society on the Sunday evening, ten or twelve came to speak to me, and to request they might be admitted into the society. On my way to meet Mr. Wesley at Perth, my mare fell with me, and cut her knees so much, that I was obliged to go to Edinburgh. "What I do, thou knowest not now, but

thou shalt know hereafter!" This accident made me visit Dunbar sixteen or eighteen days sooner than I should have done; where, to my great surprise, I found my mother on her death-bed. I attended her in her last moments; and I sincerely hope I shall meet her in that day when the Lord maketh up His jewels. She had always been a tender and indulgent parent to me; and her best interests, present and eternal, always lay near my heart. I could not help admiring the hand of Providence that had arrested me on my journey, by the misfortune which befell my mare, that I might once more see my mother before she died. Near the time of my mother's death, one of the most amiable members of the society died also. She was a sensible and pious woman: I preached a funeral sermon both for her and my mother.

Mr. Wesley soon came to Dunbar; and my much-esteemed friend Dr. Hamilton did all in his power to make his visit agreeable. Mr. Wesley desired me to spend a week or two more at Dunbar, and then to follow him into England, and I afterwards joined him at Leeds. Mr. Helton was left behind in the north, as he could not bear the long journeys.

The Conference was in London in 1770; and after it was concluded, Mr. Wesley expressed a desire for me to accompany him to the west of England. We had many refreshing seasons in different places; but we had one in Redruth that exceeded them all. Here the windows of heaven were, as it were, opened, and the skies poured down righteousness. I believe there was not a dry eye in the whole congregation. I do not remember that we had such a remarkable season in all our journey; although we had many displays of the power and love of God.

Mr. Wesley returned by Bristol; and after his full time was spent in that city, and the places adjacent, he set off for Portsmouth, and I returned to London with Mrs. Wesley, where I remained for the rest of the year.

In the latter end of October the account arrived of the death of that venerable servant of God, Mr. Whitefield. Mr. Wesley preached his funeral sermon at Tottenham-Court chapel, on the Sunday morning, and at the Tabernacle in the evening. It was one of the most awful and solemn sights which I ever beheld. The man I greatly loved was now gone to his eternal reward; and he who preached his funeral sermon is also now gone, and has joined him, and the whole assembly and church of the first-born whose names are written in heaven. A little while, and we shall all meet, to part no more for ever. Of all the men I ever knew, the above two eminent servants of God claimed my deepest regard and warmest affection.

When the time of the Conference drew near, I found a desire to spend a little more of my life with my friends in Cornwall: this desire met with Mr. Wesley's entire approbation; so that at the Conference in Bristol, 1771, I was stationed for the west once more. I did not, however, see the days which I had formerly seen in those parts; and I could only pray, "Lord, let Thy kingdom come." I could truly appeal to the Searcher of hearts, that the prosperity of His kingdom was more to me than the whole world; yea, than life itself. I continued to labour till the Conference drew near, and then went, with some of my companions in the vineyard of my Lord, to Leeds, where it was, according to rotation, held. Here I met with Mr. Webb, who had lately arrived from America. Mr. Wesley had been dissatisfied

with the conduct of those who superintended the rising work there; and while I was in London he had frequently mentioned this to me. I had made it matter of much prayer, and it appeared to me that the way was opening for me to go. When the work in America came before the Conference, Mr. Wesley determined to appoint me superintendent of the whole; and I chose my much-esteemed friend and brother Shadford to accompany me to that continent. I had proved his uprightness, piety, and usefulness in several Circuits, where he had laboured with me, and I knew I could depend upon him. It was settled that we should sail in the spring, and in the mean time, that I should labour in the York Circuit. I went accordingly, and remained in those parts from the Conference till about the latter end of March. During the time I spent in this Circuit, I considered deeply and with much prayer the importance of the work which lay before me. It had dwelt upon my mind, more or less, for some years; and the nearer the period arrived, the greater it appeared to me. The thoughts of leaving Mr. Wesley, as well as my brethren, whose counsel and advice were always at hand, and ready on every trying occasion, was no small exercise to my mind. I was about to bid adieu to my relatives, and to one whom I loved as my own soul, and who afterwards was my partner in life for nineteen years; but the consideration of the work of God, and the prosperity of Zion, swallowed up every other concern. I rode to Birmingham to receive my last instructions from Mr. Wesley. The interview was pleasing and affecting, as well as instructive, which I hope to remember to my latest breath. I went from Birmingham to London, where I spent a few days, and prepared some little matters

for my voyage. After taking a solemn and affectionate leave of my friends in London, I went on for Bristol, from whence the ship was to sail for Philadelphia. I found my much-esteemed friend Mr. Pawson, with Mr. Allen, at Bristol, who laid themselves out to make everything easy and comfortable to us during our voyage. Mr. and Mrs. Webb had taken care to arrange all things respecting our provisions; and my business was to take care of what books and clothes we should want for our future use and accommodation. For what remains, and of the five years I spent abroad, till my return to London, in the beginning of June, 1778, I refer the reader to my journal during that period.

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*An Extract of Mr. Rankin's Journal, during the space of near five Years' Residence in North America; with some cursory Remarks on the Natural History of the Country.*

ON Good Friday, April the 9th, 1773, I embarked on board the "Sally," Captain Young, commander, bound from Bristol to Philadelphia. My fellow-passengers were, Mr. and Mrs. Webb, Messrs. Shadford, Yerbury, and Rowbotham. Besides the ship's company, we had several steerage passengers and indented servants. The wind was fair from Pill, and soon brought us down to the Isle of Lundy, where our pilot left us.

Saturday, 10th.—The wind favoured us, so that we made good way down the Bristol Channel. All the passengers were extremely sick. We began, however, to have morning and evening prayers in the cabin, desiring all who possibly could to attend; and

the Lord favoured us with His blessing. Sunday and Monday, the wind blowing fresh from the north-west, we soon got clear of the land; but all the passengers continued to be more or less sick, so that we could not observe that regularity in Divine worship which we desired.

Tuesday, 13th.—We spent some time this morning in exhortation as well as prayer, and had most of the sailors and steerage passengers present. The Lord was in the midst of us, and attended our meeting with power from on high. Wednesday and Thursday, the wind blew very hard, and the sea ran high, the ship rolled much, which made it very uneasy to most of the passengers, and deprived them of sleep. We called upon the Lord, and found Him a very present help in time of need.

Friday, 16th.—The wind shifted about to the north, and blew a pleasant gale. The ship glided sweetly along, and kept her proper course. We now settled our plan how we should divide our time in future. In the morning before breakfast we had public prayer, for all the passengers and ship's company. At twelve o'clock we spent half an hour in singing and prayer among ourselves. At six o'clock in the evening we did the same; and at eight we had all on board the ship to attend the evening service. This practice we were enabled to continue as long as we were on our passage to America.

Sunday, 18th.—The weather was pleasant, and we had the cabin full at morning prayer. Captain Webb added a word of exhortation, and it was attended with the Divine blessing. At eleven o'clock Mr. Shadford preached on the quarter-deck. Passengers and sailors paid the deepest attention; and surely it will not all be as water spilt on the ground.

At seven o'clock we concluded the Lord's day with exhortation, singing, and prayer; and I found much liberty and enlargement of heart. We were led out, in earnest prayer for our friends and Christian brethren in England, as also that God would open a great and an effectual door for the spreading of His Gospel among those to whom His mercy and providence were now sending us. Indeed, we felt the gracious influence of the Divine presence so amongst us, that we could scarcely conclude. The Lord did indeed open the windows of heaven, and the skies poured down righteousness.

Sunday, 25th.—The wind continued to blow fresh at north-west all this day, so that we made a good stretch to the west-south-west. After spending some time in reading and prayer, with profit and pleasure, I preached to all who could attend; and some felt the power of the word to alarm and quicken their dead souls. Mr. Webb gave an exhortation at six o'clock, and we concluded the day with praise and mutual prayer. Upon the whole, this day was spent in an agreeable manner. Blessed be the name of the Lord for ever! Monday and Tuesday, the wind was fair, and it blew a pleasant gale; which enabled us to proceed a good way westward. We continued our usual exercises, morning, noon, and night, to all who could attend.

Saturday, May 1st.—We are now come more than half way towards Philadelphia. All on board are well, and no accident of importance has befallen any one. The praise and glory we will ascribe unto Thee, O Thou Fountain of all happiness, and God of all consolation! My soul this day longed for more close and deep fellowship with God, and breathed her wishes to the skies.

Monday, 10th.—The wind was rather contrary all last night as well as to-day, so that we advanced but slowly on our way: the weather, however, was pleasant, which made our sleep and time more agreeable. Our public and private devotions were attended with a Divine blessing this day. I found occasion for all the grace bestowed, to bear with the peevishness of some, and the ignorance of others. It is a great thing to be enabled at all times to speak the truth in love, so as to do good, and to have the approbation of God and our own hearts. To do and suffer the will of God contains more of Christianity than I have sometimes been aware of.

Tuesday, 11th.—I was much exercised with a violent headache all this day, as also divers inward temptations. May I ever be enabled to say, “Welcome cross, as well as crown!”

Wednesday and Thursday, the weather continued pleasant, and the wind a little more favourable. I was refreshed with rest, but more abundantly so by the presence of God, both in public and private.

“His presence makes our paradise,  
And where He is, is heaven.”

Sunday, 16th.—Early this morning it began to blow hard at south-west. The motion of the ship made several of my fellow-passengers sick. After our morning reading and prayer, I preached from Rom. vi. 23. I found a measure of freedom; but still preaching on board a ship is rather uncomfortable. At six o'clock in the evening, brother Webb closed the day with exhortation and prayer. The word seemed to lay hold on some of their hearts, and they began to show it by their tears. May the God of love have mercy upon their souls! About ten

days ago, several of the indented servants were taken ill of a fever, and were for some time delirious. Having some medicines on board, I treated them as Dr. Tissot prescribes, in his "Advice to the People;" and it pleased God that they all soon recovered. I attended them with food, as well as medicine; and now that they were better, and able to attend Divine service, I discovered that my poor labours had not been in vain in the Lord.

Friday, 21st.—It is just six weeks since we sailed from Pill, and so far the Lord hath conducted us. "The Lord liveth, and blessed be the Rock of my salvation."

Monday, 31st.—We sounded this evening, and for the first time found ground, at near fifty fathoms. We concluded the day with hearty prayer and praise to God for all His favours towards us.

Tuesday, June 1st.—We were enabled to lie mostly west all last night, and we were favoured with a fine breeze, so that we advanced swiftly towards the land. Between eight and nine in the morning, we saw it, and soon after a pilot-boat, which came alongside, and put a pilot on board a little after dinner. By the wind we were driven to the leeward of Cape May, on the Jersey shore. We beat up to the windward all the afternoon, in order to open the way, that we might have a fair wind up the Delaware river. As we drew nearer the shore, the pleasing view of the green trees, and many of them towering high above the rest, made the prospect delightful. None can conceive, but those who have experienced it, the sensations that arise in the breast on seeing the land, after some weeks of viewing nothing but the sea and open firmament. I believe we all felt grateful to the God of all our mercies, and

most earnestly prayed that He would go with us to a strange land and among a strange people. The prospect was charming and delightfully pleasant on both sides of the river. The spreading trees, and the great variety of shades, heightened the scene; with the addition now and then of a plantation, with large orchards of peach and apple trees, as also large fields of Indian corn. Indeed, I never beheld such a lovely prospect in any part of my life before. We came to anchor late in the evening, opposite Chester, about sixteen miles below Philadelphia, after a run of above one hundred miles from six in the morning. I felt but poorly most of the day, for want of rest the last night, occasioned by my tooth-ache returning with redoubled violence. I was enabled to look to God, and in some degree to live to Him. My cry was to be wholly devoted to Him who had done so much for my soul, and that the remainder of my days might be wholly consecrated to His glory.

Friday and Saturday, I was employed in getting our trunks and boxes on shore. I preached on Friday evening for the first time, and afterwards met the leaders of classes and bands. Upon the whole, I have reason to be thankful for what of the Divine presence I have felt this day, as well as in His service this evening. Saturday evening, Mr. Shadford gave a warm exhortation to all who attended. I found the want of more retirement since I came on shore. My soul cannot live without it.

As I am now, by the providence of God, called to labour for a season on this continent, do Thou, O Holy One of Israel, stand by Thy weak and ignorant servant! Show Thyself glorious in power, and in Divine majesty. Let Thine arm be made bare, and stretched out to save, so that wonders and signs may

be done in the name of the holy child Jesus. From what I see and hear, and so far as I can judge, if my brethren who first came over had been more attentive to our discipline, there would have been, by this time, a more glorious work in many places of this continent. Their lovefeasts, and meetings of society, were laid open to all their particular friends; so that their number did not increase, and the minds of our best friends were thereby hurt.

Sunday, 13th.—Brother Asbury preached in the morning at seven o'clock, from Ruth ii. 4. During the sermon I was led to reflect on the motives which induced me to leave my native land, and Christian friends and brethren, and cross the Atlantic ocean, to a land and people unknown. I could appeal to God, with the utmost sincerity of heart, I had only one thing in view, His glory, the salvation of souls, connected with my own. In a moment the cloud broke, and the power of God rested upon my soul, and every gloom fled away, as morning shades before the rising sun. I had then faith to believe, that I should see His glory, as I had seen it in the sanctuary. At six o'clock in the afternoon I preached from Judges iii. 20. After preaching, I met the society. The Lord was in the midst, as a flame of fire among dry stubble. Great was our rejoicing in the God of our salvation. Blessed be God, sorrow may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning! This has indeed been a day of the Son of man, both to my own soul, and the souls of many others. The praise, O Lord, will I ascribe unto Thee!

Monday, 14th.—Brother Asbury preached at five o'clock in the morning, and I preached in the evening. The Lord was in the word, and crowned it with His Divine blessing. I spoke my mind freely

and fully to the society, and I trust not in vain. One thing struck me a good deal this day. I was really surprised at the extravagance of dress which I beheld, and in particular among the women. I very well remember I observed to a friend, that "if God had a love for the inhabitants of this city, He would surely send some sore chastisement upon them." Little did I think then of the unhappy war that followed, in the calamities of which the people of New York had a large share. Indeed, the pride of dress, and luxury of every kind, had risen to a great height. I could not help taking notice of it when I met the society, and earnestly entreated them not to conform to this world.

Monday and Tuesday, I had an opportunity of conversing with many of the members of the society in private; and had reason to bless God, that I found several deeply awakened to a sense of inbred sin, and earnestly seeking entire deliverance from the last remains thereof. Others, who had been resting in good desires, were cut to the heart, and cried out with tears, "What shall I do to be saved?" Some also I found, who were newly awakened, and desired to be admitted into the society.

Sunday, July 4th.—I preached in the morning at seven. Blessed be God, I found freedom and tenderness, to apply the word in a particular manner to those who were groaning for pardon of sin and for purity of heart. Brother Asbury preached in the evening a home Methodist sermon, and the Lord crowned it with a Divine blessing. We concluded the day with a general lovefeast. The people spoke with life and Divine liberty, and in particular some of the blacks. The Lord was present indeed, and the shout of the King of Glory was heard in the camp of Israel.

Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, we had our first little Conference. There were present seven preachers, besides brothers Boardman and Pilmore, who were to return to England. The amount of all the members in the different societies did not exceed one thousand one hundred and sixty. From the wonderful accounts I had heard in England, and during our passage, I was led to think there must be some thousands awakened, and joined as members of our societies; but I was now convinced of the real truth. Some of the above number, I also found afterwards, were not closely united to us. Indeed, our discipline was not properly attended to, except at Philadelphia and New York; and even in those places it was upon the decline. Nevertheless, from the accounts I heard, there was a real foundation laid of doing much good, and we hoped to see greater things than these. The preachers were stationed in the best manner we could, and we parted in love; and also with a full resolution to spread genuine Methodism, in public and private, with all our might. It was thought proper that I should spend a little more time at New York, and brother Shadford at Philadelphia.

For some days past I have felt the Redeemer's presence in a most sensible manner; but still I want more life, light, and love: I want to be entirely devoted to God, and to walk before Him as Enoch and Abraham did.

Saturday, I met the children at four, the band-leaders a little after seven, and the bands at eight o'clock in the evening. The presence of the Lord was in the midst; but I wanted to see more freedom and openness among the people: when this should be the case, I hoped we should have a greater blessing.

Sunday, 15th.—Mr. Pilmore preached in the morning, and I supplied the evening. I met the society afterwards, and spoke my mind plainly of some things which tended to hinder the work of God and in which I sincerely desired to see an amendment. If love and harmony do not prevail among leaders and people, it is impossible for the work to prosper among them. A party spirit has greatly hindered the work of God in this city: I long to see it torn up by the very roots.

Sunday, 29th.—I preached at the usual hours, morning and evening, and afterwards met the society. In some good degree, this has been a Sabbath of rest to my soul. Blessed for ever be the name of the Lord for all His mercies. I long to be holy in life, and in all manner of conversation. I was assisted by the labours of brother Pilmore the ensuing week; having returned from a journey in the country. He preached with more life and Divine power this week than he has done since I landed at Philadelphia. Blessed be God that he is returning to that simplicity of spirit that made him so useful when he first came over to America. Whatever we lose, let us never lose that simplicity which is attended with life, light, and love, and with power from on high. If ever a Methodist preacher loses this temper of mind, the glory is departed from him. I went through some close inward exercises this week; but out of all the Lord delivered me.

Sunday, September 12th.—Brother Pilmore and I divided the labours of the day. The rainy weather made our congregations thin; but those who did attend found it good to be there. For some days past my soul has intensely breathed after full conformity to the blessed God. I can truly say, "As

the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so my heart panteth after the living God." Thou that knowest all things knowest that I desire to love Thee with all my soul, mind, and strength. Hasten, Lord, the moment when there shall be nothing in my soul but Thy pure love alone.

Sunday, 26th.—I preached in the morning at seven, and in the evening at the usual time. I found more liberty in the morning than I expected. After breakfast I went to St. Paul's, as I always have done, to public worship. After service was over, I retired to my room to wrestle with God in private prayer. My soul for several hours was indeed in the garden. I did indeed drink a little of that cup. Towards evening I felt a degree of liberty of soul, and the word was attended with some power from on high. O, how I long to see the work of God break out on the right hand and on the left! "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right arm forget its cunning," and let me be bereaved of my only joy!

Monday, October 4th.—I began visiting all the classes, previous to my leaving New York for a season. Upon the whole, I had reason to be thankful, and to bless God for what He had done for many of their souls. Brother Boardman divided the labours of this week with me; which, indeed, was a blessing to the people, as well as to my poor tried mind and feeble body.

Sunday, 10th.—Brother Boardman preached this morning, and I in the evening. I found a measure of liberty, but abundantly more in the lovefeast which followed. The Lord did sit as a refiner's fire on many hearts. I would fain hope that our gracious God is reviving His work in the hearts of the

people. Indeed, from the testimony of many this evening, I had reason to believe that the great Head of the church was better to us than all my fears. I hear no particular complaint of any member; and I find several have of late found peace with God, while others are greatly stirred up to seek all the mind that was in Christ Jesus. I also gave notes of admission to several new members. My own soul breathed after entire conformity to her living Head. My cry was, "Give me, O Lord, constant union and deep fellowship with Thee. O, let me bear the image of the blessed Jesus, and fill me with all the fulness of God."

Thursday, 28th.—We set off early in the morning, and reached Charlestown to dine, and crossed the great river Susquehannah, at the lower ferry, about four o'clock. We then set off for a Mr. Dellam's, at Swan-Creek, where we met with a friendly and hearty welcome, both from him and his wife. I had not found myself so well, no, not for several months, as I found for these few days past, and especially since I left Philadelphia. We had a most pleasant journey for man and beast. If I had not crossed several large rivers before, I should have been a good deal surprised in crossing the Susquehannah. Where we crossed, I have reason to believe it was eight times broader than the river Thames at London-bridge. Indeed, several of the rivers that I have already crossed are grand beyond conception. The river Delaware, and Hudson's river, as well as the Susquehannah, are grand sights. The large trees on the sides, and the islands in the midst, form a pleasing prospect.

Sunday, 31st.—I preached this morning at eleven o'clock, where many had come from the country

around. Such a season I have not seen since I came to America. The Lord did indeed make the place of His feet glorious. The shout of a King was heard in our camp. From brother Waters's I rode to Bush chapel, and preached at three o'clock. There also the Lord made bare His holy arm among the numbers who attended. From the chapel I rode to brother Dellam's, and preached at six o'clock; and we concluded the day with prayer and praise. This has indeed been a day of the Son of man. To Thy name, O Lord, be the praise and glory!

Monday, November 1st.—I rode from brother Dellam's to Bush chapel, and preached at ten o'clock. From thence I rode to Deer-Creek, and preached at three, and afterwards met the society. The flame of Divine love went from heart to heart, and great was our glorying in God our Saviour. I spent the evening in praise and prayer with many of our friends, who had come to attend the Quarterly Meeting.

Wednesday, 3d.—After breakfast we finished the rest of our temporal business, and spent some time with the local preachers and stewards. At ten o'clock our general lovefeast began. It was now that the heavens were opened, and the skies poured down Divine righteousness. The inheritance of God was watered with the rain from heaven, and the dew thereof lay upon their branches. The Lion of the tribe of Judah got Himself the victory in many hearts. I had not seen such a season as this since I left my native land. Now it was that the Lord burst the cloud, which had at times rested upon my mind ever since I landed at Philadelphia. O Lord, my soul shall praise Thee, and all that is within me shall bless Thy holy name. I sincerely hope that

many will remember this day throughout the annals of eternity.

Philadelphia, Sunday, December 19th.—Brother Pilmore preached morning and evening. As he and brother Boardman are soon to depart for Great Britain, I thought it was highly proper they should preach as often as they could while they were with us.

Saturday, 25th.—We had a happy Christmas-day. Many praised God for the consolation. For six weeks past we have had such weather as I never saw in England or Scotland. Scarce a cloud to be seen in the sky. In general there was a small hoar-frost in the night, and clear sunshine all the day. The roads were now as dry as if it had been midsummer.

Sunday, 26th.—Brother Pilmore preached his farewell sermon in the evening, and we concluded the day with a general lovefeast. The presence of the Holy One of Israel was in the midst, and many rejoiced in hope of the glory of God. Next day he set off for New York, from whence brother Boardman and he were to sail for England. Yet a little while, and we shall meet to part no more. The ensuing week being the close of the year, I hope it was employed and improved to the glory of God.

Sunday, January 30th, 1774.—This day was most intensely cold indeed. I never felt the like of it in all my life. The Delaware was frozen over, so that yesterday numbers came from the Jersey shore over to Philadelphia on the ice to market. Such a strange sight I never beheld before. To see a river, a mile broad, thus frozen over, and such numbers of people passing and repassing on the ice, was quite new to me. Few, comparatively speaking, attended the word, through the violence of the cold.

Sunday, February 6th.—The weather being a little more moderate, more attended the morning and evening service than last Sunday. I felt my body as if bruised all over, by the effects of the cold last week. We were enabled, however, to keep up our meetings, and could bless God for the consolation. I was enabled, also, to attend all our meetings the ensuing week, and to bless the name of the Lord for His mercy towards us.

Sunday, March 6th, New York.—I was better this morning, and preached now, and in the evening. The congregations were large, and the presence of the Holy One of Israel was in the midst. Surely I shall yet have pleasure in this city, to compensate for all my pain. I went through the duties of the ensuing week with pleasure. I observe that the labours of my fellow-labourer brother Shadford have not been in vain. The spirit of love seems to increase among the people.

Sunday, May 22d.—I found freedom to declare the word of the Lord this day; and I trust the seed sown will produce some fruit to the glory of God. We concluded the evening with a general lovefeast, in which meeting the Lord's presence was powerfully felt by many persons. Many declared, with great freedom of speech, what God had done for their souls. Some of the poor black people spoke with power and pungency of the lovingkindness of the Lord. If the rich in this society were as much devoted to God as the poor are, we should see wonders done in this city. Holy Jesus, there is nothing impossible with Thee!

Monday, 23d.—After preaching in the morning, I prepared for my journey to Philadelphia, in order to meet my brethren in our second little Conference.

I found great freedom to speak to my fellow-passengers, both in the stage and in the passage-boats. In this respect I was enabled to redeem the time, and the Lord helped me to be faithful to the souls of my fellow-sinners. In these passage-boats, where there are sometimes thirty, forty, or fifty passengers, there are good opportunities of speaking a word for God. The bread that is then cast upon the waters may be seen after many days.

Wednesday, 25th.—Our little Conference began; and ended on Friday, the 27th. We proceeded in all things on the same plan as in England, which our Minutes will declare. Everything considered, we had reason to bless God for what He had done in about ten months. Above a thousand members are added to the societies, and most of these have found peace with God. We now labour in the provinces of New York, the Jerseys, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia. We spoke our minds freely one to another in love; and whatever we thought would further the work, we most cheerfully embraced it. We had now more than seventeen preachers, who were to be employed the ensuing year, and upwards of two thousand members, with calls and openings into many fresh places. We stationed the preachers as well as we could, and all seemed to be satisfied.

Thursday, September 1st.—I rode to New-Mills, and preached to a large number in the Baptist meeting-house. Here, also, is the beginning of good days. On Friday I rode to Mount-Holy, and preached in the Presbyterian meeting-house, to an attentive congregation. I found profit and pleasure at this opportunity.

Here I met with Mr. John Brainerd, brother and successor to that great and good man, Mr. David

Brainerd, missionary to the Indians. I spent an agreeable hour with him after preaching. But, alas, what an unpleasing account did he give me of the remains of his most excellent brother's labours, as well as his own, among the Indians! When his brother died, a little above twenty years ago, he succeeded him in the mission. At that time there were a large company of Indians who regularly attended the preaching of the word, and above sixty who were communicants. They were now reduced to a small number who attended his ministry, and not above ten or twelve who were proper to be admitted to the Lord's table. I asked him the reason of this declension. Some, he observed, were dead, and died happy in the Lord; others had grown careless and lukewarm; and many had wandered back among the unawakened Indians, some of whom had turned again to their heathenish customs. There were also some who had given way to the love of spirituous liquors, from which they had once been wholly delivered; so that the gold was become dim, and the most fine gold changed.

Philadelphia, Sunday, October 2d.—I preached to a large attentive congregation this evening. I found much liberty and enlargement of soul in declaring the words of the living God. O, when will the Lord arise, and mightily shake the hearts and consciences of the people in this city? The judgments of God are spreading abroad in these lands; and a most portentous cloud hangs over these provinces. From the appearance of things, one would think that every person would turn from their sins unto the living God; but, strange to tell, with many, wickedness seems to abound more and more. What shall the end of these things be? I have

endeavoured to warn the people, and to lead them to a proper improvement of the present alarming tokens. From the first of my coming here, it has always been impressed on my mind, that God has a controversy with the inhabitants of the British colonies ; and so I said to some in my first visit to New York. It will be seen shortly whether my fears and views were properly founded or not.

Monday, 31st.—I met brother Williams, who had come from Virginia to be present at our Quarterly Meeting. Brothers Shadford, Duke, and Webster were present also. They had come from different parts of the Circuit, and our meeting together was a time of love. I preached in the evening with pleasure and satisfaction.

Tuesday, November 1st.—Being the Quarterly Meeting, we had our general lovefeast in the forenoon ; and we finished the business of the Circuit after dinner. In the evening we had our watch-night. This was a day to be remembered ; and I hope it will be by some to all eternity. The heavens were opened, and the skies poured down righteousness. The Lord spoke to many hearts with a mighty voice ; and the shout of the King of glory was heard in our camp. Blessed be the name of our God for ever and for evermore !

Monday, 7th.—We rode to Henry-Waters, near Deer-Creek, where we intended holding our Quarterly Meeting for Baltimore and Kent Circuit on the eastern shore.

Tuesday, 8th.—When I arose this morning my mind was much oppressed, but I was enabled to look to Jesus. After an early breakfast we spent about two hours in the affairs of the Circuits. At ten our general lovefeast began. There were such a number

of whites and blacks as never had attended on such an occasion before. After we had sung and prayed, the cloud burst from my mind, and the power of the Lord descended in such an extraordinary manner as I had never seen since my landing at Philadelphia. All the preachers were so overcome with the Divine presence, that they could scarce address the people; but only in broken accents saying, "This is none other than the house of God, and the gate of heaven!" When any of the people stood up to declare the lovingkindness of God, they were so overwhelmed with the Divine presence, that they were obliged to sit down, and let silence speak His praise. Near the close of our meeting I stood up, and called upon the poor people to look towards that part of the chapel where all the blacks were. I then said, "See the number of the black Africans who have stretched out their hands and hearts to God!" While I was addressing the people thus, it seemed as if the very house shook with the mighty power and glory of Sinai's God. Many of the people were so overcome, that they were ready to faint and die under His almighty hand. For about three hours the gale of the Spirit thus continued to breathe upon the dry bones; and they did live the life of glorious love! As for myself, I scarcely knew whether I was in the body or not; and so it was with all my brethren. We did not know how to break up the meeting or part asunder. Surely the fruits of this season will remain to all eternity.

For some time past my mind has been much affected, and my spirit not a little pressed down, at the prospect of public affairs in this country. Matters look extremely gloomy; and what the end of these things will be, who can tell? This I am fully certain

of, that, to all human appearance, this land will become a field of blood. My soul laments that so few seem to lay it to heart, or turn to the Hand that shakes the rod over them. Most appear to put their trust in man, and make flesh their arm; but, alas! their hearts do not cleave to the living God.

Tuesday, May 16th, 1775.—The preachers came together from their different Circuits, and next day we began our little Conference. We conversed together, and concluded our business in love. Mr. Stringer spent some time with us. We wanted all the advice and light we could obtain respecting our conduct in the present critical situation of affairs. We all came unanimously to this conclusion, to follow the advice that Mr. Wesley and his brother had given us, and leave the event to God. We had abundant reason to bless God for the increase of His work last year. We had above a thousand added to the different societies, and they had increased to ten Circuits. Our joy in God would have been abundantly more, had it not been for the preparations of war that now rung throughout this city (Philadelphia).

Wednesday, June 7th.—I spent an agreeable hour with Mr. John Brainerd, at Mount-Holy. He gave me a fuller account than he had done before of the Indians under his care; and from what he said, I am more fully convinced of what I have thought before, that none can do good among those outcasts of men, comparatively speaking, but those, and those alone, who are peculiarly raised up and called by God to that work. His brother, David Brainerd, was such a one; and such must all be who will be of use in the conversion of the Indians.

Thursday, 15th.—I returned to Philadelphia,

where I spent ten days with profit and pleasure. I do not know when I found more liberty, either in public or private, than I did at this season. The Lord enabled me to speak from the heart; and I trust it went to the hearts of many. All this week we had alarm upon alarm, by the accounts we received from New-England.

Sunday, 25th.—I was enabled to deliver my soul this evening to all who heard me. I felt conviction that I was clear of the blood of all who have heard me in this city. The time may come when some may call to mind what they have heard, and bring forth fruit to the glory of God. Even so, come, Lord Jesus, come quickly!

Thursday, July 20th.—I rode to the chapel at the forks of Gunpowder-Falls, and preached to a numerous congregation. This being the day set apart for a general fast, by the Congress, throughout all the British provinces, all the serious part of the inhabitants paid a particular attention to the same. I endeavoured to open up and enforce the cause of all our misery. I told them that the sins of Great Britain and her colonies had long called aloud for vengeance; and in a peculiar manner the dreadful sin of buying and selling the souls and bodies of the poor Africans, the sons and daughters of Ham. I felt but poorly when I began to preach; but the Lord was my strength, and enabled me to speak with power, and to meet the society afterwards. After the service was over, I rode to Mr. Gough's, at Perry-Hall. He and his wife had, by the mercy of God, lately found a sense of the Divine favour, and now cheerfully opened their house and hearts to receive the ministers and children of God. I spent a most agreeable evening with Mr. and Mrs. Gough, and

the rest of the family. A numerous family of the servants were called in to prayer and exhortation; so that with them and the rest of the house we had a little congregation. The Lord was in the midst, and we praised Him with joyful lips. The simplicity of spirit discovered by Mr. and Mrs. Gough was truly pleasing. At every opportunity he was declaring what the Lord had done for his soul; still wondering at the matchless love of Jesus, who had plucked him as a brand from the burning. A gentleman in Bristol, who had died some years ago, left Mr. Gough an estate, in money, houses, and land, to the value of upwards of sixty or seventy thousand pounds. In the midst of all this he was miserable; nor did he ever find true felicity till he found it in the love of God his Saviour. O that he may live to be an ornament to the religion of Jesus Christ, both by example and precept!

Monday, June 17th, 1776.—I set out for Leeseburgh; and after preaching at several places by the way, I came there on Friday. I called at Mr. Fairfax's, (a relation of old Lord Fairfax,) a gentleman of large estate, and who of late has been savingly brought to the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. He was over at Baltimore at our little Conference; and at the lovefeast that followed, he spoke of what God had done for his soul, with such simplicity and unction from on high, as greatly affected everyone who heard him. May he live to be an ornament to the Gospel of the Lord Jesus!

Sunday, 30th.—I was greatly pleased at the arrival of brother Shadford this morning. His coming strengthened my hands in God. I preached at the chapel a little way from brother Burshan's, at ten o'clock. I felt poorly both in body and mind; but

the Lord stood by me, and enabled me to speak with a degree of power and Divine pungency. After preaching I met the society, and we found the presence of the Lord to be with us. After dinner I observed to brother Shadford, that I feared I should not have strength to preach in the afternoon. A little rest, however, refreshed me, and at four o'clock I went to the chapel again. I preached from Rev. iii. 8. Towards the close of the sermon, I found an uncommon struggle in my breast, and in the twinkling of an eye my soul was so filled with the power and love of God, that I could scarce get out my words. I scarce had spoken two sentences, while under this amazing influence, before the very house seemed to shake, and all the people were overcome with the presence of the Lord God of Israel. Such a scene my eyes saw, and ears heard, as I never was witness to before. Through the mercy and goodness of God, I had seen many glorious displays of the arm of the Lord, in the different parts of His vineyard, where His providence had called me to labour; but such a time as this I never, never beheld. Numbers were calling out aloud for mercy, and many were mightily praising God their Saviour; while others were in an agony for full redemption in the blood of Jesus. Soon, very soon, my voice was drowned amidst the pleasing sounds of prayer and praise. Husbands were inviting their wives to go to heaven with them, and parents calling upon their children to come to the Lord Jesus: and what was peculiarly affecting, I observed in the gallery appropriated for the black people, almost the whole of them upon their knees; some for themselves, and others for their distressed companions. In short, look where we would, all was wonder and amazement. As my

strength was almost gone, I desired brother Shadford to speak a few words to them. He attempted so to do, but was so overcome with the Divine presence, that he was obliged to sit down; and this was the case, both with him and myself, over and over again. We could only sit still, and let the Lord do His own work. For upwards of two hours the mighty outpouring of the Spirit of God continued upon the congregation. As many of them had come from far, we, with the greatest difficulty and the most earnest persuasions, got them to depart, between seven and eight o'clock in the evening. Some of them had to ride ten, and others sixteen, miles to their habitations. Such a day of the Son of man my eyes never beheld before. From the best accounts we could receive afterwards, upwards of fifty were awakened, and brought to the knowledge of a pardoning God that day; besides many who were enabled to witness that the blood of Jesus had cleansed them from all sin.

Tuesday, August 27th.—Our Quarterly Meeting began as usual with our lovefeast, and ended with our watch-afternoon. Truly this was a day of the Son of man, and great was our glorying in God our Saviour. In the lovefeast, the flame of Divine love ran from heart to heart, and many were enabled to declare the great things which the Lord had done for their souls. Early in the morning, some of our kind friends came and told me that they were informed a company of the militia, with their officers, intended to come and take me and the other preachers up. Some of our good women came, and with tears would have persuaded me to leave the place, and go to some other friend's house for safety. I thanked them for their love, and was obliged to them for their kind

attention to my personal safety; but I added, "I am come hither by the providence of God, and I am sent on an errand of love to the souls that shall attend; and thus engaged in my Lord's work, I fear nothing, and will abide the consequences, be they what they will." I had retired a little by myself, when one and another came to my room-door, and begged I would not venture out to preach, for the officers and their men were come. I felt no perturbation of mind, but was perfectly calm and collected. I told our friends, their business was to pray, and mine to deliver the message of God. Soon after, I went to the arbour, which was fitted up for preaching, and then I beheld the officers and soldiers in the skirts of the congregation. After singing, I called all the people to lift up their hearts to God, as the heart of one man. They did so indeed. When we arose from our knees, most of the congregation were bathed in tears; and I beheld several of the officers and their men wiping their eyes also. I had not spoken ten minutes in preaching, when a cry went through all the people, and I observed some of the officers, as well as many of the soldiers, trembling as they stood. I concluded my sermon in peace; and the other preachers prayed and exhorted after me, till the conclusion of the service. I was informed afterwards by some of our friends, that some of the officers said, "God forbid that we should hurt one hair of the head of such a minister of the Lord Jesus Christ, who has this day so clearly and powerfully shown us the way of salvation." They departed to their own homes, and we spent the evening in peace and love. This afternoon, and in particular in the evening, I had a strong impulse upon, and presentiment in my mind, that there had been an

engagement between the British and American troops. I mentioned it to one of the preachers, and added, "We shall soon hear whether this be of God or not."

Wednesday, we set off early on our way for Philadelphia, and reached Newcastle, on the Delaware river, on Thursday afternoon. About ten o'clock that evening an express arrived, that there had been a general engagement on Long Island, near New York, and that some thousands of the American troops were cut to pieces. After preaching by the way, I came in safety to Philadelphia on Saturday forenoon.

Sunday, December 1st.—I preached at New-Mills, to one of the most attentive, as well as the largest, congregations that I ever saw in that place. After spending a few days, I purposed returning to Philadelphia, in order to settle some matters respecting the books; and then to return to the Jerseys again, in my way to New York, on purpose to spend some time there, as they had been without a regular preacher for some months. But herein I was disappointed, as the noise and tumult occasioned by the British army marching through this province, and the American army retiring before them, threw every thing into confusion, and made it unsafe for me to travel. I was therefore obliged to tarry, and spend my time among the different societies in that neighbourhood. This whole month was spent in battles and skirmishes between the British troops and the Americans. It is not my intention to give a detail, or my judgment, of these matters: suffice it to say, that the business belongs to the historian.

I remember an old planter, Mr. Joshua Owings, of Garrison-forest, about sixteen miles from Baltimore, telling me one day when at his house, among

other anecdotes, that when a young man, he and another white man, with two young Indians, frequently went a hunting together at the proper season. Frederick county, which joins that of Baltimore, was then but very thinly inhabited; and, being in many places rough and hilly, was a proper retreat for wild beasts of different kinds. One day they came to a place where one of the Indians told his companions, they were almost sure to find a bear. They had not searched long before they found one in a kind of small cave in a large rock. One of the Indians spied some light at the further end of the hole, and told them the bear had two entrances to his retreat. They agreed for two to remain below, and two to mount the rock above; a white man and an Indian at each place. This was done accordingly, and they soon found that the Indian conjectured rightly. The two that were above had not been long there before the bear, who had seen them below, clambered up to the top of the rock, and just as his breast was clear of the hole, one of the Indians let fly an arrow and pierced his gullet. Up he bounced, and over the rock he went, but soon the Indian lodged another arrow in his back. He had not run four hundred yards before he halted, and rolled himself, being apparently in great agony. It was not long before he expired; and when they cut out the arrows, they observed that which entered his gullet had found its way to, and lodged itself in, the animal's heart, which so soon put a period to his life. This is a proof of the address of the Indians in such matters, and how soon they could be an overmatch for such creatures without the use of the gun. Nearly at the same time they found another in his hole; and the question was, who would undertake to shoot the bear

where he lodged, as they were sure he would not come out. The difficulty was, whoever attempted it, the person must creep some way into the hole, and should he only wound him, he would be in danger of being torn to pieces. After some dispute, one of the Indians determined to despatch him. He crept in, and then fired his piece, and roared aloud to pull him out. The hole being full of smoke, the rest could see nothing; but as soon as the smoke cleared away they got him out; but his fears were in vain, for poor bruin lay completely dead at the end of his retreat. There is one thing a little remarkable of this creature: no person, either white man or Indian, ever killed a she-bear with young. It is generally supposed, that after conception the she-bears hide themselves in the most secret places till after they have brought forth their young.

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In the beginning of June, 1778, I once more had the happiness of meeting my dear friends in London. For some time I was in a new world. The happiness I enjoyed was unspeakable, and the Lord owned my poor labours with a blessing. The pleasure I experienced in seeing my brethren once more, was beyond what words can describe. I was stationed for London, where I laboured for two years in concert with my valuable friend Mr. Pawson; and I trust our labours were not in vain.

At the Conference in Bristol, in 1783, I requested Mr. Wesley to appoint me as a supernumerary for London. He acceded to my request. My brethren there have kindly proportioned my labours to my strength; for which I feel truly obliged to them.

Should it please God that they should come to my years, I hope they will meet the same kind returns from their brethren. My only desire is to spend my few remaining days to the best of purposes. I have many mercies to praise my Lord for. I have bread to eat, and am enabled to owe no man anything but love. Thus hath my Lord graciously dealt with His unworthy creature. I earnestly desire to love Him more, and to be fully prepared for whatever His Divine providence has prepared for me. I have many times, for several years past, looked forward with a gust of joy at the pleasing prospect of soon joining my dear friends who have gone before. Yes, in those glorious realms,

“ Where Jonathan his David meets,  
Our souls shall soon embrace ! ”

I thank my God for the Christian friends I now enjoy on earth ; but some of my dearest and most beloved have gained the peaceful shore of eternal repose. To those happy climes I wish to bend my course with more alacrity and joy.

*July 31st, 1808.*

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In this disposition Mr. Rankin continued to labour in the London Circuit till a few months previous to his departure. He generally preached once or twice every Lord's day, and occasionally on week-day evenings. He likewise met a class, attended the leaders' and preachers' meetings, and the meeting for the penitents, on Saturday evenings ; at that meeting he generally prayed, and frequently exhorted.

For many weeks previous to his death, several of

his friends saw that his constitution was fast breaking; but had the happiness at the same time to discern in him a more than usually growing meetness for heaven. His love of souls continuing unabated, he preached as often as he was able, and his last ministrations were more acceptable and profitable to the people even than the preceding. Peculiarities he certainly had, which sometimes prevented his being as useful as otherwise he would have been; but they were such as consisted in him with great devotedness to, and deep communion with, God.

Mr. Griffith, who knew him well and long, says, "I always found him, after his confinement to the house, under a very blessed influence of the Holy Spirit, calmly confident towards God his heavenly Father, through the atonement, resigned to His all-wise disposal, and thankful for His benefits. At one time he said, 'Here I am, in the enjoyment of many comforts, and favoured with many kind attentions, of which many of God's children are destitute. What am I, Lord, and what my father's house, that Thou shouldest show me such favours?'"

The following account by Mr. Benson, which reaches till within three days of his death, will be found highly interesting and edifying. How encouraging is it to those soldiers of Christ who have not yet put off their harness, to see an aged brother triumph through Christ over the king of terrors!

"Wednesday evening, May 9th," says Mr. Benson, "among many other things, he said, 'I long to publish with my latest breath His love and guardian care.' I said, 'I doubt not but you will publish it to the last.' He replied, 'It is what I have prayed for, for many years.' He then broke out in praise, 'O glory, glory for ever, glory be to God for all His

goodness! I have here a comfortable bed to lie on, kind friends about me who love me, and all the blessings I could have, together with the grace of God, and hopes of glory! I have just been desiring Mrs. Hovatt to read that hymn, some of the lines of which are,

‘O the infinite cares, and temptations, and suares,  
Thy hand hath conducted me through;  
O the blessings bestow’d by a bountiful God,  
And the mercies eternally new!’

Speaking of the Methodist society, he said, ‘I could not immediately join the people when awakened and convinced. I hesitated some time; but, glory be to God, that He inclined me to cast in my lot among them. But I had some thoughts of becoming a minister in the Church of Scotland at that time.’ I said, ‘You have been much more useful among the Methodists.’ ‘Yes,’ replied he, ‘both you and I have, than we should have been anywhere else; but I have been very unfaithful to the grace of God.’ ‘We have all too great reason,’ I answered, ‘to make that confession; but when we see so many beginning in the Spirit, and ending in the flesh, we have very great cause for thankfulness that we have been kept by the power of God in the good way: and how many dangers has God brought you through by sea and land!’ ‘Yes,’ said he, ‘I have been lashed to the pump when the waves have gone over me, endeavouring to keep the ship from sinking, and all the passengers from going to the bottom. Then I was wandering from God; but He brought me back. That,’ observed he, ‘was before I was a preacher.’

“Saturday evening, May 12th.—When I called, I found he was so weak, and that so many had called upon him, that I did not go up to see him. Finding,

however, that I had been there, he sent his servant to desire I would go back and pray with him; which I was prevented from doing. On Monday I called again, and found him very much weaker indeed, but perfectly resigned to the will of God, and patiently waiting till his change should come. He desired his daughter-in-law to tell me what had been determined about the service to be performed at his funeral. 'Let my name,' said he, 'be written in the dust; but if anything can be said on the occasion of my death that may benefit the living, let it be done.' 'Is there any particular text,' I asked, 'which you would wish to be spoken from on the occasion?' After pausing a little, he said, 'As a general subject, I know none more suitable than 1 Peter i. 3, *Blessed,*' &c.; 'but let my name be written in the dust.' As he expressed a desire for more consolation, I said, 'I hope you will not reason about that: leave it entirely to the Lord. He has for many years enabled you to show your faith by your works, by living to Him in whom you believe; and your state cannot now be affected by your feeling a greater or less measure of consolation. Your whole reliance must be on the word and promise of Him who will never leave those that trust in Him. The mercy, truth, and faithfulness of God, in Christ, must be the ground of your confidence.' He then quoted those lines,

'While Jesu's blood,' &c.

'A most blessed hymn,' said I; 'and observe what follows:—

'Fix'd on this ground,' &c.

At this he seemed to be greatly comforted. 'I sometimes think,' said I, 'we are not sufficiently thankful that the Lord has kept us so many years in the way.

Since I passed over the mountains with you from Cumberland to Newcastle, in the latter end of the year 1765, how many have we known to turn aside to the right and to the left ! but we have been kept, and have neither brought any dishonour upon the Gospel, nor been stumbling-blocks in the way of any. And now you will soon join the wise and good collected out of all nations,' &c. 'Delightful consideration!' replied he. 'Our chief felicity,' said I, 'shall be the vision and enjoyment of God ; and what wonder that the holy Scriptures give us this view of future happiness? For surely the vision we shall then have of a Being infinitely amiable, and loving us infinitely, must be infinitely transporting.' We then joined in prayer, and were refreshed indeed. He was affected and filled with consolation, and, when I rose from my knees, took me by the hand, and said,

'Lo, God is here, let us adore,' &c."

In this humble, resigned, and happy frame of spirit he continued till, on May 17th, 1810, he finished his course with joy, after having faithfully served God in his generation.

From the foregoing narrative, the judicious reader will form a tolerably correct idea of Mr. Rankin's character; the most striking traits of which are sincerity, steadiness, and sobriety. We highly respect the memory of a man who, in various and trying situations of life, both at home and abroad, maintained for upwards of fifty years an unblemished character. This, through Divine grace, did Mr. Rankin. In short, he was a man truly devoted to God his Saviour; and in death witnessed a good confession.

THE LIFE  
OF  
MR. GEORGE STORY.

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WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

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I WAS born in the year 1738, at Harthill, in the West Riding of Yorkshire. At four years of age I had learned the Catechism, and had repeated it before the minister in the church.

About that time I had a narrow escape: being near the edge of a deep pond, my foot slipped, and I plunged in; but, recovering myself, I struggled to the side, and, laying hold on some weeds, got out, no one being near that could give me any assistance.

In my sixth year I had read the Bible through several times, and other books that came in my way; particularly the History of the Sufferings of the Protestants in the valleys of Piedmont; which fixed in me an aversion to the principles of the Church of Rome. Among the practical treatises in this History, was a Caveat against Dancing, wherein was asserted that "every step a dancer takes is a step to hell." This so affected me, that no inducement could ever prevail upon me to attend the dancing-school; which I esteem a singular mercy, as it pre-

vented connexions that might have proved very pernicious.

One day I wantonly threw a stone, and killed a young bird belonging to a neighbour. Though no one saw me, yet for several nights I had little sleep. The idea of the bird's expiring in agonies through my wickedness, filled me with inexpressible anguish. I would have given a great deal to have restored the little creature to life. Tears and prayers to God for pardon, and promises to offend Him thus no more, was the only way wherein I found relief.

My parents taught me early the fear of the Lord, as far as they knew; and though their instructions were tedious and irksome, yet they made an impression on my mind that was never lost, but often recurred when I was alone, or in places of temptation.

Our minister was a pious venerable man, and performed his duty with a solemnity that often struck me with awe of the Divine presence; particularly when he was reading the burial service, I frequently had a distant prospect of judgment and eternity. I was agreeably affected with thunder and lightning. It filled me with a sense of God's majesty and power; for which reason I would get into the midst of it, though ever so dreadful, if I was not prevented, that I might enjoy the whole report, and see the full blaze.

In my seventh year I lost all relish for learning, and contracted several evil habits. The two following years my time at school was spent to little purpose: part of this I attribute to the being too early taught to read, and too close application to it; and part to the want of a proper master, who could suit my genius and engage my curiosity for useful know-

ledge. But my master dying, and being succeeded by one whose ability and method were adapted to my capacity, I soon recovered my thirst for learning, and made considerable improvement therein.

Before I was well able to carry a gun, I was fond of shooting; till being out one day in the fields, my gun went off at half-cock, and was within a very little of killing my brother: this filled me with such horror, that I could not endure that exercise any more.

When I was about ten years of age, God began to revive His work of grace in and about Sheffield; the rumour of which spread into our village, and occasioned serious reflections in the minds of many. One evening, as I was hearkening to the conversation of my parents on that subject, I was struck with an observation they made, that prayer was nothing unless the mind was stayed on God. At night, when I repeated my customary prayers, I watched my thoughts narrowly, and soon found that they wandered from the Lord all the time. This discovery deeply affected me: I strove with all my might to think on God as being present, seeing and hearing me; and after repeated efforts, through grace I prevailed. I now began to delight in duties; to pray fervently and feelingly, with or without a form; and many times the Lord answered me in such a manner as clearly convinced me of His omniscience and omnipresence. I read the Bible with pleasure and profit: the sufferings of Christ filled me with wonder and gratitude, as I now understood that He endured them all for my sins, and to save my soul from eternal destruction. Reading in the Thirty-nine Articles, that justification was by faith, I endeavoured to cast my soul upon the Lord

in the best manner I was able, and at times was persuaded that He had forgiven all my trespasses. Though I had never heard any of the Methodist preachers, yet from that time I felt an esteem for them; and notwithstanding they were loaded with all manner of reproach, and represented in the most detestable light, those calumnies only increased my regard for them, because I understood that true Christians, in all former ages, had met with the same treatment from the world.

Having acquired all the learning that was taught at a country school, my friends began to think of putting me to some business. Going one day to a bookseller's shop, in a neighbouring market-town, I got acquainted with him; and my friends accepting of his proposals, I soon after went with him to his place of residence. This introduced me into company, and exposed me to temptations I never knew before: and yet the Spirit of God strove with me more than ever: almost every night I was called to a strict account by that inward monitor, and reproved for the faults of the day; and I could seldom sleep till with prayers and tears I had implored mercy, and in some degree obtained it from the Lord; and in this manner I went on for about a year.

I had often been perplexed with the doctrine of predestination, but now the tempter drew me insensibly into it. He continually suggested, that if I was to be saved, I certainly should, live as I list; but if I was ordained to be damned, there was no remedy; God Himself could not save me; and therefore it was mere folly to give myself so much concern about it. But although these suggestions tended to stupefy my conscience, and harden my heart, yet I was more uneasy than ever. The Methodists at

that time were few and feeble ; they had seldom any travelling preachers : I sometimes attended their prayer-meetings, and often followed them up and down the town, hoping they would turn and speak to me ; but none took any notice of me. I was left alone to struggle with sin and Satan.

One day hearing a preacher was to be there, I attended ; but he did not come. Upon this, one of the local preachers, who was then a Calvinist, gave an exhortation ; in which he fairly repeated the words that Satan had so often suggested to me ; namely, that if we were to be saved, we could not possibly perish ; and if we were to be damned, there was no help for us. This made a deep impression, and confirmed all that the devil had been preaching to me for years. I believed the horrible doctrine, and from that time determined to give myself as little trouble as possible about religion.

Being surrounded with books, I read the first that came to hand,—histories, novels, plays, and romances, by dozens ; but they only pleased while my eyes were upon them, and afterwards furnished matter for a thousand vain imaginations. I then read “The Lives of the Heathen Philosophers,” with admiration, and determined to copy after them. I perfected myself in geometry and trigonometry ; then I learned Macauley’s short-hand ; soon after, geography and astronomy, together with botany, anatomy, physic, and several branches of natural philosophy. Once I intended studying the law, and read a great deal in “The Statutes at large,” and other law books : but the subject was too dry and unentertaining for one of my desultory disposition. I could recollect reading over three hundred volumes, of one kind or another, (some of them were large folios,) before I was sixteen

years old. My passion for books was insatiable. I frequently read till ten or eleven o'clock at night, and began again at four or five o'clock in the morning; nor had I patience to eat my meat, unless I had a book before me.

But about this time I was weary of the shop, and entered the printing-office. This opened a new scene of things, which pleased me for a season. I was determined to be a complete master of my business, and in about two years was able to accomplish my day's work in six hours, so that I had much time upon my hands for study and recreations. One summer I was an angler, attended the rivers early every morning; but this, after a few months' trial, brought me neither pleasure nor profit. The next summer I commenced florist, took a garden, was passionately fond of auriculas, polyanthuses, &c. But this, too, soon grew insipid: happiness was not to be found in these pursuits. In the midst of my reading I met with some deistical authors: I read and reasoned, till the Bible grew not only dull, but, I thought, full of contradictions. I staggered first at the Divinity of Christ; and at length gave up the Bible altogether, and sunk into Fatalism and Deism.

This new light promised great satisfaction. I thought myself much wiser than others; but, alas, it soon led into a dreary labyrinth! My ideas of God and religion were quite confounded. I felt the wretchedness of my heart, but could discover no way to escape from it.

About the age of eighteen the management of the printing-office fell to my share. I had a weekly newspaper to publish, all the paragraphs to select from the public prints, the advertisements to prepare,

the press to correct, and the journeymen and the apprentices to superintend. This flattered my vanity, increased my native pride, and consequently led me further from God. I then sought happiness in card-playing; but, after repeated trials, it appeared such a silly waste of time, and so opposite to common sense, that I was obliged to give it up. Twice or thrice I got into company, and was intoxicated with liquor; but in the midst of this folly I saw its madness, and turned from it with abhorrence. I likewise saw its ruinous consequences in those I was daily surrounded with. However, I hoped a horse-race was a more manly and rational amusement: I therefore attended the races at Doncaster, with the most flattering expectation of the happiness I should find that week. The first day vanished without any satisfaction: the second was still worse. As I passed through the company dejected and disappointed, it occurred to my mind, "What is all this immense multitude assembled here for? To see a few horses gallop two or three times round the course, as if the devil was in both them and their riders! Certainly we are all mad; we are fit for Bedlam, if we imagine that the Almighty made us for no other purpose but to seek happiness in such senseless amusements!" I was ashamed and confounded, and determined never to be seen there any more.

When I was twenty years old, I was glad of the opportunity of seeing London. I went up full of the most sanguine expectation of finding the happiness I was in search of, and therefore lost no time in seeing and hearing everything new and curious that I could gain access to. But new things quickly grew old, and the repeated sight of them soon proved disgusting. No happiness followed, but an unac-

countable anguish of spirit whenever I attended to the sensations of my own mind. Then I would gladly have travelled into any part of Europe or America, hoping a continual change of scenes would satisfy me. But it was war-time, and I could not embark for Holland without a passport from the Secretary of State, which I did not know how to procure.

At length I resolved to try if religion would afford me any relief. I went to several places of worship; but even this was in vain: there was something dull and disagreeable wherever I turned my eyes, and I knew not that the malady was in myself. At length I found Mr. Whitefield's chapel in Tottenham-court-road, and was agreeably entertained with his manner of preaching: his discourses were so engaging, that when I retired to my lodgings, I wrote down the substance of them in my journal, and frequently read them over with pleasure; but still nothing reached my case, nor had I any light into the state of my soul. Meantime, on the week-nights I went to the theatres; nor could I discern any difference between Mr. Whitefield's preaching and seeing a good tragedy.

Being now weary of everything, and every place being equal to me, (for I carried about with me a mind that was never at rest,) I embraced the invitation of my friends, and returned into the country. I was kindly received, and solicited to enter into business for myself. But, reflecting that I was young and unexperienced, I declined the offer, and engaged with a person to manage his printing-office. I was now in an agreeable situation. I wanted for nothing. I had more money than I knew what to do with. Yet, notwithstanding, I was as wretched as I could

live, without knowing either the cause of this misery, or any way to escape.

I had now for some years attempted to regulate my conduct according to reason ; but, alas ! I stood condemned, in a thousand instances, even at the bar of that partial judge. From my infancy I was exceedingly passionate ; and this evil grew upon me, and caused bitter reflections on various occasions. I knew that anger was a paroxysm of madness ; that it was contrary to reason in every respect : I therefore guarded against it with all my might. Sometimes I conquered ; and those transient victories greatly pleased me. But if an unexpected temptation suddenly occurred, all my resolutions were but as a thread of flax before the fire ; and my behaviour was more like that of an enraged wild beast, than of a rational creature. Sometimes, when among facetious company, I endeavoured to catch their spirit ; but in the midst of levity I had a dread upon me. Experience taught me, that their laughter was madness. As soon as I returned to sober thoughts, I found my feigned mirth left a melancholy upon my mind, and this was succeeded either by storms of passion or an aversion even to life. During this dark night of apostasy, I lost all remembrance of God's former goodness. I wandered to different places of religious worship, but found sufficient matter everywhere to be disgusted : at length I forsook them all, and on Sundays confined myself to my room, or retired to the centre of a neighbouring wood. Here I considered, with the closest attention I was able, the arguments for and against Deism. I would gladly have given credit to the Christian revelation, but could not. My reason leaned to the wrong side, and involved me in endless perplexities. I likewise

endeavoured to fortify myself with stronger arguments and firmer resolutions against my evil tempers; for since I could not be a Christian, I wished, however, to be a good moral heathen. Internal anguish frequently compelled me to supplicate the Divine Being for mercy and truth. I seldom gave over till my heart was melted, and I felt something of God's presence. But I retained those gracious impressions only for a short time.

Being employed in abridging and printing the Life of Eugene Aram, who was hung in chains at Knaresborough for murder, I observed that by intense application he attained to a prodigious knowledge in the sciences and languages. I was so engaged with this account, that I determined on the same acquisitions; vainly imagining that as I had the desire, so I had the capacity, to learn everything. While I was musing upon these matters, and fixing the plan for my future proceedings, the following thoughts fastened upon my mind, and broke in pieces all my schemes:—"The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. What did this man's wisdom profit him? It did not save him from being a thief and a murderer; no, nor from attempting even his own life. True wisdom is foolishness with men. He that will be wise must first become a fool, that he may be wise!" I was like a man awakened out of sleep. I was astonished. I felt myself wrong. I was conscious I had been pursuing a vain shadow, and that God only could direct me into the right path. I therefore applied to Him with earnest importunity, entreating Him to show me the true way to happiness; which I was determined to follow, however difficult or dangerous.

Just at this time a work of grace broke out in the

village where I was born, through the labours of a person remarkably zealous for the cause of God. My mother in particular was deeply convinced of the truth, which she soon experienced, and retained the life and power thereof to her dying day. She was much concerned for me; hoping, if I could be brought among religious persons, I should likewise soon be convinced. She therefore, by an acquaintance, entreated me to converse with the Methodists. I answered, "If my mother desires it, I will visit them with all my heart." The first time I entered a Methodist's house, they went to prayer with me and for me, a considerable time. I looked upon them as well-meaning, ignorant people, and thought no more about the matter. In a few days they desired I would come and see them again. Considering it was my mother's request, I went without hesitation. I found four or five persons in the house, with whom I disputed about religion for some hours, till I had fairly wearied them. They laboured to convince me that I was a sinner, and in danger of eternal death if I did not repent and return to God. These were subjects I had no kind of idea of; and as their arguments were only supported by Scripture, for which I had very little regard, all they said made not the least impression.

As I was about to withdraw, not a little elevated with my imaginary victory, one of the company desired to ask me a few questions. The first was, "Are you happy?" My countenance instantly fell, and I answered from the dictates of my conscience, "No." She then inquired, if I was not desirous of finding happiness. I replied, it had been my pursuit ever since I could remember; that I was willing to obtain it on any terms; and that I had sought

for it every way I could think of, but in vain. She then showed me the true way of obtaining the happiness I wanted; assuring me, if I sought the Lord with all my heart, I should certainly find in Him that peace and pleasure which the world could not bestow. Every word sunk deep into my mind; and from that moment I never lost my convictions, nor my resolution to be truly devoted to God.

I immediately broke off all connexion with my companions; threw my useless books into the fire; and sought the Lord with all my might. I soon discovered the importance of the Scriptures; that there was no other revelation of the Divine will to mankind; that I must credit the truths contained therein, however opposite they appeared to my own vitiated reason. I found my reason had been deceived and corrupted by the suggestions of an enemy, and that I could trust it no more till it was renewed by grace; that my memory was filled with a train of false ideas every moment presenting themselves, and leading me from God; and that my understanding was totally dark, till Divine illumination should visit me.

Reading Mr. Hervey's Dialogues, this light shone upon me, and I was much delighted with the discovery of the Divinity of Christ, and the atonement which He made for sinners. About this time I heard Mr. Fugill preach: his discourse was suited to one in my state, and the power of my evil reasonings was suspended while he described the work of grace in the soul; I saw the way of justification and full sanctification so clearly, that I could trace the path as if it had been a road delineated in a map.

The next discovery I had was the hardness of my heart. This called off my attention from everything

else : neither fears nor joys, heaven nor hell, made any impression on it. I often thought that Satan himself could not possibly have a more obdurate heart. I found it was full of pride, ambition, anger, evil desire, unbelief, and everything that was vile and vain. Being invited to join the society, I gladly embraced the opportunity, and found much encouragement to seek the Lord, notwithstanding all the wretchedness I felt in myself.

Attending to the experience of the people, I observed that almost all of them, during the time of conviction, were exercised with horrible fears and terrors ; and thence I concluded it was necessary I should have the same. For at that time I did not know, that frequently those distracting terrors were from the enemy, in order to drive the soul into despair. I therefore used every method to bring myself under dreadful apprehensions, hoping this would break my stubborn heart ; but I could never find that kind of experience. After several weeks struggling with this obduracy, at last I resigned myself to the Lord, when He was pleased to regard my distress ; and while William Brammah was at prayer, the softening power of grace descended, and removed the stony heart.

I now found a great change in my mind, but it was not complete ; for I had no consciousness of the pardon of sin, which I was convinced was the privilege of the children of God ; therefore I could not conclude myself justified. However, I began to seek for that blessing with all diligence. Many difficulties occurred in the way. The old train of pernicious ideas continually presented themselves : I could not meditate a moment without sinking into Deism ; and I was equally embarrassed with the doctrine of

predestination. Indeed, their connexion seemed inseparable: I could not by any means disjoin one from the other. And I repeatedly found that the moment I suffered my mind to embrace either of them, I lost sight of God, and plunged into blackness of darkness. The wretchedness I then felt was insupportable, accompanied with suggestions to blaspheme, or to embrace Atheism. After many sore conflicts, the Lord showed me a path by which I might escape; and that was by staying my mind upon Him, and ceasing from these reasonings. This I found was a safe, though painful, path; it equally mortified my proud reason and vain imaginations, while gracious promises occurred, and encouraged me to follow on to know the Lord. Now I began to look up for the pardon of sin; I saw that it was purchased by Christ, and that God gave it freely; that no works or sufferings of mine could in the least degree merit this blessing, but that it was to be received by faith.

But here again I was greatly embarrassed. The Scriptures universally testified that I must believe or perish: my friends were continually urging me to believe and I should be saved. Upon close examination I found that I did believe every truth in the Bible; yet this did not bring a sense of justification. And I durst not think that God was reconciled to me, when I was conscious of the contrary. But the Lord soon brought me out of this dilemma, by showing me that to forgive was His prerogative, and to believe was my duty. This believing for salvation I found was a distinct thing from believing I was saved: I found it implied the lifting up of my heart to the Lord in fervent prayer, looking to Him with a single eye and steady aim; without evil

reasonings or vain wanderings; leaving to Him with all my strength, casting my soul upon His mercy, and depending upon His promises.

While I persisted in this, I found I was saved from many evils, and the great blessing I had in view was often near: sometimes I could lay hold on it for a moment, and found peace and joy; but I had been so long habituated to unbelief, that it often rose spontaneously, and overturned all my consolation. I had therefore to renew my efforts hourly, and to rise as speedily as possible from every fall. In this exercise I continued about two months. Many times I lost my way by too scrupulously regarding the experience of others; yet I had never found anything like despair, unless I wilfully reasoned myself into it; nor could I attain to any deep terrors, which were too much insisted on as a necessary branch of conviction. I likewise formed wrong ideas of justification: I wanted some great work to be wrought upon me, that I might have something very remarkable to boast of. And therefore, when the Lord gently drew near, and manifested His peace in a small degree, I rejected it with displeasure. I even contended with the Lord, till He strongly impressed upon my mind these words: "I will bring the blind by a way that they know not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known; I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight: these things will I do unto them, and not forsake them." I was now convinced of the necessity of receiving with thankfulness the smallest tokens of the Divine favour; and that I must suffer, with child-like simplicity, the Lord to lead me in His own way. This was soon followed by a clear manifestation of pardoning mercy, that excluded all

doubts, temptations, and fears, accompanied with a joy unspeakable and full of glory.

I continued praising a reconciled God for some days. The happiness I felt carried me above every difficulty. I could discern and reject the first approach of temptation. I now thought my mountain was so strong, I should never be moved. I did not know that I should meet with war any more. Indeed, I expected to go right forward to heaven in a short time. My mind had been so intensely engaged in seeking pardon, that I had quite forgot there was a further work of grace to be wrought in me. But the Lord did not suffer me to remain long under that mistake: He soon discovered the remains of the carnal mind, and the necessity of its removal. I had scarcely begun earnestly seeking after that blessing, before the tempter returned with double rage. I saw an invaluable privilege before me, but the way was difficult; a thousand arguments were presented to discourage my pursuit.

Once I lost the peace of God by attending to a discourse which set justification exceedingly high, confounding it with full sanctification. Viewing myself in this false glass, and not finding I had all the marks which the preacher said belonged to one born of God, I fell into the snare of Satan, gave up my shield, and suffered myself to be persuaded that all I had experienced of the goodness of God was a mere delusion. For some hours I was in as deep distress as I had ever known; and I saw no way to escape but by returning to the Lord in faith; who then discovered and broke the snare.

I had suffered much by evil reasonings on many occasions; but now I was determined to use double vigilance against them. Yet the enemy suggested

to me, "Thou mayest now take thy time : thou art a child of God ; and if once in Christ, always in Christ. As for full sanctification, it will be accomplished some time or other ; perhaps in the article of death. God has begun the work, and He will finish it ; therefore take thy ease, and enjoy thy present comfort." But I saw, whether these were true or false arguments, yet the conclusion was deadly. Therefore I rejected the suggestions with all my might, and determined to be wholly devoted to God.

In the midst of great exercises of mind, through manifold temptations, I omitted no opportunity of exhorting all about me to flee from the wrath to come. God was pleased to smile upon my weak endeavours, and to make me instrumental in the conversion of several. Afterwards I was convinced I ought to act in a more public manner : but I saw the danger of being too forward as well as of being too backward, and was enabled to keep from both extremes. When an opportunity offered of giving an exhortation in any of the neighbouring societies, I did it with much fear and trembling ; but I durst not shun the cross. Indeed, I laboured under great disadvantages. Through a natural impediment in my speech, I could not easily pronounce several words ; and it was a considerable time before I could conquer, or substitute others in their place. I hoped my acquaintance with authors on most subjects might be of some use to me ; but I was greatly mistaken : my mind was in a situation that forbade all kind of meditation. If I attempted any such thing, I was instantly filled with my old deistical ideas again. I was therefore necessitated to stay my thoughts upon the Lord, and to follow His light and truth as they shone upon me. What knowledge I

had acquired while in the spirit of apostasy from God, I was obliged to throw away, as altogether useless.

After some time, a scene opened which was both painful and profitable. We took an old chapel in a neighbouring village, the inhabitants of which, in general, differed very little from the savage Indians. Here I frequently preached to large congregations, and met with plenty of persecution for my pains; but it was not unexpected, and I was determined to stand it, though it should cost me my life.

One time a Popish gentleman hired some men to pull me out of the pulpit. Though I was ignorant of their design, I providentially fixed my eye on them as soon as they came in. They were confounded, and stayed peaceably till the service was over. Sometimes the mob revenged themselves on the door and windows, throwing whatever came next to hand; and then followed us through the street with mire and dirt. At an adjoining village, where I was to preach, some had engaged a madman; and, to qualify him more perfectly for the work, had made him drunk. He came armed with a large club, and raging in a most furious manner. I was waiting calmly for the event, when the man's wife came, and, having endeavoured in vain to persuade him to go away, fell into violent fits. Seeing this, he instantly became as quiet as a lamb, and we returned without the least injury.

Soon after, I entered into the most afflicting dispensation I had ever known, which continued three months. I gradually sunk into unaccountable anguish of mind, as if the powers of darkness surrounded me without intermission. Sometimes such a horror penetrated my whole soul as if I had committed

some atrocious crime, and was instantly to stand before the great Judge to receive the sentence of eternal damnation. Very often I expected instant death; my whole frame seemed just dissolving. In the midst of all, I found the grace of God was sufficient to support me under it; my conscience was free from condemnation; and I saw this distress was partly natural, and partly diabolical. I still kept cleaving to the Lord, and staying my mind upon Him: the cloud broke, and my former peace returned. I found something daily dying within me; but what it was I could not tell. When I was at the lowest, I began to rise again, and continued increasing in the life of God for three months more. I was then one evening meeting my band, when the power of the Lord descended in an uncommon manner, and I believed He had purified my heart. At first I rejected it through a sense of my unworthiness; but the witness again returned. I considered, "What have I either done or suffered, that could induce the Lord to show me this great mercy?" And I was upon the point of giving up again, when it occurred to my mind, "By grace ye are saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast." I was then constrained to acquiesce, and said, "Since it is so, I will hold fast if I can."

The next morning I awoke in such power and peace as I had never known; and the promises in the latter part of the thirtieth chapter of Ezekiel were applied in such a manner as left no doubt but the Lord had wrought that great change in me. Nevertheless it was not in the manner I expected. I supposed a soul saved from all sin would be a great, wise, and glorious creature; whereas I found myself

infinitely little, and mean, and base : I had such a discovery of my own nothingness, as humbled me to the dust continually. I felt myself as ignorant and helpless as an infant, and knew I could not stand a moment without the Divine aid. Nor did I find such overflowing joys as I expected, but only an even permanent peace, which kept my heart in the knowledge and love of God.

Meantime several scriptures were opened to me at once ; and I found a delightful relish for the whole. But still I found knowledge in Divine things was to be acquired gradually, through patient labour ; and that even this was limited : God giving no more than was necessary, and at such times as He pleased.

I walked in this liberty some months, till one day I met with a circumstance which grieved me. I attended too much to the temptation, and was not inwardly watchful ; so, before I was aware, the temptation took place in my heart, and I found myself angry for a moment or two. As I never expected to feel this evil any more, my distress was inconceivable for three or four hours ; the enemy suggesting that I was now an apostate from the pure love of God, and could never be restored. I cried mightily to the Lord, and He discovered the device of the enemy, and healed the wound that had been made. He likewise showed me, that as I had received Christ Jesus, so I must walk in Him ; that the same faith by which I entered into rest must be continued, in order to be established in that liberty.

The Conference being at Leeds, in the year 1762, I attended with a design of being edified by the public discourses and private conversation of the preachers. And herein I had abundant reason to be satisfied. Mr. Wesley's sermons were in a peculiar

manner calculated for establishing me in what I had lately experienced. During the Conference it appeared there wanted several more preachers as itinerants in different Circuits. My friends proposed me for one, and asked if I had any objection. As I was resigned to any station Providence seemed to point out, I submitted to the judgment of my brethren. Being admitted on trial, I returned home to settle my affairs; and in the latter end of February, 1763, I went into the Dales Circuit.

When I got to Darlington, the town was in an uproar, occasioned by George Bell's prophecy. That day, according to his prediction, the world was to be destroyed. Many people were much frightened; but their fears soon gave place to resentment, and they threatened to pull down the house, and burn the first preacher that came. However, considering that God was all-sufficient, I told Mrs. Oswald, if she would venture the house, I would venture myself. Notice being given for preaching, the place was soon filled with people, rude enough. Providentially I found in the Newcastle paper a paragraph, wherein Mr. Wesley disavowed all connexion with Mr. Bell, and all credit to his prophecy. This I read to the people, which instantly quieted them, and they attended patiently to the end of the meeting. A poor backslider was that night cut to the heart, and roared out in a tremendous manner. But shortly after he found mercy, and died in peace.

In this Circuit I found several societies of sincere people; but many of them were settled upon their lees: those who had obtained justification were resting in their past experience, and had little expectation of being saved from inward sin till death. I spoke strongly of full salvation, and God gave the

word success. Several were stirred up to seek for purity of heart, and others were convinced of sin. Mr. Samuel Meggot, a zealous, pious preacher, was my fellow-labourer, in whom I found the affection of a parent. Meeting me one day in the Dales, he said, "You must make haste to Barnard-Castle: the people are all in confusion; six or seven of them have found full sanctification, and the rest are tearing one another to pieces about it." When I got to the town, I found many were not a little prejudiced against me, as a setter forth of strange doctrines. I attempted to preach among them, but could find no liberty: I met the society, but it was still the same. I was just going to conclude, when in an instant the power of God descended in a wonderful manner. The assembly were all in tears, some praising God for pardoning mercy, and others for purifying grace. And even those who could not yet understand this new doctrine were constrained to say, "If we do not believe it, we will never speak against it any more." The snare of the enemy was effectually broken; and from that time the work spread, not only through the town, but also into the neighbouring societies: we seldom had any meeting, public or private, but some were either convinced, justified, or saved from all sin.

The society in Wear-Dale consisted of thirty-six members. But one Sunday, at two o'clock, the Divine power descended upon the assembly; six persons, one after another, dropped down, and, as soon as they came to themselves, cried out for mercy. The work from that time revived, and spread through different parts of the Dale; and the society was soon doubled in its number, many of whom stand to this day.

In other places, the people were remarkably lively, and many were added to the societies. I continued in this Circuit till July, 1764, having the satisfactory evidence that I was acting in a station suitable to the designs of Providence. This greatly supported me in the various difficulties that unavoidably occurred. Indeed, I exerted myself much above my strength both in preaching and travelling, often venturing in tempestuous weather over those dreary fells when even the mountaineers themselves durst not. I was frequently in danger of being swallowed up in the bogs, or carried away by the torrents. Sometimes I have rode over valleys where the snow was eight or ten feet deep, for two or three furlongs together. When the danger was most imminent, I not only found a calm resignation, but a solid rejoicing in the God of my salvation.

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THE following character of Mr. Story was written by his friend Mr. Benson, and adopted by the Conference of 1818 :—

GEORGE STORY. He was an old disciple, and faithful labourer in the Lord's vineyard. His piety was genuine, and uniformly evidenced by a life and conversation unblamable and holy. His views of Christianity, in all its branches, were clear and correct, and his attachment to every part of Methodism steady and uninterrupted. He believed and loved our doctrines, which he considered as being those of the Scriptures; and perfectly approved of our discipline, and took all opportunities of enforcing it. He was received as an itinerant preacher in the year

1762; continued to travel in various parts of England, Scotland, and Ireland for twenty-nine years; and had many proofs that his labours were attended with success. In the year 1792 he was appointed editor of our Magazine and other publications; and a few years after, superintendent of our printing-office; the duties of which departments he discharged to the satisfaction of the Conference, and to his own credit, until his various infirmities rendered it necessary that he should be released from them. The weakness attendant on age came very gradually upon him, until within a few months of his death; when his strength of body, and the faculties of his mind, decayed apace. His end was peaceful and serene, as his life had been meek, gentle, and temperate. A short time before his death, to a friend, who asked him concerning his prospect into eternity, he said, "I feel Christ to be more precious to my soul than ever."

Mr. Story died May 22d, 1818, in the eightieth year of his age.

THE LIFE  
OF  
MR. WILLIAM BLACK.

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WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

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I WAS born at Huddersfield in Yorkshire, in the year 1760. When I was about six years old, I had serious impressions on my mind; and the thoughts of my state so distressed me, that I frequently said within myself, "O that I were a toad, a serpent, or anything but what I am! O that I had never been born, or else had been greater than God! and then He could not have punished me for my daring sins." I found enmity in my heart rising against the blessed Author of my being; particularly against His sovereignty, holiness, and justice; so that before I was ten years old, had it been in my power, I would have overturned God's throne, and put down the Judge of all the earth.

At this time I lived at Otley, near Leeds, with my uncle. Here I went to school; but was inattentive to my learning, and assiduous in wickedness; particularly fighting, quarrelling, lying, stealing, and disobedience to my uncle. When I was about twelve or thirteen years old, I ran away to my father's, who lived about twenty miles distant. He gave me

a severe correction; but, as he had thoughts of going to North America, he did not send me back to my uncle. O, how I desire at this day to be humbled at the remembrance of these my youthful iniquities, and praise the God of grace who had mercy on my worthless soul!

In the year 1774 my father left England, and went to Nova-Scotia. After going through several parts of the province, he purchased an estate at Amherst, near Cumberland, and in the fall of the year returned. While he was in America, my dear mother paid particular attention to the concerns of my soul. She frequently took me aside into her closet to pray with and talk to me; after relating God's gracious dealings with herself, and affectionately pressing the necessity of the new birth on my conscience. Her godly admonitions were not altogether in vain. Many times they deeply affected me, and sent me in my closet to my knees, where, with tears, I besought the Lord for mercy; which I surely should have found, had I not believed the subtle fiend, who whispered, "It is too soon for you to be religious: it will destroy your happiness, cut off all your pleasures, and make you a laughing-stock for every boy in the school." With this, and such like temptations, he prevailed. I quenched the Spirit of God, and drove away my concern, so that I could sin on nearly as I did before.

In April, 1775, we sailed from Hull, on board the "Jenny," Captain Foster, and had a good passage, until we came within sight of Halifax, where we struck upon the rocks with great violence, and were afraid the ship would be lost; but it being low water when she struck, through mercy, she was got off again without much damage.

Captain Foster was a pattern to mariners, especially to masters of vessels, both with respect to his private walk as a Christian, and his government as a master. I never heard him speak a rash word; nor did I hear a rash oath from the time we left England, until we arrived in Halifax harbour, either by mariner or passenger, although we had about ninety on board. There was religious worship in the cabin constantly, morning and evening, to which the captain invited all to come that could be spared from the management of the vessel. He used to sing and pray with the people, and affectionately to advise and exhort them to make sure of the one thing needful. What pity it is that so few imitate him!

After staying about a fortnight at Halifax, we sailed for Cumberland, and arrived in June. Here I grew in wickedness as I advanced in age, turning the grace of God into lasciviousness; spending whole nights together in the ridiculous practice of shuffling spotted pieces of pasteboard, with painted kings and queens on them; and dancing for four or five nights in the week; until the spring of 1779, when the Lord again began to work upon my mind in a most powerful manner.

A few old Methodists who had emigrated from England some years before, and had retained something of the work of grace in their souls, began to keep meetings amongst themselves for prayer and exhortation. God blessed these means, some being awakened, and several set at liberty; and when this was rumoured abroad, the people began to think and inquire whether these things were so or not.

One day my brother John had been over at Fort-Lawrence, and on his return told me that two of our acquaintances were converted, and knew their sins

forgiven; and that he thought it was high time for him to set out, and seek the same blessing. I replied, "Brother, whether they are converted or not, it is certain we must alter our course of life, or we cannot be saved." He said, he intended to do it. But said I, "Let us determine to set out now; and, lest we should be drawn back, let us covenant together." We did so, and shook hands, as a confirmation of the same. Yet, as our conviction was not deep, this covenant chiefly respected outward things; as the leaving off card-playing, dancing, Sabbath-breaking, &c., and resolving to attend the meetings, to read, and to pray, &c.

About this time I went over to Mr. Oxley's, (whose family were under concern for their souls,) who exhorted me to set out with all speed to seek God, and not to rest until my peace was made with heaven. 'This was a great blessing to me, as it strengthened me in my determinations.

One night, at our request, John Newton of Fort-Lawrence came over to Amherst to pray with us. While he was giving out the hymn, the tears began to gush out of my eyes, and my heart to throb within me; so that in a little time most of the company did so too. One young man at first began to laugh at us, and thought within himself, "These never committed murder, or did any dreadful thing, that they need to make such fools of themselves, and roar out that way like mad people." But God soon turned his laughter into sorrow, and sent an arrow of conviction to his heart; and then he roared out the loudest of all, "God be merciful to me, a poor miserable sinner!" Ten or eleven continued crying thus for some time, when God graciously set Mrs. Oxley at liberty. Her soul was brought out of

dismal darkness into marvellous light. O, how did her soul exult in the Lord her Redeemer, and magnify His holy name! Our meeting continued that night for several hours; after which, I went home with my three brothers and a sister, weary and heavy laden with the burden of our sins.

From this time, we met almost every night at Mr. Oxley's, to sing and pray, for some months together. We generally met a little after sunset, and continued our meetings until midnight; indeed, frequently I and the young man before-mentioned continued until daylight. I now wept, fasted, and prayed, and my constant cry was, "Give me Christ! Give me Christ! or else I die." I could bear to hear of nothing beside Jesus, and Him crucified; and was amazed to see men, endowed with reason, and capable of enjoying God's love in time and eternity, spending their precious moments in the most trifling and unprofitable conversation.

One night coming from a religious meeting with two or three young men, whilst the northern lights began to wave backwards and forwards in the air, I thought, "What, if the day of judgment be coming? I am ill prepared to die!" Then, throwing myself on the ground, I cried to the Lord to have mercy on my poor, wretched, sinful soul. While lying on the ground, this thought was impressed upon my mind: "The curse of God hangs over prayerless families. God is not worshipped in a public manner in your family: this is your sin." This had for some time lain heavy on my mind, and that of my brother John. He had several times been requested to pray with us, but always put it off, saying, "By and by I will, when I get more strength." But still he could not break through. I rose from the ground, and went

immediately home, resolving in myself, that if neither my father nor elder brother would pray with the family, I would. Just as I entered the door, my brother began to pray; which was the first time we had family prayer since my mother died, in 1776.

Soon after this, Mr. Wells came over to Amherst, and gave an exhortation, in which were these words, "Sin and repent, sin and repent, until you repent in the bottomless pit." They went like a dagger to my heart. "Lord," thought I, "I am the very man. I sin and grieve, and then I sin again. Alas! what will such repentance avail? I must be holy, or I cannot be happy." Now my sins were set in array before me. I saw and felt myself guilty, helpless, wretched, and undone. I went about from day to day, hanging down my head like a bulrush, whilst streams of tears rolled down my cheeks; yet still I found no deliverance. However, I was determined never to rest until I found rest in Christ. None of the externals of religion would now satisfy my awakened conscience. I saw that if ever I was saved, it must be by grace through faith; and that this faith was the gift of God: but, alas! I had it not; nor was I yet brought wholly to trust in the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world.

Soon after this, I went to hear an exhortation at a neighbour's house: but, alas! I felt hard and stupid; all my softening frames were gone. (Perhaps I trusted too much in them.) I could not shed a tear, if it would have saved my soul from hell. I thought, "Surely I am one of the vilest wretches on the face of the earth. I know that I am a child of the devil, of wrath, and hell; and dying here, I am for ever undone; yet I cannot shed a tear. Alas, alas! I am worse and worse! more wretched

than ever!" In this miserable state I laid me down, concluding I was farther from deliverance than ever. I mourned because I could not mourn; and grieved because I could not grieve.

The day following, we had our monthly meeting at Mr. Foster's, of Fort-Lawrence. Such a day as this I never saw before or since. Mr. Wells's prayer seemed just suited to my case. Every word came home with keen conviction, and sunk deeper into my heart than ever. I formerly used to long that I might feel my sins a greater burden, and that my distress might be increased. I mourned because I had so little sense of my state. I was greedy of sorrow; to mourn was pleasing, and to shed tears was some relief. But now the scene was changed, and my sins were an intolerable burden. I was weary of life, and strangely said within myself, "I wish I was dead. If God pleases to save me, it is infinite mercy: if He damns my soul, be it so, He is righteous and just; I cannot help myself." Everything augmented my sorrows. A cock, just then crowing, brought strongly to my mind Peter's denial of his Master, so that I cried within myself, "O, I am wretchedly denying the Lord a place in my heart: I, like Peter, have denied the Lord." The enemy then softly whispered, "Go and hang thyself." But God of His infinite goodness (though He did not yet deliver me) preserved my soul from self-destruction, blessed be His name for ever!

Meeting being over, John Newton came to me, and said, "Surely, Willy, there must be something that thou art not willing to give up, or the Lord would have delivered thy soul before now!" I replied, "I am in Francis Spira's condition." "No, no," said he: "only give up all thy soul to Jesus, and

He will soon deliver thee. Sorrow may continue for a night, but joy shall come in the morning." Thus he endeavoured to encourage me to look for relief, while he pressed me to surrender up all my soul to Jesus Christ, assuring me I should find deliverance the moment I cast all my soul on Jesus. My distress was so great, I thought if I was in hell I could not be much worse. "A wounded spirit who can bear?" Soon after, the extremity of my distress went off, and I remained for two days melancholy, under an abiding sense of my lost condition, except the Lord should, in infinite mercy, send me help from His holy place. On the evening of the latter day, I went to Mr. Oxley's, where a woman who knew my distress asked me, "Can you believe?" I answered, "No." She said, "You are reasoning with the enemy. Come, I have got a sweet promise for you;" and then showed me a passage in the Bible, which she supposed suitable to my case. I said, "I have seen many such sweet promises as that to-day; but, alas! they are not for me."

Mr. Frieze then came to me, asked the state of my mind, and went to prayer. He took an affectionate leave of me, saying, "I believe God will deliver you before morning." We tarried still at Mr. Oxley's, singing and praying for about two hours, when it pleased the Lord to reveal His free grace; His fulness and suitableness, as a Saviour; His ability and willingness to save me: so that I was enabled to venture on the sure mercies of David, and claim my interest in His blood, with, "I am Thine, and Thou art mine;" while our friends were singing,

"My pardon I claim,

For a sinner I am,

A sinner believing in Jesus's name."

Now I could lay hold of Him, as the hope set before me, "the Lord my righteousness." My burden dropped off; my guilt was removed; condemnation gave place to mercy; and a sweet peace and gladness were diffused through my soul. My mourning was turned into joy, and my countenance, like Hannah's, was no more heavy. After tarrying some time, and returning public thanks, I went home with my heart full of love, and my mouth full of praise. The next morning my brother John came to inquire how I felt my mind. I said, "O, blessed be God, I am happy: He hath graciously delivered my soul, and makes my heart to rejoice in His name." He went and told my brother Richard, who soon after came to inquire as he had done: but I did not feel so clear an evidence as before, and began to question whether I had indeed found the Lord; whether the peace and comfort I had felt might not be from the devil. I soon after took up Mr. Hervey's Meditations; and while reading a little in them, God smiled again on my soul, and cheered my heart as with the new wine of His kingdom. My scruples now were all removed, and I could again cry, with joy, "My Lord, and my God!"

That night, when a few friends met at my father's for prayer, I was much comforted in singing those words,—

"But this I can tell,  
He hath loved me so well  
As to lay down His life to redeem me from hell."

Now I concluded my mountain was so strong, that it could not be moved; but, what are we, if God for a moment hide His face? In the evening we went to Mr. Oxley's; where seeing many in tears and great distress, I said, "O that ye would all come to

Christ! Surely ye may all now believe, if ye will: it is easy to believe." But it was instantly suggested with great violence into my mind, "You are deceived; you are puffed up with pride." This came with such force, that it blasted all my evidences and comforts in a moment, so that I cried out, in the presence of them all, "O, what a wretch am I! I said a few minutes ago, Ye may all believe, if ye will; and now I myself cannot believe." I left the house, went into the field, and, throwing myself on the ground, cried to the Lord for help. He heard my prayer; He saw my distress; filled my soul with love, and bade me go in peace. Lord, what a wavering, inconstant soul am I! Sometimes I feel Thy love; I behold Thy fulness; I see Thee altogether lovely, and cry, "Now I will never doubt again." But, alas! no sooner does the storm come on, the winds blow, the waves run high, than I begin to doubt; and the more I doubt, the more I sink; and I should perish altogether, if Thou didst not reach to me Thine arm, as Thou didst once to sinking Peter. However, these temptations served to confirm me the more; for always proportionable comforts followed them: if my distresses were great, my deliverance was the greater. This, I find, hath been the case with me unto the present day.

For some time after this I was peculiarly blessed. I went on my way rejoicing, carried as in the bosom of my Redeemer.

" Jesus all the day long  
 Was my joy and my song.  
 O that all His salvation might see!  
 He hath loved me, I cried,  
 He hath suffer'd and died,  
 To redeem such a rebel as me.

“ On the wings of His love  
I was carried above  
All sin and temptation and pain ;  
I could not believe  
That I ever should grieve,  
That I ever should suffer again.”

Everything conspired to make me happy. If I looked upon the heavens above, or the earth beneath, both sparkled with their Creator's glory; and all creation seemed to smile on my soul, and speak its Maker's praise. My heart glowed within me, while the fields broke forth into singing, and the trees clapped their hands. The glory of Lebanon was given unto them, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon, because of the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God. Whether I looked on man or beast, I saw the wisdom, power, and goodness of God shine conspicuously. I was filled with wonder and felt the greatest tenderness and love for every creature God had made. With glowing admiration my soul beheld, and with grateful praise I confessed, the inimitable skill of His all-creating hand in the formation of a fly, or the paintings of a flower. More especially, when I considered, “This is not barely the work of a God, but of *my* God! my Father! and my Friend!” When I thought of death, judgment, heaven, or even hell, it filled my heart with comfort. But above all, at the name of Jesus, my heart took fire, kindled into love, and ardently longed to be with Him. In this happy frame I continued for some time.

When walking out one day, I began to reason with the enemy, or accuser of the brethren, who suggested, “Your joy is not the joy of the Holy Ghost: you deceive yourself: it is self-made, for you can

rejoice when you please. If Jesus, heaven, or hell is but mentioned or thought of, you instantly rejoice. Ah! it is only your passions that are a little moved: you are no Christian still." This temptation appeared so plausible, that it threw me into many doubts and fears; nor could I then command my former joys, as my tempter insinuated. But I cried to the Lord, and He helped me; so that again I could rejoice with confidence in Jesus, as the Lord my Saviour, the Lord my righteousness.

At another time the tempter suggested that question, "Is there any God?" with such power, that I do not wonder St. Paul should exhort us above all things to take the shield of faith, that therewith we may be able to quench the fiery darts of the devil. However, I rejected the thought with abhorrence; but then it soon followed, "You are no Christian, or such a thought could never have entered your mind. You surely are not born again." With such suggestions I was led sometimes to reason to my hurt. I did not always consider, it is no sin to be tempted, unless we make the temptation our own by giving place to it.

Some days after, a blasphemous suggestion against the being of God struck me as if it had been lightning from heaven; but I cried aloud, "Lord, help me!" and it vanished in a moment. One day, beginning to reason, whether a child of God could ever meet with such suggestions and temptations as I did, until my mind was perplexed and clouded, I was sweetly relieved by these lines:—

" My Saviour doth not yet appear,  
 He hides the brightness of His face;  
 But shall I therefore let Him go,  
 And basely to the tempter yield?  
 No, in the strength of Jesus, no,  
 I never will give up my shield."

At another time the accuser struck at my sincerity thus : " After all your profession, you are only a hypocrite still : you pray much ; so do hypocrites : you are very exact in all you do ; are not they, touching the law, blameless ? " But I have faith. " You think so ; and do not they ? " But I have power over sin. " They suppose they have, but deceive themselves, as you do. " But I have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins. " So you conclude ; but there is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, who are not cleansed from their filthiness. " But the love of God, and the joy of the Holy Ghost, are shed abroad in my heart. " Many have thought so, and yet were deceived : Herod heard John gladly, and did many things : the stony-ground hearers received the word with joy," &c. Thus all my evidences were disputed, as fast as I could produce them. I went into an adjacent field, and, throwing myself on the ground, cried, " O Lord God Almighty, Thou that searchest the heart and triest the reins of the children of men, search and prove me ; see if there be any wicked way in which I go. Lord, Thou knowest all things ; Thou knowest that I would love Thee with all my heart. If I am deceived, if I do not love Thee, O my Lord, show it unto me. " My appeal was scarcely gone from my lips ; yea, while I was yet speaking, He lifted up the light of His countenance, and answered in the joy of my soul. In His light, I saw light, and could not doubt either God's love to me, or my love to God. O, what a blessing it is to have a throne of grace so free of access !

When I first set out in the ways of God, I thought if I was once converted, I should never feel the least evil desire, wandering of thought from God, or

aversion to duty. I concluded, sin will be all destroyed, and I shall know war no more. But how mistaken! I found my conflicts were just beginning; or myself but newly entered on the field of battle. O, what a depth of wickedness I found still in my heart! what a den of thieves, a cage of unclean birds, a nest of corruption, pride, self, unbelief, love of the world, aversion to duty! all loathsome to behold, and contrary to the will of that God whom in my soul I loved. Yet, blessed be God, they had not the dominion over me. The moment they were discovered, my soul rose in indignation against them, fled to the atoning blood, and looked to heaven for deliverance. I hated, I abhorred them as the spawn of hell; so that they did not break my peace. I still held fast the beginning of my confidence, and felt the Spirit of the Lord bearing witness with my spirit that I was a child of God. But a view of these things greatly humbled me, and showed me the continual need I had of Jesus Christ. It sent me often to Calvary with this cry,

“Every moment, Lord, I need  
The merit of Thy death.”

I never had a greater sense of my vileness, or so great a love to Jesus. Never did sin appear so odious, or grace in so lovely a view before. Jesus, in His various names, characters, and offices, appeared lovely, yea, altogether lovely. His presence sweetened everything; so that now I could sing,—

“With me no melancholy void,  
No moment lingers unemploy’d,  
Or unimproved below;  
Our weariness of life is gone,  
Who live to serve our God alone,  
And only Him to know.”

My days did sweetly glide away. I could see, or feel, or taste God in everything. The eating a little bread, or the drinking a little water from a brook, hath many times filled my soul with wonder at His goodness, in feeding such a worthless, hell-deserving creature as I was. God's ordinances now became delightful to me. I went up to His house with joy, and entered His courts with praise. His people now were my dearest and only companions. They were the excellent of the earth, in my view, though perhaps clothed in rags. I was glad when they said unto me, "Let us go up to the house of God." Sabbath-days, formerly the most burdensome, became the most delightful days in all the year. I fed on marrow and fat things. I was sorry when the Sabbath was over, or longed for the return of the next. I saw time was exceedingly precious: I longed that it should be all filled up for God; and was determined to have opportunity for prayer, though I should take it out of meal-times.

While I thus happily went on, I was assaulted with many temptations, out of which the Lord delivered me; one of which I will relate. One day, while I was at work, a sudden thought was darted into my mind, "Is there any God? I wish there was no God!" This horrid injection surprised me. I scarcely knew my own voice from that of the fiend. However, when the enemy comes in with a flood, the Spirit lifts up a standard against him. I cried, "Lord, Thou knowest all things; Thou knowest that I not only believe in Thee, but love Thee, and rejoice that Thou art mine." By the grace of God, I was preserved, so that Satan gained no advantage hereby. His temptations were rather a blessing to me, as they made me seek after the continual

presence of God. I could not rest one moment without feeling His love; which He in mercy graciously bestowed upon me, from day to day. I set the Lord always before me, and almost continually adverted to His presence, both in speaking and acting.

In the evenings I frequently walked out to meditate on God's goodness, and the works of His hands. O, how often hath my soul been filled with wonder and admiration! I felt a peculiar love to souls, and seldom passed a man, woman, or child without lifting up my heart to God on their account; or passed a house without praying for all in it, that God would open their eyes, give them to see the miseries of a natural state, and make them partakers of His love. It grieved me from day to day to see them so ignorant of themselves, of happiness, and of God; so that sometimes I was constrained to speak to them, though I met with rough treatment in return.

Most of our family were soon after converted to God; and O, what a blessed change did religion now make among us! Before its blessed influences were known in our family, nothing but discord, jealousy, and ill-will were there. Peace had for some time left our dwelling, and we, hurried on by devilish passions, were urging fast to ruin. But when religion once spread her benign influences over us, our jars ceased, peace returned, and harmony and love reigned in the whole family. So that my father, once speaking to a person very much prejudiced against religion, said, "Madam, you may say what you please against religion; but I would not for three hundred pounds, it should have missed coming into my house, even on a temporal account. And sure I am, whatever others may think, that those are the

happiest people under heaven, who love God, and bear the Redeemer's cross."

I now longed vehemently that all should know the sweetness and preciousness of Christ. I had a feeling sense of their unhappy condition, as strangers to the grace of God, and could scarcely refrain from weeping over them. I loved them so, that I thought I could willingly have sacrificed my life on a gibbet, if that would have been a means of bringing them to the knowledge of themselves and of Jesus Christ. One evening, when we met at St. Lawrence, I gave vent to the fulness of my heart, and entreated them by the mercies of God, and the preciousness of their own souls, not to quench the Spirit, and destroy themselves eternally. Soon after this we had meetings at Amherst. Here also the love of Christ, and the love of souls, constrained me to beseech them in Christ's stead to be reconciled unto God. My heart seemed to melt down while I spoke, and tears flowed from my eyes.

I now began to pray and exhort at almost every meeting; and God was with us of a truth, but to convince and to comfort. We seldom met together, but the shout of a King was heard in our camp. I found the Lord graciously stood by my weakness, and His Spirit helped my infirmities; so that many times, though my body trembled, and my knees smote one against another, yet God delivered me from these fears, so that I could speak with confidence, freedom, and tender affection.

In the winter following, being invited to go over to Tantremar, and give a word of exhortation, I did so; and God sent the word with power to the hearers' hearts. From that time an awakening began. Many, both young and old, inquired the way to Zion, and

afterwards believed in Jesus. Three other young men and I agreed to visit in our turns, every Sabbath-day, Prospect, St. Lawrence, and Amherst. The word did not fall to the ground in vain; for in every place God gave us to see the fruit of our labours. We met with little opposition, except by hard names, (which were plentifully bestowed upon us, both by the Pharisees and Sadducees,) and being once taken prisoners to the garrison, where after we had been detained two hours, they set us at liberty. The work still went on with greater swiftness during the winter, and many found the word to be the power of God unto salvation.

In the spring following we were visited by a young man from Falmouth, who was very zealous in the cause. He laboured fervently, and at his first coming was made a great blessing to many. After staying about seven or eight weeks, he returned; but, before he left us, proposed that we should give up the Methodist discipline, and form ourselves into a Congregational church. This the people could not consent to do. He soon sent another, who preached amongst us for some time; but, alas! he sowed dissension, and poured out a flood of the rankest Antinomianism, which afterwards produced dismal fruits. At the time he came, we had about two hundred in the society, which met regularly in the classes; and about one hundred and thirty of them professed faith in Jesus. He tarried about a month with us. Several of the friends, beside myself, reasoned with him on the evil tendency of his doctrines; but all in vain. At last, ten of the principal friends wrote him a letter; in which they informed him, that if he continued to preach such doctrines, they could not in conscience hear him. The letter did not reach his

hand ; but he never returned to Cumberland since. Yet though he was gone, his doctrines took root and spread, and soon after tore the society into pieces.

I took a tour up the river Petitcodiac, and spoke to the people of the goodness of God, and the way of salvation through faith ; but they remained in general hard and stupid. However, the word did not wholly fall to the ground, one being then awakened, and the next time I visited the river, set at liberty. It was up this river where I first ventured to take a text, to prevent a sameness in my discourses. After my return, I continued as usual, working at my father's in the day-time, and in the evening and on the Sabbath-days exhorting and preaching at different places, according as it suited the people best. One night, having called at a friend's house, where a number of those that were awakened had got together, a hymn-book being put into my hand, I gave out a verse, and began to expound it. One of those that had been under great distress began to praise God, and to tell what He had done for her soul. Soon after another and another, till four that night professed redemption in the blood of Jesus Christ. I continued to labour at home until November 13th, when I set off again, to visit the poor, hardened people of Petitcodiac river, and laboured amongst them until the 20th. I preached to them sixteen or seventeen times, and perceived the word reached their hearts, as appeared from their heaving breasts and weeping eyes. At Hillsborough, and also at the village, many were pricked to the heart, and began to inquire the way to Zion, in a manner they had never done before. One cried vehemently for mercy, who had just before been mocking. The word fastened on his mind, so

that he was ready to cry out, but left the house to avoid it: soon after he returned, and found it to have the same effect. He attempted to leave the room as at the first, but before he reached the door, was constrained to cry out for mercy.

On the 21st I returned to Tantremar, and preached in the evening with very great freedom. Jesus was in the midst of us, both to wound and to comfort; and many of the friends were remarkably happy. One little girl about seven or eight years old got upon a form, and told, in a wonderful manner, what God had done for her soul. Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings He can and does perfect praise. After preaching several times at Tantremar, on the 26th I rode over the marshes, and on the 28th, by God's blessing, arrived safe at home, having found this a blessed journey to my soul.

I laboured about home as usual, and for about six weeks was sorely grieved to see the enemy likely to gain so great an advantage. Antinomianism now began to rear its dreadful head. The commandments of God, more precious than gold, yea, than much fine gold, were dressed up as scarecrows. God's law was, by many, rather vilified, than magnified and made honourable. To press it on the consciences of our audience was looked upon as a mark of our ignorance, if not of our being total strangers to the grace of God. All this they did under pretence of honouring free grace; and taught publicly, that no believer could make shipwreck of his faith; that his soul never sinned, though he should lie or get drunk; that David himself, or his soul, never sinned, while in Uriah's bed,—it was his body only. Thus were the flood-gates of iniquity set open; and many sucked in the poison, as if it had been the marrow of the

Gospel. So that some of my own children rose up against me, even those that once loved me as the apple of their eye. Yea, even two of our leaders, and many of our principal members, were drawn away by these corrupt notions. Hence dissensions arose; their zeal was spent upon notions and opinions, and the life of God gradually died away.

January 9th, 1782.—I set off for Petitcodiac river, and stopped the first night at a place where I found one whom I had left in great distress, now rejoicing in the Lord. The next morning I set forwards on snow-shoes, for the French settlement on the north side of the river, in company with one or two of our friends. We lay at a French house that night on a little straw, and had only about two yards of a thin linen wrapper to cover us, though it was one of the coldest nights in all that winter. But

“ Labour is rest, and pain is sweet,  
If Thou, my God, art here ! ”

The next day we went forward, and walked about nineteen miles. I was much fatigued with the snow-shoes; yet I preached in the evening, but felt little life in my own soul. O Lord, what are we without Thy love? Sunday, 12th.—I preached at the village, where many were deeply affected, and, with floods of tears, declared they sought the Lamb that taketh away the sins of the world. After preaching, I walked about nine miles to the head of the river, where we met a small company in the evening. The next day I preached twice; and the day following returned to the village again, where I found some fruit of my labours.

Wednesday, 16th.—We walked as far as Ricars-point, where I preached in the evening; but the

people appeared quite unmoved. On Thursday we reached Hillsborough, where we were received with joy. Many appeared to be in sore distress, and one found comfort. Monday, 21st.—I walked about twenty miles on snow-shoes, and preached at night. Many were deeply affected; and one in particular cried, “O, Mr. Black, what shall I do? my heart is ready to burst.” I pointed him to Jesus, and exhorted him to believe. Others declared what God had done for their souls; and many hung around, ready to catch every word, and some with tears crying, “O that I might receive my sight! O that my eyes were opened! What shall I do? My heart is almost broken!” &c.

Wednesday, 23d.—I preached at the village, and, having left the people weeping, went on my journey. At night I preached at a friend's house, where a young man trembled greatly, and cried, “O Lord, if Thou dost not save, I am undone!” About bed-time I went out of the house to the barn, where I found him kneeling on the snow, crying and praying in the bitterness of his soul. The next morning we commended him to the grace of God, and set off for Membromcook, where we tarried all night amongst the French again, and the next day reached Mr. Weldon's. Saturday, 26th.—About one o'clock I arrived at Sackville; but found a proud, barren heart, many times wandering from God. O my God, I hate this self, and will not give up my claim to Thee. Sunday, 27th.—I preached twice, but felt great cause to mourn my barrenness, my distance from, and unlikeness to, Jesus.

I next visited the societies around Cumberland as usual, for about six weeks, and then returned to the river again, where I found all were walking steadily

according to their profession. On April 3d I got safe to Membromcook, after a dangerous passage across the bay. Had my Master been pleased to have called me then away, I was well reconciled to a watery grave; for I knew that I had a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. On the 9th I arrived at Cumberland, and continued in my old Circuit until the 22d of May, when I set off for Windsor, and on the 25th got safe to Cornwallis. On the Lord's day I preached three times; and whilst some wept, and others greatly rejoiced, I had such a sense of my unworthiness, that I appeared to myself as the chief of sinners. If conscience did not prevent, I believe I should yet give up preaching. Lord, let me not fall by the hand of Saul!

Wednesday, 29th.—I visited a sick woman who thought she had a great stock of good deeds to build upon. I endeavoured to convince her of the necessity of the new birth; but all in vain. I offered to pray with her, but she refused. I then exhorted her to consider the dreadful state of her soul, and left her. O Lord, pity her benighted soul!

June 4th.—I rode on to Falmouth, and preached in the evening. Many of Mr. Alleine's friends were there. They felt the power of the word, and rejoiced greatly, declaring it was the power of God unto salvation. But, though they frequently spoke thus during my first visit, yet after Mr. Alleine had returned from Cumberland the second time, and told them that I had opposed his doctrines, and his design to set aside the Methodist discipline there, the case was changed, and on my second coming they said, I was no minister of Jesus Christ; soon after, I was no Christian; and, in a little while, a downright minister of antichrist. Yet I continued

to act, live, and preach the very same doctrines as before. Lord, what is man? I doubt not, but many of these are good, though mistaken, people, and enjoy the life of religion; yet they do not know their brethren.

June 10th.—I set off for Halifax, where there was scarcely the shadow of religion to be seen. I preached four times amongst them; but the word met with little reception. In general they are Gallio-like, and care for none of those things. I then went and preached at two or three other places; and on the 20th returned to Halifax again, where I tarried five days, and preached six times. Some were now affected, and two backsliders much stirred up: but we had considerable disturbance from the sons of Belial; some of whom threw handfuls of flour about the room, upon the people's clothes; others threw gunpowder crackers into the fire, which flew about amongst the people; and others cursed, and swore that I should not preach long, for the press-gang was coming. I pitied them much, but did not fear them. Father, forgive them! they know not what they do.

July 1st.—At the request of some, who had come about seventy miles to hear the word, I agreed to visit Annapolis. We set off early in the morning, and got to Granville that night; where I tarried about seven days, and had some comfortable meetings. I then rode to Horton, and preached in Magee's barn, where the word was sharp as a two-edged sword. Many trembled exceedingly, and amongst the rest, one who had formerly been a valiant servant of the devil, and confessedly as proud as Lucifer; but now he trembled in every limb, and floods of tears gushed from his eyes. Many saw the

necessity of inward religion, and with strong cries and tears besought the Lord for mercy. In the evening we held our first watch-night at Nathaniel Smith's, in Cornwallis. Such a meeting as this I never saw before, except one at Amherst. O, what a noise and a shaking amongst the dry bones! The cries of the wounded were so great, that my voice could scarcely be heard. When the first meeting was over, I found my strength almost exhausted, and feared I should not be able to preach again. But I found the promise literally fulfilled: "They that wait on the Lord shall renew their strength."

On the 12th I returned to Horton; and the next morning setting off about four o'clock, I reached my father's house the same evening, travelling that day about seventy miles. Blessed be God, this was a comfortable journey to me, seeing seven or eight profess to have found the pearl of great price.

Sunday, 14th.—I preached at Amherst. Whilst I was absent, Mr. Alleine paid the people here a second visit, completed a separation, and drew nearly seventy of our members away from us. All was in confusion; the classes were broken up, and a flood of contention threatened dreadful consequences. O Satan! a wicked man could not have answered thy purpose so well. But may the Lord overrule it for good, and prevent the mischief I dread! O Lord, suffer us not to lose the spirit of religion in the spirit of controversy!

On the 25th a number of the principal friends met together at Mr. D——'s, to consult what was best to be done in our present situation. Several leaders were appointed, and three or four classes formed again. O that the Lord would heal the breaches of Zion!

August 1st.—I set off again to visit the dear people at Petitcodiac. I arrived at Membromcook that night, where we had a comfortable meeting. Here I found one, whom I left on March 4th in sore distress, now rejoicing in God her Saviour. This was a day of sweet refreshment to my soul: so does the Lord regard the unworthiest of all that ever knew His grace or spoke in His name. Alas, what a body of death, what a heap of corruption and deformity, am I! Yet, Lord, I trust I can say, grace (not sin) reigns in me. O, what need have I to live by faith!

“O, to grace how great a debtor  
Daily I'm constrain'd to be!”

Friday, 3d.—I preached at Hillsborough in the forenoon, and in the evening at the village. The day following I preached at the head of the river, and joined a few in society. On the Sabbath we had a comfortable time, when many seemed fully determined to seek God for their portion; but especially on Monday, 6th, while I discoursed on, “Ye ask, and have not, because ye ask amiss.” Many were deeply affected, and some very happy. When the tide served, we went down the river in a canoe, leaving many in tears; and in the evening we arrived safe at Hillsborough, where my heart was made glad by hearing one of the Dutch women tell what God had done for her soul.

Tuesday, 7th.—I preached in the morning, and then set off for Shepody. We had a tedious and dangerous passage: the tide was for us, and the wind high, and right a-head, which meeting the tide, made it both rough and dangerous. The night was very dark, and the men almost spent with rowing. With difficulty we reached Cape-Mosel; yet, blessed

be God, in the midst of breaking waves and foaming surges, I could with confidence sing,

“ I fear no denial, no danger I fear,  
Nor start from the trial, while Jesus is near.”

After we got ashore we groped our way about a mile across marshes, until we got into the edge of the woods, where we tarried all night under the shade of the trees, and about day-break set off again, by land, for Shepody, and arrived about eight o'clock. Here I tarried until the 11th. Several appeared affected under the word ; but I fear the work is not deep. Then I set off for Membromcook, and arrived safe at Tantremar that night, where I stayed until the 14th. Then I crossed the marshes, and preached at Mount-Whatley in the evening, and at St. Lawrence the next day.

Sunday, 19th.—I received a very pressing letter from Petitcodiac, requesting me to return there if possible immediately, and informing me that my last visit had been made a great blessing ; that now the prejudices of the people began to vanish, and several were under deep concern. I laid the matter before our friends, who thought I ought immediately to return. The next morning I set off, and rode to the English settlement at Membromcook that night, and about ten o'clock the next reached Hillsborough.

Tuesday, 22d.—I preached twice, when deep attention sat on every face, and some wept most of the time. God appears deeply at work. O that they may never quench His Spirit ! The day following I went in a boat, with about twenty other persons, to the village, and preached twice to an affected congregation, where two professed redemption in the blood of Jesus.

Friday, 24th.—We went by water to the head of the river, where also I preached twice ; and about

one o'clock in the morning set off again in our boat. We had not got above a mile or two down the river, before we met a small canoe, with a man, his wife, and a little child in it, who had rowed about twenty miles, to hear the word, but was too late. O gracious Father, let not his labour be in vain! About nine in the morning, I preached again at the village, and met the society afterwards. Truly this was a powerful and affecting time. God set old Mrs. Stieves at liberty, and her mourning was turned into glorious joy. O, how affectingly did she speak of the goodness of God, until all in the room were melted into tears! She was always of a moral character, and had strictly adhered to some of the externals of religion; but saw not the necessity of inward religion. When two of her sons were awakened and joined the society, she opposed, supposing they were deceived; and when Mr. B——, justice of the peace, went up the river, she wrung her hands in great distress, and cried, "O that Black, that Black, he has ruined my two sons! O, he has ruined my two sons!" But some time ago God opened her understanding, and gave her to feel a need of a deeper work. She was then convinced that she was but a poor deluded Pharisee herself, a whited wall, a painted sepulchre; and that she was in a miserable situation, unless her soul was converted. Sore distress and anguish filled her soul, until God in mercy revealed His Son in her heart. Then she willingly joined those whom formerly she looked upon as enthusiasts and fanatics.

About one o'clock, leaving many in tears, we set off with the tide, and arrived at Hillsborough in time for preaching; where one fell to the ground, and some wept bitterly.

Sunday, 26th.—Having to cross the river at high water, which was about twelve o'clock, I preached early in the morning, and again about eleven o'clock, when there was weeping and rejoicing on every side. F. Stieves, who had been under concern for some time, was powerfully delivered in the last prayer. O, what a blessed time! Gladly would I have stayed longer here: but Tuesday was the Quarterly Meeting at Fort-Lawrence; therefore we took an affectionate leave of each other. They accompanied me across the river to the French settlement, where I had left my horse; and I rode that night to Tantremar.

Tuesday, 28th.—In the lovefeast at Fort-Lawrence about fifty declared their desire to continue in the Methodist Connexion. About nine or ten of these had joined Mr. Alleine; but now saw cause to return, and walk in the way in which they were first called, who, together with those at Petitcodiac, amounted to about eighty. Many stood aloof, and would not join either society. O, what a blow did the work in general receive from these unhappy divisions! Satan's maxim is, "Divide and destroy." However, our way is, with meekness and love, to instruct those that oppose.

September 3d.—I set off again to visit the lower towns, and on the 5th I arrived at Windsor. I then visited Halifax, Horton, Cornwallis, Granville, and Annapolis. We had good seasons at each of these places, except Halifax; and even here, two since my last visit professed faith, so that I hope the word did not fall to the ground. These, with a few more, I joined together in society. But in general the people here are hardened. Lord, pity them! Having visited the friends from Halifax to Annapolis, I returned to the Cumberland Circuit again, where I

arrived, after a dangerous passage, on the 14th of November.

Wednesday, 20th.—I rode over to Tantremar, where I was sorely grieved to find mysticism and the foulest Antinomianism spreading like fire, and its deadly fruits already growing up on every side. The people were informed publicly, that they had nothing to do with God's law: that David was still a man after God's own heart, when wallowing in adultery and murder; that his soul never sinned all that time, but only his body. Mr. Alleine himself told several persons one day, that "a believer is like a nut thrown into the mud, which may dirty the shell, but not the kernel." That is, we may get drunk, or commit adultery, without the smallest defilement, &c. O Lord, suffer not the enemy of souls to deceive them thus!

Thursday, 21st.—I rode on to Membromcook, and in the evening went in a canoe to Hillsborough. I tarried near the river about seven days, and had several affecting meetings: two more professed an acquaintance with Jesus; the society were pretty lively; some were under deep concern, and trembled exceedingly under the word.

December 1st.—In speaking on Gal. v. 1, I endeavoured to point out to the people of Tantremar the true Christian liberty; that it did not consist in a liberty to sin with impunity, but a happy liberty to serve God both with our body and with our spirit, which are His.

February 18th.—While I was at Mr. Donkin's, a young man began to talk unscripturally of being led by the Spirit. A woman that was present kindly cautioned him; but it was to no purpose. Like other enthusiasts, he was above being taught by

man, and said he spoke by the Spirit of the eternal God. She replied, "Some are led by another spirit, and not by the Spirit of God: the word of God is the only rule by which we are to try the spirits." After they had talked together for some time, I related the case of George Bell in England, as related in Mr. Wesley's Journal; and also of another person of whom I had heard. It struck him; he threw himself down on the floor, and cried aloud, "I am undone, undone, undone!" I said, "Only seek the Lord, and abide by the testimony of His word: He is still able and willing to save." He then rose from the floor, and sat down on a bench, grinning and grinding his teeth; and appeared evidently to be under the influence of an evil spirit. I fell on my knees by his side, and began to pray; when immediately, as if possessed by a thousand furies, he leaped from his seat, raised up his hands, and scratched me down the back, as if he would have torn off my coat. But when his hand came to the bottom of my back, he could touch me no more. Mrs. D—— caught up her child in her arms, and ran screaming out of the house, leaving him and me alone.

I know not how to describe his various gestures and hideous noises. Sometimes he barked like a dog; then again he would fly round the room, jumping, stamping, and making the most dreadful noises, imitating the Indian powwows, when they invoke the infernal powers. He then roared and screamed in my ears, and shouted in order to drown my voice; mingling with his shouts terms of the most bitter disdain, and execrable blasphemy against Jesus Christ. I found his design was, if possible, to stop me from praying; thinking he should then have power to seize me: but I was peculiarly helped to

wrestle with the Lord, that He would either bind or cast out the evil one. I continued praying until he became quiet as a lamb, kneeled down by me, and began to pray. He told me afterwards, that he was so strongly possessed by the devil, that he wished to tear out my eyes or kill me; but that after his hands came to the bottom of my back, he could touch me no more. Hence we may learn the devil's malice, the prevalence of prayer, and the worth and necessity of our Bibles.

March 29th.—I left Partridge-Island, and crossed in a small boat to Cape Blow-me-down. After a fatiguing journey through mud and water, and having for several hours lost my way, not knowing where to go in the dark, and fully expecting to stay in the woods, I at last found a house, where I tarried all night; and the next day preached at Cornwallis, where many were much comforted.

From this until May 22d I laboured at Horton, Annapolis, Granville, Falmouth, Windsor, and Halifax. I then set sail in a small schooner for La Have, where we arrived the day following, and I preached in the evening. I tarried here about five days, preached eighteen times, and then left some deeply affected.

Wednesday, 28th.—On taking my leave, some friends came with me down to the shore, entreating me to return as soon as possible; and some seemed fully determined to seek God as the portion of their souls. That evening I arrived at Liverpool: the news of my arrival soon spread, so that at half after seven I had about three hundred to hear me. I came here only to get a passage to Halifax; but little did I think what blessed times I was about to see.

June 1st.—The Rev. Mr. Frazer preached twice in the meeting-house, and I preached once. At noon I went to Mr. Smith's, where the people followed me, not willing to lose a word. The house was presently filled; and the Lord was in the midst of us. Many were deeply engaged in seeking salvation. Weeping and rejoicing were on every side: many were exceedingly happy, praising God. Blessed be God for all His kindness to me! O Lord, how do I love Thee, and Thy people!

June 2d.—I preached on the east side of the river; and great was the power of God in the midst of us. Verily God is known in Salem; His name is great in Israel. Great indeed was the noise and shaking of the dry bones. I think there were about fourteen crying out in great distress and anguish of spirit, while others were shouting for joy. Indeed, I never heard more heart-piercing cries and groans, than those of one little girl. O, how did she cry out, for the space of two hours! "What shall I do to be saved? O, my Jesus, my dear Jesus! What shall I do! O, what shall I do to be saved?" These, and such like expressions, were enough to melt a heart of stone, as they dropped from her almost infant lips. Our meeting continued between two and three hours, while shouts of praise and groans of distress might be heard from every part of the room. We had such a time in the evening again at Mr. Dean's, which continued until midnight. Lord, what a day was this! Glory be to Thy name for ever!

June 3d.—I expected to have gone to Shelburne this morning, but the vessel did not sail; therefore I crossed the river to Mr. Smith's, where presently a number of people were gathered. Here also great

was the shaking amongst the dry bones, and there was scarcely a dry cheek in the room. In the evening I preached at the Falls above the town, and God sent the word home to their hearts. It was sharp as a two-edged sword! I have seldom seen such a meeting as this. Numbers were in great distress, groaning, crying, and earnestly pleading for mercy. One gentleman in particular, lately from Stratford, in Connecticut, in New-England, was very grievously wounded. O, how vehemently did he plead for mercy for several hours! Others, again, were filled with consolation. The meeting continued until one o'clock in the morning. Blessed be God, these were reviving days to me, and I could say,

“ With me no melancholy void,  
 No moment lingers unemploy'd,  
 Or unimproved below ;  
 Our weariness of life is gone,  
 Who live to serve our God alone,  
 And only Him to know.”

June 4th.—I received the following note:—  
 “ Edmund Darrow, a stranger to a saving interest in Jesus Christ, begs your prayers to Almighty God for the deliverance of his soul; and should Mr. Black come to New-England, he would be glad to wait upon him at his own house, in the western part of Connecticut.” He soon after found peace with God, and with great zeal exhorted others to seek after the same blessing; and the next year God called him, I trust, to a mansion in heaven.

June 5th.—I set sail for Shelburne, with brother Dean, where we safely arrived on Friday evening; and our hearts were made glad by the sight of some of our friends from New York. These had just sat down in the midst of barren woods; and, as there was

not one house in all the place, they lived in tents. It rained hard most of the night. Brother Barry, in whose tent brother Dean and I stayed, insisted upon our going to bed, and he sat up. The rain beat in upon us during the greater part of the night. The next day I preached to a few of the people, and on Sunday I preached three times. They heard attentively; but on Monday, 9th, while I was at prayer, one came up in the habit of a gentleman, cursing and swearing that if I did not come down, he would knock me down. He asked, "By what authority do you preach?" and then, turning to the audience, added, "He is nothing but an impostor, and has no authority to preach." I said, "Sir, I have as much authority to preach as you have to swear, and sport with the tremendous name of the great Judge, who will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain." "Well, but who sent you?" "Sir, I AM hath sent me unto you." "What, are you God's mouth to this people?" "I am; for it is written, He that heareth you heareth Me, and he that heareth Me heareth Him that sent Me." He went away, uttering dreadful menaces; but presently returned, with two of his companions, sturdy servants of the same master. They came on like mad bulls of Bashan, with mouths full of blasphemy, oaths, and dreadful imprecations, declaring they would tear me down; but the people suffered them not. One of them swore, "I can preach as well as he!" He then leaped on the stump of a tree, (one put a pocket-book into his hand,) and after uttering horrid blasphemy came down. As he came towards me, I addressed him thus: "Friend, I wish you well: my soul pities you: you know that you are fighting against God: your own conscience condemns you.

Remember, you and I must soon stand at the bar of God; and how, O how, will you meet me there?" He seemed to be struck for a time, but soon hardened his heart against God, and belched out a few more oaths, and then left me to finish my discourse without further trouble. During the preaching, a man from the skirts of the congregation threw a stone with great violence; but as I saw it come, I saved my head, and it just passed by my temples. Blessed be God for His mercy! This disturbance brought many more to hear. Several appeared to be concerned; particularly in the evening, while I gave a few words of advice in one of the tents.

Tuesday, 10th.—I preached at Rosaway, when most in the room were in tears, and some cried out, "What shall I do to be saved?" Wednesday, 11th, we sailed for Liverpool; but did not arrive there until the 19th, by reason of the fog. On my going ashore, I found there was a vessel sailing for Halifax. I proposed going in her; but our friends would not consent, insisting in the strongest manner, that it was not my duty to go and leave them now. I knew not what to do, as I had already stayed double the time I intended. After praying for direction, being anxious only to do the will of the Lord, I opened my Bible on these words, "If any man compel thee to go with him a mile, go with him twain." I could not say another word, but readily consented; and that night we had a comfortable time whilst I was preaching.

Saturday, 21st.—I preached twice with great power. In the evening several came to Mr. Smith's, some of whom were deeply affected, wept and cried for a considerable time. One young woman was very happy, who prayed and praised God in a very

wonderful manner, and exhorted all around to seek an interest in Jesus Christ. Some part of this day I had a sense of God's goodness, and longed to live entirely to His glory; yet I could not find those sweet sensations, and lively views of His goodness and love, that I had formerly felt. O my Lord! give me to love Thee alone; take away every rival; destroy all sin; and let me spend my latest breath in proclaiming Thy love to the fallen sons of Adam. Gladly would I die as soon as my last message is delivered. Death is no terror to me; rather it appears infinitely desirable, when I feel Thy presence.

Sunday, 22d.—I preached three times: three, I trust, found peace with God, whilst others were in deep distress, and many were filled with abundance of consolations. O, what a blessed day! Glory, glory to God, that ever I was born!

Monday, 23d.—I preached at the meeting-house; and on my return I met the Rev. Mr. Cheevers, who said abruptly, "I suppose you think you have been doing good." "Sir," said I, "I hope we have been doing no harm." "Yes, you have been poisoning the minds of the people with doctrines as bad as ratsbane. You are leading them all to hell." "Sir, I pity you, and I will pray for you." "I suppose," replied he, "you do not desire that I should pray for you." I said, "If you can pray in faith, I do; otherwise I do not:" then I bade him a good day, and left him.

Thursday, 26th.—In the forenoon I preached at the Falls; and endeavoured to point out the creature's emptiness, and Christ's fulness. One at this time professed redemption through His blood; and in the evening we had a good time at the town, when another broke out in praise, saying, "Jesus is

precious! O, He is precious! O that all would come, and taste His love!" Another little boy spoke to the same effect. Indeed, many rejoiced, and others wept. After preaching, many went down with me to Mr. Bradford's; and it was midnight before we could part. As I expected to sail for Halifax next morning, I took my leave of this people, and bless God that I ever saw Liverpool.

Friday, 27th.—I set sail for Halifax, and arrived there the next day. After preaching two or three sermons here, I set off for Windsor, on July 1st, and arrived the same night. Here I tarried until the 10th, and had some comfortable times; but a difference between two of our friends has done much hurt. On the 11th I arrived at Cumberland again, where I laboured until the 20th, and then visited my dear children at Petitcodiac river. These are a simple, loving people indeed, happy in God. I preached ten or eleven times among them; and found many Divine consolations, and great refreshments of soul; and then returned to Cumberland. Having rode two or three times round the Circuit, I returned to Windsor, Horton, &c., where I tarried until September 23d.

On the 28th I arrived at Cumberland in a small schooner, and visited all the places round. We had some comfortable times; but found a general declension, at Tantremar in particular. Once it was filled with peace and love, praise and prayer; but, alas! the glory is departed. Our meetings were now flat and dull, and many who began well are like to end in the flesh. Speculative or practical Antinomianism hath bewitched them. O Lord, lay to Thine hand; for men have made void Thy law.

October 20th.—I set off for the island of St.

John's, at the invitation of Mr. B. Chappel ; where I arrived on the 22d, and tarried about a fortnight. I preached several times at Charlotte-Town, and at St. Peter's ; but, alas ! the people in general appeared stupid, and senseless as stones, altogether ignorant of the nature of true religion, and of that faith which worketh by love. On my return from the island, I was exceedingly ill ; but, through grace, not afraid to die. It was my earnest prayer to God, that if my usefulness was done, I might then finish my course, and go to Him whom my soul loved. Blessed be God, death has long since lost his sting and terror. Many times the very thoughts of dying filled my heart with joy : particularly once, when a party of Indians had risen at Miramichi, and taken many of the inhabitants prisoners ; and it was reported they were on their way to destroy all the friends of government at Cumberland. At the news of this, my heart leaped, yea, danced within me for joy, to think that I had a mansion in heaven, a house above their reach, even the bosom of my Redeemer,

“ That palace of angels and God.”

I did not fear those who could only kill the body. After being three days on our passage, and most of the time with little to eat, we arrived at the Bay-Verte. The next day I rode on to Cumberland, and took my Circuit for the winter.

For some time before this, I had had thoughts of marriage. At first I rejected them as a temptation. I had not the least scruple but it was lawful for a minister to marry ; but I feared lest I should do my own will, not the will of God. I prayed again and again, that the Lord would show me His will, and would rather die than offend Him ; and having

advised with my friends, and they approving of my design, I was, on February 17th, 1784, married to Mary Gay, of Cumberland. We both devoted ourselves to the Lord and His service; and, blessed be God, I have no reason to repent of it to this day.

As soon as the spring opened, I set off for the lower towns; and after preaching several times at Windsor, &c., I went to Halifax. Having stayed here some time, and met the classes, one of blacks, and the other of whites, I then went with eight of our friends in a boat to Birchtown; where I preached to about two hundred black people. It is truly wonderful to see what a work God hath been carrying on amongst these poor negroes. Upwards of sixty profess to have found the pearl of great price, within seven or eight months: and what is farther remarkable, the chief instrument whom God hath employed in this work is a poor negro, who can neither see, walk, nor stand. He is usually carried to the place of worship, where he sits and speaks, or kneels and prays with the people.

April 23d.—I met nine of the black classes; (five more remained unmet, for want of time;) and many of them are deeply experienced in the ways of God. There are about one hundred and eight blacks and whites in society at Shelburne and Birchtown.

April 26th.—I set sail for Liverpool, and arrived the next evening. On hearing that I was come, the friends flocked to see me: we had a comfortable evening, and could heartily praise God that He had brought us together again. On the following days, whilst I preached, many were bathed in tears; and some were so filled with a sense of the glory of God, that they said, their mortal bodies could hardly stand under it. O my God, what kindness is this to

mortals! O, how did they rejoice and tell of His goodness! Blessed be God that ever I was made a partaker of these immortal hopes! O, what an infinite fulness is laid up in Jesus! My God, only give me to enjoy Thy sacred smile, a constant sense of Thine approbation and love, and I desire no more :—

“Honours, wealth, or pleasures mean,  
I neither have nor want.”

May 2d.—I preached twice, and we had several meetings for prayer and exhortation. The people were much engaged, so that we had scarcely time or inclination to eat. O, what a blessed day was this! Many trembled, wept, and cried for mercy. O that none may ever turn again, as a dog to the vomit!

Monday, 3d.—We had another wonderful meeting. One woman, whose harp had been on the willows for some time, and her soul in captivity, was filled with unspeakable joy. O, how did she praise the Lord for her happy deliverance! This was a glorious time to me. Blessed Lord, let me only taste Thy love, and be employed in Thy service, and it sufficeth me. Once, indeed, I wished that I had never been born, and thought it my greatest misery to have a soul: now I bless Thee for my being, and glory that I am capable of loving Thee.

Wednesday, 5th.—I set sail for Halifax, where having arrived early on Saturday, I set off for Windsor on foot, and travelled forty miles that day; but the skin was so blistered under my feet, that with difficulty I reached Carles's. The next morning I reached Windsor, and preached twice; and after visiting Annapolis, Cornwallis, and Horton, I returned to Cumberland on May 26th. I laboured

here until September 15th, when, after an affecting parting, I set off to visit the States, intending to get some help from our brethren there, as I alone could not take care of all the societies. On my way to Baltimore I called at Boston, where I preached twice: from thence I went by the way of Rhode-Island to New York; where I arrived October 20th, and preached a few times.

I was much exercised here about my temporal circumstances. Satan painted, in lively colours, my distance from home, my money almost gone, my being amongst entire strangers, &c. I could not fully resist this. It followed me even to the pulpit; but there God delivered me, and removed the heaviness from my mind. The first words I opened upon in my Bible were these, "O ye of little faith, wherefore did ye doubt? Look at the lilies," &c. My heart was filled with joy, and I walked in the strength of this promise, not doubting but God would provide.

From New York I went to Long-Island; and on the 29th preached at Black-Stump, the day following at Newtown, and on Tuesday attended the execution of two men that were hung at Jamaica. At the sheriff's desire, I prayed with them, and recommended their souls to God. After travelling two or three days with brother Cox, and preaching at Serrington, Cowharbour, and Huntingdon, I crossed the sound into Connecticut. I preached in the evening at Northwalk, and the next morning rode on to Stratfield. I preached six or seven times amongst the people here, and then returned to New York. During my absence from New York, Dr. Coke had arrived there, and two other preachers from England, and were gone towards Baltimore. There-

fore, on November 17th, I set off for Philadelphia, and thence forward on my way to meet them. December 14th I met Dr. Coke and Mr. Asbury. On the 15th the doctor preached and administered the sacrament at the Gunpowder meeting-house. It was a blessed time to me. O my God, I am Thine by a thousand ties, necessary, voluntary, and sacred; houses of worship, woods, fields, and trees have been witness to the sacred vows and engagements that I am under to Thee; and these, when I willfully and presumptuously sin against Thee, will bring their evidences against me. O my Lord, keep me by Thy powerful grace! O, preserve Thine for ever!

Friday, 17th.—I rode with Doctor Coke and four other preachers to Perry-Hall, the most spacious and elegant building I have seen in America; and on Saturday, 18th, I left it, and rode on to Hunt's chapel, to relieve brother Whatcoat. This was a day of trials, and, blessed be God, of peculiar comforts too. After preaching at Rioter's-town, and several other places, on Thursday, 23d, I arrived at Baltimore. Friday, 24th, our Conference began; and ended on January 1st, 1785. Perhaps such a number of holy, zealous, godly men never met together in Maryland before. Two preachers, Messrs. Garrettson and Cromwell, were appointed for Nova-Scotia. They set off by way of New York; and I went by water to Hienah, near Barnstable. Here I tarried a few days, and preached six or seven times. The word was attended with power; many were stirred up; and two, a few days after, found peace with God. From hence I went to Hingham, where I found my wife well.

February 1st.—I went to Boston, and tarried there mostly until May, and then sailed for Cum-

berland. When I first arrived here, I preached in private houses, none of the ministers being willing to lend me their pulpits. First I preached in a chamber at the north end of the town; but the people crowded in so that the floor sunk an inch or two. I then preached in a large room at the south end of the town, where in time of prayer one of the beams of the floor broke, and the people screamed, as if going to be swallowed up by an earthquake. After this I preached in Mr. Skillman's meeting-house, two or three times: but this was like to cause a quarrel between him and the committee, who had offered the use of the house; so I declined preaching there any more. We then procured from the "select men" the use of the North Latin school-house: but neither would this contain half the people; and one of the beams here also giving way, the people were terribly afraid, and screamed as if about to be crushed to death. I preached most of the time in the Sandemans' meeting-house, as most of that society are now scattered; but it would not contain half the people. The last Sabbath I preached in Dr. Elliot's meeting-house, to, I suppose, upwards of two thousand people. This was the only meeting-house that would hold the people; nor would this have held them, if they had had timely notice. I trust my labour here was not in vain. The word reached the hearts of many, who soon after found peace with God; and, as there was no Methodist preacher there when I left them, they joined Mr. Skillman's church, who is a lively, useful Baptist minister.

In the end of May I arrived at Cumberland, where I tarried about a month; and then set off for Windsor, &c., to meet Mr. Garrettson. During my absence, I found, the classes had met but badly, and

some not at all. Since that time, I have endeavoured to labour in my Lord's vineyard, and find He is a gracious Master. I have always found Him faithful to His promise. I feel His love better than life, and I trust I shall spend and end my days in His service. Only I am ashamed that I have made no greater progress in the Divine life.

W. B.

SHELBURNE, *June 1st*, 1788.

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THE following account of the latter years of Mr. Black's life was written by the Rev. Richard Knight, one of his fellow-labourers in Nova-Scotia :—

IN the year 1786 we find his name on the Minutes of Conference, as a duly authorized and regularly appointed minister of our Connexion. He had, however, for five years previous to this devoted his whole time and energy to the important work of calling sinners to repentance. He had, amidst much labour and opposition, and sometimes even peril, been singularly successful; but now, a more special and regular path of ministerial duty was marked out for him. To the itinerant work (as may be seen from his journals and letters) he brought a constitution of more than ordinary strength; a strong, sound, and discriminating judgment; the very desirable possession of great Christian prudence; an ardent thirst for the attainment of knowledge; talents for the ministry of the most useful kind; a heart intensely inflamed for the salvation of souls, and a fixed purpose to labour for God. These varied and important qualifications became still more valuable when

strengthened by faithful exercise, and matured by experience. Since I have read his pastoral letters and journals, and have thus caught some glimpses of him in the closet, in the family, in the church, and in the world, I can see how it is, that his memory is embalmed in the most endearing recollections of the churches. I had heard him called, long before I saw him, "the Apostle of Methodism in Nova-Scotia." I have since found, that to this distinguished honour he has an unquestioned claim. Some favourable opinion must be formed of his zeal, when we find the devoted Dr. Coke, who was a missionary in body and soul, thus writing to him:—"You cannot be so useful in one Circuit in England as you are now; but do not kill yourself. I am almost angry with you for shortening your useful life." His zeal, and love for souls, were as the fire upon the Jewish altar, always burning; and to the missionary devotion of his early life doubtless it was owing, that he so soon came upon the supernumerary list: but he worked while it was day. With the venerable Wesley and Dr. Coke he kept up a regular correspondence; and to his judgment they paid considerable deference. In their letters to him, they speak of him in terms of warm commendation; and therefore it was that so early as 1789, three years only from the commencement of his regular itinerancy, we find him appointed as "presiding elder, or general superintendent of the missions in Nova-Scotia, New-Brunswick, and Newfoundland." The estimation in which he was held by Dr. Coke (on whom then rested the principal management of the foreign missions) may be seen from the following fact,—that the doctor wished him to take the general superintendence of the missions in the Leeward Islands. To this

appointment Mr. Black acceded; and, as preparatory to his entering upon the regular performance of its onerous duties, visited, in the year 1793, in company with the doctor, the scene of his intended labours. The exercises of his mind at this period were intense and interesting. He thus sets them before us:—  
“To-morrow we are to sail for St. Eustatius. O my Lord, let Thy presence go with us; and if it is not for Thy glory that I should go to the West Indies, let me not go! I desire not to choose for myself: rather let Infinite Wisdom choose for me. Sometimes the thought of going to those islands appears to me like death and the grave; but I feel resigned. ‘Not my will, but Thine be done!’”  
The day after they sailed, he thus writes in his journal: “My great desire is to enjoy God, and to live in His will. Away, ye earthly loves, and leave me to my God! His love, His favour, His will, are dearer to me than life itself. O, what is life without Him but a dull, empty round?” This submissive state of mind he held fast throughout the voyage; for we find him, when approaching its close, thus recording his feelings:—“I have had much pleasure this evening in my closet-duties. I said, with the disciples on Mount Tabor, ‘It is good to be here.’ I feel thankful at the thought that Infinite Wisdom is at the helm of affairs, and directs the whole; and here my soul would rest. Let me cheerfully go wherever Thy providence appoints. Though the flesh would incline me to prefer England to any other part of the world, especially to the sultry climes of the West Indies, yet I wish to walk not after the will of the flesh, but after the will of my God. Sovereign of the world, sanctify my will! Let all within me be in sweet subjection to Thyself.

A thousand times rather would I die, than live to sin against such goodness and purity as are in Thee. To lose my place in the scale of being would be a less evil, than to lose the image of God, and sink into the base drudgery of sin and the vassalage of Satan."

His stay, however, in the West Indies was short. The brethren in the Nova-Scotia District thought his removal from among them would be attended with injury to the mission; and making their opinion known to Dr. Coke, he was continued in his former station.

In July, 1791, he visited the island of Newfoundland. The result was a large accession to the Methodist society there, and the dawn of that brighter day which has since shone upon our mission in that island. Newfoundland had early engaged the attention of Mr. Wesley. Some years previous to the visit of Mr. Black, Mr. Wesley and Lady Huntingdon had prevailed on the Bishop of Bristol to give episcopal ordination to Laurence Coughlan, who had for seven years travelled in our Connexion. He was sent thither. On his arrival he found the moral and spiritual condition of the people too much resembling the bleak and gloomy coasts of the country in which they resided. After three years' toil and disappointment, he was the means of effecting much good. He established a society; but its discipline and modes of worship, owing to the peculiar relations in which he stood, had neither the simplicity nor the freedom of Methodism in England. This want of independence marred, in some considerable degree, the good which had been effected. Mr. Black therefore found religion at a very low ebb on his arrival. He observes: "I reached Carbonear, where I was joyfully received by

brother M'Geary, a Methodist preacher. He said he had been weeping before the Lord over his lonely situation, and the deadness of the people, and that my coming was like life from the dead to him. There was a great work here, a number of years ago, under the ministry of Mr. Coughlan; but some of the fruits of it are gone to heaven, some gone back unto the world, and now only about fifteen women meet in class." The arrival of Mr. Black retrieved the mission from abandonment, (for Mr. M'Geary had determined to leave the island,) and laid the foundation of its future prosperity. His visit to Newfoundland may be considered as forming the most useful and interesting portion of his missionary life. As such he thought it himself, and spoke of it to the last with feelings of great pleasure. He was indeed to that land as the messenger of mercy. No sooner did he open his providential embassy, than the Lord crowned his labours with success, and a blessed revival broke forth, marked by depth, and extent, and all the characters of a work truly Divine. No less than two hundred souls were savingly converted to God during his brief sojourn in Conception-Bay. Nor are the fruits of that visit to be limited by its immediate results. He organized Methodism; settled the mission-property, and secured it to the Connexion; increased and inspirited the society; and, by laying their case before Mr. Wesley, obtained for them the help they needed. He then left their shores, and thus describes the circumstances connected with his departure:—"I think I never had so affecting a parting with any people before in my life. It was hard work to tear away from them. I was nearly an hour shaking hands with them, some twice and thrice over; and even then we hardly knew how

to part; but I at last rushed from among them, and left them weeping as for an only son." In Newfoundland, though most of those who knew him have passed away, his memory is still blessed.

He reached Nova-Scotia from this missionary excursion in October, 1791, after a rough and dangerous passage. But here new trials awaited him. "On my arrival," he says, "I was sorry to find that some painful and difficult circumstances had occurred, in consequence of which Mr. M—— is out of society, and we have no meeting-house to preach in. Lord, make all things to work for the best!" Mr. M—— continued for some time untractable, and would agree to no arrangements either for selling or letting the preaching-house. The mind of Mr. Black was much exercised; but on this occasion, as on many others, he found a comforter in the excellent woman who was so truly a help meet for him. Several letters had passed between him and Mr. M——, who was still obstinate. "I was much affected," said he, "in reading the letters. The Lord pity that untoward man! But the following letter from my dear wife much comforted me. She says, 'Blessed be God, you have a Friend who can and will bear you up under all your trials. Fain would I help to bear your burdens, for they are great at present. Long has our heavenly Father kept us from almost everything that might disturb our peace; but at length He sees fit in His godly wisdom to try us; but O! be faithful unto the end. May our gracious Lord be with you, to bless, direct, and comfort you.'" The unyielding disposition of Mr. M—— rendered it necessary that measures should be used to procure another chapel. Our venerated friend engaged ardently in this business. A sub-

scription-list was opened, and in one day £200 were raised, and a place of worship in due time erected.

In the year 1812 his name was put down on the stations as supernumerary : but from that time to the period of his decease, he continued to render many and important services to the church ; and in her most endearing recollection is his name enshrined. Nor did he forget her in his last will. To the old chapel, with which he was connected by so many affecting associations, he left £250 ; and to the poor of the Wesleyan society in Halifax, the sum of £50. But, " our fathers, where are they ? and the prophets, do they live for ever ? " The time came, when the man who had been for so many years looked up to as the father of Methodism in this province, must pass from the fellowship of the militant to that of the triumphant church. Indications of the rapid approaches of death were perceived by his friends for some weeks ; but they were scarcely prepared to hear of his removal when it actually took place. Conversing with him a few days before his death, on the awful disease which was raging in our town, he, with his usual heavenly smile, said, " It does not matter ; I must soon go : whether it be by the cholera, or " (pointing to his swollen legs) " this dropsy, it is all the same ; I leave it to my Master to choose." But his days were numbered. On Sunday, September 6th, 1834, he felt himself worse than usual. I saw him just before the time of evening service. His conduct towards me was, as it had been from the first hour I saw him, that of the utmost kindness and affection. Knowing that my whole time had been occupied in visiting the cholera patients at the hospital, and in their own habitations, and in attending to the regular duties of the

Circuit, he feelingly entreated me to be careful of my health, for the sake of my family and the church. I did not, however, think that his end was so near.

When called to visit him early in the morning of the day on which he died, September 8th, I felt the force of the often-quoted language of Dr. Young:—

“The chamber where the good man meets his fate  
Is privileged beyond the common walk  
Of virtuous life, quite in the verge of heaven.”

I found him contending with the last enemy, but in the perfect possession of his reason, although so oppressed by the complicated afflictions under which he laboured in his last hour, as to find very great difficulty in speaking. “I trust, sir,” said I, “you feel that Saviour to be precious whom you have held forth so long to others.” He said, “All is well; all is peace; no fear, no doubt. Let Him do as He will: He knows what is best.” I referred to his long and useful life. He said very impressively, “Leave all that; say no more. All is well.” We joined in prayer; and his spirit was evidently much engaged in the solemn exercise. On leaving the room, I said, “You will soon be in that glory of which you have so often spoken in the course of your long ministry.” “I shall soon be there,” he said, “where Christ is gone before me.” After this he sunk very fast, and spoke little, and that with considerable difficulty. His last words were, “Give my farewell blessing to your family, and to the society;” and, “God bless you. All is well.”

As a man, Mr. Black was affable, generous, prudent, and one that followed after peace. As a Christian, his piety was deep, uniform, active, and growing. As a minister, he possessed a very con-

siderable knowledge of divinity. He had given attention to reading and study, and could rightly divide the word of truth. He was well acquainted with human nature; possessed a longing desire for the salvation of souls; was faithful, affectionate, and assiduous. In short, he had all those qualifications which never fail to make the minister respected, beloved, and useful. As the head of a family, he "walked before his house in a perfect way," as his journals and letters abundantly testify. His reward is with his God; and being dead he yet speaketh. To ministers he has left an example, and to the church an admonition to be faithful. A funeral sermon was preached in the old chapel, from 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8; when a gracious feeling pervaded the congregation. May the effects be permanent and saving!

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THE following character of Mr. Black is extracted from the Minutes of Conference for 1835:—

**WILLIAM BLACK.** He was a native of Huddersfield, Yorkshire, which place he left at an early period of life, and accompanied his parents to the province of Nova-Scotia. Soon after his arrival in that country, he was deeply convinced of sin by the Spirit of God, and under the guidance of the same Spirit sought and obtained redemption through the blood of Jesus, even the forgiveness of his sins. In the year 1786 he was set apart to the work of the ministry; to which sacred employment he brought a constitution of more than ordinary strength, a sound and discriminating judgment, an earnest desire for useful knowledge, an enlightened zeal for

the glory of God, and a fixed purpose of mind to seek and save the souls of men. He was a diligent student, as well as a faithful and laborious pastor; and his profiting appeared unto all. Though placed in circumstances very unfavourable to mental cultivation, he so improved the few advantages which he enjoyed, that he was enabled to read the oracles of God in the languages in which they were originally revealed to man; and his reading in theology and ecclesiastical history was extensive and judicious. He was an acceptable and useful preacher of the Gospel; and hundreds of people, who were by his instrumentality converted from the error of their way, will be the crown of his rejoicing in the day of the Lord Jesus. On the recommendation of the late venerable Dr. Coke, he was appointed general superintendent of our missions in British America; the duties of which important office he discharged in a manner alike honourable to himself, and beneficial to the missionaries and societies that were entrusted to his care; and by them he was justly regarded as the father of Methodism in that portion of the British empire. After a long, laborious, and useful life, he died, as he had lived, in peace with God and man, on the 8th of September, 1834, in the seventieth year of his age. His last words were, "All is well! all is peace! I shall soon be in that glory to which Christ has gone before me."

THE LIFE  
OF  
MR. WILLIAM ASHMAN.

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WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

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I WAS born at Colford, in the parish of Kilmersdon, in the county of Somerset, in the year of our Lord 1734. My father and mother were very honest people, but had no religion. My mother had something of the form of godliness, and in that she trusted; but my father had neither the form nor power. He was much addicted to swearing, and paid little or no regard to the Sabbath-day, for which my mother did often reprove him; but to little purpose, till on receiving the news that his brother, a very wicked man, was killed by falling down a coal-pit, he was cut to the heart. Then I saw him drop a tear, and wring his hands, saying, "What is become of his poor soul?"

About this time Providence brought the Rev. Mr. Wesley into our parish to preach; and great numbers of people flocked to hear, among whom were my father and mother. I was then present with my mother, who was greatly affected with the preaching, and said to my father, "I never saw or heard such

a man before: I think there has not been such a man on the earth since the days of the apostles. I believe he is raised up for some very great work, and that the end of the world is near at hand." My father now began to attend to what he heard, and the word made a lasting impression on his mind; so that he was quite reformed, and began to pray in his family. A society began to be formed, and a mighty outpouring of the Spirit fell on the people, so that there was a great ingathering of souls to Jesus Christ. The poor people began to build a preaching-house at Colford, though they had not a shilling in hand to do it with. One or two said, "What are we going about? We cannot go on with it." One said, "Let us begin as if the king was to pay for it." It was then agreed, that every member of the society should pay one penny a week at least, and others what they thought proper. There was also a weekly collection towards the building, and the people were of one heart and one soul. As there was a great reformation from swearing, drunkenness, and Sabbath-breaking, the money that built the preaching-house was saved out of the ale-houses; and many uncomfortable families were made truly happy.

The first person, I think, that received a clear sense of the pardon of sin, and, I believe, a clean heart at the same time, was the wife of Joseph Wilcocks, at Holcombe, who died in a short time after in the full triumph of faith, her soul being filled with perfect love that casteth out all fear. Many being present at her death caught the heavenly flame, which began now to spread in all the meetings; so that in a few months many were justified, and, I believe, many of them sanctified; though

they did not know what justification or sanctification meant, only they expressed themselves thus: "I am very happy. I love God with all my heart, and with all my soul; and I know God loves me, and that Jesus Christ died for me, and that all my sins are forgiven." This was not in word only, but in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance, as was evident in their lives; for the lions became lambs.

Among this number was my father, who became a new creature in Christ Jesus: all old things were done away, and all things became new. I have heard him say, that for many years together he did not lose a comfortable sense of the presence of God; and that it was his meat and drink to do the will of God; and his whole delight was to give his heart to God, and to set his affections on things above. In his lying down and in his rising up his heart was full of prayer and praise to God. He continued a very useful and faithful member of society above forty years; and always paid three-pence a week to his class, which he never failed to meet during all that time. He always gave a shilling a quarter when he received his ticket, which he never once failed to receive; and also gave freely at every other collection. He thought he never could do too much for so good a cause; and as he lived, so he died in the full assurance of faith, leaving a clear testimony that he was a sincere Christian. Some of his last words to my brother, and those that were then present, were, "Weep not for me; for I am going to heaven:" and just as he departed, my brother perceived a very bright light shine on the bed, which far exceeded all the light that was in the room. And he was so overwhelmed with the Divine pre-

sence, that he sunk down on his knees by the bedside, where he remained filled with such a sense of the presence of God, that he was not able to speak or move for some time, and then broke out in a flood of tears, giving praise to God.

My mother died three or four years before my father, in the eighty-sixth year of her age. She had not so great a degree of faith as my father; yet she feared the Lord and wrought righteousness, was diligent in all the means of grace, and was a sincere lover of all the preachers and all good people; was a good wife, a tender mother, a good neighbour, and a sincere friend. The Lord favoured her with a very easy death. She rose as usual, and walked about the room, and finding herself faint sat down in her chair. My brother being present took her in his arms, when she said, "Into Thy hand I commend my spirit, O Thou God of my salvation: come, Lord Jesus," and spake no more. She always rose early, never used tea, had five children, was diligent in business, and it never cost her twenty shillings for medicines in her whole life.

I well remember the Lord was striving with me ever since I was four or five years old, inclining me to love good persons and good things. I thought all ministers were good men, and were sure of going to heaven: therefore I had a desire in my heart to be a minister, that I might go to heaven. Now the Lord began to pour out His Spirit on the children; and a great number, of different ages, were truly convinced of sin, and many found the pardon of sin, and could rejoice in God, amongst whom I was one. There were prayer-meetings almost every night in the week; and many were justified in those meetings. It was in one of those meetings that the

Lord was pleased to cut me to the heart, under my father's prayer, when I was between eleven and twelve years old. The work continued to increase, and many were converted daily, some under the preaching, some in private meetings, and some without any outward means. Several very wicked men were convinced while they were in the bowels of the earth, working in the coal-mines. Thus the Lord was pleased to pour out His Spirit in a wonderful manner in public and private, on the surface of the earth, and in the bowels of it, to show His almighty power.

I have often thought, if I had been taken proper care of, and put to a Christian school, I might have been far more useful than I am. I went to school to the Dissenting minister in Colford, who was a Welshman, and exceedingly warm in his temper. I think he meant to do good; for he studied very hard to make sermons, and preached twice on Sundays, morning and afternoon, for near two hours together, but to very little purpose; for there were very few, if any, in the congregation that had the fear of God; and not one boy in the school, except myself, that had any desire to love and serve God. This was a very great hurt to me. Mrs. — took notice of me, and desired to know what was the matter, and why she did not see me playing with the boys. She said, "I hear you go to the Methodist meetings, and hold a meeting with the children, and that you pray with them. I am afraid you will hurt your mind, if you study too much about such deep things."

Some time after my master said, "So, William, I am told that your father is converted, and that he prays in public, and that you pray also." I was as much afraid as if I had stolen something, and trembled greatly; but, recovering myself a little, I

said, "Yes, sir; and do not you pray with us every morning?" He said, "Yes, I do; but how can you pray?" I said, "When I kneel down, I speak what God puts into my mind." He said, "What! are you inspired, then?" I said, "I do not know what you mean: I know that I love God, and that God loves me." He said, "What is God?" I said, "I love to read the Bible, and other good books." He said, "What good books have you?" I said, "Some of Mr. Wesley's." On his desiring to see one of them, I lent it, which he read, and when he came to those words, "He that is born of God sinneth not," he smiled, and said to Mrs. —, "You see, my dear, what an error!" Mrs. — said, "Error, my dear! I think St. John makes use of the same words in his Epistle." She took the Bible, and found it so. They then read, and compared what they read with the Bible; and soon after they both attended the preaching, and continued so to do while they continued at Colford: for, soon after, he began to alter his manner of preaching, and then some of the heads of the meeting were displeased; therefore he left them, and I heard they both died in the true Christian faith.

From the time I was convinced under my father's prayer, I began to seek the Lord in all the means of grace, and found it very comfortable to my soul. Sometimes four or five of us boys met together in the corner of some field to sing and pray, and sometimes in a stable, barn, or hay-loft; and it was my meat and drink to do the will of God. In this state I continued till I was fourteen years old, and then went into a family that were professed Methodists, to learn the stocking business. The family consisted of a master and mistress, and a young man three or

four years older than myself: but their deportment was very unbecoming the Gospel. Sometimes they were full of levity, and at other times full of evil tempers, and often made use of very unbecoming words. This grieved me very much, and for a time it hurt my mind; but after a while I was determined to live more close to God than ever, and to make a good use of bad example, which the Lord was pleased to enable me to do, and my soul was truly alive to God.

When I was about sixteen, I was truly and deeply convinced of inbred sin, the evil of my heart, and how offensive it was to God; and saw the necessity of a clean heart and a right spirit, and had a very great desire to be wholly renewed after the image of God in righteousness and true holiness. Under the burden of my evil nature I groaned for some time; but having no one that understood my case, I did not make proper use of the blessing, which God was pleased to confer upon me, and which He would have conferred more abundantly, if I had retained what He had given me. I continued in this family about three years; and soon after I left it, my master failed in business, left the country, went into the army, and farther and farther from God; but as he died abroad, I do not know what end he made. The young man I spoke of married, went into business, and soon failed also: he left the country, went into the army, and died abroad; so I am equally ignorant of the manner of his death. But there were many circumstances in their short lives too shocking to mention. I am a witness that they were triflers with God, and with their own souls, and the means of grace. Let this be a caution to all those who have tasted the good word of God, and have felt the powers of the

world to come, to take care how they draw back in their hearts from God. "Be not deceived, God will not be mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

From the time I was eighteen till I was twenty, I suffered loss in my soul; but when I was about twenty-one, being then married to my present wife, I began to seek the Lord again with all my heart, and with all my strength; and I soon found Him as good as His word; for He filled my soul with perfect love that casteth out all slavish fear. I then entered into a solemn covenant with God, that I would be His, and serve Him all the days of my life. My wife willingly joined with me, and we set out for the kingdom of heaven with all our hearts; and I soon found power to love God with all my heart, and with all my soul, and with all my strength. My body and soul were wholly given up to God; and I think no common man ever enjoyed more sweet and close union and communion with God than I did. I hated sin with a perfect hatred, and loved God and holiness with a perfect heart. I can truly say, I lived a life all devoted to God, and it was my delight to give God all my heart. It was my element to love God and delight in Him, and to do His will; and, as I loved Him, so I feared to offend Him. Indeed, I felt no inclination to offend the God I loved. At this time I went into business, and the Lord was pleased to bless me in all I set my hands unto.

From twenty-one until I was thirty, I was leader of two, and sometimes three classes and a band, and steward of the society, and general steward of the Circuit. I often met the people in public, and read Mr. Wesley's Notes on the New Testament over and

over, and his Sermons in public and private. The Lord was with me and blessed me in all I did, gave me favour in the eyes of the people, and made my weak endeavours useful to many. My sister was justified under my prayer, and died very happy soon after. When I was about thirty-one the Lord inclined and constrained me to speak in public. Nothing but the mighty power of God could cause me to do this; for I am naturally of a fearful, bashful, and shy disposition. Indeed, it is a miracle that I ever faced a congregation; but there is nothing too hard for God, who can out of the stones raise up children to Abraham. I was a local preacher about three years, during which time the Lord was pleased to bless the word which He enabled me to deliver, to the conviction and conversion of many; and to the encouragement of seekers, and the building up of believers in the most holy faith. Many declared on their death-bed that at such a time, while I was preaching, the word took such hold of them as never to leave them afterwards.

When I was thirty-four years old, I wrote to Mr. Wesley, to let him know that I had a mind to give up myself more fully to the work of God; when he was pleased to accept of me, weak and unworthy as I was. This was not done because I could not live at home, or for any temporal advantage; for I had a good house of my own, and good business, by which I cleared fifty pounds a year with half the labour I have had since I left home. I had also a kind father, a tender mother, a loving wife, and many friends; but I took up my cross, and a great one it was to me and my wife. We went, according to appointment, into the east of Cornwall, and with great difficulty I could get a place for her to live in. At last I agreed

with Mr. Holmes, near Tavistock, to board her for so much a week. He had three daughters and a son, all very kind and loving: they spent the year very comfortably together, and were made a blessing to each other. From that time to the present, which is twenty-one years, I have always gone where I was appointed without the least objection; and as I had no other motive in leaving my business and country, but to do good to the souls of my fellow-creatures, I have made it my study to be as useful as possible in the holiness of my life, and setting a good example before all, in every Circuit where I have gone; and the Lord has been pleased to favour me with the affections of all good people.

With respect to my wife, from the time we entered into a solemn covenant with the Lord, to serve Him all the days of our lives, she has never repented of it, but has held fast the engagement. She loves God and her blessed Saviour with an upright heart, and serves Him with a willing mind. She is a sincere lover of the doctrine and discipline of the Methodists, loves all the preachers, and esteems a connexion with them above any people on earth. With regard to myself, the Lord has made me an instrument in His hand, in every Circuit where I have laboured, for the conviction and conversion of many souls; and I have never spent one year without seeing more or less fruit of my labour, and some happy deaths.

I believe the preachers called Methodists to be one of the most useful bodies of men in these kingdoms; and the plan hitherto followed by them to be the best that ever was laid down since the apostles' days. I pray God it may ever continue, and that each of us who are in connexion may labour to be

more and more useful. I believe there is more real religion among the Methodists than among any other body of people in these kingdoms; but there is not half enough, considering the means they enjoy. This is the fourth year I have spent in this country: and I observe many things that hinder vital religion; namely, smuggling, drinking to excess, lewdness, and a worldly spirit. It is no wonder that real religion is at a low ebb; whilst the more of this world's goods many people have, the closer they hold them, and are less useful and less alive to God than when they were worth far less. What a pity that three or four thousand pounds should make men less useful and less happy! Yet this is too often seen and known by sad experience, and will be a great hurt to the Methodist cause.

The following is my creed:—I believe that God created man in His own image, able to stand, but liable to fall: and that He gave him a law for the trial of his obedience, as a free agent, which law man broke, and thereby lost the image of his Creator, and was driven out of paradise: that in Adam all died, the consequence of which is, we are all born in sin, with an evil heart of unbelief departing from the living God. This evil nature deserves God's wrath; and in this state lay the whole human race, when the Lion of the tribe of Judah undertook to open the book, and to unloose the seals thereof. Then it was that God came to our first parents, and preached the Gospel to them, and in so doing He preached the Gospel to every soul of man; so that the free gift is come upon all men to justification of life. The happy consequence of this is, all that die in a state of infancy, and all that never had the use of reason, are received into the kingdom of heaven, without any

condition to be fulfilled on their part. But the rest of mankind are required to walk agreeable to the light which God is pleased to give them ; for Christ is the true light which lighteneth every man that cometh into the world ; and by the grace of God He tasted death for every man. God is loving to every man, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to the knowledge of the truth to be saved.

With regard to my preaching, I have always made it a rule, but more abundantly of late, to deliver every discourse as if it was to be my last, and to desire the people to hear and to receive it in the same manner. In my doctrine I never forget to point out to man the state and condition he is in by nature ; and likewise what he has brought on himself by evil practice, with the danger of continuing in an impenitent state, and the great misery that will be consequent upon living and dying without true repentance, the pardon of sin, and holiness of heart. Then I hold forth Jesus Christ, as a present and willing Saviour to every man that will forsake his sins and come to Him in a proper manner. I encourage all that labour and are heavy laden to come to the Fountain opened for sin and uncleanness, according to the words of our blessed Saviour, " Whosoever cometh unto Me, I will in nowise cast him out."

I tell the people that they ought not to rest without the knowledge of salvation by the remission of their sins ; that this blessing is received by faith ; and that it is free for all who feel their need of it. To those who know they have redemption in the blood of Christ, the forgiveness of sin, I preach that the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin ; and

that there are as many promises in the word of God that He will sanctify as there are that He will justify us. I believe Jesus Christ has purchased as much holiness for us as Adam lost ; and that God is willing to restore us to His image, and to stamp it on our hearts. We are justified by faith, and we are sanctified by faith. "Be it unto thee according to thy faith. If thou canst believe, thou shalt see the salvation of God. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved," "from the guilt, from the power, and from the inbeing of sin." "He that believeth on the Son of God hath everlasting life. Perfect love casteth out all fear." "If I can but touch the hem of His garment, I shall be made whole." "As many as touched Him were made perfectly whole." "Fear not, only believe, and thou shalt be made whole."

I have seen the kind hand of Providence over me all the days of my life in general, and likewise in many particular instances. When I was between five and six years old I had a very bad fever. I have heard my mother say that she expected every breath to be my last for some days and nights together. Many times horses have fallen with me, and left me senseless. When I was between fifteen and sixteen, as I was walking by myself in a field, a strong young man coming behind me gave me a violent blow on my back, which left me breathless for some time. When I came to myself, I found him assisting me by rubbing my face, &c. When I was able to speak, I asked, why he did so : he assigned no reason, but begged I would not tell it, and made me promise that I never would while he lived, which was but a few years, and then he died a very miserable death. Two or three times as I was learning to swim, going too far out of my depth, I was within a hair's breadth of being drowned.

When I was about twenty-nine years of age, I had a fever which confined me to my bed and room eight weeks. My life was despaired of; and, had not my wife put clarified honey into my mouth, which found its way down my throat, I must have died, for my mouth and tongue were very black, and nothing would pass. Since I have travelled as a preacher I have been in great danger of losing my life in deep snow. Once, between Sarum and Shaston, being quite out of my road, and in very great distress, I cried unto the Lord to direct me, for I was utterly at a loss which way to go. My strength failing, and night coming on, and being many miles from any town, I could see no house or place of shelter; and the snow falling very fast, so that it filled up my tracks after me, whilst a very strong, sharp, piercing north-east wind blew, I thought it was of no use to go any farther; therefore I stood still, and rested myself by leaning on the horse's neck. I then said, "Lord, what shall I do? Must I die here; or must I go to the right hand, or to the left?" It came into my mind to go to the right. I found some comfort with the impression, and my strength was renewed.

I had not walked above a quarter of an hour before I saw a smoke arise, and gladly made towards it. It proved to be a small cottage, where the woman had just put some wet straw on the fire, which caused a very great smoke. She told me I might come in; but said she had no place for my horse, nor anything for him to eat. She said there was a farm-house about two miles off, and gave me the best directions she could. I set out in the strength of the Lord, trusting in Him to bring me thither; and I do not think I went a quarter of a mile out of the

direct road, though I could see nothing but snow. The farmer gave me and my horse some refreshment, and sent a guide with me to put me in the way to Shaston. If Providence had not brought me to this poor woman's house, it is likely I should have died on the plain, which is called Salisbury Plain, as many did that winter.

At another time, as I was riding very slowly step by step, in a deep hollow road, a man that was out shooting was behind the right-hand hedge, and fired his gun across the road. Some of the shot came about my horse's ears, and some about my face and hat: the main body passed between my head and that of the horse. Had I been one step farther forward, it is likely I should have received the whole body in my neck or the side of my face, which must have killed me on the spot. About two or three years ago, the horse I was riding on fell with me twice, and left me on the ground senseless, of which I did not get the better for some months; and last year my horse fell with me twice, and hurt me, so that it is not likely I shall ever get the better of it. This year my horse was taken very ill; and the horse that was lent me, being too small, fell with me, and threw me on my head, and left me senseless on the ground, by which I have received such a hurt in my neck, shoulders, breast, and back, that I do not think I shall ever be quite free from it. But I am in the Lord's hand: let Him do with me as seemeth Him best. O that the remainder of my strength, and my few days, may be all devoted to Him, and spent in His service!

WILLIAM ASHMAN.

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UNDER the date of February 17th, 1818, the following letter was addressed to the editor of the *Methodist Magazine*:—

“It falls to my lot to inform you of the death of one of the oldest Methodist preachers, Mr. William Ashman. He exchanged this world for a better the 9th instant, at Halcomb, in Somersetshire, aged eighty-three.

“The affliction which terminated his life was supposed to be something of the stone, from which he suffered acute pain, which he bore with great fortitude and patience, and considered it as the messenger of death. The last time I saw him was about a week before his dissolution. He told me that he was going the way of all flesh, with an unshaken confidence in God. He said, that he had long since built his house upon the rock Christ Jesus; that he enjoyed a consciousness of the Divine favour, and a lively hope of immortality.

“CHARLES GREENLY.”

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IN the obituary department of the Minutes of Conference, it is stated that Mr. Ashman “desisted from travelling as a regular preacher twenty years previous to his dissolution. He lived at his native place, where he continued to exercise his ministry, and to act as a class-leader, till within a short time of his death, which happened on the 9th of February, 1818. At the close of life he declared himself to be very happy in God, and perfectly resigned to His will.”

**THE LIFE**  
**OF**  
**MR. RICHARD WHATCOAT.**

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WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

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1. I WAS born in the year 1736, in the parish of Quinton, in the county of Gloucester. My father dying while I was young left a widow and five children. At thirteen years old I was bound apprentice, and served for eight years. I was never heard, during this time, to swear a vain oath, nor was ever given to lying, gaming, drunkenness, or any other presumptuous sin, but was commended for my honesty and sobriety. And from my childhood I had, at times, serious thoughts on death and eternity.

2. I served the greatest part of my apprenticeship at Darlaston, in Staffordshire. But at the age of twenty-one, I removed from thence to Wednesbury. Here I found myself in continual danger of losing the little religion I had, as the family in which I lived had no religion at all. Therefore I took the first opportunity that offered of removing to another place. And a kind Providence directed me to a family that feared God and wrought righteousness.

3. I soon went with them to hear the Methodists,

which I did with deep attention; and when the preacher was describing the fall of man, I thought he spoke to me in particular, and spoke as if he had known everything that ever was in my heart. When he described the nature and fruits of faith, I was conscious I had it not; and though I believed all the Scripture to be of God, yet I had not the marks of a Christian believer. And I was convinced that if I died in the state wherein I then was, I should be miserable for ever. Yet I could not conceive how I that had lived so sober a life could be the chief of sinners. But this was not long; for I no sooner discovered the spirituality of the law, and the enmity that was in my heart against God, than I could heartily agree to it.

4. The thoughts of death and judgment now struck me with terrible fear. I had a keen apprehension of the wrath of God, and of the fiery indignation due to sinners; so that I could have wished myself to be annihilated, or to be the vilest creature, if I could but escape judgment. In this state I was, when one told me, "I know, God for Christ's sake has forgiven all my sins; and His Spirit witnesseth ~~with~~ my spirit, that I am a child of God." This gave me a good deal of encouragement. And I determined ~~never~~ to rest until I had a testimony in myself, that my ~~sins~~ also were forgiven. But in the mean time, such was the darkness I was in, such my consciousness of guilt, and the just displeasure of Almighty God, that I could find no rest day or night, either for soul or body. So that life was a burden, and I became regardless of all things under the sun. Now all my virtues, which I had some reliance on once, appeared as filthy rags. And many discouraging thoughts were put into my mind; as, "Many

are called, but few chosen ;” “Hath not the potter power over his own clay, to make one vessel to honour, and another to dishonour?” From which it was suggested to me, that I was made to dishonour, and so must inevitably perish.

5. On September 3d, 1758, being overwhelmed with guilt and fear, as I was reading, it was as if one whispered to me, “Thou hadst better read no more ; for the more thou readest, the more thou wilt know. ‘And he that knoweth his Lord’s will, and doeth it not, shall be beaten with many stripes.’” I paused a little, and then resolved, “Let the consequence be what it may, I will proceed.” When I came to those words, “The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God,” as I fixed my eyes upon them, in a moment my darkness was removed, and the Spirit did bear witness with my spirit that I was a child of God. In the same instant I was filled with unspeakable peace and joy in believing ; and all fear of death, judgment, and hell suddenly vanished away. Before this, I was kept awake by anguish and fear, so that I could not get an hour’s sound sleep in a night. Now I wanted not sleep, being abundantly refreshed by contemplating the rich display of God’s mercy, in adopting so unworthy a creature as I was to be an heir of the kingdom of heaven.

6. This joy and peace continued about three weeks ; after which it was suggested to me, “Hast not thou deceived thyself? Is it not presumption, to think thou art a child of God? But if thou art, thou wilt soon fall away ; thou wilt not endure to the end.” This threw me into great heaviness ; but it did not continue long. For as I gave myself unto prayer, and to reading and hearing the word of God

at all opportunities, my evidence became clearer and clearer, my faith and love stronger and stronger. And I found the accomplishment of that promise, "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength."

7. Yet I soon found, that though I was justified freely, yet I was not wholly sanctified. This brought me into a deep concern, and confirmed my resolution, to admit of no peace, no, nor truce, with the evils which I still found in my heart. I was sensible both that they hindered me at present in all my holy exercises, and that I could not enter into the joy of my Lord, unless they were all rooted out. These considerations led me to consider more attentively the exceeding great and precious promises, whereby we may escape all the corruption that is in the world, and be made partakers of the Divine nature. I was much confirmed in my hope of their accomplishment, by frequently hearing Mr. Mather speak upon the subject. I saw it was the mere gift of God; and, consequently, to be received by faith. And after many sharp and painful conflicts, and many gracious visitations, on March 28th, 1761, my spirit was drawn out and engaged in wrestling with God for about two hours, in a manner I never did before. Suddenly I was stripped of all but love. I was all love, and prayer, and praise; and in this happy state, rejoicing evermore, and in everything giving thanks, I continued for some years; wanting nothing for soul or body, more than I received from day to day.

8. I began to look round, and to observe, more than ever, the whole world full of sin and misery. I felt a strong desire for others to partake of the same happiness with myself. I longed to declare unto

them what I knew of our Saviour. But I first sat down to count the cost; and being then fully convinced of my duty, I began to exhort those of the neighbouring towns to "repent and believe the Gospel." This I did for about a year and a half; but was still convinced I might be more useful as a travelling preacher. This I mentioned to Mr. Pawson, a little before the Conference in 1769. A little after it, he wrote and let me know, that he had proposed me at the Conference, and that I was accepted as a probationer, and stationed in the Oxfordshire Circuit. Having settled my temporal affairs with all the expedition I could, I went into the Circuit, and was received far better than I expected; and I found that affection for the people which never since wore off. After spending some time very agreeably there, I believe to our mutual satisfaction, I removed to Bedford Circuit, where I remained till the Conference in 1774.

9. I was then appointed for Enniskillen Circuit, in the north of Ireland. This was a trial to me on several accounts. I was an utter stranger to Ireland, of which I had heard little good spoken: I had a great aversion to sea-voyages. And what troubled me more than all was, that my mother was on her dying-bed. But she knew and loved the work I was engaged in; so she willingly gave me up to the Lord, though she did not expect to see me any more till we met in eternity. In this Circuit I found many things that were not pleasing to flesh and blood. It took us eight weeks to go through it; and in this time we slept in nearly fifty different places: some of them cold enough; some damp enough; and others, not very clean. We commonly preached two or three times a day, besides

meeting the societies and visiting the sick ; and very frequently we had no other food than potatoes and a little salt meat. By this means, as my constitution was but weak, my strength was nearly exhausted. But it was an ample amends, to see that the work of the Lord prospered in our hands. Upwards of two hundred members were this year added to the society ; a great part of whom had found redemption through the blood of the covenant. And I was entirely willing to wear out my body in so blessed a work.

10. But I was soon cut short ; for, before I got into the next Circuit where I was stationed, namely, that of Armagh, my labour was at an end ; my body quite sunk under me. I was taken with an entire loss of appetite, a violent bleeding at the nose, and profuse night-sweats, so that my flesh was consumed from my bones, and my eyes sunk in my head. My sight also failed me, so that I could not distinguish my most intimate acquaintance the breadth of a room. But although my life was quite despaired of, yet it pleased God to raise me up ; and after a confinement of twelve weeks at Sydare, I removed into Armagh Circuit. But going out before I had sufficiently recovered my strength, the cold seized upon me, and caused such a humour to settle in my legs, that for some time I could not set my feet to the ground. But my mind being set upon my work, I little regarded the pain of my body, so long as I was able to sit on my horse, or stand and speak to the people. So, in about a fortnight, I went into my Circuit again ; but in a fortnight more I was again disabled, the humour returning so violently, that I was laid up for eight weeks. But these afflictions were not grievous : they were all sweetened by the

peace of God which I enjoyed, and the exceeding kindness of my friends where I was. Lord, remember them for good!

11. By my respite from preaching, while I travelled to Dublin, and afterwards to London, and by the frequent use of bathing, both in salt and in fresh water, I gradually recovered my health. And I have great reason to bless God, who has preserved me during the eleven years that I have been an itinerant preacher. In this time He has delivered me from many troubles, both of body and mind. He has enabled me to persevere in my labour, with a single eye. He has kept my heart disengaged from all creature-loves, and all desire of worldly happiness. And I can still truly say,

“ Bless'd with the scorn of finite good,  
My soul is lighten'd of her load,  
And seeks the things above.”

With the same work, and in the same spirit, may I fill up the remnant of my days! Then may I join the choirs around the throne, and give blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, unto God and the Lamb for ever and ever!

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THE following character of Mr. Whatcoat is taken from the American Minutes of Conference of 1807:—

RICHARD WHATCOAT, late superintendent in the Methodist Episcopal Church in America, was born in Gloucestershire, in England, but was early removed to the town of Darlaston, in Staffordshire,

where he became a member of the Methodist society. He remained in that place eight or nine years; and through his gravity, sincerity, and simplicity, was very early chosen to fulfil the offices of a leader, steward, and local preacher. In the year 1769 he offered himself to become an itinerant preacher, under the direction of the Rev. Mr. Wesley and the British Conference, and travelled in that character in divers parts of England, Ireland, and the principality of Wales. In the year 1784 he was sent to the United States of America, and occupied various important stations in the cities, towns, Circuits, and Districts, with the fidelity of an apostolic man of God. Upwards of six years, in the latter part of his life, he was a superintendent in the Methodist Episcopal Church till he was past the seventieth year of his age. We will not use many words to describe this almost inimitable man. Who ever saw him light or trifling? Who ever heard him speak evil of any person? Nay, who ever heard him speak an idle word? He was dead to envy, self-exaltation, and praise; sober without sadness; cheerful without levity; careful without covetousness; and decent without pride. He died not possessed of property sufficient to have paid the expenses of his sickness and funeral, if a charge had been made: so dead was he to the world! Although he was not a man of much erudition, yet he was well read in the word of God. His knowledge of the Scriptures was so great, that one of his friends used to call him his "Concordance." He gave himself greatly to reading; and, notwithstanding that he was called to the office of an overseer of the church at an advanced period of life, he magnified his office by travelling annually three or four thousand miles, through all the United

States. A complication of painful and irresistible diseases, produced and aggravated by excessive travelling, closed the scene. He was a prodigy of pain and patience for thirteen weeks. He departed this life in the full assurance of faith, July 5th, 1806, in the house of Richard Basset, Esq., in Dover, state of Delaware. He proved himself worthy of the affection and confidence of the Methodist Connexion in Europe and America. But we cannot, in a few lines, speak his Christian and ministerial excellencies. Indeed, they cannot be fully enumerated: for the man of deep piety frequently will not let his left hand know what his right hand doeth. Those who wish to see a further account of this Israelite indeed, may probably, at some future period, be favoured with a narrative written by himself, of his labours, travels, and sufferings in Europe and America, for about thirty-eight years.

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9052

LONDON:  
PRINTED BY WILLIAM NICHOLS,  
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