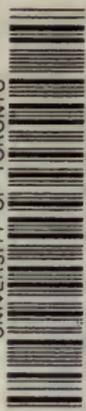


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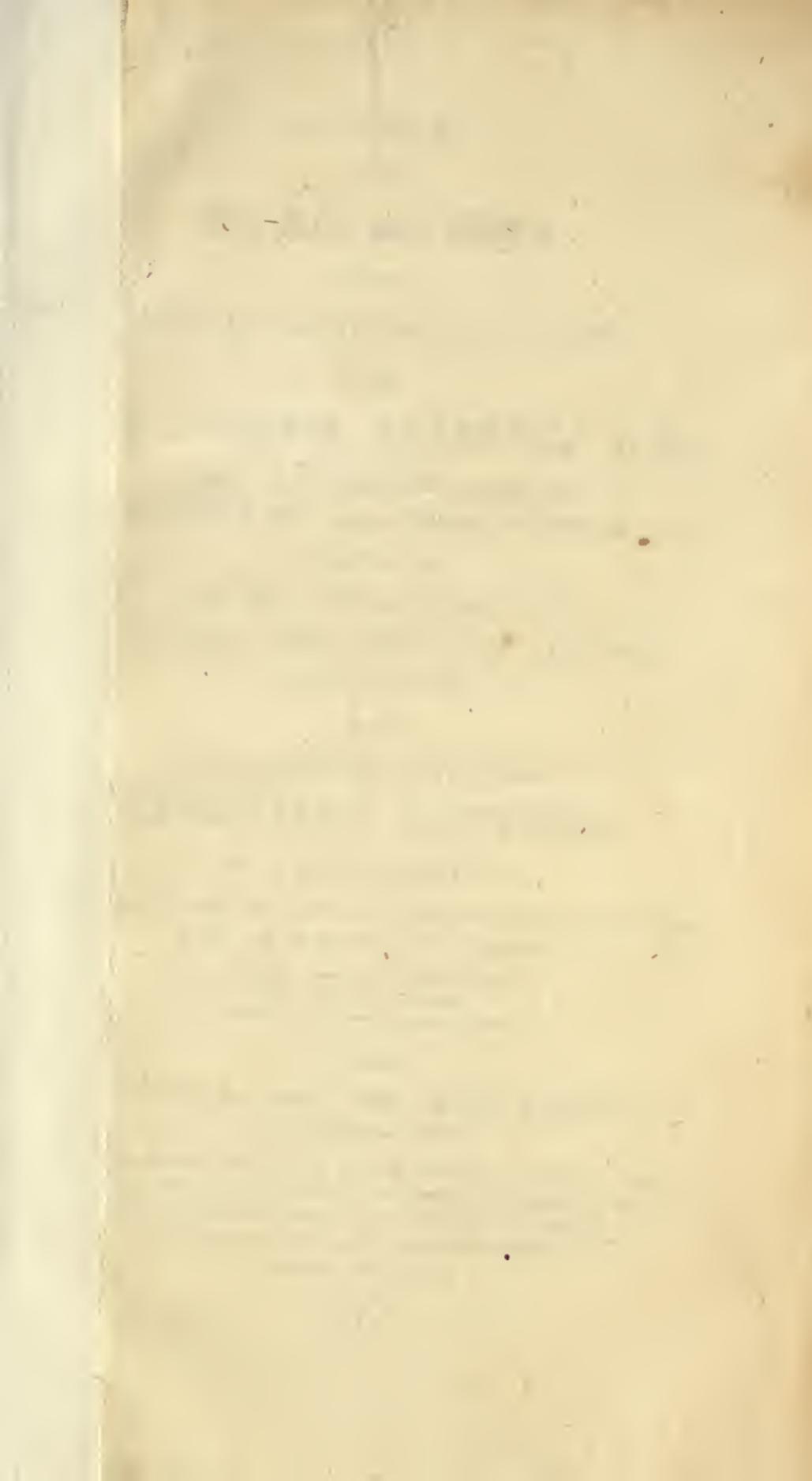
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AN ACCOUNT
OF
The Life and Death
OF THAT
EXCELLENT MINISTER OF CHRIST,
THE
REV. JOSEPH ALLEINE, A. B.

Author of "An Alarm to the Unconverted," &c.
And late Minister of the Gospel, at Taunton, in Somersetshire.

WRITTEN BY
THE REV. RICHARD BAXTER,
HIS WIDOW, **MRS. THEODOSIA ALLEINE,**
And other Persons.

TO WHICH ARE ADDED, HIS
CHRISTIAN LETTERS,
Full of Spiritual Instructions,
TENDING TO THE PROMOTING OF THE POWER OF GODLINESS
BOTH IN PERSONS AND FAMILIES.

Second Edition, corrected.

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PREFACE.

IN a new edition of "the Life and Christian Letters of the Rev. Joseph Alleine," no apology from the person who respectfully presents it, can be required. The worthy subject of the following memoir, is embalmed in the memory of the just; and his name can receive no additional celebrity from the honourable mention of it by the writer of this preface. As an eminent christian and a powerful and eloquent writer, his praise has long been in all the churches. His unbiassed biographers bear abundant testimony to his exalted piety; and in his literary labours he was, according to the best acceptation of the word, uncommonly *successful*.

The perusal of his "Alarm to the unconverted" has been blessed to thousands of persons; and the editions through which it has passed have been exceedingly numerous. If a favourable judgment may be pronounced on a work from the popularity which it obtains, and if utility be the proper test of merit, then may the "Alarm" claim a high degree of attention, and its author may be justly ranked among those men of genius whose pious exertions have procured them the title of **BENEFACTORS**: For, if we except the "Pilgrim's Progress" and "Robinson Crusoe," scarcely has any treatise in the English Tongue, whether allegorical or in the form of history, had a circulation more extensive and beneficial than this serious and sensible production.*

His "Call to Archippus"† is considered a masterpiece of pathetic argumentation. On some of the most useful and pious Nonconformist ministers, it operated as an incentive to continue their labours of love among the scattered sheep of their respective flocks, and patiently to take the consequence of it—the suffering for righteousness' sake.

Nor have his "Christian Letters" come down to the present times without receiving some due portion of encomium. They have always since their first publication been regarded, by the pious, as models of ministerial faithfulness and christian eloquence. In that heavenly unction and moving tenderness which breathe from his letters, he has not been equalled by any of the Christian Fathers: Only by the sacred penmen themselves is he excelled in these qualities. Many weighty authorities might be adduced in support of this opinion; but two may now suffice. That admirable man and great divine, the Rev. Richard Baxter, says of him, "Oh! how happy were
 " the church of God, if great understanding and fer-
 " vent zeal were ordinarily as well conjoined, as
 " they were in this worthy man!

" And many have much *reading*, and plentiful *ma-*
 " *terials* for learning, who yet were never truly
 " learned, as being *injudicious*, and never having well
 " digested what they read into the habits of solid

* It has sometimes been published under the more imposing title of "The Sure Guide to Heaven."

† A new edition of this work will shortly be published.

“ understanding. But so was it not with this our
 “ brother, as his very letters fully witness: How
 “ clearly and solidly doth he resolve that great
 “ question which he speaketh to, as one that had
 “ theology, not in his books only, but in his head
 “ and heart!”

The late Rev. John Wesley, a man every way qualified to judge in this matter, has given the following character of them, which is the more to be relied upon, for disinterestedness and impartiality, on account of the known difference of sentiment between him and Mr. Alleine, in some peculiar points of doctrine, traces of which will be perceived in a few phrases adopted in this his correspondence :

“ The Letters of Mr. Samuel Rutherford have
 “ been generally admired by all the children of God,
 “ into whose hands they have fallen, for the vein of
 “ piety, trust in God, and holy zeal, which run
 “ through them. The same piety, zeal, and con-
 “ fidence in God, shine through all the letters of Mr.
 “ Alleine: so that in this respect he may well be stiled,
 “ The *English Rutherford*. But yet there is a very
 “ discernible difference between them: in piety and
 “ fervour of spirit they are the same: but the fer-
 “ vour of the one more resembles that of St. Paul;
 “ of the other, that of St. John. They were both
 “ men of the most intrepid courage: but in love Mr.
 “ Alleine has the pre-eminence. He seems to ex-
 “ cel in bowels of mercy, meekness, gentleness,
 “ in tenderness, mildness, and sweetness of spirit,
 “ even to his bitterest enemies. I do not therefore

“ scruple to give these Letters the preference, even
“ to Mr. Rutherford’s: as expressing, in a still higher
“ degree, the love that is long-suffering and kind,
“ which is not provoked, which thinketh no evil, and
“ which hopeth, believeth, and endureth all things.”

The *Introductory* Chapter to this “ Account of his Life and Death” was the performance of the Rev. Richard Baxter. It is a piece of exquisite composition, and contains a fine eulogy on Mr. Alleine, and a disquisition on biography and sacred history, in which the acumen of his wit and the soundness of his judgment are happily displayed. The *third* Chapter was written by his father-in-law, Mr. Richard Alleine, and the *fourth* by his worthy vicar, the Rev. George Newton. His widow, Mrs. Theodosia Alleine, wrote the *sixth*, which is a remarkably simple and interesting narrative; and his intimate acquaintance, the Rev. Richard Fairclough, the *ninth*. The other chapters were the productions of several of his most familiar friends. The remaining portion, which is the largest part of the volume, is occupied by that excellent collection of his pastoral correspondence which has been described above, and is entitled “ Christian Letters.” What Richard Baxter introduced and recommended, and Joseph Alleine wrote, will not appear despicable to those who are gifted with the pleasing skill of appreciating intellectual and spiritual excellence.

In this impression it has been the care of the editor to translate all the Latin and Greek quotations, and to place them at the bottom of each page where

they occur. When any obsolete or uncommon word presents itself, its modern synonyme, or one almost equivalent to it in signification, is inserted in the margin; thus, *peep, warily, peevish, giving a share in, &c.* are in the notes explanatory of *pear, charily, froppish, interressing, &c.* in the text. The original edition of 1672 has been scrupulously followed throughout, except in the orthography of a few words, such as *rejoyce, flie, meer, onely, &c.* which are changed into *rejoice, fly, mere, only, &c.*—It was the custom of that age for the *Past* tense of verbs, which is sometimes called the *Imperfect*, to usurp the place and function of the *perfect participle*: Thus it was generally said, “I am forgot,” instead of *forgotten*. Such participles are here rectified, especially in the latter part of the volume.—The copulative word “and,” when connecting words which were nearly synonymous, was rarely suffered to possess any power in influencing the verb, to which such words were joint nominatives, in the plural number: Thus it was neither unusual nor accounted inelegant to say, “My truth and faithfulness *hath* never failed.” Similar instances of this construction may be found in the authorized English translation of the scriptures. Though apparent breaches of what we now call *good grammar*, such expressions remain in this edition, without the trifling amendment which would render them correct according to modern ideas of grammatical propriety. A copious *table of contents* has been added.

The editor has been thus explicit in mentioning the alteration of a few letters, because he thinks a rea-

sonable account of the most minute change in an author's phraseology ought always to be given to the public. It cannot but have excited indignation in every honest breast to behold the liberties which are frequently taken, in these days, with authors whose works are thought worthy of republication.

Every literary man would rather that, after his decease, his grave were broken open, and his bones left to bleach in the sun, than that his works, the finest and most sensitive parts of him, should be subjected to the tortures of an ignorant blockhead or a wretched pedant. These observations are not intended to apply to extracts, fairly made; or to abridgments, announced as such.

In addition to what is said in the following pages, respecting Mr. Alleine, it is proper to mention that he died in November, 1668, and was buried in the Chancel of the church of St. Magdalen, Taunton. Over his grave was this epitaph, engraven on a stone:

*Hic jacet Dominus Josephus Alleine,
Holocaustum Tauntonense et Deo et vobis.*

Of which A. Wood gives the following translation:

“ Here Mr. Joseph Alleine lies,
“ To God and you a sacrifice.”

In allusion to which one of his friends says of him, “ But, alas! his zeal for the glory of God and the good of souls, made all his strength a whole burnt sacrifice, a sacrifice as truly devoted as if it had been offered up in the flames of martyrdom.”

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THE
Life and Death

OF

That excellent Minister of Christ,

THE REV. JOSEPH ALLEINE.

—
CHAP I.
—

AS history is both useful and delightful to mankind so *Church-History* above all hath the pre-eminence in both: For it treateth of the greatest and most necessary subjects: It is most eminently divine, as recording those works of God, in which he most graciously condescendeth unto man; and those actions of men, in which they have most nearly to do with God; and treating of those holy societies, events, and businesses, in which God's holiness is most conspicuous, and his honour most concerned in the world. The narratives of the great victories and large dominions of Alexander, Cæsar, Tamberlain, or such others, are but the portraiture of phantasms, and the relation of the dreams of vagrant imaginations, or of the lifeless motions in a poppít-play, where there is much stir to little purpose, till the play be ended; further than the matters of God, and of the church, and men's everlasting concernments are comprehend-

ed in them. The report of one soul's conversion to God and of the reformation of one family, city, or church, and of the noble operations of the Blessed Spirit, by which he brings up souls to God, and conquereth the world, the flesh, and the devil; the heavenly communications of God unto sinners, for their vivification, illumination, and holy love to God and to his image, are so far better than the stories of these grand murderers and tyrants, and their great robberies and murders called *conquests*, as the diagnosticks of health are than those of sickness; or, as it is more pleasant to read of the *building* of cities, than of their *ruins*; or of the *cures* of a physician, than of the *hurts* done by robberies and frays; yea, of the *healing* of immortal souls, than of the over-hasty *destroying* of men's bodies, which would quickly turn to dust of themselves, if these valiant murderers had but the patience to stay the time.

And among all parts of church-history, the lives of wise and holy men do seem to be not least useful and delightful: (Which is the reason why Satan hath so marvellously and successfully bestirred himself, to corrupt this part of history with so many impudent lies in the Popish legends, as might render all such narratives afterwards contemptible and incredible, and might destroy the ends:) Therefore is the sacred scripture so much historical; and the gospel itself is not a volume of well-composed orations, or a system, or encyclopædia of the sciences and arts; nor yet a great volume of unnecessary laws; but the history of the life and death of Christ, and the wondrous works of Himself and his Spirit

in his servants, and a record of those brief laws and doctrines, which are needful to the holiness and happiness of man.

In the lives of holy men we see God's image, and the beauties of holiness, not only in precept, but in reality and practice; not pictured, but in substance: and though the precepts and rules be more perfect in their kind, as wanting no degree or part, yet the real impress and holiness in the soul, is that living image of God, which is the end of the former, and of which the scripture is but the instrumental cause. And holiness in visible realities is apt to affect the world more deeply, than in portraiture and precept only. Therefore, we find that Satan and his instruments, are used to do that against the scriptures exemplified in the godly, which they have not done against the scriptures in themselves: They can bear the bare precepts of a perfect rule, who cannot bear the very imperfect practice of them in a holy life. Many have burnt martyrs, that could endure good books. Living holiness most exciteth malice! Besides, that the best of men have imperfections, which may be a pretence for detraction, slander, and persecution, when the sacred rule is not so boldly to be accused, till they are ripened in malignity and audacity.

Many a one can read with reverence the life of a dead saint, who will neither imitate nor endure the living. And I doubt not but many can bear the narrative of this holy person's life, who could not have endured to see themselves condemned in the exercises of his present holy zeal.

And yet it is not to be denied, but that human nature yet containeth such principles and inclinations, as give an honourable testimony to goodness: For the exercises of prudent, impartial, equal virtue, and eminent holiness in a heavenly life, and in the joyful hopes of the invisible blessedness, and in fervent love to God and man, and in an innocent life, and self-denying endeavours to do good to all, do so much convince and awe man's nature, and so powerfully command approbation and honour, that Satan and bad men could not resist them; were it not that such excellent persons are too rare, and that the far greater number of good men are lamentably imperfect, and tainted with many unlovely faults; and were it not also for two great advantages that Satan layeth hold on, that is, men's strangeness and disacquaintance with those that are good, and the slanderous reports of them by others. And whoever noteth it shall find, that most that ever hated and persecuted men of eminent holiness, were such as never intimately knew them, but only at a deceitful distance, and such as heard them odiously described by lying tongues.

And it is not a small benefit of this kind of history, that the weak and lame christians may see such excellent examples for their imitation; and the sluggish and distempered christian may have so real and lively a reproof; and the discouraged christian may see that higher degrees of goodness are indeed attainable; and that the dark and troubled christian may see the methods in which God's Spirit doth work upon his servants, and see that a genuine christian

life is a life of the greatest joy on earth; and that the slothful hypocrite may see that religion is a serious business; and that the factious christian may see that a man may be eminently holy that is not of his opinion, side, or party; and that both the proud domineering Pharisee may see, that eminent piety is separated from his traditions, formalities, ceremonies, and pomp; and the opinionative hypocrite may see that holiness consisteth of something else, than in circumstantial and siding singularities, and in a condemning of other men's outward expressions or modes of worship, or a boisterous zeal against the opinions and ceremonies of others.

And it is a notable benefit of this kind of history, that it is fitted to insinuate the reverence and love of piety into young unexperienced persons: For before they can read much of theological treatises with understanding or delight, nature inclineth them to a pleasure in history, and so their food is sugared to their appetites, and *profit* is entertained by *delight*. And nothing taketh well with the soul that is not pleasant to it; nor did he ever know the true way of educating youth, or doing good to any, that knew not the way of drawing them to a pleasedness and love to goodness: *Omne tulit punctum qui miscuit utile dulci.**

On such accounts, we may conclude that such men as Melchior Adamus, Mr. Samuel Clark, &c. that have served the church with this sort of history, have done no small or useless service; which we the

* He who has mixed the useful with the pleasant, has obtained the suffrages (or approbation) of all.

easier perceive when we remember at what rates now the church would purchase a full history of the lives of all the apostles, and all the eminent pastors of the churches for the first two hundred, or three hundred years; yea, or but of some few of them. And how much of the history of the times they lived in, is contained in a just history of such men's lives.

It were to be wished that more did as Thuanus, at large; or as Scultetus, in his *Curriculum vitæ suæ*,* at least; or yet as Junius, and many others, that give us a breviatè of the most considerable passages of their own lives: Because no man knoweth usually those intimate transactions of God upon men's souls, which are the life of such history, or at least no useless part. But men are commonly supposed to be so selfishly partial, and apt to over-value all their own, and to fish for applause; and it is so meet to avoid appearances of pride and ostentation, that few think meet to take this course. And the next desirable is, that their intimate friends would write their lives at large, who are best able; as Camerarius hath done Melancthon's; and Beza, Calvin's; and as the lives of Bocholtzer, Chytræas, and many more are written.

But none of all this must be expected concerning this our brother; because he was young, and taken away before any had thoughts of gathering up his words or actions for any such use; those that have done this little being his fathers and seniors, who looked to have died long before him; and because he lived in a time of trouble, and division, and sus-

* The short course of his own life.

pcion, in which every man had great concernments of his own to mind; and in which men are afraid of praising the holy servants of God, lest it offend those that in some things differed from them.

The special excellency of this worthy man lay chiefly in the *harmony* and *completeness* of such particular gifts, and all of them in a high degree, as use to exalt the fame of others, in whom some one or few of them is found. And all these in a man so young, as unless in one Joh. Picus Mirandula, one Keckerman, one Pemble, in a country, is rarely to be found. Do you desire the preparatives of language and philosophy? In these he was eximious, as his Treatise *De Providentia*, licensed for the press (of which more anon) doth shew, with several other manuscripts of like nature. How thoroughly had he searched the writings of philosophers! How fully had he found out how much natural reason doth attest, and speak for the attributes and providence of God, and the principles of a godly life! And how much supernatural revelation presupposeth, and findeth ready to entertain it and befriend it in the light and law of nature! How excellently able was he to deal with the naturalist at his own weapons, and to shame them that call religion an *unproved* or *unreasonable thing*! No doubt it was an excellent help to his own faith, to have so clear and full a sight of all those subsidiary natural verities, which are known *propria luce*,* and are out of the reach of those malignant suggestions, by which the tempter is often

* By their own light.

questioning supernatural truths. Few christians, and too few divines do dig so deep, and proceed so wisely, as to take in all these natural helps; but overpassing those presupposed verities, do oft leave themselves open to the subtile assaults of the tempter, who knoweth where the breach is, and will sometimes urge such objections on them, as need a solution by those helps which they are ignorant of.

Do you look for a high degree of *zeal*? In this he was marvellous, being a living fire, continually burning in the love of God and man; still mounting upward, and kindling all that were capable about him; as prone to *fervour* and *activity*, as earthen natures to *cold* and *idleness*; not weary of well-doing; not speaking slightly, and with indifferent affection of the great Jehovah and of holy things; but with reverence and seriousness, as became one that by faith still saw the Lord: Not doing God's work with an unwilling or a sluggish heart, as if he did it not, nor as those that fear being losers by God, or of giving him more than he deserveth, or getting salvation at too dear a rate: But as a soul that was kin to angels, which are active spirits, and a flame of fire that came from God, the Lord of life, and Father of spirits, and liveth in God, and is working and passing up to God. As one that knew that none other work was worthy of a man, (and approvable by any reason, save that which is made a salve to sense,) except only the soul's *resignation*, *obedience* and *love to God*, and the *seeking of the heavenly durable felicity*, in the use of all those means which God in nature and scripture hath appointed for the obtaining of it,

It is too common to find men that are long and deep students in philosophy, and the doctrinals and methods of theology, to be found none of the most zealous or serious divines; and for the learnedest doctors to be but of the coarsest and weakest sort of christians. Because they exercise the head almost alone, and take little pains to work what truths they know upon their hearts: As if the *head* were more diseased with sin, than the *heart* is, and the heart had not as much need of a cure: Or as if God's grace did not as much dwell in the *will*, as in the *understanding*; and the heart had not the noblest work to do. *Life, light, and love*, are the inseparable influences and effects of the Sanctifying Spirit: But yet sometimes the indisposition of the receiver may keep out one of them, more than the rest. *Light* alone may be profitable to the church, by breeding *light* in others: But *life* and *love* also, are as suitable means to produce their like as *light* is. And without them, it is not a flashy light and frigid knowledge that will save the soul.

And on the other side, (alas!) how ordinary is it for *zeal* to make a bustle in the dark, and for those that are very earnest to be very blind? And strong affections (not to God himself, but about the exercise of religious duties) to be guided by a weak understanding; and so for such well-meaning persons, to make most haste when they are out of the way, and to divide and trouble the church and neighbourhood, by their fervency in error, till late experience hath ripened them to see what mischief their self-conceitedness hath done? O! how happy were the

church of God, if great understanding and fervent zeal were ordinarily as well conjoined, as they were in this worthy man!

And many have much *reading*, and plentiful *materials* for learning, who yet were never truly learned, as being *injudicious* and never having well digested what they read, into the habits of solid understanding. But so was it not with this our brother, as his very letters fully witness: How clearly and solidly doth he resolve that great question which he speaketh to, as one that had theology, not in his books only, but in his head and heart!

And I account it no small part of his excellency, that his judgment led him to dwell so much on the great essentials of godliness and christianity; the love of God, and a holy, just, and sober life: And that he laid not out his zeal diseasedly, and unproportionably, upon those outward circumstances, where the noise doth call off the minds of too many from the inward life of communion with God. His sermons, his conference, his letters, were not about Mint and Cummin, but about the knowledge of God in Christ, which is the life eternal.

Yet that he did not prostitute his conscience to the interest of the flesh, nor subject God to the world, nor deny self-denial and the cross of Christ; nor hypocritically resolve to shift off the costly part of religion, on pretence of *indifferency* or *smallness* of any thing which he thought God forbade him;—you need no other proof than the following history.

And he was not one of those weak well-meaning ministers, who think that their mere *honesty* is

enough to deserve the esteem of worthy pastors; nor was he one of those proud and empty persons, who think that the dignity of their function is enough to oblige all to bow to them, and to be ruled by them, without any personal *wisdom, holiness, or ministerial abilities*, suitable to their sacred office: But, so great was his ministerial skilfulness in the public explication and application of the holy scriptures; so melting and winning, convincing and powerful his unaffected sacred oratory; so wise and serious his private dealing with particular families and souls, that it is no wonder if God blessed him with that great success, which is yet visible among the people where he lived, and which many of his brethren wanted. For he did not by slovenly expressions, or immethodical extravagancies, or unsound injudicious erroneous passages, or by jocular levities, or by nauseous tautologies, make sermons or prayers become a scorn; nor give advantage to carnal captious hearers, who for every hair, not only abominate the wholesomest food, but also write books to breed their own disease in others: Nor yet did he, by an affected unnatural curiosity of jingling words and starched phrases, make sermons like stage-plays, and destroyed the people's edification, or their reverence of holy things: But he spake as one that spake from God, in the name of Christ, for men's renovation and salvation, in a manner suitable to the weight and holiness of the matter.

And his fervent zeal and thirst for the people's conversion and salvation, was a great advantage to his success. For, let men's parts be ever so great,

I seldom have known any man do much good, that was not *earnestly desirous* to do good; if he long not for men's conversion, he is seldom the means of converting many. For there is a certain *lively seriousness* necessary in all our studies, to make our sermons suitable to their ends, and in all our preaching, to make them fit to reach men's hearts; without which they are as a blunted *knife*, or as a bell that's cracked, or any other unmeet instruments, unable for their proper use. And though God can work miracles, and therefore can work without means, or without their fitness, yet that is not his ordinary way, and therefore is not to be expected.

And his great diligence from house to house in private, was a great promoter of his successes. I never knew a minister, who *prudently* and *diligently* took that course, to be unprosperous in his work; but by them that have wisely and faithfully used it, I have known that done that before seemed incredible: And truly, when I think of some men yet living, and some few, (too few) places (great places) which by the great abilities and excellent preaching, the personal exhortations and catechizing, the unwearied pains and the extraordinary charity to the poor, the holy exemplary lives of their pastors (I can scarce forbear naming four or five of my acquaintance) have been so generally seasoned with piety, that the great market towns have become as religious as the selected members, which some think only fit for churches; it makes me conclude, that it is principally for want of such a ministry, that the world is so bad, and that greater things are not

done among us: And that for another sort of men to cry out of the people's ignorance and profaneness, and obstinate wickedness, while their unskilfulness, sloth, miscarriage, and negligence, is the cause,—is as little honour to them, as to the physician or surgeon, that when he can cure but few, doth cast the blame upon the patient, when skilfuller men do cure the like.

And his great humility in stooping to the meanest, and conversing with the poorest of the flock, and not affecting things above him, nor insinuating by flatteries into men of worldly wealth and power, no doubt helped on his great successes; though it was not the way to preferments, honours, no, nor safety and quietness to the flesh. Had Balaam dealt throughout sincerely, it had been a very honourable and comfortable word to him from king Balak, (Num. xxiv. 11.) *I thought to promote thee to great honour, but lo, the Lord hath kept thee back from honour.* It is more honourable and comfortable to be kept from honour by God and a good conscience, than to be honoured by men on sinful terms.

And the moderation and peaceableness of this holy man, was very exemplary and amiable; which I the rather mention, because in these distempered times of temptation, too many think that the excellency of zeal lieth in going to the furthest from those they differ from and suffer by. And because some will think, that knew no more of him, but only how oft and long he lay in the Common Goal, that sure he was some violent unpeaceable zealot. No, his zeal was for peace and quietness, for love and for

good works: He was not used to inflame men against dissenters, nor to back-bite others, nor to make those odious that were willing enough to have made him so: He fled from one extreme with fear and suspicion of the other. He was indeed himself a silenced minister, in a place and among a people who had his heart, and who had been blessed with his fruitful labours; and his judgment was, *That it is sacrilege for a minister, consecrated to God, to alienate himself, and violate that covenant and ministerial dedication, by giving over his work as long as he hath ability and opportunity, and the people's souls have a true necessity.* And therefore he chose that long imprisonment, rather than voluntarily to surcease. But whilst he had liberty, he went oft to the public assemblies, and was a hearer where he was wont to be a teacher, and encouraged the people to do the like. He spake not evil of dignities, nor kindled seditious principles or passions in the people's minds, nor disaffected them against authority, nor aggravated his own sufferings to exasperate their minds against such as he suffered by; though how great they were as to the effect, the sequel will acquaint you. In all, he did in patience possess his soul, and learned still more patience by the things which he suffered, and taught others what he learned himself.

But above all, it is his highest excellency in my eyes, that he attained to the right temperament of the christian religion, and to a truly evangelical frame of spirit, suitable to the glorious hopes of faith, and to the wonderful love of our Redeemer. And when most christians think that they have done much, if

they can but weep and groan over their corruptions, and can abstain from the lustful pollutions of the world, in the midst of many doubts and fears; LOVE and JOY, and a HEAVENLY MIND, were the internal part of his religion; and the large and fervent PRAISES of God, and THANKSGIVING for his mercies, especially for CHRIST, and the SPIRIT, and HEAVEN, were the external exercises of it. He was not negligent in confessing sin, nor tainted with any Antinomian errors; but PRAISE and THANKSGIVING were his natural strains; his *frequentest, longest, and heartiest* services: He was no despiser of a broken heart; but he had attained the blessing of a healed joyful heart. The following narratives, the strain of his letters, but above all the admirations of his nearest friends, will tell him that will enquire, how his triumphant discourses of the hopes of glory, and his frequent and fervent thanksgiving and praise, were the language which he familiarly spake, and the very business of his heart and life. And, O how amiable is it to hear the tongue employed seriously and frequently in that which it was made for; even in the praise of him that made it! And to see a man passing with joyful hopes towards immortality! And to live as one that seriously believeth, that he must quickly be in the heavenly church, and live with God and Christ for ever! O how comely is it to see a man that saith, *he believeth that Christ hath redeemed him from hell, and reconciled him to God, and made him an adopted heir of glory*, to live like one that was so strangely saved from so great a misery, and with the most affectionate gratitude to honour the Purchaser of all

this grace! And how uncomely a thing is it to hear a man say, *That he believeth all this grace of Christ, this heavenly glory, this love of God,* and yet to be inclined to no part of religion, but fears and complainings, and scarce to have any words of praises or thanksgiving, but a few, on the bye, which are heartless, affected, and constrained! O did christians, yea ministers, but live with the *joy, and gratitude, and praise* of Jehovah, which beseemeth those that believe what they believe, and those that are entering into the celestial choir, they would then be an honour to God and their Redeemer, and would win the world to a love of faith and holiness, and make them throw away their worldly fool-games, and come and see what it is that these *joyous souls* have found! But when we shew the world no religion, but sighing and complaining, and live a sadder life than they, and yet talk of the glad tidings of Christ, and pardon, and salvation, we may talk so long enough before they will believe us that seem no more to be believers ourselves, or before they will leave their fleshly pleasures for so sad and dreadful a life as this.

And as this kind of heavenly, joyful life is an honour to Christ, and a wonderful help to the converting of the world, so is it a reward to him that hath it; which made this holy person live in such a vigour of duty, such fervour of holy love, and such continual content in God, so that the kingdom of God in him was *righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost*; which others think consisteth in *meats, drinks, and days*, in shadows and circumstances, in sidings and in singular conceits. (Rom. xiv. Col. ii. 16.) It

was not a *melancholy* spirit that acted him, nor did he tempt his people into such an uncomfortable state and strain. But in the multitude of his thoughts within him, the comforts of God did delight his soul: His meditation of God and his Redeemer was sweet, and he rejoiced in the Lord. He delighted in the law of the Lord; and when delight invited him, no wonder if it were his meditation day and night. (Psalm i. 2. civ. 34. cxix. 103. xciv. 19.)

And how great a solace was this in his sufferings, when he could be in a *gaol* and in *Heaven* at once? When he could, after the terrible torment of convulsions, have the foresight and taste of heavenly pleasures? *Nihil Crus sentit in Neruo, cum Animus est in Cælo*, saith *Tertullian*.*

And as he lived, so he died, in *vigorous, joyful praises* and *thanksgivings*: Reviving out of his long speechless convulsion, into those fervent raptures, as if he had never been so impatient of being absent from the Lord, as when he was just passing into his presence; or rather as if, with Stephen, he had seen Heaven opened and Christ in his glory, and could not but speak of the unutterable things which he had seen. I deny not but his vigorous active temper might be a great help to all his holy alacrity and joy, in his healthful state: But when that frame of nature was broken by such torments, and was then dissolving, to hear a dying man about sixteen hours together, like the ferventest preacher in the pulpit, pour out his soul in praises and thanksgiving; and speak of God, of Christ, of Heaven, as one that

* The cross feeleth nothing in the nerves, when the soul is in heaven.

could never speak enough of them; and that with a vivacity and force, as if he had been in former health, and to triumph in joy as one that was just laying hold upon the crown;—surely in this there was something that was the reward of all his former praise and thankfulness; and that which must needs tell the auditors the difference, not only between the death of a righteous believer and the wicked unbeliever, but the weak and distempered believer; also the difference between a sound and a diseased christian, and between the triumphant faith and hopes of one that saw the God and world invisible, and the staggering faith and trembling hopes of a feeble and distrustful soul; and between the death of one that had been used to converse in heaven and to make thanksgiving and praise his work, and of one that had been used to cleave to earth and make a great matter of the concernments of the flesh, and to rise but little higher in religion than a course of outward duty animated most with troublesome fears: Though he died not in the pulpit, yet he died in pulpit-work.

And I must also note, how great an advantage it was to himself, and to his ministerial works, that he was possessed deeply with this true sentiment, *That the PLEASING of GOD is the proper ultimate end of man*, (not doubting but it includeth the notion of glorifying him,) for thus his heart was rightly principled, and all his doctrine and duties rightly animated.

And as in all his ministry he was extraordinarily addicted to open to the hearers the covenant of grace, and to explain religion in the true notion of covenanting

with God and covenant-keeping, and greatly to urge men to deliberate well-grounded resolutions in this holy covenant: (As one that understood that baptizing is truly christening, and that Baptism and the Lord's Supper are our sacramental covenanting, and that we need no new descriptions nor characters of grace and church-titles, if we understand what these sacraments truly mean:) So God was pleased to give him a certainty and sense of his divine faithfulness, in fulfilling the promises of his covenant, and a lively sense of all the benefits of it; and his faith in God for the performance of his part, was as strong and fixed, as was his own resolution in the strength of grace to be true to God: I compare not his resolution to God's fidelity; (for what comparison between God and man?) but only to his belief of God's fidelity, and his comfort in the assurance of the conclusion. And as he was resolved through grace never to forsake Christ, so Christ did never fail him nor forsake him. And in his ministry, in his sufferings, and his death, this faith, this hope, this heavenly joy, was his support and strength; and in the valley of the shadow of death, he feared no evil. But when his flesh and heart failed, as to natural strength, the Lord was the rock or strength of his heart, and never failed him. (Psalm lxxiii. 25.) *Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his.*

I have premised this general skeleton, as limners and builders first draw the pillars and *stamina* of their work, which the following narratives will fill up: And I have given you this general index or contents of what is distinctly contained in the sequel.

For the history is not drawn up by one hand, nor as by one that intended rather to shew what he could say, than what the person was and did: But it is the brief account of the several parts of his life, drawn up by several of his most worthy and judicious friends, that were present, or most intimate and familiar with him. And I take this to be the best advantage to a history, as to the truth, which should satisfy the incredulous, though not as to uniformity, and a fluid style, which might please the curious. For a man's life is like a war or battle: No dispersed war, no, nor any one particular battle, can fully be described by the observations of any one man alone: But one man is but in one place, and seeth only that which is within his own prospect, which his proper station did advantage him to see: But when intelligent men from each part of the army do every one bring in their several *narratives*, all set together may be a satisfactory history of the whole war or fight: So when a man's course of life is transient, and one is his familiar in youth, and another at riper age; one in the university, and another in the ministry; one in prison, and one at home; one in health, and another at death; it is no one of himself that can credibly report the whole. And therefore though, by variety of style, it may seem a *ceuto*, or incongruously composed; yet truth being the soul of history, that's best which is best fitted to the lovers of truth. And though one part be written by a woman, his widow; and another part by his Reverend Father-in-law; another by that worthy pastor whom he assisted; ano-

ther by a fellow minister, and another by a scholar of his intimate acquaintance, &c. Yet is there such agreement in them all, and such evidence of unquestionable verity, especially to all that know these worthy and faithful persons, that for my part I take it as coming to me with greater advantage, than if it had been an even thread, drawn out by one skilful hand alone; as the writing of the history of Christ by the four evangelists, is advantageous to the christian faith. The plainness and open breast of a godly widow, and of so many holy and most credible friends, is another kind of evidence, than the contrived history of a learned man, which is fitted to the interest of a party, to which the person's fame and honour seemeth requisite: I know not how a history of this nature could come to the world with fairer human evidence of unquestionable credibility than this doth.

And let posterity know, (for I need not tell it to this present age, who live in the light;) that though this servant of Christ excelled very many of his brethren, yet it is not that such men are wonders in this age, that his life is singled out to be recorded to posterity: But because his affectionate friends and auditors are forwarder than many others, hereby to tell the world what effects his holy doctrine and example hath left upon their hearts: It makes the writer's heart to bleed, to think how many thousands of souls do perish by *ignorance*, and *ungodliness*, even in *England*; and how many vast kingdoms of the world are deprived of the gospel.

If you ask, "What labours hath he left behind him?" I answer; first, the great numbers of holy souls converted, confirmed, and edified by his doctrine, and the example of his holy life; the *specimen*, or exemplar of a right minister of the gospel, which he hath left to the neighbouring ministers that knew him, and to those that now possess their places, and to all the ministers of the land, and to the ages that are yet to come: For who will not be convinced of the necessity and sweetness of holy diligence, in so good a work, and become laborious in the word and doctrine, who seriously readeth such examples as this here set before him? And who that considereth it aright, can choose but see, how greatly such holy labourers do differ from those that preach the gospel in strife and envy, to add affliction to Paul's bonds: (Phil. i. 15.) And those that use their ministry but as lawyers use the laws, to get preferment and worldly wealth by it; that they may say, *Soul, take thy ease, eat, drink, and be merry, thou hast goods enough laid up for many years: Till they hear at last, Thou fool, this night shall they require thy soul; whose then shall the things be which thou possessest?* So is every one that layeth up riches for himself, and is not rich towards God.

Secondly, And for writings, who can expect that a man that entered upon the sacred ministry at twenty-one years of age, and died about thirty-five, and lived in such exceeding ministerial labours, should leave many books behind him of his writing, in an age wherein we have had too many books, and too few such ministers? Yet the following history tells

us, he is the author of that *Synopsis* of the *Covenant*, in Mr. Richard Alleine's book. He printed an exposition of the *Assembly's Catechism*, with an exhortation to use it; as also prayers for his people's use: And left a book to work on the unconverted, not yet printed. And he hath left (alas! imperfect;) a good part of a body of *Natural Theology*, called *Theologia Philosophica*. 1. *De cognitione Dei*. 2. *De existentia Dei*. 3. *De nominibus et substantia Dei*. 4. *De attributis Dei in genere, et speciatim de ejus unitate*. 5. *De perfectione divina, &c.* 6. *De decretis divinis*. 7. *De providentia divina*. 8. *De cultu divino, de precibus*.* In all which he succinctly delivereth, in a very good Latin style, the *Christian Doctrine*; and then by way of annotations, addeth the testimony of the ancient philosophers: So that you have together a sum of sound doctrine, and the fullest attestation of *Ethnicks'* consent that ever I have seen; being such a promptuary for any one that hath not leisure to peruse or to gather to such particular; uses the philosophers themselves, that I know no where you can find the like. For every sheet or two of his doctrine on the subject there is about eight, ten, twelve, or more sheets of collected attestations. The rest are all imperfectly written, only that *De providentia*, hath his *ultimam manum*,† and is licensed for the press; but being Latin and Greek, and such books having

* Philosophical Theology. 1. On the knowledge of God. 2. His existence. 3. His names and substance. 4. His attributes in general, and especially his unity. 5. On the divine perfection, &c. 6. The divine decrees. 7. Divine Providence. 8. Divine worship and prayer.

† His final correction.

too few buyers in England, none yet is found that will be at the charge of printing it, much less altogether; though indeed (though imperfect) it is pity they should be separated. The title of this licensed piece is, *Theologicæ Philosophicæ, sive Philosophicæ Theologicæ specimen: In quo Eterni Dei Providentia solius naturæ lumine comprobatur, validissimis rationum momentis demonstratur, quoad partes, species, objecta, &c. explicatur; contra omnes denique adversariorum objectiones firmatur: Ex Aristotele, Platone, Chalcidio, Sallustio, Firmico, Empirico, Jamlico, Antonino, Epicteto, Proclo, Simplicio, Cicerone, Seneca, Macrobio, Porphyrio, Xenophonte, Galeno, Plutarcho, Plotino, Tyrio, Appuleio, Alcino, aliisque Philosophis, Oratoribus, et Poetis, tum Græcis tum Latinis, ad Atheorum convictionem, et Orthodoxorum confirmationem; e lucubratione J. A. Anno Dom. 1661.**

* A Specimen of Philosophical Theology, or Theological Philosophy: In which the Providence of the Everlasting God is proved by the light of nature alone, demonstrated by the most powerful force of reasoning, and explained, as to its divisions, species, objects, &c. And lastly it is confirmed against all objections of adversaries: From Aristotle, Plato, &c. &c. and other Philosophers, Orators, Poets, both Greek and Latin, for the conviction of Atheists, and the confirmation of the Orthodox. By the labour and study of Joseph Alleine. 1661.

CHAP II.

A brief relation of his early setting forth in the christian race, from his childhood: Also some memorials of his industrious and prosperous pursuit of learning, and of his singular piety during his abode in the University.

WRITTEN BY AN EYE-WITNESS THEREOF.

MR. JOSEPH ALLEINE, born in the Devizes, in Wiltshire, in the year 1633, during his childhood shewed forth a singular sweetness of disposition, and a remarkable diligence in every thing he was then employed about. The first observable zeal of religion that appeared in him, was in the eleventh year of his age, about which time he was noted to be very diligent in private prayer, and so fixed in that duty, that he would not be disturbed or moved by the coming of any person accidentally into the places of his retirement. This and other fruits of a serious and gracious spirit, were the common observation of the family. From this time forward, the whole course of his youth was an even-spun thread of godly conversation, which was rendered more amiable by his sweet and pleasant deportment towards all he conversed with. While he thus openly began to run his christian race, his brother Mr. Edward Alleine, a worthy minister of the gospel, departed this life: Whereupon he earnestly desired to be brought up in preparation, to succeed him in the work of the ministry. Which good motion his father gladly hearkened unto, and speedily prepared to put it in execution.

Such was his great diligence at school, that he redeemed for his book the time allotted for recreation. In the space of about four years he attained to very good knowledge in the Latin and Greek tongues, and was by his school-master adjudged fit for University-studies. After which, he abode some time with his father in the country, where a worthy minister of the place read Logic to him: And when he was about sixteen years old, he was placed in Lincoln College, in Oxford.

He had not been long in the University, but a Wiltshire place becoming void in *Corpus Christi* College, he was chosen SCHOLAR of that house: The pregnancy of his parts assuring all that his OWN MERITS were the SOLE FRIENDS, the ONLY MANDAMUS which brought him in.

Being entered and settled, he gave both early and constant proofs of his indefatigable industry; signaling thereby his love for learning, and evidently demonstrating how much he abhorred to be found a drone in such a hive. He esteemed a college an other-guess place than a VICTUALLING HOUSE, and coming into this with a nobler design than only to TAKE COMMONS: He thought himself happy in nothing so much, as the advantage he had gained for the best *Aquists*.

I have known too many, who in the very places which they have got by their parts, have lost the parts which got them their places; and peradventure had been excellent scholars, had they never had those encouragements to be so, which they unhappily won from their competitors. For idleness

enervates the strength of nature, and makes those *logs* that might have been *Mercuries*; but this person was none of those. He quitting himself so well at the election, was but a pledge and earnest of his doing better afterwards. He made it appear to all observing him, that when he stood, he stood not so much for a place, as for the accomplishments by his future studiousness attainable in it, demeaning himself like one, who even in the days of his vanity, well understood how profane a thing it was to live in a school of learning no otherwise than as if it were a sanctuary for laziness, or a place privileged with nothing else but leave and opportunity to eat the founder's bread, with no other sweat of the brow, than what's provoked in a ball-court.

Never had learning a truer drudge since she kept house in Oxford. At her work he was both day and night, thinking all time too little, no pains too much that he spent in her service: When but a school-boy (as I have heard) he was observed to be so studious, that he was known as much by this periphrasis, *The lad that will not play*, as by his name: And sure I am, when in the University, he was so generously and ingeniously bookish, that he deserved to be called, *The Scholar, who by his good-will would do nothing else but pray and study*.

Courteous he was, and very civil to all acquaintance: But if they came to visit him at studying times, though they were sure enough to find him within, yet withal so busy generally with better company, as to have no leisure to let them in. And if at this they were moved, and murmured, and went away

offended with him, he cared not. That notable principle of *Joachim Fortius*, which shut him up, bearing him out, and being his relief in all such cases, viz. *Better it is that they should wonder at thy rudeness, than thou shouldst lose thy time; for only one or two will take notice of that, but all posterity would be sensible of this.*

His appetite to his business being that to him which alarms in their chambers are wont to be to others; seldom it was that he could be found in bed after four in the morning, though he had stayed up on the same occasion on which he then rose, till almost one over-night.

For though, whilst junior scholar, he obtained many weekly SLEEPING DAYS for others, yet in many years he could hardly vouchsafe himself so much as one.

And as thus he begrudged himself his rest, so thus also his very food; it being as familiar with him to give away his commons (at least) once, as with any others to eat theirs twice a day. As if he, who was never satisfied how many volumes soever he devoured, had looked upon it as a kind of gluttony to eat that meal, the time of eating which might without prejudice to health have been better spent upon a book. *Porphyry's* wish, *That he were able to live without eating and drinking at all, that so he might be wholly taken up about nobler things*, is sure the wish of thousands in the learned world. Certain I am it was his, and that if piety would have suffered him, and they had not been such dear friends, he would have fallen out with God, for tying his soul to such a body, as could

not subsist without (what he would often call *no better than time-consuming things*) meat, and drink, and sleep.

That this his laborious studiousness was as delightful and pleasant to him, as the highest voluptuousness can be to the most sensual sot, I conclude, not only from the constancy of it, but from his charging matrimony, to which afterwards he became a subject, with no greater tyranny, than the necessity which it laid upon him of being kinder sometimes unto himself than he was wont to be in Oxford. For, being married, an intimate friend of his of the same college, who had thoughts of changing his condition, wrote to him, and in a jesting manner, desired of him an account of the inconveniences of marriage; to whom he returned this pleasant, but very significant, answer; *Thou wouldest know the inconveniences of a wife, and I will tell thee; first of all, whereas thou risest constantly at four in the morning, or before, she will keep thee till about six. Secondly, whereas thou usest to study fourteen hours in the day, she will bring thee to eight or nine. Thirdly, whereas thou art wont to forbear one meal a day at least for thy studies, she will bring thee to thy meat: If these be not mischiefs enough to affright thee, I know not what thou art.*

Through his industry, with God's blessing on it, he exceedingly prospered in his studies, and quickly appeared a notable proficient. He would often say, *he chiefly affected rational learning, valuing skill in languages only for the sake of things, and those things most which were of all most likely to improve his judgment.* And the truth of his words was sufficiently

evident: For all that knew him, knew him to be as good a linguist, so as smart a disputant, and an excellent philosopher. When he performed any *academical* exercises, either in the hall or in the schools, he seldom or ever came off without the applause, or at least the approbation of all but the envious; who also themselves, even by their very detractions, in spite of their teeth, commended him; there being, to the ingenuous, no surer sign almost of his having acquitted himself well, than that such as they could not endure it should be said so.

Certain I am his pregnant parts and early accomplishments were so much taken notice of in the College, that so soon almost as he was but bachelor of arts, he was even compelled to commence a tutor; and presently intrusted (to speak within compass) with as great a number of pupils as any in the house. Some of his scholars are now Graduates in Divinity, and singular ornaments of that flourishing society, as Mr. John Rosewell, B. D. Mr. Nicholas Horseman, B. D. &c. Others of them, who left the University, have not gone without considerable preferments in the church, as Mr. John Peachil, lately lecturer at St. Clements Danes, without Temple-Bar; Mr. Christopher Coward, prebendary of Wells, &c. And I make no question but all of them (which are yet alive) honour his memory, and will at any time be ready to express the grateful sense which they retain of the advantage they received from his prudent instructions and pious examples.

It is true, indeed, he had no advancement proportionable to his merits whilst he staid amongst us:

But if there were any thing to be blamed for that, it was nothing else but his own self-denial. For a chaplain's place becoming void, he chose that before a fellowship, which he knew well enough, in a little time, would, of course, and by right, have been certainly his. And this choice having been made by him at first deliberately, he never after in the least repented, but rather often reflected on with a great deal of content and comfort. For he had always such a huge affection for prayer, that he and his friend could hardly ever walk and discourse together, but, before they parted, at his desire, they must also go and pray together. And what a pleasure then may we think it was to him, twice a day to engage a whole society, in so dear an exercise, with a *Let us pray!* Frequently indeed have I heard him say, *He prized the employment above that which generally we reckoned much better preferment, and looked upon it as his honour and happiness.*

And it was well w^s us that so he did, it being hardly possible that the duty of the place should have been by any discharged better than it was by him. We were not used to a great deal of noise, vain tautologies, crude effusions, unintelligible sense, or mysterious nonsense, instead of prayer. His spirit was serious, his gesture reverent, his words few, but premeditated and well weighed, pithy, solid, and to the full expressive of his as truly humble as earnest desire. He loathed the sauciness which went by the name of *holy boldness*; and drew near to God, not as if he had been going to play with his mate, but as became a creature overawed with the majesty

of his great Creator. He prayed with the spirit and the understanding also; confessed sin with real grief, inward hatred, and detestation; and begged the mercies he came to beg, like one that felt the want and worth of what he begged, with faith and fervency, and true importunity; his affections working, but working rationally as well as strongly.

And this, as I doubt not it prevailed above, so it had on us the more powerful influence, because we found it to be no mere religious fit, but exactly agreeable to the habitual frame and disposition of the man. It is a shrewd reflection which Suidas makes on the philosopher Sallust: (How truly I know not, he is neither civil nor just to some:) *Σαλλουστίου δε ὁ τρόπος παράδοξος πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις, ὅτε μὲν φιλοσοφοῦντος ἐπὶ τὸ καρτερώτερον, τὰ δὲ ποίζοντος ἐπὶ τὸ γελοιότερον.* *Sallust's carriage was strange to all men; for though when he read his philosophy lectures, he did it gravely and very solemnly; yet at other times he played the child, and that most D. iculously.* And there are too many, both chaplains and preachers, who justly merit as bad a censure: Whilst praying and preaching, they appear demure, and mighty devout; yet take them out of their desks and pulpits, and they are as light, as vain, and frothy, yea, extremely dissolute, as any others. But it was not so with this person: For he was always composed and serious, grave and reverend, above his age. He set God always before him; and wherever he was, laboured to live as in his presence. It was his solemn business to be religious; his great endeavour to walk by rule; his main design, in all his ways, to approve

himself unto his Father, which saw in secret; and his daily exercise, to keep a conscience void of offence, both towards God and towards men.

As for the pleasures and delights of sin, he highly nauseated and abhorred them; was so above them, that he could not endure them: *Quam suave istis suavitatibus carere!* How sweet was it to him (as said once St. Austin) to want those sweets! And as for lawful delights and pleasures, although he did divert unto, and now and then solace a while, and entertain himself with them, yet how little was his heart unto them, or was he (generally) taken with them! He was as formal in using them, as some christians are in God's service; as they sometimes do pray, as if indeed they prayed not; and hear, as if they heard not; so he rejoiced in such things as these, as if indeed he rejoiced not. He looked upon them, compared with others, as upon his righteousness, compared with Christ's,—as very vanity, yea, dross and dung. His conversation being in heaven, his sweetest comforts and most prized refreshments, were divine and heavenly. His soul took often a delightful prospect of eternity, viewing the regions of bliss and glory, looking wistly at her father's seat, the mount of joy, aspiring after a nobler mansion, and hugging herself in a comfortable persuasion, that it would not be long ere she should be in it. And hereupon, as he little minded any earthly glory, so he little minded or cared for the poor and empty delights of sense.

However, he was not morosely pious, nor did his affection to God and goodness, and the things above,

make him either a Timon or a Cynic; it had not then been so true and genuine, and of so right a kind as it was. Homilitical virtue he as much excelled in as any other, and the decried morality found ever with him very great respect, being recognized as an integral part of his religion.

He was of as sweet a disposition, and of as highly civil a conversation, as a man (subject to the common frailties of human nature) almost could be. He had scarce a gesture which did not seem to speak, and, by a powerful and charming rhetorick, affect all whom he conversed with. Were it not that he had so many other moral perfections and excellencies besides that, it might as truly be said of him, as by the historian was of the Emperor, in respect of his clemency, that *he was—totus ex comitate,—made up, as it were, of nothing else but courtesy and affability.*

For a friend, I think I may safely say, he was one of the truest that ever person had interest in; and withal, as pleasant as a serious christian could well wish. He loved not rashly, but where he loved, he loved intirely; and whoever came to be entertained in his affections, were sure to find a warm lodging. There was no more but only one thing, which he thought too much for any, for whom he thought not his love too good: He could not sin, knowingly, and willingly, for any friend he had on earth. When Lelius in the presence of the Roman Consuls, (who, after the condemnation of Tiberius Gracchus, pursued all that had been formerly intimate with him,) came to enquire of Caius Blossius, his chiefest friend, *what he was willing to have done for Gracchus:* He answered,

“All things.” *What! all things?* replied Lelius. *Suppose he had willed you to burn our temples, would you have done it at his request?* “I know,” said Blossius, “he could never command it; but if he had, I had obeyed him.” I confess this friend did never dare to be such a friend, or any thing like him: But *usque ad aras*,—so far as lawfully and conscientiously he might do any thing, he stuck at nothing wherein he might serve, pleasure, or gratify them he loved.

And yet his love was not ingrossed by his friends only; for whilst to them he shewed himself friendly, good nature as well as christianity obliged him to be kind to all, and (according to his ability) to the poor bountiful. He was too frugal to throw away his charity, yet not so covetous as to withhold it when he met with objects to whom it was due. He did not think the little he had so much his own, as that his necessitous brethren might not claim a part in it; and therefore gave them as if he had been paying debts, and not bestowing alms. But of all most admirable was his affection to the souls of others, and his desire to do good to them. This indeed was most conspicuous, and seemed to shew,

Velut inter Ignes

Luna minores,

Much like the Moon appearing bigger, and shining brighter than the other stars. The sage Pythagoras, I remember, gave this very mystical but wise advice unto his scholars, Ἐγκέφαλον μὴ ἐσθίειν, *by no means to eat their own brains*; intending by it, as it is conceived, that they should not keep their reason (of which the brain is an immediate instrument) unto themselves,

but still employ it for the advantage of others. And sure this person did forbear to eat, but by his abstinence fed many others with his brains, that is, his enlightened, improved reason. Some there are, to my knowledge, who at this day do verily think, they should never have found the way to live, or to live for ever, if he had lived unto himself. Eminent was his charity to the poor prisoners in Oxford gaol; among whom first (as the Rev. Mr. Perkins did at Cambridge,) of his own accord he began to preach, and held on constantly (while he remained in town) once a fortnight, for a year and upwards, encouraging them to give attendance on his ministry, by a considerable allowance of bread that week he preached, at his proper cost and charges. Frequent visits also was he used to make, at other times, to other persons in the world that were but mean and low; his main design (together with the relieving of their temporal wants) being to assist their souls, and help them forward in their way to heaven. And indeed, in all his converses, wherever he was, he was like fire, (as Salust was used to say of Athenodorus) ἐξάπιων πάντα τὰ παρακείμενα; *warming, refreshing, quickening all that were about him*, and kindling in them the like zeal for God and goodness which he had in himself. Whoever they were that came to visit or be acquainted with him, it was their own fault if they got not by him so much good, as to be for ever the better for him. It was hardly possible to be in his company, and not to hear such things from him, as, if well weighed, might have been enough to make one out of conceit with sin, and in love with virtue, as long as one lived. Though

he did not say, (as Titus once) yet by his actions we may judge he thought that *he had even quite lost a day*, when none had gained somewhat by him. He lived as if he had been quickened with that saying, (which I have somewhere met with in Tertullian) *Quid prodest esse, quod esse non prodest? To what purpose is it to live, and not to live to some good purpose?*

But this was that (this ardent love to the souls of men) that quickly deprived us of his company; it carried him down into the country; where, how he demeaned and carried himself, let others speak.

CHAP III.

A brief character of him by that reverend person Mr. R. A. who was nearly related to him, shewing how eminently he was qualified for the Ministerial service and warfare, unto which he was called.

OF his extract I shall say little; he was the son of a godly father, Mr. Tobie Alleine, sometime of the Devizes, an understanding, affectionate, prudent, and signally humble and experienced christian, who died suddenly but sweetly, his son surviving him not above a year or two. He having been languishing for some time, at length seemed to be upon recovery, and went about his house. On the morning before he died, he arose about four; about ten or eleven he came down out of his closet, and called for something to eat, which being prepared, he gave thanks, but could not eat any thing: His wife perceiving a sudden change in him, persuaded him to go to his bed; he answered, "No; but I will die in my chair, and I am not afraid to die." He sat down

and only said, "My life is hid with Christ in God;" and then he closed his eyes with his own hands, and died immediately. No more of the father: Concerning his son I shall speak,

What he was, and what his temper and behaviour was,

As a Man.

As a Christian.

As a Minister.

1. *As a Man.* He was, 1. of quick natural parts, and great acquired abilities, concerning which I shall need say no more, there being a fuller account given by another. 2. Of a composed, grave, and serious temper and behaviour, not at all morose, but full of candour, free, affable, cheerful, and courteous.

2. *As a Christian.* He was, for exemplary holiness, and heavenliness of mind and life, much elevated above the ordinary rank. He lived much in delightful communion with God; his soul was greatly exercised in divine contemplation; and he would sometimes speak (to provoke others, whom he wished the same delights, to the same exercise) what ineffable pleasure, sweetness, and satisfaction his soul had found in his stated meditations on the Divine Attributes, distinctly one by one. In his discourses he would speak much and passionately to the commending and exalting of the divine goodness, and of the inexpressible dearness and tenderness of the divine love. In prayer he was not ordinarily so much in confession or complaining of corruption and infirmities, though he expressed a due sense of these, as in the admiring and praising of God in his infinite glo-

rious perfections, in the mention of his wonderful works, particularly of those wonders of his love revealed in Jesus Christ. In some of his letters to me, when he had been speaking of the grace and goodness of God to him, (of the sense whereof he would seem to be even quite swallowed up) he would break off with some such expressions as these, *I am full of the mercies of the Lord; O love the Lord for me; O praise the Lord for my sake; O help me, help me to praise the Lord!*

His whole life was adorned and beautified with the admirable lustre of his particular personal graces.

1. *He was a man of love.* His sweet, amicable, and courteous converse was such as made him the *deliciæ** of his acquaintance, and made way for the entertainment both of his serious counsels and severer reproofs: He grew dear unto the saints that knew him, because they saw in his very face and all his carriages, how very dear they were to him. His compassion to those in distress, his bounty to those in want, (wherein he abounded beyond his ability) his forbearance in case of offences, his affectionate language and carriage, his readiness to all obliging offices of love to his relations, to his friends, to strangers, to enemies, did evidently declare how he loved them. Especially his love was let forth in fuller streams upon the congregation where he exercised his ministry. The people of his care, were the people of his delight. His ardent longing for their souls, his rejoicing in their souls' prosperity, his bleedings and break-

* The delight.

ings of soul under any of their falls or infirmities, his incessant labours among them, both publicly and from house to house, his frequent and affectionate letters to them when he was absent, his earnest desire to live and die and be buried amongst them, (declaring to them, *That if he died within fifty miles of Taunton, his will was to be brought and buried there, that his bones might be laid with their bones, his dust mingled with their dust*)—these all declare how greatly they were in his heart.

2. *He was a man of courage.* 1. He feared no dangers in the way of his duty, knowing that *He that walks uprightly, walks surely*, In cases less clear, he was very inquisitive to understand his way, and then he fixed without fear. 2. He feared not the faces of men; but where occasion was, he was bold in admonishing, and faithful in reproof; which ungrateful duty he yet managed with such prudence and such expressions of love and compassion to souls, as made his way into hearts more easy, and his work more successful.

3. *He was a son of peace;* Both a zealous peacemaker among differing brethren, in case of personal quarrels and contentions; and he was also of sober and peaceful principles and a healing spirit, as to parties or factions upon the account of religion. He had an awful and reverend regard to magistrates, abhorring all provoking and insolent expressions, or mutinous and tumultuous actions against them.

4. *He was a man of truth and righteousness;* both as to his own personal practice; and also was much in pressing it upon others, especially professors of

religion, to be exemplarily just in their dealings, and true in their words, to be wary in promising, and punctual in performing. O! how often and passionately have I heard him bewailing the sins of promise-breaking and deceitful dealing, whereof such as he hath known to be guilty have understood, both by word and writing, how much his soul was grieved at them, for the wrong they did hereby to their own souls especially, and the reproach they brought upon the gospel of our Lord.

5. *He was of great patience.* To say nothing of his behaviour under sufferings of other kinds, his great weakness, and long languishing for some years together, and his constant serenity, calms, and quietness of spirit, in all that time,—so far from the least touch of murmuring, that he was still blessing the Lord for his tender dealings with him,—have given the world a full proof that he was of a patient spirit.

6. *He was eminent in liberality;* He not only *did*, but *devised liberal things, and by liberal things did he stand;* he studied and considered how he might both give himself, and procure from others, relief for those in want: He gave much alms daily, both in the place where he lived, and wherever he came. When there were collections at any time for pious and charitable uses, he stirred up others to bountiful giving, both by word, and also by his example. In the collection for the Fire in London, he gave publicly such a liberal proportion as he thought meet to be an example to others; and (as I came occasionally to understand) lest it should be misjudged if he had been known to give more, he gave more than as

much again secretly. He distributed much amongst his relations. His aged father and divers of his brethren, with their large families, being fallen into decay, he took great care for them all, and gave education to some, pensions to others, portions to others of them; and notwithstanding all this, he had but a very small matter of stock to begin upon, and never above eighty pounds per annum, that I know of; and near the one half of his time, not above half so much; only by the industry of his wife, who for divers years kept a boarding-school, his income was for that time considerably enlarged. He took great pains in journeyings abroad to many gentlemen, and other rich men in the country, to procure a standing supply for such *Non-conforming ministers* as were in want.

7. *He was of an active spirit.* He went about doing good. As he was abundant and uncessant in his labours in the congregation where he lived; so wherever he came, he would be scattering some good seed, not only among the adult, but he would be dealing much with the children in those families into which he came, asking them questions, giving them counsel, and sometimes leaving them his counsel in writing. In his own family (which was great whilst his wife kept boarders) he was exceedingly industrious; the gravity of his carriage, contempered with much sweetness and affability towards those young ones, begat in many of them the awe and love as of children to their father, and made way for the success of his endeavours with them, which was considerable upon divers of them. At Bath, while he lay sick there, he sent for many of the poor, both old and

children, and gave them catechisms, engaging them to learn them, and give him an account; who came cheerfully and frequently to him, being encouraged hereto by his familiar and winning carriage, his giving them money, his feeding and feasting them. He would sometimes say, *It is a pity that counsel of our Lord (Luke iv. 13.) of feasting the poor, was no more practised among christians.*

8. *He was of a humble spirit.* Though God had so exceedingly lifted him up in the hearts of others, yet he was not puffed up in his own: He was low in his own eyes, and despised the praise of men. His whole carriage was without the least ostentation, and he was of great condescension to the weakest or meanest. Once or twice he was complaining to me of the pride of his heart; I (judging it to proceed rather from a holy jealousy of himself, and a tenderness of the least spark of that evil, than from any power it had upon him) replied to him (as I remember) to this purpose; *If he had a proud heart, he had it to himself, for none else could perceive it.* But he answered, "Some men that are proud enough, have more wit than to let every one know it." Another time making the same complaint in a letter to me, he added this: *But my naughty heart, whilst I am writing this, is in hope you will not believe me.* So watchful was he, as to espy and check the least motions of that lust which he so much abhorred.

III. *As a minister.* He was settled in Taunton Magdalen, as an assistant to the Reverend Pastor there; with whom, as a son with the father, he served in the gospel. I shall say nothing here, there be-

ing a large account given under the hand of that worthy person.

But besides his labours in that great congregation in which alone he was fixed, the care for many other congregations was daily upon him. He went forth frequently into several places about the country, amongst the poor ignorant people that lived in dark corners and had none to take care of them, and both preached to them himself, and stirred up many of his brethren; whose forward minds readily joined with him, to set up standing lectures amongst them: He had an eye to poor Wales, and had an influence upon the sending over some ministers to them: He resolved also to have gone and spent some time amongst them himself, and by all the dissuasions of his friends, from his great weakness and unfitness for travel, he was hardly withheld from his purpose.

CHAP. IV.

An account of his godly life and practice, and of the course of his Ministry in Taunton, given by Mr. George Newton, the Reverend Pastor there, whose assistant he was.

MR. JOSEPH ALLEINE came to my assistance, in the year 1655, being then in the one and twentieth year of his age; and we continued together with much mutual satisfaction.

I soon observed him to be a young man of singular accomplishments, natural and acquired. His intellectuals solid, his memory strong, his affections lively, his learning much beyond the ordinary size:

And above all, his holiness eminent, his conversation exemplary; in brief, he had a good head, and a better heart.

He spent a considerable part of his time in private converses with God and his own soul; he delighted very much to perform his secret devotions in the view of heaven, and the open air, when he could find advantages fit for his purpose. He used to keep many days alone, and then a private room would not content him, but (if he could) he would withdraw himself to a solitary house, that had no inhabitant in it: And herein he was gratified often by some private friends of his, to whom he did not impart his design: Perhaps it was, that he might freely use his voice as his affections led him, without such prudential considerations and restraints as would have been necessary in another place; and that he might converse with God without any avocation or distraction.

His conversation with others, was always mingled with heavenly and holy discourses; he was ready to instruct, and to exhort, and to reprove; which he never failed to do (when he thought it necessary) whatever the event might be: But he performed it usually with such respect, humility, tenderness, self-condemnation, and compassion, that a reproof from him did seldom, if at all, miscarry.

In the houses where he sojourned, their hands fed one, but his lips fed many; God freely poured grace into his lips, and he freely poured it out. None could live quietly in any visible and open sin, under his inspection: When he came to any house to take

up his abode there, he brought salvation with him; when he departed, he left salvation behind him. His manner was, when he was ready to depart, and to transplant himself into some other family, (as that the exigence of his condition and the time, did more than once constrain him to,) to call the people one by one into his chamber; from whence, it was observed, that scarce any once returned with dry eyes.

In matters of religion, and the first table, his strictness was so exemplary, (which was near to rigour) that I have scarce known any of his years keep pace with him. Surely he did more than others; his righteousness exceeded not the Publican only, but the Pharisees too. He was much taken with Monsieur de Renty, (whose life he read often) and imitated some of his severities upon better grounds: How often have I heard him to admire (among many other things) especially his self-annihilation, striving continually to be nothing, that God might be all.

But here he stayeth not, he was a *second-table man*, a man of morals; I never knew him spotted in the least degree with any unjust or uncharitable act. And I am sure, the many failings of professors in this kind, touched him to the very quick, and brought him low; drew prayers, tears, complaints, and lamentations, both by word and letter from him, though yet the Lord would not permit him to behold and reap the fruit before he died.

He had an eminently free and bountiful heart to his power, and I may truly say, beyond his power; yea, much beyond it, he was willing of himself. It

is but seldom that the best do need restraint in these matters; and yet we read of some who brought more than enough, yea, much more than enough. (Exod. xxxvi. 5.) So that there was a proclamation issued out, to put a stop upon their bounty, and it is added presently, *so the people were restrained*. Men universally almost do need a spur, but he did rather need a bridle. When other men gave little out of much, he gave much out of little; and while they heaped and gathered up, he dispersed and scattered abroad. He did not hide himself from his own flesh, but was helpful to relations, as some of them have great reason to acknowledge. His charity began at home, but it did not end there; for *he did good to all*, (according to his opportunities) though *especially to the household of faith*. He considered the poor, he studied their condition; he devised liberal things; he was full of holy projects, for the advancement of the good of others, both spiritual and temporal; which he pursued with such irresistible vigor, and zeal, and activity, that they seldom proved abortive.

He was a man of extraordinary condescension to the infirmities of weaker brethren, as they that are most holy, and best acquainted with themselves, are wont to be: *Instructing those that were contrary minded in meekness; if God peradventure would give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth: Restoring those who were overtaken with a fault, with the spirit of meekness*. So dealing with them in such a loving, sweet, and humble way, as considering himself, lest he also might be tempted. In their confessed failings, he was no way supercilious, cap-

tious, and censorious; he would maintain a good opinion of another, upon a narrower footing than many others, who (to say no more) were nothing stricter, holier, humbler, than himself would be. His charity *believed all things* that were to be believed, and *hoped all things* that were to be hoped. And when he deeply condemned the action, he would not judge of the estate: Indeed he had more charity for others than himself; and though he were sufficiently mild in his judgment of others, he was severe enough in his judgment of himself.

He was not peremptory in matters that belong to doubtful disputations: He laid no more weight and stress on notions and opinions in religion, that wholly depend upon *topical* arguments, than belongs to them. He was not like many who are so over-confident in their determinations that they will hardly hold communion; nay, scarce so much as a pleasing conversation with any man, how gracious soever, who cannot think, and say, and act in every thing as they do. He would allow his fellow-members the latitude that the apostle doth; and so would freely and familiarly converse with those who are sound in the faith, (as to the fundamentals of religion) and who were strict and holy in their lives, of all persuasions.

His ministerial studies were more than usually easy to him, being of a quick conceit, a ready, strong, and faithful memory, a free expression, (which was rather nervous and substantial, than soft and delicate,) and, which was best of all, a holy heart that boiled and bubbled up with good matter. This furnished him on all occasions, not with warm affec-

tions only, but with holy notions too. For his heart was an epistle, written, not with ink, but with the Spirit of the Living God: And out of this epistle, he drew many excellent things. In the course of his ministry, he was a good man, and in his heart a good treasure; whence he was wont continually to bring forth good things, both in public and in private.

He was apt to preach and pray, most ready on all occasions to lay out himself in such work, yea, spending himself in such work: When my sudden distemper seized upon me, put him at any time (as many times they did) upon very short and sudden preparations, he never refused; no, nor so much as fluctuated in the undertaking; but being called, he confidently cast himself upon the Lord, and trusted perfectly to his assistance who had never failed him; and so he readily and freely went about his work without distraction.

He began upon a very considerable stock of learning, and gifts ministerial and personal, much beyond the proportion of his years, and grew exceedingly in his abilities and graces, in a little time. So that his profiting appeared to all men; he waxed very rich in heavenly treasure, by the blessing of God on a diligent hand, so that he was behind in no good gift. He found that precious promise sensibly made good, *to him that hath* (for use and good employment) *shall be given, and he shall have abundance.* He had no talent for the napkin, but all for traffic, which he laid out so freely for his Master's use, that in a little time

they multiplied so fast, that the napkin could not hold them. I heard a worthy minister say of him once, (not without much admiration) *Whence hath this man these things?* He understood whence he had them well enough, and so did I, even from above, whence every good and perfect gift proceedeth: God blessed him in all spiritual blessings in heavenly things, and he returned all to heaven again; he served God with all his might and all his strength; he was abundant in the work of the Lord; he did not go, but *run* the ways of his commandments: He made haste and lingered not; *he did run, and was not weary; he did walk, and was not faint.* He pressed hard towards the mark, till he attained it; his race was short and swift, and his end glorious.

He was infinitely and insatiably greedy of the conversion of souls, wherein he had no small success in the time of his ministry: And to this end, he poured out his very heart in prayer and preaching; *he imparted not the gospel only, but his own soul.* His supplications, and his exhortations, many times were so affectionate, so full of holy zeal, life, and vigor, that they quite overcame his hearers: He melted over them, so that he thawed and mollified, and sometimes dissolved the hardest hearts. But while he melted thus, he wasted, and at last consumed himself.

He was not satisfied to spend himself in public, but used constantly to go from house to house, and there to deal particularly (where he had a free reception) both with the governors, and with the children, and with the servants of the household, instruct-

ing them especially in the great fundamental necessary truths of the law, and of the gospel, where he observed them to be ignorant: Gently reprov- ing them, where he found any thing amiss among them. Exhorting them to diligence, both in their general and particular callings: Entreating them who were defective, by any means to set up the worship of God in their houses, and to make them little churches, by constant reading of the scripture, so that the word of Christ might deeply dwell among and in them richly, by careful catechising of the children, and the servants, if the governors were able; by frequent meditations, conferences, repetitions of that which they had heard in public, especially by daily prayer, morning and evening, that so they might avoid that dreadful indignation which hangs over, and is ready to be poured out upon the families that call not upon God. He made the best inspection that he could, into the state of every particular person, and so accordingly applied himself to check, to comfort, to encourage, as he found occasion. All which he did with so much tenderness, humility, and self-denial, that they gained very much on the affections and respects of all that received him, and wrought them at least to outward conformity; so that they who were not visited in the beginning, at length came forth and called upon him to come to their families and help them.

Thus he did wear himself away, and gave light and heat to others: He usually allowed himself too little sleep to recruit and to repair the spirits which

he wasted with waking. His manner was to rise at four o'clock at the utmost, many times before, and that in the cold winter mornings, that he might be with God betime, and so get room for other studies and employments. His extraordinary watchings, constant cares, excessive labours in the work of his ministry, public and private, were generally apprehended to be the cause of those distempers and decays, and at last of that ill habit of body, whereof in the end he died.

He was the gravest, strictest, most serious, and composed young man that I had ever yet the happiness to be acquainted with. And yet he was not rigid in his principles, his moderation was known to all men that knew him.

CHAP. V.

A Further account of his Catechising, both in public and private, by Mr. G.

WHEN he did catechise the greater sort in public, before he was silenced, his manner was to begin with prayer for a blessing upon that exercise: And having proposed some questions out of the *Assembly's Catechism* to them, he was careful, not only to make them perfect in rehearsing the answers there set down, but also to bring them to a clear understanding of the sense and meaning of the said answers, and of all the terms and phrases in which they are expressed; and to draw some practical, useful

inferences from those heads of divinity contained in them. Moreover when any distinction was necessary for the clearing up of the matter in hand, he would also be instructing his *Catechumens* therein: Now this he would do, by proposing several other collateral questions, besides those in the *Catechism*; which questions, together with the answers to them, himself had before drawn up, and sent to them in writing.

In the even of the Lord's Day, his course was to repeat his sermon again, in the public place of worship, where abundance of people constantly resorted to hear him; which when he had done, several youths were called forth, which did give him an account of the heads of all his sermon by memory.

As for his method in going from house to house, for the instructing of private families, it was this; he would give them notice of his coming the day before, desiring that he might have admittance to their houses, to converse with them about their soul concerns, and that they would have their whole family together against he came. When he came, and the family were called together, he would be instructing the younger sort in the principles of religion, by asking several questions in the *Catechism*; the answers to which he would be opening and explaining to them. Also he would be enquiring of them about their spiritual estate and condition, labouring to make them sensible of the evil and danger of sin, the corruption and wickedness of our natures, the misery of an unconverted state; stirring them up to look

after the true remedy proposed in the gospel, to turn from all their sins unto God, to close with Christ upon his own terms; to follow after holiness, to watch over their hearts and lives, to mortify their lusts, to redeem their time, to prepare for eternity. These things as he would be explaining to their understandings, that they might have clear apprehensions about them, so he would be pressing the practice of them upon their consciences, with the most cogent arguments and considerations, minding them of the great privileges they did enjoy, the many gospel-sermons that they did or might hear, the many talents they were intrusted withal, and the great account that they had to give to the God of Heaven; telling them how sad it would be with them another day, if after all this they should come short of salvation. Besides, he would leave with them several counsels and directions to be carefully remembered and practised for the good of their souls. Those that were serious and religious, he would labour to help forward in holiness, by answering their doubts, resolving their cases, encouraging them under their difficulties. And before he did go from any family, he would deal with the heads of that family, and such others as were grown to years of discretion, singly and apart; that so he might, as much as possibly he could come to know the condition of each particular person in his flock, and address himself in his discourse as might be suitable to every of them. If he perceived that they did live in the neglect of family duties, he would exhort and press them to

set up the worship of God in their families, as reading, prayer; and directing them how to set about it, and to take time for secret duties too. Such as were masters of families, he would earnestly persuade and desire, as they did tender the honour of Christ and the welfare of their children and servants' souls, to let them have some time every day for such private duties, and to encourage them in the performance of them; neither would he leave them before he had a promise of them so to do. Sometimes also he would himself go to prayer before his departure. This was his method in the general; although with such necessary variation in his particular visits, as the various state and condition of the several families did require. If the family where he came were ignorant, he would insist the longer in instructing and catechising; if loose, in reprovng and convincing; if godly, in encouraging and directing.

He did use to spend five afternoons every week in such exercises, from one or two o'clock, until seven in the evening: In which space of time he would visit sometimes three or four families in an afternoon, and sometimes more, according as they were greater or less. This course he would take throughout the town; and when he had gone through, he would presently begin again, that he might visit every family as often as he could. He often did bless God for the great success that he had in these exercises, saying that God had made him as instrumental of good to souls this way, as by his public preaching, if not more. When the minis-

ters of this county of Somerset, at one of their Associations, which heretofore they held, were debating whether and how far it were incumbent upon them to set up private family instruction in their particular charges, Mr. Alleine was the man that they pitched upon for to draw up his reasons for that practice, together with a method for the more profitable management of it.

An Abridgment of what he drew up, here followeth:

IT being the unquestionable duty of all the ministers of the church of Christ, *to take heed to all the flock over whom the Holiest hath made them overseers;* and to teach and preach, not only publicly, but from house to house; not only taking a general care of the whole, or calling out the chiefest of the sheep for our particular care and inspection, as the manner of some is, and leaving the rest to sink or swim; but as good shepherds inquiring into their estates, observing the particular marks, diseases, strayings of our sheep, and applying ourselves suitably to their cases; in a word, warning every man, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. Therefore it behoveth us to study to do this great duty in such a manner, as may be acceptable to God and profitable to our flocks. The directions for performing this duty, are either more general or more special; for the more general directions,—they are either such as concern the entrance on this duty, or the performance of it.

I. For those that concern the entrance, it will be necessary, that we convince the people of the neces-

sity of this duty. 2. That we study to manage this great work to our people's best advantage. 3. That we set apart such set times for this great work as, upon consideration, we shall find most convenient for them and us, resolving to be constant in observing them. 4. That we pray for wisdom from above, what and how to speak. 5. That we send word to the people when we intend to visit them, that they dispose of their business to receive us.

II. For those that concern us, in the managing of the duty,

1. The family being called together, we may, if time and conveniency permit, begin with prayer. 2. The family consisting of superiors and inferiors, it would not be amiss to begin with the inferiors; for many can hear their children and servants examined contentedly, that cannot bear it themselves: For that they will not disdain to give an account of themselves before their superiors, though their superiors would disdain to give an account before them; and here it will be necessary to enquire into their knowledge, practice, states;

1. *Their knowledge*; here we may examine what progress they have made in the principles of the doctrine of Christ, and try them in the Catechism.

2. What they do gain by the public ministry, what they remember of the sermon last heard.

2. *Their practice*; in their duty towards God; where it may be useful to inquire, if they make conscience of secret prayer. The necessity of it may be expressed, the nature of it opened, and some heads

of prayer explained; and if they be such as need it, it would be useful to commend to them some form, for the present help. 2. In the duties of their relations towards men; and if they be pressed to faithfulness, diligence, and uprightness, the duties they owe to those that were over them, it would be very convenient.

3. Into their estates; and here we may take an account of them, what they think of the state of their souls, shewing the paucity of them that are saved, the desperate deceitfulness of the heart, the infinite danger of being deceived, the wiles and devices of Satan to beguile them; from whence, and such like arguments, we may press them to be diligent in inquiring what the case of their souls is, to be jealous of themselves; where we may take occasion to shew them, 1. That every man, by nature, is in a damnable estate. 2. The absolute necessity of conversion. 3. By what signs they may know whether they remain in, or are delivered from, this estate: Which signs should be few, plain, certain, and infallible, founded upon the clear evidence of the word. And because the searching work is so displeasing to the flesh, that it might disengage them to come too close at first, it may not be amiss to defer this till we had got some interest in their hearts, by a loving tender carriage.

III. The inferiors being thus dealt with, may be dismissed to their several employments; and then we may take occasion to discourse with the heads of the families, proceeding as prudence shall direct upon some of the forementioned particulars.

1. We may enquire whether they perform this great duty of prayer in the family, offering them helps if they need.

2. We may press them to instruct and catechise their families.

3. We may exhort them to the strict sanctifying the Lord's Day.

4. If they are poor, we may draw forth the hand of our bounty towards them.

5. If we know any evil by them, we may take them aside privately, shewing them the sinfulness of their practice, and engaging them to promise reformation.

6. We should leave with them some few particulars of greatest weight, often repeating them till they remember them, engaging them to mind them till we shall converse with them again.

7. Our dealing with them must be in that manner that may most prevail, and win upon their hearts:

(1.) With compassion; being kindly affectioned to them, charging, exhorting, comforting every one of them, as a father his children.

(2.) With prudence; warning and teaching them in all wisdom, applying ourselves to the several cases and capacities;—1. To the rich in this world, shewing more respect as their places require, charging upon them those duties that are required of them in special. 2. To the poor, you may be more plain and free, pressing upon them those duties that are most proper to their condition. 3. To the aged, we

must be more reverent, labouring to root out of them the love of the world, shewing them the dangerousness of covetousness, and the necessity of making speedy preparations for eternity. 4. The men are to be exhorted to temperance and sobriety; diligence in their callings, &c. 5. Women to meekness, humility, subjection to their husbands, and constant infusing good principles into their children.

(3.) With patience; being gentle to all men; in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; bearing with their dulness, rudeness, and disrespectfulness; waiting for their repentance.

(4.) With all faithfulness, giving no occasion of offence, that our ministry be not blamed.

(5.) With zeal, as Apollos, fervent in spirit, teaching diligently the things of the Lord, &c.

(6.) With plainness, not betraying their souls to hell, and ours with them, for want of faithfulness and closeness in our dealing with them. It being not sufficient in general, that no drunkard, &c. shall inherit the kingdom of Heaven; but telling them plainly, and particularly, "Such is your looseness, your ignorance, that I fear you are in an unconverted state."

(7.) With authority; dealing with them in the power and demonstration of the Spirit.

(8.) With humility; *not lording it over God's heritage, but condescending to men of low estates:* Nor disdain to go into the houses of the meanest.

IV. The sort of directions are more special, respecting the several sorts of our people, who may

be ranked into four heads, the Ignorant, Profane, Formal, Godly.

1. For the Ignorant; Our work with them will be,

(1.) To convince them that they are ignorant, which may be done by shewing their inability to answer some plain familiar questions.

(2.) To shew them the dangerous, yea, the damnable nature of ignorance.

(3.) To press them, with all possible earnestness, to labour after knowledge.

(4.) To answer their carnal pleas for their ignorance, when wilful.

2. For the Profane; it would be necessary to deal with them convincingly, shewing the certain damnation they are running upon.

3. For the Formal; With these we must deal searchingly, and shew them,

(1.) How easily men may mistake the form of godliness for the power.

(2.) The undoing danger of resting in being almost a Christian.

(3.) The most distinguishing differences between a hypocrite and a sincere christian.

4. For the godly; To these we must draw forth the breasts of the promises, opening to them the riches and fulness of Christ; inquiring into their growth in grace; quickening them to labour after assurance; to be stedfast in the faith; patient in suffering; diligent in doing the will of Christ, zealous of good works, always abounding more and more.

There is one thing more, in which his self-denial and other graces, were very exemplary; namely, his faithfulness in reprovng the miscarriages of professors, sparing none, whether high or low, whether ministers or private christians; yea, although they had been never so dear in his affections, and never so obliging in their carriage to him, yet if he found in them any thing that was reprovab, and blame-worthy, he would deal with them faithfully and plainly about it, whatsoever the issue and event were.

One time when he was going about such a work, he told a christian friend with whom he was very intimate and familiar, *Well* (says he) *I am going about that which is like to make a very dear and obliging friend to become an enemy: But, however, it cannot be omitted, it is better to lose man's favour than God's.* But God was pleased (then, as well as divers other times besides, when he went about business of this nature) to order things for him better than he could have expected, and so to dispose of the heart of the person with whom he had to deal, that he was so far from becoming his enemy for his conscientious faithfulness to him, that he loved him the better ever after as long as he lived.

As to his judgment about the Arminian controversies, as far as I can perceive, who have discoursed with him about them, it was much-what the same with Doctor Davenant's and Mr. Baxter's.

He was a man of a very calm and peaceable spirit, one that loathed all tumultuous carriages and proceedings; he was far from having any other design

in his preaching, than the advancement of the kingdom of the Lord Jesus, by the conversion and salvation of souls: This was the mark that he had in his eye; this was that for which he laboured, and ventured, and suffered, and for which he thought he could never lay out himself enough.

Though he were but a young man, yet in his carriage he was exceeding serious and grave, and withal very humble, courteous, and affable, condescending to discourse with the poorest and meanest persons, for their spiritual good, as soon as with the greatest and richest.

And indeed so unblameable and convincing was he in the whole of his conversation, that there were very religious and sober persons that knew him, either in town or country, either ministers or people, (yea, though some of them differing in judgment from him,) but did highly approve of him. And for his brethren in the ministry here in these parts, such was his holy and discreet deportment amongst them, that he had as great an influence upon them, as few others had the like.

He was full of holy projects, often bethinking himself by what ways and means he might more effectually promote the honour of Christ, and the benefit of souls; and whatsoever he apprehended to be conducing to these highest ends, he would prosecute with that wisdom and vigour, that he seldom failed of bringing it to a comfortable and successful issue.

Of which projects, this is one which I shall here insert: Having considered how much the consciences

tious and frequent performance of the duty of self-examination, might tend to the bringing down of sin and furtherance of holiness, both in heart and life, he did earnestly press the said duty on his hearers in his preaching, directing them in the performance; and not only so, but dealt with them also in private about it, and got a promise from the most of them, that they would every night, before they did take their rest, set about this duty; and spend some time in secret, on purpose to call themselves to an account, how they had carried it that day, by proposing several questions to their own hearts, which questions he had referred to several heads, and drawn up for them in writing.

And not a few of them have acknowledged, that they have cause to bless God, who stirred him up to put them upon this practice, which they have found very helpful to them in their daily christian walk,

USEFUL QUESTIONS,

Whereby a Christian may every day examine himself.

PSALM IV. 4.

Commune with your Hearts upon your Beds.

EVERY evening before you sleep (unless you find some other time in the day more for your advantage in this work) sequester yourself from the world; and

having set your heart in the presence of the Lord, charge it before God to answer to these interrogatories.

FOR YOUR DUTIES.

Question 1. Did not God find me on my bed, when he looked for me on my knees? Job i. 5. Psalm v. 3.

2. Have not I prayed to no purpose, or suffered wandering thoughts to eat out my duties? Mat. xviii. 8. 9. Jer. xii. 2.

3. Have not I neglected, or been very overly in the reading God's holy word? Deut. xvii. 19. Josh. i. 7. 8.

4. Have I digested the sermon I heard last? Have I repeated it over, and prayed it over? Luke ii. 19. 51. Psalm i. 2. and cxix. 5. 11. 97.

5. Was there not more of custom and fashion in my family duties, than of conscience? Psalm ci. 2. Jer. xxx. 22.

6. Wherein have I denied myself this day for God? Luke ix. 23.

7. Have I redeemed my time from too long or needless visits, idle imaginations, fruitless discourse, unnecessary sleep, more than needs of the world? Ephes. v. 16. Col. iv. 5.

8. Have I done any thing more than ordinary for the church of God, in this time extraordinary? 2 Cor. xi. 28. Isaiah lxii. 6.

9. Have I took care of my company? Prov. xiii. 20. Psalm cxix. 63.

10. Have not I neglected, or done something against the duties of my relations, as a master, servant, husband,

wife, parent, child, &c. Ephes. v. 22. to chap. vi. 9. Col. iii. 18. to chap iv. 2.

FOR YOUR SINS.

Q. 1. *Doth not sin sit light?* Psalm xxxviii. 4. Rom. vii. 24.

2. *Am I a mourner for the sins of the land?* Ezek. ix. 4. Jer. ix. 1. 2. 3.

3. *Do I live in nothing that I know or fear to be a sin?* Psalm cxix. 101. 104.

FOR YOUR HEART.

Q. 1. *Have I been much in holy ejaculations?* Neh. ii. 4. 5.

2. *Hath not God been out of mind, heaven out of sight?* Psalm xvi. 8. Jer. ii. 32. Phil. iii. 23.

3. *Have I been often looking into my own heart, and made conscience of vain thoughts?* Prov. iii. 23. Psalm cxix. 113.

4. *Have not I given way to the workings of pride or passion?* 2 Chron. xxxii. 26. James iv. 5. 6. 7.

FOR MY TONGUE.

Q. 1. *Have I bridled my tongue, and forced it in?* James i. 26. and iii. 2. 3. 4. Psalm xxxix. 1.

2. *Have I spoke evil of no man?* Titus iii. 2. James iv. 11.

3. *Hath the law of the Lord been in my mouth as I sat in my house, went by the way, was lying down, and rising up?* Deut. vi. 6. 7.

4. *Have I come into no company where I have not dropped something of God, and left some good savour behind?* Col. iv. 6. Ephes. iv. 29.

FOR YOUR TABLE.

Q. 1. *Did I not sit down with a higher end than a beast, merely to please my appetite? Did I eat and drink for the glory of God?* 1 Cor. x. 31.

2. *Was not mine appetite too hard for me?* Jude xii. 2 Peter i. 6.

3. *Did not I arise from the table without dropping any thing of God there?* Luke vii. 36, &c. and xiv. 1, &c. John vi.

4. *Did not I mock with God when I pretended to crave a blessing, and return thanks?* Acts xxvii. 35. 39. Mat. xv. 36. Col. iii. 17. 23.

FOR YOUR CALLING.

Q. 1. *Have I been diligent in the duties of my calling?* Eccles. ix. 1 Cor. vii. 17, 20, 24.

2. *Have I defrauded no man?* 1 Thes. iv. 6. 1 Cor. vi. 3.

3. *Have I dropped never a lie in my shop or trade?* Prov. xxi. 6. Ephes. iv. 25.

4. *Did not I rashly make, or falsely break some promise?* Psalm cvi. 33. Jos. ix. 14, &c. Psalm xv. 4.

AN ADDITION

OF

SOME BRIEF DIRECTIONS FOR THE MORNING.

DIRECT. 1. *If through necessity or carelessness you have omitted the reading and weighing of these questions in the evening, be sure to do it now.*

2. *Ask yourself, "What sin have I committed, what duty have I omitted? Against which of these rules have I offended, in the day foregoing?" And renew your repentance, and double your watch.*

3. *Examine whether God were last in your thoughts when you went to sleep, and first when you awake.*

4. *Enquire whether your care of your heart and ways doth increase upon your constant using of this course for self-examination, or whether it doth abate, and you grow more remiss.*

5. *Impose a task of some good meditations upon your selves while you are making ready, either to go over these rules in your thoughts, or the heads of some sermon you heard last, or the holy meditations for this purpose in the Practice of Piety, or Scuder's Daily Walk.*

6. *Set your ends right for all that day.*

7. *Set your watch, especially against those sins and temptations that you are like to be most incident to that day.*

CHAP. VI.

A full Narrative of his Life, (from his silencing till his death,) by his Widow Mrs. Theodosia Alleine, in her own words; wherein is notably set forth with what patience he ran the race that was set before him, and fulfilled the Ministry that he had received of the Lord.

BEFORE the *Act for Uniformity* came forth, my husband was *very earnest day and night with God*, that his way might be plain to him, that he might not desist from such advantages of saving souls, with any scruple upon his spirit; in which, when he saw those *clauses of assent and consent, and renouncing the covenant*, he was *fully satisfied*: But he seemed so moderate before, that both myself and others thought he would have conformed: He often saying

He would not leave his work for small and dubious matters: But seeing his way so plain for quitting the public station that he held, and being thoroughly persuaded of this, that the ejection of the ministers out of their places, did not disoblige them from preaching the gospel, he presently took up a firm resolution to go on with his work in *private*, both of *preaching* and *visiting* from house to house, till he should be carried to prison or banishment, which he counted upon, the Lord assisting him. And this resolution, without delay, he prosecuted; for the Thursday after he appointed a *solemn day of humiliation*, when he preached to as many as would adventure themselves with him at our own house. But it being then a strange thing to the most professors to suffer, they seemed much affrighted at the threatenings of adversaries; so that there was not such an appearance at such opportunities as my husband expected; whereupon he made it his work to converse much with those he perceived to be most timorous, and to satisfy the scruples that were on many amongst us; so that the Lord was pleased in a short time to give him such success that his own people waxed bold for the Lord and his gospel: And multitudes flocked into the meetings, at whatsoever season they were, either by day or night; which was a great encouragement to my husband, that he went on with much vigour and affection in his work, both of preaching, and visiting, and catechizing, from house to house.

He went also frequently into the villages and places about the towns where their ministers were gone, as most of them did fly, or at the least desist for a considerable time after Bartholomew-day. Wherever he went, the Lord was pleased to give him great success; many converted, and the generality of those animated to cleave to the Lord and his ways.

But by this the justices' rage was much heightened against him, and he was often threatened and sought for; but by the power of God, whose work he was delighted in, was preserved much longer out of their hands than he expected. For he would often say, *If it pleased the Lord to grant him three months' liberty before he went to prison, he should account himself favoured by him, and should with more cheerfulness go, when he had done some work.* At which time we sold off all our goods, preparing for a gaol or banishment, where he was desirous I should attend him, as I was willing to do, it always having been more grievous to me to think of being absent from him, than to suffer with him.

He also resolved, when they would suffer him no longer to stay in England, he would go to China, or some remote part of the world, and publish the gospel there.

It pleased the Lord to indulge him, that he went on in his work from Bartholomew-day till May the twenty-sixth after. Though often threatened, yet he was never interrupted, though the people both of the town and country were grown so resolute, that they came in great multitudes, at whatever season

the *meeting* was appointed, very seldom missing twice a sabbath, and often in the week. I know that he hath preached fourteen times in eight days, and ten often, and six or seven ordinarily in these months, at home and abroad, besides his frequent converse with souls. He then laying aside all other studies which he formerly so much delighted in, because he accounted his time would be short. And the Lord (as he often told me) made his work in his ministry far more easy to him, by the supplies of his Spirit both in gifts and grace, as did evidently appear, both in his *doctrine* and *life*; he appearing to be more spiritual, and heavenly, and affectionate than before, to all that heard him, or conversed with him.

He was upon a Saturday in the evening, about six o'clock, seized on by an officer in our town, who would rather have been otherwise employed, as he hath often said, but that he was forced to a speedy execution of the warrant by a Justice's clerk, who was sent on purpose with it to see it executed, because he feared that none of the town would have done it.

The warrant was in the name of three Justices, to summon him to appear forthwith at one of their houses, which was about two miles from the town, but he desired liberty to stay and sup with his family first, supposing his entertainment there would be such as would require some refreshment: This would not be granted, till one of the chief of the town was bound for his speedy appearance: His supper being prepared, he sat down, eating very heartily, and was very cheerful, but full of holy and

gracious expressions, suitable to his and our present state. After supper, having prayed with us, he with the officer, and two or three friends accompanying him, repaired to the justice's house, where they lay to his charge that he had broken the *Act of Uniformity* by his preaching; which he denied, saying, *That he had preached neither in any church, nor chapel, nor place of public worship since the twenty-fourth of August; and what he did was in his own family with those others that came there to hear him.*

Here behold how many ministers have these eight or nine years been silenced in England, Scotland, and Ireland, whose holy skill and conscience, fidelity and zeal, is such, as would have justly advanced most of the ancient Fathers of the church to far greater renown, had they been but possessed with the like! Of whom indeed the world is not worthy. O! how many of them am I constrained to remember, with joy for their great worth, and sorrow for their silence! But though learning, holiness, wonderful ministerial skill, and industry, moderation, peaceableness, true catholicism, absolute dedication unto Christ, zeal, patience and perseverance, did not all seem sufficient to procure his *ministerial* or *corporal* liberty in his latter years; yet they did much more for him than that, in qualifying him for the crown which he now enjoyeth; and to hear, *Well done, good and faithful servant, enter into thy Master's joy.*

But, alas, Lord! what is the terrible future evil, from which thou takest such men away? And why is this world so much forsaken, as if it were not a

prayer of hope which thou hast taught us, *Thy will be done on earth, as it is in Heaven?*

He hath printed a small book, called, *A call to Archippus*, to persuade the silent Non-conformists to pity souls, and to be faithful in the work to which they are devoted and consecrated, how dear soever it may cost them.

He held that separation in a church was necessary many times, from the known corruptions of it; but allowed not separation from a church where active compliance with some sinful evil was not made the condition of communion. And in this way he frequently declared himself in health and sickness, and most expressly in my hearing on his bed of languishing, when he was drawing near his long home. And that the people were not disobliged from attending upon their ministry, who were ejected out of their places, as his book entitled *A call to Archippus* sheweth; after that black and mournful sabbath, in which he took his farewell with much affection of his beloved people.

When he was taken up for prison, he was not only contented, but joyful to suffer for the name of Jesus and his gospel, which was so dear to him; intimating, that God had given him much more time than he expected or asked of Him, and that he accounted it cause of rejoicing, and his honour, that he was one of the first called forth to suffer for His name.

Although he was very suddenly surprised, yet none could discern him to be in the least moved. He pitied the condition of his enemies, requesting

for them, as the Martyr Stephen did for those that stoned him, *That God would not lay this sin of theirs to their charge.* The greatest harm that he did wish to any of them, was, *That they might thoroughly be converted and sanctified, and that their souls might be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.*

He was very urgent with those that were unconverted, to look with more care after their salvation, now they were removed from them that longed for it, and had watched for their souls; using this as an argument often, *That now they were fallen into the hands of such, many of which, if not most of them, had neither skill nor will to save souls.* And setting home upon them with most tender affections, *What miserable creatures they were while unregenerate; telling them how his heart did yearn for them, and his bowels turned within him for them; how he did pray and weep for them, while they were asleep, and how willingly he had suffered a year's imprisonment: Nay, how readily he could shed his blood to procure their salvation.* His counsels and directions were many, and suited to the several states of those he thus conversed with, both as to their degree and place, and their sins and wants, and would be too long to recite, though I can remember many of them.

To his fellow prisoners he said, *The eyes of God and Angels are upon you, and the eyes of men are upon you; now you will be critically observed. Every one will be looking that you should be more holy than others, that are called forth to this his glorious dignity, to be the witnesses of Christ Jesus, with the loss of your liberties.*

He was eminently free from harsh censuring and judging of others, and was ready to embrace all in heart, arms, and communion, civil and religious, any that professed saving faith in Jesus Christ, and did not overthrow that profession by some fundamental error in doctrine or wickedness of life and conversation.

And yet they accused him of being at a *riotous assembly*, though there were no threats nor dangerous words; no staves, nor weapons, no fear so much as pretended to be struck into any man, nor any other business met about than preaching and prayer. Here he was much abused, receiving many scorns and scoffs from the justices and their associates, who were met to hear his examination; also from the ladies and other gentlemen, who called him often, "rogue;" and told him, *He deserved to be hanged; and if he were not, they would be hanged for him;* with many such like scurrilous passages, which my husband received with much patience; and seeming, as they apprehended by his countenance, to slight their threatenings, they were more enraged at him: They urged him much to accuse himself, which they seeing they could not bring him to, and having no evidence, as appeared after, yet did make his *mittimus* for to go to the gaol on Monday morning, after they had detained him till twelve at night, abusing him beyond what I do now distinctly remember, or were fit to express.

As soon as he returned, it being so late, about two o'clock, he lay down on the bed in his clothes, where he had not slept above two or three hours at the most, but he was up, spending his time in converse

with God, till about eight o'clock; by which hour, several of his friends were come to visit him: But he was so watched, and the officer had such a charge, that he was not suffered to preach all that sabbath, but spent the day in discoursing with the various companies that came flocking from the town and villages to visit him; praying often with them, as he could be permitted. He was exceeding cheerful in his spirit, full of admirations of the mercies of God; and encouraging all that came, to be bold and venture for the gospel and their souls, notwithstanding what was come upon him for their sakes. For, as he told them, *He was not at all moved at, nor did in the least repent of, any thing he had done, but accounted himself happy, and under that promise Christ makes to his, in the 5th of Matthew, That he should be doubly and trebly blessed, now he was to suffer for His sake:* And was very earnest with his brethren in the ministry, that came to see him, *that they would not in the least desist when he was gone, that there might not be one sermon the less in Taunton;* and with the people to attend the ministry with greater ardency, diligency, and courage, than before; assuring them *How sweet and comfortable it was to him to consider what he had done for God in the months past: And that he was going to prison full of joy, being confident that all these things would turn to the furtherance of the gospel and the glory of God.*

But he not being satisfied to go away, and not leave some exhortations with his people, he appointed them to meet him about one or two o'clock in the

night, to which they shewed their readiness, though at so unseasonable a time : There was of young and old, many hundreds; he preached and prayed with them about three hours.

And so with many yearnings of his bowels towards them, and theirs towards him, they took their farewell of each other; a more affectionate parting could not well be.

About nine o'clock, he, with two or three friends that were willing to accompany him, set out for Ilchester: The streets were lined on both sides with people, and many followed him a foot some miles out of the town, with such lamentations (that he told me after) did so affect him, that he could scarce bear them; but the Lord so strengthened him, that he passed through them all with great courage and joy, labouring, both by his cheerful countenance and expressions, to encourage them.

He carried his *mittimus* himself, and had no officer with him; but when he came there, he found the gaoler absent, and took that opportunity to preach before he went into the prison; which was accounted by his adversaries a great addition to his former crime. As soon as the gaoler came, he delivered his *mittimus*, and was clapped up in the Bridewell chamber, which was over the common gaol. When he came to the prison, he found there Mr. John Norman, late minister of Bridgwater, who for the like cause was apprehended and committed a few days before him; a man, who for his singular abilities in preaching, his fervent zeal, and holy boldness in the cause of Christ,

his constancy to his principles in the most wavering and shaking times, joined with an exemplary carriage and conversation, was deservedly had in great repute among the people of God in these Western parts; and indeed there were very few that knew him, either among the sober gentry or commonalty, but, for his eminent parts and spotless life, had great respects for him. There were also five more ministers, with fifty Quakers, which had all their lodgings in the same room, only parted with a mat, which they had done for a little more retirement. It was not long after before Mr. Coven, and Mr. Powel, with eight more, were brought into the same place, being taken at meetings; which made their rooms very straight, and it was so nigh to the upper part of the prison, that they could touch the tiles as they lay in their beds; which made it very irksome, the sun lying so hot on it all the day, and there being so many of them, and so much resort continually of friends, they had very little air, till they were forced to take down the glass and some of the tiles, to let in some refreshment. But here they were confined to lie and eat their meals, and had no place but a small garden, joined to the place where all the common prisoners were; which was no retirement for them, they having there, and in their chamber, the constant noise of those wretches, except when they slept; who lay just under them, their chains rattling, their tongues often blaspheming, or else roaring and singing by night as well as in the day: And if they went into the courts of the prison, there was the sight of their

clothes hanging full of vermin, and themselves in their rags and chains: But that which was most grievous to them, they had no place to retire to God in, neither alone, nor together. They were also much molested by the Quakers, who would frequently disturb them by their cavils, in the times of their preaching, praying, and singing; and would come and work in their callings just by them, while they were in duties, which was no small disturbance to them: And the want of the air was more to my husband, than to most of them, because he always accustomed himself, both in Oxford, and after, to spend his most secret hours abroad in bye-places, in the fields or woods.

As soon as he came into the prison he preached and prayed: that he called the *consecration* of it. After he had spent a day or two in the prison, being willing to have me either in the town or there, to attend him and to keep company with his friends, who came frequently to visit him, he then began to fit up his lodging; having prevailed with the keeper for one corner, which was more private than the rest, to set his bed in, about which he made a little partition by some curtains, that so he might have some conveniency for retirement. This was much comfort to him, and after a few weeks, he got leave of the keeper to go out on mornings and evenings a mile or more, which he did constantly, unless the weather or his keeper's fury did hinder him.

Their diet was very good and sufficient, and sometimes abundant, by their friends' kindness. Here

they preached once a day constantly, sometimes twice, and many came daily to hear them, eight or ten miles round about the country; and multitudes came to visit them, it being a strange sight to see ministers laid in such a place. Their friends were exceedingly kind to them, endeavouring by their frequent visits, and provisions for diet, and supplies of money, to make their prison sweet to them.

But my husband's labours were much increased by this, spending all the day in converse, he was forced to take much of the night for his studies and secret converse with God.

Thus he with my brother Norman and his company, with their fellow prisoners, continued in that place for four months, being tossed from Sessions to Assizes. On the 14th of July following, he was brought to the sessions held at Taunton, and was there indicted for preaching on May the 17th; but the evidence against him was so slender, that the Grand Jury could not find the bill, so that he was not brought to his answer there at all: And his friends hoped he should have been dismissed, it being the constant practice of the court, that if a prisoner be indicted and no bill found, he is freed by proclamation. But, however, my husband was sent to prison again until the assizes; and to his friends that earnestly expected his enlargement, he said, *Let us bless God that his will is done, and not the will of such worms as we.*

August the 24th, he was again indicted at the assizes, and though the evidence was the very same

that, at the sessions, was by the *Grand Jury* judged insufficient, yet now at the assizes, the bill was by them found against him. So was he had to the bar, and his indictment read, which was to this purpose: *That he, upon the 17th day of May, 1663, with twenty others to the jurors unknown, did riotously, routously, and seditiously assemble themselves together, contrary to the peace of our Sovereign Lord the King, and to the great terror of his subjects, and to the evil example of others. Unto which, his answer was, That as to preaching and praying, which was the truth of the case, of these things he was guilty, and did own them as his duty; but as for riotous, routous, and seditious assemblies, he did abhor them with his heart, and of these he was not guilty.* At last he was found guilty by the Petty Jury; and was sentenced by the judge to pay a hundred marks, and to lie in prison till payment should be made. Sentence being pronounced against him, he only made this brief reply: *That he was glad that it had appeared before his country, that whatsoever he was charged with, he was guilty of nothing but doing his duty; and that all did appear by the evidence, was only that he had sung a psalm, and instructed his family, others being there, and both in his own house: And that if nothing that had been urged would satisfy, he should, with all cheerfulness and thankfulness, accept whatsoever sentence his lordship should pronounce upon him for so good and righteous a cause.* Thus from the assizes he was sent to prison again, where he continued a whole year, wanting but three days.

But the winter coming on, they were willing to try if they could have the favour to be removed to the Ward, this place being like to be as cold in the winter, as it had been hot in the summer, (there being no chimney in the whole chamber,) which with some difficulty they obtained; and then had more comfortable accommodations in all respects.

Here they had very great meetings, week-days, and sabbath-days, and many days of humiliation and thanksgiving. The Lord's-days many hundreds came. And though my husband and brother Norman had many threats from the justices and judges, *That they should be sent beyond sea, or carried to some island, where they should be kept close prisoners;* yet the Lord preserved them by his power, and thus ordered it, that their imprisonment was a great furtherance to the gospel, and brought much glory to Him, both by their preaching and conversing with souls: In which they had great success through his blessing on their labours. My husband having here more freedom, made a little book, entitled *A call to Archippus*, to stir up his Non-conforming brethren to be diligent at their work, whatsoever dangers and sufferings they might meet withal: And because he could not go to his flock, he had prepared for them, *The Synopsis of the Covenant*, which was after placed into one of my father's books.

And for the help of the governors of families, in their weekly catechizing those under their charge, he explained *all the Assembly's shorter catechism;* to which he annexed an affectionate letter, with rules

for their daily examination; which were printed and dispersed into all their houses by his order, while he was a prisoner. He also writ many holy, and gracious, and affectionate letters to all his relations, and many other friends, to many churches of Christ in other parts and places, both far and near.

His sufferings that he underwent for the sake of the gospel, could neither remit his zeal, nor abate his activity for God; but he would gladly embrace all opportunities of doing Him service. The minister who was appointed to preach at certain times to the felons in the prison, being by sickness disabled for that work, he freely performed that office among them, as long as he was permitted; earnestly exhorting them by repentance towards God and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ, to secure the eternal welfare of their souls; freely bestowing upon them, according to his ability, for their relief; that by doing good to their bodies, he might win upon them to receive good for their souls. He was very forward to promote the education of youth, in the town of Ilchester and country adjacent; freely bestowing catechisms on those that were of poor families, to instruct them in the principles of religion; stirring up the elder to teach, and encouraging the younger to learn. He was a serious and faithful monitor to his fellow-sufferers, if he espied any thing in any of them, that did not become the gospel, for which they suffered.

Here, as else-where, he was a careful redeemer of his time; his constant practice was, early to begin

the day with God, rising about four of the clock, and spending a considerable part of the morning in meditation and prayer, and then falling close to his study, in some corner or other of the prison, where he could be private. At times, he would spend near the whole night in these exercises, not putting off his cloaths at all, only taking the repose of an hour or two in his night-gown upon the bed, and so up again. When any came to visit him, he did not entertain them with needless impertinent discourse, but that which was serious, profitable, and edifying; in which he was careful to apply himself to them, according to their several capacities, whether elder or younger; exhorting them to those gracious practices, which by reason of their age, or temper, calling, or condition, he apprehended they might be most defective in, and exhorting them from those evils they might be most prone and liable unto. He rejoiced that he was accounted worthy to suffer for the work of Christ; and he would labour to encourage the timorous and faint-hearted, by his own and others' experience of the mercy and goodness of God in prison, which was far beyond what they could have thought or expected. He was a careful observer of that rule of the Lord Jesus, (Mat. v. 44.) *Love your enimies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you.* It was none of his practice to exclaim against those that were the greatest instruments of his sufferings.

In all his imprisonment, at present, I could not discern his health to be the least impaired, notwithstanding his abundant labours; but cannot but suspect, as the physicians judged, that he had laid the foundation for that weakness which suddenly after surprised him, and was his death.

At his return from the prison, he was far more earnest in his work than before; yet willing to preserve his liberty among his people, who had no minister that had the oversight of them, though some came and preached while he was absent. And the people flocked so greatly after him, that he judged it best to divide the company into four, and resolved to preach four times each sabbath to them: But finding sensibly that would be too hard for him, his strength much decaying, he did forbear that course, and preached only twice a sabbath as formerly, and often on week-days at home and in the country; and spent what time he had else from his studying, in private converse with God, as formerly he had done: Pressing all that feared the Lord, especially those that were of a more weak and timorous spirit, to a life of courage and activity for God, and to be much in helping one another, by their converses, now ministers were withdrawn; and to be much in the work of praises and thanksgiving to God, rejoicing and delighting themselves in him; and with cheerfulness and readiness, denying themselves for him, and resigning themselves, and all they did enjoy, to him; letting the world know, they could live comfortably on a God alone, on his attributes and promises, though they should have nothing else left.

But it pleased the All-wise God to take him off from the eager pursuit of his work, and designs for Him, by visiting him in the latter end of August with much weakness, so that he had not above three months' time after he came out of prison: For he, going about sixteen miles, at the request of a society, whose pastor was not able to come among them to preach and to administer a more solemn ordinance, was so disabled, that he was not able to perform the great and chief work, though he did adventure to preach, but with much injury to himself, because he would not wholly disappoint the people, who came so far as many of them did: With much difficulty, after three or four days, I made way to get him home to Taunton, where we then sojourned, and presently had the best advice the most able physicians, both in and round the town, could give; who advised together, and all judged it to be from his abundant labours, and the preaching too soon after his meals; as he did, when he preached four times a sabbath, whereby he had so abated the natural heat of his stomach, that no food would digest, nor oftentimes keep within him. He would assure us, he was in no pain, but a constant discomposure in his stomach, and a failing of his appetite, that he could not for many weeks bear the scent of any flesh-meat, nor retain any liquors or broths, so that he consumed so fast, that his life seemed to draw to an end. But the Lord did so bless the means, that he recovered out of this distemper, after two months' time, but so lost the use of his arms from October

till April, that he could not put off nor on his cloaths, nor often write either his notes or any letters, but as I wrote for him, as he dictated to me. He was by all physicians, and by my earnest beseechings, often dissuaded from preaching, but would not be prevailed with, but did go on once and sometimes twice a sabbath, and in his private visiting all that winter; in the spring, the use of his arms returned, for which he was exceeding thankful to the Lord; and we had great hopes of his recovering; and making use of further remedies, he was able to go on with more freedom in his work; and the summer following, by the use of mineral-waters in Wiltshire, near the Devises, where he was born, his strength was much increased, he finding great and sensible good by them.

But he venturing too much on what he had obtained, his weakness returned frequently upon him the next winter, and more in the spring following, being seized as he was at the first. But it continued not long at a time, so that he did preach often to his utmost strength (nay, I may say, much beyond the strength he had) both at home and abroad; going into some remote parts of the country, where had been no meetings kept all that time the ministers had been out, which was two years. And there he engaged several of his brethren to go and take their turns, which they did with great success.

He had also agreed with two of his brethren to go into Wales with them, to spread the gospel there; but was prevented in that, by his weakness increas-

ing upon him: It was much that he did, but much more that he desired to do.

He was in this time much threatened, and warrants often out for him; and he was so far from being disturbed at it, that he rejoiced; that when he could do but little for God, because of his distempers, God would so far honour him that he should go and suffer for him in a prison. He would often with cheerfulness say, *They could not do him a greater kindness:* But the Lord was yet pleased to preserve him from their rage, seeing him not then fit for the inconveniencies of a prison.

The *Five Mile Act* coming in force, he removed to a place called Wellington, which is reckoned five miles from Taunton, to a dyer's house, in a very obscure place, where he preached on the Lord's-days, as he was able. But the vigilant eyes of his old adversaries were so watchful over him, that they soon found him out, and resolved to take him thence, and had put a warrant into the constable's hand to apprehend him, and sent for our friend, and threatened to send him to gaol for entertaining such persons in his house. So my husband returned to the house of Mr. John Mallack, a merchant, who lived about a mile from Taunton, who had long solicited him to take his house for his home. We being in such an unsettled state, my husband thought it best to accept of his courteous offer: But many of his friends were willing to enjoy him in the town, and so earnest, that he did, to satisfy them, go from one to another, staying a fortnight, or three weeks, or a

month at each house; but still took Mr. Mallack's for his home: This motion of his friends, he told me, (though it was troublesome for us to be so unsettled,) he was willing to embrace, because he knew not how soon he might be carried again from them to prison, and he should have opportunity to be more intimately acquainted with them, and the state of their souls, and of their children and servants, and how they performed their duties each to other in their families.

He went from no house without serious counsels, comforts, or reproofs, as their conditions called for; dealing with all that were capable, both governors and others particularly, acquainting them faithfully and most affectionately, what he had seen amiss in any of them.

He went from no house that was willing to part with him; nor had he opportunity to answer the requests of half that invited us to their houses. So that he would often bless God, and say with holy Mr. Dod, *That he had a hundred houses for one that he had parted with; and though he had no goods, he wanted for nothing, his Father cared for him in every thing, that he lived a far more pleasant life than his enemies, who had turned him out of all.* He was exceedingly taken with God's mercy to him, in Mr. Mallack's entertaining him and me so bountifully; the house, and gardens, and walks, being a very great delight to him, being so pleasant and curious; and all accommodations within suitable, so that he would often say, *that he did as DIVES, fare*

deliciously every day: But he hoped he should improve it better than he did, and that God had inclined him to take care for many poor, and for several of his brethren in the ministry; and now God did reward him, by not suffering him to be at the least expence for himself or me.

He was a very strict observer of all providences of every day, and did usually reckon them up to me before we went to sleep, each night after he came into his chamber and bed, to raise his own heart and mine, to praise the Lord, and to trust Him, whom we had such experience of, from time to time.

The time of the year being come for his going to the waters, he was desirous to set one day apart for thanksgiving to God, for all his mercies to him and them, and so to take his leave of them.

Accordingly, on the 10th of July, 1665, divers of his brethren in the ministry, and many of his friends of Taunton, met together to take their leave of him before his departure, at the house of Mr. Mallack, then living about a mile out of the town. Where after they had been a while together, came two justices, and several other persons attending them, brake open the doors by force, (though they might have unlatched them if they had pleased,) and with swords came in among them. After much deriding and menacing language, which I shall not here relate, having taken their names, committed them to the custody of some constables, whom they charged to bring them forth the next day, at the Castle Tavern in Taunton, before the justices of the peace

there. The next day the prisoners appeared, and answered to their names; and after two days' tedious attendance, were all convicted of a conventicle, and sentenced to pay three pounds a piece, or to be committed to prison threescore days. Of the persons thus convicted but few either paid their fines, or suffered their friends to do it for them. My husband, with seven ministers more, and forty private persons, were committed to the prison of Ilchester. When he, together with the rest of his brethren and christian friends, came to the prison, his carriage and conversation there was every way as exemplary as in his former confinement. Notwithstanding his weakness of body, yet he would constantly take his turn with the rest of the ministers, in preaching the gospel in the prison; which turns came about the oftener, though there were eight of them there together, because they had preaching and praying twice a day, almost every day they were in prison; besides other exercises of religion, in which he would take his part.

And although he had many of his flock confined to the prison with him, by which means he had the fairer opportunity of instructing, and watching over them, for their spiritual good; yet he was not forgetful of the rest that were left behind, but would frequently visit them also, by his letters, full of serious profitable matter, from which they might reap no small benefit, while they were debarred of his bodily presence. And how greatly solicitous he was for those that were with him, (that they might be

the better for their bonds, walking worthy of the many and great mercies they had enjoyed during their imprisonment; that when they came home to their houses, they might speak forth, and live forth the praises of God, carrying themselves in every respect as becomes the gospel, for which they had been sufferers) you may clearly see by those parting counsels that he gave them that morning that they were delivered, which I shall recite in his own words, as they were taken from his mouth in short-hand, by an intimate friend and fellow-prisoner, which you may take as followeth ;

Mr. Joseph Alleine's Exhortation to his Fellow-sufferers, when they were to be discharged from their Imprisonment.

Dearly beloved brethren, my time is little, and my strength but small, yet I could not consent that you should pass without receiving some parting counsel; and what I have to say at parting, shall be chiefly to you that are prisoners, and partly also to you our friends, that are here met together. To you that are prisoners, I shall speak something by way of exhortation, and something by way of dehortation.

By way of Exhortation.

First. Rejoice with trembling in your prison-comforts, and see that you keep them in a thankful remembrance. Who can tell the mercies that you have received here? My time, or strength, will not suffice me to recapitulate them. See that you rejoice in God; but rejoice with trembling. Do not think the account will be little for mercies so many and so great.

Receive these choice mercies with a trembling hand, for fear lest you should be found guilty of misimproving such precious benefits, and so wrath should be upon you from the Lord. Remember Hezekiah's case; great mercies did he receive, some praises he did return, but not according to the benefit done unto him; therefore was wrath upon him from the Lord, and upon all Judah for his sake. (2 Chron. xxxii. 25.) Therefore go away with a holy fear upon your hearts, lest you should forget the loving-kindness of the Lord, and should not render to Him according to what you have received.

Oh, my brethren! stir up yourselves to render praises to the Lord! You are the people that God hath formed for his praise, and sent hither for his praise; and you should now go home, as so many trumpets, to sound forth the praises of God, when you come among your friends. There is an expression (Psal. lxviii. 11.) *The Lord gave the word, great was the company of them that published it:* So let it be said of the praises of God now, *Great was the company of them that published them.* God hath sent a whole troop of you here together, let all these go home and sound the praises of God wherever you come; and this is the way to make his praise glorious indeed. Shall I tell you a story that I have read?—There was a certain King that had a pleasant grove, and that he might make it every way delightful to him, he caused some birds to be caught, and to be kept up in cages, till they had learned sundry sweet and artificial tunes; and when they were perfect in their lessons, he let

them abroad out of their cages into his grove, that while he was walking in this grove, he might hear them singing those pleasant tunes, and teaching them to other birds that were of a wilder note. Brethren, this King is God, this grove is his church, these birds are yourselves, this cage is the prison; God hath sent you hither, that you should learn the sweet and pleasant notes of his praise. And I trust that you have learned something all this while; God forbid else. Now God opens the cage, and lets you forth into the grove of his church, that you may sing forth his praises, and that others may learn of you too. Forget not therefore the songs of the house of your pilgrimage; do not return to your wild notes again; keep the mercy of God for ever in a thankful remembrance, and make mention of them humbly as long as you live; then shall you answer the end for which he sent you hither: I trust you will not forget this place. When Queen Mary died, she said, *That if they did rip her up, they should find Callis on her heart.* I hope that men shall find by you hereafter, that the prison is upon your heart, ILCHESTER is upon your heart.

Secondly. Feed and feast your faith upon prison-experiences. Do not think that God hath done this only for your present supply. Brethren, God hath provided for you, not only for your present supply in prison, but to lay up, for all your lives, that experience that your faith must live upon, till faith be turned into vision. Learn dependence upon God, and confidence in God, by all the experiences that

you have had here. *Because thou hast been my help,* (saith the Psalmist,) *therefore under the shadow of thy wing will I rejoice.* Are you at a loss at any time? Then remember your bonds. We read in scripture of a time when there was no smith in all Israel, and the Israelites were fain to carry their goads and other instruments, to be sharpened, down to the Philistines: So when your spirits are low, and when your faith is dull, carry them to the prison to be sharpened and quickened. Oh, how hath the Lord confuted all our fears! Cared for all our necessities! The faith of some of you was sorely put to it for corporal necessities. You came hither, not having any thing considerable to pay for your charges here; but God took care for that. And you left poor miserable families at home, and no doubt but many troublesome thoughts were in your minds what your families should do for bread; but God hath provided for them.

We that are ministers, left poor starvling flocks, and we thought that the country had been now stripped; and yet God hath provided for them. Thus hath the Lord been pleased to furnish us with arguments for our faith, against we come to the next distress: Though you should be called forth to leave your flocks destitute, you that are my brethren in the ministry, and others their families destitute, yet doubt not but God will provide; remember your bonds, upon all occasions. Whensoever you are in distress, remember your Old Friend, remember your tried Friend.

Thirdly. Let divine mercy be as oil to the flame of your love: *O love the Lord, all ye his saints!* Brethren, this is the language of all God's dealings with you, they all call upon you to love the Lord your God, with all your hearts, with all your souls, with all your strength. What hath God been doing ever since you came to this prison? All that he hath been doing since you came hither, hath been to pour oil into the flames of your love, thereby to increase and heighten them. God hath lost all these mercies upon you, if you do not love Him better than you did before. You have had supplies; to what purpose is it, unless you love God the more? If they that be in want, love Him better than you, it were better you had been in their case. You have had health here, but if they that be in sickness love God better than you, it were better you had been in sickness too: See that you love your Father, that hath been so tender of you. What hath God been doing, but pouring out his love upon you? How were we mistaken? For my part, I thought that God took us upon his knee to whip us; but he took us upon his knee to dandle us. We thought to have felt the strokes of his anger, but he hath stroked us, as a Father his children, with most dear affection. Who can utter his loving-kindness? What, my brethren, shall we be worse than Publicans? The Publicans will love those that love them. Will not you return love for so much love? Far be this from you, brethren; you must not only exceed the Publicans, but the Pharisees too; therefore, surely you must love Him that

loveth you. This is my business now to bespeak your love to God, to unite your hearts to Him: Blessed be God for this occasion! For my part, I am unworthy of it. Now if I can get your hearts nearer to God than they were, then happy am I, and blessed are you. Fain I would, that all these experiences should knit our hearts to God more, and endear us for ever to Him. What! So much bounty and kindness, and no returns of love? At least no further returns? I may plead in the behalf of the Lord with you, as they did for the centurion: *He loveth our nation, say they, and hath built us a synagogue.* So I may say here, *He hath loved you, and poured out his bounty upon you.* How many friendly visits from those that you could but little expect of? Whence do you think this came? It is God that hath the key of all these hearts. He secretly turned the cock; and caused them to pour forth kindness upon you. There is not a motion of love in the heart of a friend towards you, but it was God that put it in.

Fourthly. Keep your manna in a golden pot, and forget not him that hath said so often, *Remember me.* You have had manna rained plentifully about you; be sure that something of it be kept. Do not forget all the sermons that you have heard here: O that you would labour to repeat them over, to live them over! You have had such a stock that you may live upon, and your friends too, if you be communicative, a great while together. If any thing have been wanting, time for the digesting hath been wanting. See that you well chew the cud; and see that you

especially remember *the feasts of love*. Do not you know who hath said to you so often, *Remember me?* How often have you heard that sweet word since you came hither? What! Do you think it is enough to remember him for an hour? No, but let it be a living and lasting remembrance. Do not you write that name of his in the dust, that hath written your names upon his heart. Your High Priest hath your names upon his heart, and therewith is entered into the holy place, and keeps them there for a memorial before the Lord continually. O that his remembrance might be ever written upon your hearts, written as with a pen of a diamond, upon tables of marble, that might never be worn out! That as Aristotle saith of the curious fabric of Minerva, *that he had so ordered the fabrick, that his name was written in the midst, that if any went to take that out, the whole fabrick was dissolved*. So the name of Jesus should be written upon the substance of your souls, that they should pull all asunder, before they should be able to pull it out.

Fifthly. Let the bonds of your affliction strengthen the bonds of your affection. Brethren, God hath sent us hither to teach us, among other things, the better to love one another. Love is lovely, both in the sight of God and men, and if by your imprisonment you have profited in love, then you have made an acceptable proficiency. O brethren, look within; are you not more endeared one to another? I bless the Lord for that union and peace that hath been ever among you; but you must be sensible that we

come very far short of that love that we owe one to another; we have not that love, that endearment, that tenderness, that complacency, that compassion towards each other that we ought to have. Ministers should be more endeared one to another, and Christians should be more dear to each other, than they were before. We have eaten and drunk together, and lived on our Father's love in one family together; we have been joined together in one common cause, and all put into one bottom: O let the remembrance of a prison, and of what hath passed here, especially those uniting feasts, engage you to love one another!

Sixthly. Let present indulgence fit you for future hardships, and do not look that your Father should be always dandling you on his knee. Beloved, God hath used you like fondlings now, rather than like sufferers. What shall I say? I am at a loss, when I think of the tender indulgence, and the yearnings of the bowels of our Heavenly Father upon us. But, my brethren, do not look for such prisons again.

Affliction doth but now play and sport with you, rather than bite you; but do you look that affliction should hereafter fasten its teeth on you to purpose: And do you look that the hand that hath now gently stroked you, may possibly buffet you, and put your faith hard to it, when you come to the next trial. This fondness of your Heavenly Father is to be expected only while you are young and tender; but afterward you must look to follow your business, and to keep your distance, and to have rebukes and frowns too when you need them. Bless God for what

you have found here; but prepare you, this is but the beginning,—shall I say *the beginning of sorrow*? I cannot say so; for the Lord hath made it a place of rejoicing. This is but the entrance of our affliction; but you must look, that when you are trained up to a better perfection, God will put your faith to harder exercise.

Seventhly. Cast up your accounts at your return, and see whether you have gone as much forward in your souls as you have gone backward in your estates. I cannot be insensible but some of you are here to very great disadvantage, as to your affairs in the world, having left your business so rawly at home in your shops, trades, and callings, that it is like to be no little detriment to you upon this account. But happy are ye, if you find at your return, that as much as your affairs are gone backward, and behind-hand, so much your souls have gone forward. If your souls go forward in grace by your sufferings, blessed be God that hath brought you to such a place as a prison is!

Eighthly. Let the snuffers of this prison make your light burn the brighter, and see that your course and discourse be the more savoury, serious, and spiritual for this present trial. O brethren! Now the voice of the Lord is to you, as it is in the prophet Isaiah ix. 1, *Arise, and shine. Now let your light shine before men, that others may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.* It is said of those preachers beyond sea,—that have been sent into England, and here reaped the benefit of our English practical divinity,—at their return, they

have preached so much better than they had wont to do, that it hath been said of them, *Apparuit hunc fuisse in Angliá.** So do you my brethren: Live so much better than you had wont, that when men shall see the change in your lives, they may say of you, *Apparuit hunc fuisse in Custodiá.†* See that your whole course and discourse be more spiritual and heavenly than ever. See that you shine in your families when you come home; be you better husbands, better masters, better fathers, study to do more than you have done this way, and to approve yourselves better in your family-relations than you did before; that the savour of a prison may be upon you in all companies; then will you praise and please the Lord.

Ninthly, and lastly. See that you walk *accurately*, as those that have the eyes of God, angels, and men, upon you. My brethren, you will be looked upon now with very curious eyes. God doth expect more of you than ever; for he hath done more for you, and he looketh what fruit there will be of all this. Oh! may there be a sensible change upon your souls, by thẽ showers that have fallen in prison, as there is in the greenness of the earth, by the showers that have fallen lately abroad.

By way of Dehortation also, I have these four things to leave with you.

First. Revile not your persecutõrs; but bless them, and pray for them, as the instruments of conveying

* It appears that this person has been in England.

† It appears that this man has been in prison.

great mercies to you. Do not you so far forget the rule of Christ, as when you come home, to be setting your mouths to talk against those that have injured you. Remember the command of your Lord, *Bless them that curse you, pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you.* Whatsoever they intended, yet they have been instruments of a great deal of mercy to us; and so we should pray for them, and bless God for the good we have received by them.

Secondly. Let not the humble acknowledgment of God's mercy degenerate into proud, vain-glorious boasting, or carnal triumph. I beseech you, see that you go home with a great deal of fear upon your spirits in this respect, lest pride should get advantage of you, lest instead of humble acknowledging of God's mercy, there should be carnal boasting. Beware of this, I earnestly beg of you; for this will very much spoil your sufferings, and be very displeasing in the sight of God. But let your acknowledging of his mercy, be ever with humble self-abasing thankfulness, and be careful that you do not make his mercies to be the fuel of your pride, which were to lose all at once.

Thirdly. Be not prodigal of your liberty upon a conceit that the prisons will be easy, nor fearful of adventuring yourselves in the way of your duty. Alas! I am afraid of both these extremes: *On the one hand,* lest some among us, having found a great deal of mercy here, will now think there is no need of any christian prudence, which is always necessary, and is a great duty. It is not cowardice to make use

of the best means to preserve our liberty, not declining our duty. *On the other side*, there is fear lest some may be fearful, and ready to decline their duty; because they have newly tasted of a prison for it. Far be it from you to distrust God, of whom you have had so great experience; but be sure you hold on in your duty, whatsoever it cost you!

Fourthly. Do not load others with censures, whose judgment or practice differs from yours; but humbly bless God that hath so happily directed you. You know, all are not of the same mind as to the circumstances of suffering, and all have not gone the same way. Far be it from any of you, my brethren, that you should so far forget yourselves, as to be unmerciful to your brethren; but bless God that hath directed you into a better way. Your charity must grow higher than ever: God forbid that you should increase in censures, instead of increasing in charity!

Having spoken to my fellow-prisoners, I have two words to speak to you, our friends and brethren with us.

First. Let our experience be your encouragement. O love the Lord, ye our friends, love the Lord; fear him for ever, believe in him, trust in him for ever, for our sakes; we have tasted of the kindness of God.

You know how good God hath been to us in spirituals and in temporals. Encourage your hearts in the Lord your God, serve him the more freely and gladly for our sakes. You see we have tried, we have tasted how good the Lord is: Do you trust him

the more, because we have tried him so much, and found him a friend so faithful, so gracious, that we are utterly unable to speak his praise. Go on and fear not in the way of your duty: *Verily there is a reward for the righteous.* God hath given us a great reward already, but this is but the least; we look for a kingdom.

Secondly, and lastly. My desire is to our friends, that they will all help us in our praises. Our tongues are too little to speak forth the goodness and the grace of God; do you help us in our praises. Love the Lord the better, praise him the more; and what is wanting in us, let it be made good by you. O that the praises of God may sound abroad in the country by our means, and for our sakes!



He was prevented of going to the waters, by his last imprisonment; for want of which, his distempers increased much upon him all the winter after, and the next spring more; yet not so as to take him fully off from his work, but he preached, and kept many days, and administered the sacrament among them frequently.

But going up to the waters in July, 1667, they had a contrary effect upon him from what they had at first: For after three days' taking them, he fell into a fever, which seized on his spirits, and decayed his strength exceedingly, so that he seemed very near death. But the Lord then again revoked the sentence passed upon him, and enabled him in six weeks to return again to his people, where he much

desired to be: But finding, at his return, great decay of his strength, and a weakness in all his limbs, he was willing to go to Dorchester, to advise further with Doctor Lose, a very worthy and reverend physician, from whom he had received many medicines, but never conversed with him, nor had seen him, which he conceived might conduce more to his full cure.

The doctor soon perceiving my husband's weakness, persuaded him to continue for a fortnight or three weeks there, that he might the better advise him, and alter his remedies, as he should see occasion; which motion was readily yielded unto by us.

But we had not been there above five days, before the use of all his limbs was taken away on a sudden; one day his arms wholly failing, the next his legs; so that he could not go, nor stand, nor move a finger, nor turn in his bed, but as myself and another did turn him night and day in a sheet: All means failing, he was given over by physicians and friends, that saw him lie some weeks in cold sweats night and day, and many times for some hours together, half his body cold, in our apprehension dying; receiving nothing but the best cordials that art could invent, and almond milk, or a little thin broth once in three or four days. Thus he lay from September 28th, to November 16th, before he began to revive, or it could be discerned that remedies did at all prevail against his diseases. In all this time he was still cheerful; and when he did speak, it was not at all complaining, but always praising and admiring God for his mer-

cies; but his spirits were so low, that he spake seldom, and very softly. He still told us he had no pain at all; and when his friends admired his patience, he would say, *God had not yet tried him in any thing, but laying him aside out of his work, and keeping him out of heaven; but through grace he could submit to his pleasure, waiting for him:* It was pain he ever feared, and that he had not yet felt; so tender was his Father of him; and he wanted strength (as he often told us) *to speak more of his love, and to speak for God who had been, and was still so gracious to him.* Being often asked by myself and others, *How it was with his spirit in all this weakness,* he would answer, *He had not those ravishing joys that he expected, and that some believers did partake of; but he had a sweet serenity of heart, and confidence in God, grounded on the promises of the gospel, and did believe it would be well with him to all eternity.*

In all this time, I never heard one impatient word from him; nor could, upon my strictest observation, discern the least discontent with this state; though he was a pitiful object to all others that beheld him, being so consumed, beside the loss of the use of his limbs. Yet the Lord did support and quiet his spirit, that he lay as if he had *endured* nothing; breaking out often most affectionately in commending the kindness of the Lord to him, saying, *Goodness and mercy had followed him all his days.*

And indeed the loving-kindness and care of God was singular to us in that place, which I cannot but mention to his praise. We came strangers thither,

and being in our inn, we found it very uncomfortable; yet were fearful to impose ourselves on any private house. But necessity enforcing, we did enquire for a chamber, but could not procure one; the small pox being very hot in most families, and those that had them not, daily expecting them, and so could not spare rooms, as else they might. But the Lord who saw our affliction, inclined the heart of a very good woman, a minister's widow, one Mrs. Bartlet, to come and invite us to a lodging in her house; which we readily and thankfully accepted of; where we were so accommodated, as we could not have been any where else in the town, especially in regard of the assistance I had from four young women who lived under the same roof, and so were ready, night and day, to help me, I having no servant nor friend near me; we being so unsettled, I kept none, but had always tended him myself to that time. And the ministers and christians of that place were very compassionate towards us, visiting and praying with and for us often: And Dr. Lose visited him twice a day for twelve or fourteen weeks, except when he was called out of town, refusing any fees tendered to him. The gentry in and about the town, and others, sending to us whatever they imagined might be pleasing to him; furnishing him with all delicates that might be grateful to one so weak; so that he wanted neither food nor physic, having not only for necessity, but for delight; and he did much delight himself in the consideration of the Lord's kindness to him in the love he received,

and would often say, *I was a stranger, and mercy took me in; in prison, and it came to me; sick and weak, and it visited me.* There was also ten young women, besides the four in the house, that took their turns to watch with him constantly; for twelve weeks' space I never wanted one to help me. And the Lord was pleased to shew his power so in strengthening me, that I was every night (all these weeks in the depth of winter) one that helped to turn him, never lying out of the bed one night from him, but every time he called or wanted any thing, was waking to assist her in the chamber, though; as some of them have said, they did tell, that we did turn him more than forty times a night, he seldom sleeping at all in the night, in all these weeks. Though his tender affections were such, as to have had me sometimes lain in another room, yet mine were such to him, that I could not bear it, the thoughts of it being worse to me than the trouble or disturbance he accounted I had with him, for I feared none would do any thing about him with such ease; neither would he suffer any one all the day to touch him but me, or to give him any thing that he did receive; by which I discerned it was most grateful to him, and therefore so to me. And I never found any want of my rest, nor did get so much as a cold all that winter, though I do not remember that for fourteen or fifteen years before, I could ever say I was one month free of a most violent cough, which if I had been molested with then, would have been a great addition to his and my affliction;

and he was not a little taken with the goodness of God to me in the time of all his sickness, but especially that winter; for he being not able to help himself in the least, I could not be from him night nor day, with any comfort to him or myself.

In this condition he kept his bed till December the 18th. And then, beyond all expectation, though in the depth of winter, began to revive and go out of his bed; but he could neither stand nor go, nor yet move a finger, having sense in all his limbs, but not the least motion: As his strength did increase, he learnt *to go*, (as he would say) first by being led by two of us, then by one; and when he could go one turn in his chamber, though more weakly, and with more fear than the weakest child that ever I saw, he was wonderfully taken with the Lord's mercy to him. By February he was able, with a little help, to walk in the streets; but not to feed himself, nor to go up or down stairs without much help.

When he was deprived of the use of his limbs, looking down on his arms, as I held him up by all the strength I had, he again lifted up his eyes from his useless arms to heaven, and with a chearful countenance said: *The Lord hath given, and the Lord hath taken, and blessed be the name of the Lord.*

Being asked by a friend, how he could be so well contented to lie so long under such weakness? He answered, "What! is God my Father, Jesus Christ my Saviour, and the Spirit my sweet friend, my Comforter, and Sanctifier, and heaven my inheri-

“tance. Shall I not be content without limbs and
“health? Through grace I am fully satisfied with
“my Father’s pleasure.”

To another that asked him the same, he answers,
“I have chosen God, and he is become mine, and I
“know with whom I have trusted myself; which
“is enough. He is an unreasonable wretch that
“cannot be content with a God, though he had
“nothing else: My interest in God is all my joy.”

His friends (some of *Taunton*) coming to *Dorchester* to see him, he was much revived, and would be set up in his bed, and have all the curtains drawn, and desired them to stand round about the bed, and would have me take out his hand, and hold it out to them, that they might shake him, though he could not them, as he used formerly to do when he had been absent from them. And, as he was able, thus he spake to them—“O how it rejoices my heart to see your faces, and to hear your
“voices, though I cannot speak as heretofore to you!
“Methinks I am now like old *Jacob*, with all his sons
“about him. Now you see my weak estate; thus
“have I been for many weeks, since I parted with
“*Taunton*, but God hath been with me, and I hope
“with you; your prayers have been heard and answered for me many ways; the Lord return them
“into your own bosoms! My friends, life is mine,
“death is mine; in that covenant I was preaching of
“to you, is all my salvation and all my desire; although my body do not prosper, I hope through
“grace my soul doth.

“ I have lived a sweet life by the promises, and
“ I hope through grace can die by a promise:
“ It is the promises of God which are everlasting,
“ that will stand by us: Nothing but God in them
“ will stead us in a day of affliction.

“ My dear friends, I feel the power of those doc-
“ trines I preached to you on my heart: Now the
“ doctrines of faith, of repentance, of self-denial, of
“ the covenant of grace, of contentment, and the
“ rest: O that you would live them over, now I
“ cannot preach to you!

“ It is a shame for a believer to be cast down
“ under afflictions, that hath so many glorious pri-
“ vileges,—justification, adoption, sanctification, and
“ eternal glory. We shall be as the angels of God
“ in a little while: Nay, to say the truth, believers
“ are, as it were, little angels already, that live in
“ the power of faith. O, my friends! live like be-
“ lievers, trample this dirty world under your feet;
“ be not taken with its comforts, nor disquieted
“ with its crosses: You will be gone out of it
“ shortly.”

When they came to take their leaves of him, he would pray with them as his weak state would suffer him; and in the words of Moses and of the Apostles blessed them. The same he always used after a sacrament, “ The Lord bless you and keep
“ you, the Lord cause his face to shine upon you,
“ and give you peace! And the God of peace, that
“ brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus,
“ through the blood of the everlasting covenant,

“make you perfect in every good work to do his
“will, working in you that which is well-pleasing
“in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be
“glory for ever and ever. Amen.”

And then spake thus, “Farewell, farewell, my
“dear friends! remember me to all Taunton; I be-
“seech you and them, if I never see your faces
“more, go home and live over what I have preached
“to you, and the Lord provide for you when I am
“gone. O! let not all my labours and sufferings,
“let not my wasted strength, my useless limbs, rise
“up in judgment against you at the great day of
“the Lord.”

Another time, some coming to visit him there, he
spake thus to them, “O! my friends, let your whole
“conversation be as becomes the gospel of Christ;
“whether I am present or absent, live to what I
“have spoken to you in the name of the Lord. Now
“I cannot preach to you, let my wasted strength,
“my useless limbs, be a sermon to you: Behold me,
“I cannot move a finger; all this is come upon me
“for your sakes, and the gospel; it is for Christ and
“you that I have thus spent out myself. I am
“afraid of you, lest some of you, after all that I
“have spoken to you, should be lost in the world.
“There are many professors who can pray well, and
“talk well, whom we shall find at the left hand of
“Christ another day. You have your trades, your
“estates, your relations; be not taken with these,
“but with God. O live on him! for the Lord’s
“sake go home, and take heed of the world, worldly

“cares, worldly comforts, worldly friends, &c.” saying thus,

“The Lord having given authority to his ministers to bless his people, accordingly I bless you in “his name,” using the same words as before, and so parted with them; with many other dear expressions of his love to them and the town.

And thus he was used to converse with all that came to visit him, as he was able, looking always cheerfully upon them, and never complaining of any affliction he was under, except it were to excite his Taunton friends to their duties.

In February, he being very desirous to return among his people, he moved it to his doctor, who consented to it, fearing that the air might be too keen for him in March, and hoping that it might much add to his cure to satisfy his mind.

In a horse-litter I removed him. He was much pleased at the sight of the place and his people, who came flocking about him; and he seemed to increase in strength, so that he was able to feed himself the week after he came home. But I fearing the frequent visits of his friends might be prejudicial to him, persuaded him to remove to Mr. Mallack's house, which he was again invited to, and most courteously entertained.

And thus he continued increasing in strength, till the beginning of April; and then he began to decline again, and was taken after some days with convulsion fits, as he sat in his chamber one afternoon, and had three or four more fits that night: But in

the use of means, through God's blessing, he had no more in three weeks. One evening, being in his chamber, he desired me to leave him a while alone; which I was very unwilling to do, but his importunity made me to go down from him. But in less than half a quarter of an hour, he was fallen to the ground in one of his former fits, and had hurt his face; and from his nose came much blood, which was very clotted and corrupt, which physicians seeing, did conclude (though it were grievous to me, that, under such weakness, he should have so sad an accident) that the fall saved his life: For had not that blood come from his head, he had, so far as they could rationally judge, died in that fit, which took away his senses for the present; but he went to bed, and slept so well that night, as he had not in many weeks before; so that myself, and friends, feared that he had been in an apoplexy: But he awaked about six in the morning, much refreshed, and full of the praises of God for his mercies to him, being very sensible how suddenly he was surprised the evening before. After this, he lived always expecting death, saying often to me and his friends, "It is but a puff, and I am gone:" And therefore would, every night, after he had been at prayer, bid all the family farewell, telling them, *He might be dead before the morning*; and dropping some holy counsels to them, would depart to his chamber. All the while I was undressing him, he would be discoursing of spiritual things, it being all his delight; and when we lay down to rest, his last words were usually, "We

“ shall shortly be in another bed, therefore it is good
“ to mind it, and provide for it apace; farewell, my
“ dear heart, the Lord bless thee!” and so he would
go to his rest. In his health and sickness, his first
speeches in the mornings would be, “ Now we have
“ one day more; here is one more for God; now let us
“ live well this day; work hard for our souls; lay up
“ much treasure in Heaven this day, for we have
“ but a few to live.”

After this, the strength of his limbs, which were decayed, returned again, and he was, beyond all expectation, so far recovered, that we had no fears of his relapsing again: His appetite and rest, and all repaired. But about the sixth of May, he began again to find weakness in his stomach, which in a few days so grew upon him, that he lost his limbs again; and on the 12th of May, in the morning, having lain some days and nights in cold sweats, as heretofore at Dorchester, he was again seized with convulsions, first lying four hours with his eyes fixed to heaven, not speaking one word, nor in the least moving himself, myself and friends weeping by him, at last he spake to us with a very audible voice, “ Weep not
“ for me, my work is done;” and seemed to be full of matter to utter to us, but was immediately seized with a terrible convulsion, which was sad to behold; it so altered his countenance, and put him into such sweats, that it was strange to see how the drops lay and ran down his face, and hands, and body. This held him two hours or more, and ceased, but he was left by it without any sense; and in a quarter of an

hour, or little more, fell into another, in which he rattled, and was cold, so that we apprehended every breath would be his last. The physician, who was then by him, accounted his pulse to be gone, and that he would be dead in a few minutes: But the Lord shewed his power here once again in raising him. So that many that came and saw him, that heard the next day he was alive, would not believe till they came and saw him again. These violent fits went off about twelve o'clock, and he revived; but had no sense to converse with us till the next day, nor did he perfectly recover them four days after, and then was as before, and so continued very weak till July, no strength coming into his hands or legs; for the most part confined to his bed, but still cheerful in his spirit, and free to discourse with any that came to visit him, as long as he was able.

But the Lord had yet more work for him to do: I seeing him lie so hopeless, as to his life or limbs, and considering the winter was growing on apace, I proposed it to the doctors to have him to the Bath; some were for it, others against it; acquainting my husband with it, he was much pleased with it, and so earnest in it, that I sent immediately to Bath for a horse-litter, and the Lord was pleased strangely to appear in strengthening him for his journey; so that he, that had not in many weeks been out of his bed and chamber, was able in two days to reach near forty miles. But when he came to Bath, the doctors there seemed to be much amazed to behold such an object, professing they never saw the like, much

wondering how he was come alive such a journey, and doubted much to put him in: But he having tried all artificial baths, and ointments, and plaisters before, he resolved, against their judgment, to adventure himself.

At his first appearing in the Bath, being wasted to skin and bone, some of the ladies were affrighted, as if death had been come in among them, and could not endure to look towards him.

The first time he went in, he was able to stay but a little while, but was much refreshed, and had no symptom of his fits, which he feared the Bath might have caused again. Through the blessing of the Lord upon this means, without any thing else, except his drinking of goat's milk, he that was not able to go nor stand, nor move a finger, could in three weeks' time walk about his chamber and feed himself: His impaired appetite was again restored, and his strength so increased, that there seemed no doubt to the physicians of his full recovery, he having not the least sign of any inclination to his fits, from the twelfth of May till his death drew nigh.

In this time of his being in Bath, his soul was far more strengthened with grace; so that myself, and all that beheld him and conversed with him, discerned sensibly his growth; and he was in the nights and days, so frequently with God, and often in such ravishments of spirit, from the joys and consolations that he received from the Spirit of God, that it was oftentimes more than he could express, or his bodily strength could bear; so that for my own part, I had

less hopes of his continuance on earth than ever before. For I perceived plainly, the Lord had spared him but to recover strength of grace, and to make him a more evident instance of his singular love, before he took him hence.

He being now more cheerful than formerly, and more exceedingly affectionate in his carriage to me and to all his friends, especially with those that were most heavenly, the Lord was pleased to order it in his providence there were many such then who came to use the Bath, as Mr. Fairclough and his wife, Mr. How, of Torrington, Mr. Joseph Barnard and his wife, and several of our Taunton friends, and of Bristol Ministers and others, which was a great comfort to us.

His parts seemed to be more quick in his converses, whatever he was put upon, either by scholars, or those that were more inferior. He had many visitors there, both of strangers and friends, who were willing to see him and discourse with him, having heard what a monument of mercy he was; and he would to all of them, so amplify upon all the passages of God's dealings with him, as was very pleasant to all that heard him; and did affect many that were strangers to God and to religion, as well as to him.

He found much favour, even among the worst; both gentry and others,—such as would make a scoff at religion, or holy discourse from others, would hearken to him. Though he did often faithfully reprove many for their oaths, and excess in drinking, their lascivious carriages, which he observed in the

Bath; and there was none of them but did most thankfully accept it from him, and shewed him more respect after, than they had done before: In which he observed much of God's goodness to him, and would often say to me: "O! how good it is to be faithful to God." The vilest of these persons, as I was by several informed, said of him, *That he never spake with such a man in his life.*

His reproofs were managed with so much respect to their persons, and the honourable esteem he had of their dignity, that they said, *They could not but accept his reproofs, though very close and plain:* And his way was, sometime before he intended to reprove them, he would often in the Bath converse with them, *of things that might be taking with them;* and did so engage their affections, that they would willingly every day converse with him: He, being *furnished* from his former studies *for any company*, designing to use it still for holy ends, by such means hath caught many souls.

While he was in this place, though he had many diversions, by his using the Bath constantly every day, and his frequent visits, besides his weakness, yet he kept his constant seasons, four times a day, for his holy retirements; waking in the morning constantly at or before five o'clock, and would not be disturbed till about seven, when he was carried to the Bath. Having the curtains drawn close, he spent his time in holy meditation, and prayer, and singing; and once again before dinner, but then he spent less time; and about half an hour before two in the afternoon, just before he went abroad.

For though he never attained to so much strength, as to be able to walk abroad in the streets without my leading him, or some other, yet he would be employed for his Lord and Master. His chairmen, that used to carry him to the Bath, he appointed to fetch him about three o'clock, who carried him to visit all the schools, alms-houses, and the godly poor, especially the widows; to whom he would give money, and with whom he would pray and converse concerning their spiritual states, according as their necessities required; engaging those that were teachers and governors, to teach the *Assembly's Catechism*, buying many dozens, and giving them to distribute to their scholars; and many other small books which he thought might be useful for them; and then would come and see, in a week or fortnight, what progress they had made. He also engaged several to send their children once a week to him to be catechised; which they did hearken to him in: And we had about sixty or seventy children every Lord's-day to our lodging, and they profited much by his instructions, till some took such offence at it, that he was forced to desist, and the schoolmaster was threatened to be cited to Wells before the Bishop, and many others affrighted from it.

He also sent for all the godly poor he could find in that place, and entertained them at his chamber, and gave to them every one as he was able, as a thank-offering to the Lord for his mercy to him, and desired them, with several others, to keep a day of thanksgiving for him; Mr. Fairclough, Mr. How, and himself, performing the duties of the day.

Thus though his sickness had been long, and his expences great, he thought he could never spend enough for Him from whom he had received all. He constantly gave money or apples to all the children that came to be catechised by him, to engage them, besides all he gave to the teachers and poor, which indeed was beyond his ability, considering his estate. But I am persuaded, he did foresee that his time would be but short; and having made a competent and comfortable provision for me, he resolved to lay up the rest in heaven; he did often say to me, *if he lived never so long, he would never increase his estate, now I was provided for; he having no children, God's children should have it.*

But he was yet again designing what he might do before he took his leave of the world: And his next work was, to send letters to all his relations and intimate friends, in most of which he urges them to observe his counsels, for they were like to be his last to them. I always wrote for him, for he could not, by reason of his weakness, write a line.

At this time he had a great desire to go to Mr. Joseph Barnard's, which was about five miles from Bath, there to finish his last work for God that ever he did on earth; which was to promote the exercise of catechising in Somersetshire and Wiltshire. Mr. Barnard having had a great deliverance as well as himself, he proposed this to him as their thank-offering to God, which they would jointly tender to Him. They had engaged one another, to give so much for the printing of six thousand of the *Assembly's*

Catechism, and among other friends, to raise some money, for to send to every minister that would engage in the work, and to give to the children for their encouragement in learning: This work was finished by Mr. Barnard, after my husband was gone to his rest.

He finding himself to decline again, apprehended it was for want of using the Bath, and therefore desired to return; and I being fearful he should ride home, seeing some symptoms of his fits, sent for the horse-litter, and so carried him again to Bath: Where by the doctor's advice, after he had taken some things to prepare his body, he made use of the hot Bath; (the Cross Bath being then too cold;) and so he did for four days, and seemed to be refreshed, and the strength that he had in his limbs to recover, rather than abate; and two of his Taunton friends coming to see him, he was cheerful with them. But on the third of November I discerned a great change in his countenance, and he found a great alteration in himself, but concealed it from me, as I heard after: For some friends coming to visit him, he desired them to pray for him, for his time was very short; but desired them not to tell me of it: All that day he would not permit me to move out of the chamber from him, except once while those friends were with him. After we had dined, he was, in more than ordinary manner, transported with affection towards me; which he expressed, by his returning me thanks for all my pains and care for him and with him, and putting up many most affectionate requests for me

to God, before he would suffer me to rise as we sat together: At night again, at supper, before I could rise from him, he spake thus to me—"Well, now, my dear heart; my companion in all my tribulations and afflictions, I thank thee for all thy pains, and labours for me, at home and abroad, in prison and liberty, in health and sickness;" reckoning up many of the places we had been in, in the days of our affliction. And with many other most endearing and affectionate expressions, he concluded with many holy breathings to God for me, that *he would requite me, and never forget me, and fill me with all manner of grace and consolations, and that his face might still shine upon me, and that I might be supported, and carried through all difficulties.*

After this he desired me to see for a *Practice of Piety*; and I procuring one for him, he turned his chair from me, that I might not see, and read the *Meditations about Death* in the latter end of that book; which I discerning, asked of him, whether he did apprehend his end was near. To which he replied, *He knew not; in a few days I would see;* and so fell into discourse, to divert me; desiring me to read two chapters to him, as I used to do every night; and so he hasted to bed, not being able to go to prayer; and with his own hands did very hastily undo his coat and doublet, which he had not done in many months before. As soon as he was in bed he told me, *He felt some more than ordinary stoppage in his head;* and I brought him something to prevent the fits, which I feared. But in a quarter of an hour

after he fell into a very strong convulsion: Which I being much affrighted at, called for help, and sent for the doctors; used all former and other means, but no success the Lord was pleased to give then to any: But they continued for two days and nights, not ceasing one hour.

This was most grievous to me, that I saw him so like to depart, and that I should hear him speak no more to me; fearing it would harden the wicked to see him removed by such a stroke. For his fits were most terrible to behold: And I earnestly besought the Lord, that if it were his pleasure, he would so far mitigate the heavy stroke I saw was coming upon me, by causing him to utter something of his heart before he took him from me; which he graciously answered me in; for he, that had not spoke from Tuesday night, did on Friday morning, about three o'clock, call for me to come to him, speaking very understandingly between times, all that day. But that night about nine o'clock he brake out with an audible voice, speaking, for sixteen hours together, those and such like words as you formerly had account of; and did cease but a very little space, now and then, all the afternoon, till about six on Saturday in the evening, when he departed.

About three in the afternoon he had, as we perceived, some conflict with satan; for he uttered these words, "Away! thou foul fiend, thou enemy of all mankind, thou subtle sophister! Art thou come now to molest me, now I am just going? Now I

“am so weak, and death upon me? Trouble me not, for I am none of thine! I am the Lord’s; Christ is mine, and I am his; his by covenant; I have sworn myself to be the Lord’s, and his I will be; Therefore be gone!” These last words he repeated often, which I took much notice of, *That his covenanting with God was the means he used to expel the devil and all his temptations.*

The time we were in Bath, I had very few hours alone with him, by reason of his constant using the Bath, and visits of friends from all parts thereabouts, and sometimes from Taunton; and when they were gone, he would be either retiring to God, or to his rest: But what time I had with him, he always spent in heavenly and profitable discourse, speaking much of the place he was going to, and his desires to be gone. One morning as I was dressing him, he looked up to Heaven and smiled, and I urging him to know why, he answered me thus, “Ah, my love! I was thinking of my marriage-day; it will be shortly. O what a joyful day will that be! Will it not, think-est thou, my dear heart?”

Another time, bringing him some broth, he said, “Blessed be the Lord for these refreshments in the way home! But O, how sweet will heaven be!”

Another time, “I hope to be shortly where I shall need no meat, nor drink, nor clothes.”

When he looked on his weak consumed hands, he would say, “these shall be changed; this vile body shall be made like to Christ’s glorious body. O what a glorious day will the day of the resurrec-

“tion be! Methinks I see it by faith. How will
 “the saints lift up their heads and rejoice; and how
 “sadly will the wicked world look then! O come
 “let us make haste; our Lord will come shortly,
 “let us prepare. If we long to be in Heaven, let
 “us hasten with our work; for when that is done,
 “away we shall be fetched. O this vain, foolish,
 “dirty world! I wonder how reasonable creatures
 “can so dote upon it! What is in it worth the look-
 “ing after? I care not to be in it longer than while
 “my Master hath either doing or suffering-work for
 “me; were that done, farewell to earth!”

He was much in commending the love of Christ, and from that exciting himself and me to obedience to him, often speaking of his sufferings and of his glory; of his love-letters, as he called the holy history of his life, death, resurrection, ascension, and his second coming; the thoughts of which he seemed always to be much ravished with.

He would be frequently reckoning the choice tokens Christ had sent him, which I remember he would frequently reckon up, 1. *The pardon of sin.* 2. *A patent for heaven.* 3. *The gift of the Spirit.* 4. *The robe of his righteousness.* 5. *The spoils of enemies.* 6. *The charter of all liberties and privileges.* 7. *The guard of his angels.* The consideration of this last he did frequently solace himself in, saying to me often, when we lived alone in the prison, and divers other places, “Well, my dear, though we have
 “not our attendants and servants as the great ones
 “and rich of the world have, we have the blessed

“angels of God still to wait upon us, to minister to us, and to watch over us while we are sleeping; to be with us when journeying, and still to preserve us from the rage of men and devils.”

He was exceedingly affected with the three last chapters of Saint John's Gospel, especially Christ's parting words and prayer for his disciples. But it is time for me to set a stop to my pen; God did pour into him; and he did pour out so much, that it was scarce possible to retain the converses of one day, without a constant register. His heart, his lips, his life was filled up with grace; in which he did shine both in health and sickness, prosperity and adversity, in prison and at liberty, in his own house and in the churches of Christ, wherever he came. I never heard any that conversed with him, but would acknowledge it was to their advantage.

At my husband's first coming to Taunton, he was entertained by Mr. Newton as a sojourner, and after he was ordained in Taunton in a public association meeting, he administered all ordinances jointly with him; though he were but an assistant, Mr. Newton would have it so, who dearly loved him, and highly esteemed of him; and seeing him restless in his spirit, and putting himself to many tedious journeys to visit me, (as he did once a fortnight, twenty-five miles,) he persuaded him to marry, contrary to our purpose, we resolving to have lived much longer single. The 4th of October, 1655, after a year and two months' acquaintance, our marriage was consummated.

And we lived together with Mr. Newton near two years, where we were most courteously entertained; and then, hoping to be more useful in our station, we took a house, and I having been always bred to work, undertook to teach a school, and had many tablers and scholars, our family being seldom less than twenty, and many times thirty; my school usually fifty or sixty of the town and other places. And the Lord was pleased to bless us exceedingly in our endeavours: So that many were converted in a few years, that were before strangers to God. All our scholars called him "Father:" And indeed he had far more care of them than most of their natural parents, and was most tenderly affectionate to them, but especially to their souls.

His course in his family was prayer, and reading the scriptures, and singing twice a day, except when he catechised, which was constantly once, if not twice a week. Of every chapter that was read he expected an account, and of every sermon, either to himself or me. He dealt with them and his servants frequently, together and apart, about their spiritual states; pressing them to all their duties, both of first and second-table, and calling them strictly to account, *Whether they did not omit them.* He also gave them books suitable to their capacities and condition, which they gave a weekly account of to him or me; but too often by public work was he diverted, as I am apt to think, who knew not so well what was to be preferred.

His Lord's-days' work was great, for though he preached but once in his own place, yet he was

either desired by some of his brethren to supply theirs on any exigency, or would go where was no minister; and so was forced often to leave his family to me, to my great grief and loss. In his repetitions in public, as well as catechising, his own family came all in their turns, to answer in the congregation, both scholars and servants.

When I have pleaded with him for more of his time with myself and family, he would answer me, *His ministerial work would not permit him to be so constant as he would; for if he had ten bodies and souls, he could employ them all in and about Taunton.* And would say, “*Ah, my dear! I know thy soul is safe; but how many that are perishing have I to look after? O that I could do more for them!*”

He was a holy, heavenly, tenderly-affectionate husband, and I know nothing I could complain of, but that he was so taken up, that I could have but very little converse with him.

His love was expressed to me, in his great care for me, sick and well; in his provision for me; in his delight in my company; saying often, *He could not bear to be from me, but when he was with God, or employed for him; and that often it was hard for him to deny himself to be so long absent.* It was irksome to him to make a meal without me, nor would he manage any affair almost without conversing with me, concealing nothing from me that was fit for me to know; being far from the temper of those husbands who hide all their concerns from their wives, which he could not endure to hear of, especially in good men.

He was a faithful reprove of any thing he saw amiss in me, which I took as a great evidence of his real good-will to my soul; and if in any thing he gave me offence, which was but seldom, so far would he deny himself, as to acknowledge it, and desire me to pass it by, professing to me he could never rest till he had done so; and the like I was ready to do to him, as there was far more reason; by which course, if any difference did arise, it was soon over with us.

He was a very tender master to his servants, every way expressing it to their souls and bodies, giving them that encouragement in their places they could desire; expecting from his whole family that respect and obedience to his commands, which their rule required; reproveing them that were careless and negligent in observing them.

He was frequent in keeping solemn days of humiliation, especially against a sacrament.

He was a very strict observer of the sabbath, the duties of which he did perform with such joy and alacrity of spirit, as was most pleasant to join with him, both in public and in the family, when we could enjoy him: And this he did much press upon christians, to spend their sabbaths more in praises and thanksgivings, as days of holy rejoicing in our Redeemer.

All the time of his health, he did rise constantly at or before four of the clock, and on the sabbath sooner, if he did wake. He would be much troubled if he heard any smiths, or shoemakers, or such tradesmen

at work at their trades, before he was in his duties with God; saying to me often, "O how this noise shames me! Doth not *my* master deserve more than *theirs*?" From four till eight he spent in prayer, holy contemplation, and singing of psalms, which he much delighted in, and did daily practise alone, as well as in his family. Having refreshed himself about half an hour, he would call to family duties, and after that to his studies, till eleven or twelve o'clock, cutting out his work for every hour in the day. Having refreshed himself a while after dinner, he used to retire to his study to prayer, and so abroad among the families he was to visit, to whom he always sent the day before; going out about two o'clock, and seldom returning till seven in the evening, sometimes later. He would often say, "*Give me a christian that counts his time more precious than gold.*" His work in his publick ministry in Taunton being to preach but once a sabbath and catechise, he devoted himself much to private work, and also catechised once a week in public besides, and repeated the sermon he preached on the sabbath day, on Tuesday in the evening.

He found much difficulty in going from house to house, because it had not been practised a long time by any minister in Taunton, nor by any others of his brethren; and he being but a young man, to be looked upon as singular, was that which called for much self-denial, which the Lord enabled him to exercise. For after he had preached up in public the ministers' duty to their people, and theirs to receive them

when they came to them for their spiritual advantage, he set speedily upon the work.

In this work, his course was to draw a catalogue of the names of the families in each street, and so to send a day or two before he intended to visit them, that they might not be absent, and that he might understand who was willing to receive him. Those that sent slight excuses, or did obstinately refuse his message, he would notwithstanding go to them, and if (as some would) they did shut their doors against him, he would speak some few affectionate words to them; or if he saw cause, denounce the threatenings of God against them that despise his ministers, and so departed; and after would send affectionate letters to them, so full of love and expressions of his great desires to do their souls good, as did overcome their hearts; and they did many of them afterwards readily receive him into their houses. Herein was his compassion shewed to all sorts, both poor and rich, not disdainng to go into such houses amongst the poor as were often very offensive to him to sit in, he being of an exact and curious temper: Yet would he, with joy and freedom, deny himself for the good of their souls, and that he might fulfil his ministry among those the Lord had given him the oversight of.

I perceiving this work, with what he did otherwise, to be too hard for him, fearing often he would bring himself to distempers and diseases, as he did soon after, besought him not to go so frequently: His answer would be, "*What have I strength for,*

“but to spend for God? What is a candle for, but to be burnt?” And he would say, *“I was like Peter, still crying, O spare thyself! But I must not hearken to thee, no more than my Master did to him:”* Though his labours were so abundant, I never knew him, for nine years together, under the least distemper one quarter of an hour.

He was exceeding temperate in his diet, though he had a very sharp appetite; yet he did at every meal deny himself, being persuaded that it did much conduce to his health. His converse at his table was very profitable, and yet pleasant, never rising, either at home or abroad, without dropping something of God, according to the rule he laid down to others. He was very much in commending and admiring the mercies of God in every meal, and still so pleased with his provision for him, that he would often say, *He fared deliciously every day, and lived far better than the great ones of the world, who had their tables far better furnished.* For he enjoyed God in all, and saw his love and bounty in what he received at every meal: So that he would say, *“O wife! I live a voluptuous life; but, blessed be God, it is upon spiritual dainties, such as the world know not, and taste not of.”*

He was much in minding the poor, that were in want of all things, often wondering that God should make such a difference between him and them, both for this world and that to come; and his charity was ever beyond his estate, as myself and many other friends did conceive, but he would not be dissuaded,

always saying, *If he were prodigal, it was for God, and not for himself, nor sin.*

There were but few, if any, poor families, especially of the godly in Taunton, but he knew their necessities, and did by himself or friends relieve them: So that our homes were seldom free of such as came to make complaints to him. After the times grew dead for trade, many of our godly men decaying, he would give much beyond his ability to recover them: He would buy pease and fitches of bacon, and distribute twice a year, in the cold and hard seasons. He kept several children at school at his own cost; bought many books and catechisms; and had many thousands of prayers printed, and distributed among them! And after his brethren were turned out, he gave four pounds a year himself to a public stock for them, by which he excited many others to do the same and much more, which else would never have done it: And on any other occasions as did frequently fall in, he would give even to the offence of his friends: So that many would grudge in the town to give him what they had agreed for; because he would give so much. Besides all this, the necessities of his own father, and many other relations, were still calling upon him, and he was open-handed to them all: So that it hath been sometimes even incredible to ourselves to consider how much he did, out of a little estate, and therefore may seem strange to others. Moreover, when he had received any more than ordinary mercy at the hand of God, his manner was to set apart some considerable portion out

of his estate, and dedicate it to the Lord, as a *thank-offering*, to be laid out for his *glory* in pious and charitable uses.

When I have begged him to consider himself and me, he would answer me, *He was laying up, and God would repay him; that by liberal things he should stand, when others might fall that censured him; that if he sowed sparingly, he should reap so; if bountifully, he should reap bountifully.*

And I must confess I did often see so much of God in his dealings with us, according to his promises, that I have been convinced and silenced; God having often so strangely and unexpectedly provided for us: And notwithstanding all he had done, he had at last somewhat to dispose of to his relations and to his brethren, besides comfortable provision for me.

Thus his whole life was a continual sermon, holding forth evidently the doctrines he preached; humility, self-denial, patience, meekness, contentation, faith, and holy confidence shining in him, with most dear love to God, and his church, and people; and where he longed and panted to be he is now shining, in heaven, singing praises to God, and to the Lamb; which work he much delighted in, whilst here on earth.

CHAP. VII.

SOME NOTES FROM ANOTHER,

Whose House he lodged in. (Mr. F.)

The Narrative of his most constant, tender, compassionate dealing with ignorant and bad people, in the places where he came, (frequently giving them money, with his exhortations) is mentioned before.

AS for such as feared God already, he was still seeking their edification, and stirring them up to a holy life; very much pressing them, to intend God as their end, and to do whatever they did for God. When the week began, he would say, "Another week is now before us, let us spend this week for God." And in the morning he would say, "Come now, let this day be spent for God. Now let us live this one day well: Could we resolve to be more than ordinary circumspect but for one day at a time, and so on, we might live at extraordinary rate." In the day time, he would (seasonably) ask people, "How did you set out to-day? Did you set out for God to-day? What were your morning thoughts?"

In the week time, he would often ask the servants for the heads of the sermon, which they had heard on the Lord's-day before. As he walked about the house, he would make some spiritual use of whatever did occur; and still his lips did drop like the honeycomb to all that were about him, to do any offices for him in his weakness; they were all well requited. To give a few instances of his savoury words:

To one that had done well, "There are two things," said he, "that we must specially look to after well-doing, and the special taste of the love of God. (1.) That we grow not proud of it, and so lose all. (2.) That we grow not secure, and so give the tempter new advantages."

Speaking of the vanity of the world, he said, "It is as good to be without the world, and to bear that state as beseemeth a christian, as to enjoy the world, though it were never so well employed. If a man hath riches, and layeth them out for God and for his servants, yet is it as happy a state to receive alms of another, so we bear our poverty aright, and are cheerful and thankful in our low estate. Though yet it is true, that riches may be used to the good of others; and it is more honourable to give than to receive."

Another time he was saying, "How necessary a duty it is for a child of God placidly to suit with all God's dispensations! And that a christian must not only quietly submit to God in all his dealings, but ever to be best pleased with what God doth, as knowing that he is infinitely Wise and good. And, O! how unbecoming a christian is it to do otherwise!" To which one answering, *How short we ordinarily fall as to that temper!* He replied, "We have much ground to go yet, but so it must be; but we shall never be well indeed till we come to heaven."

Another time said he, "O what an alteration will be shortly made upon us! Now we are the sons

“ of God, but yet it doth not appear (to sight) what
 “ we shall be. Did we imagine only that we shall
 “ shine as the sun in the firmament, it were too low
 “ a conception of our blessedness hereafter.”

Another morning as he was dressing, he said, “ O
 “ what a shout will there be, when Christ shall come
 “ in his glory! I hope all here present shall contri-
 “ bute to that shout.”

Another time, “ I bless the Lord, I delight in no-
 “ thing in this world, further than I see God in it.”

Another time (in his weakness) saith he, “ There
 “ are three things which must be unlearned, as be-
 “ ing mistakes among men. (1.) Men think that
 “ their happiness lieth in having the world, when
 “ it is much more in contemning the world. (2.)
 “ Men think that the greatest contentment lieth in
 “ *having* their wills, when indeed it lieth in *crossing*,
 “ *mortifying*, and *subduing* their wills to the will of
 “ God. (3.) Men think it their business and benefit
 “ to seek themselves, when indeed it is the denying
 “ of themselves.”

Another time this was his advice, “ (1.) Value
 “ precious time, while time doth last; and not when
 “ it is irrevocably lost. (2.) Know the worth of
 “ things to come, before they come, (or are present),
 “ and the worth of things present, before they are
 “ past. (3.) Value no mercy as it serveth to con-
 “ tent the flesh, but as it is serviceable for God, and
 “ to things eternal.”

Such was his talk at the table, where he would
 be still raised in gratitude for God's bounty, and

used to eat his meat with much cheerfulness and comfort, as savouring of a sweeter good.

He took one that was watching with him by the hand, and said: "I hope to pass an eternity with thee, in the praises of our God: In the mean time, let us live a life of praise while we are here, for it is sweet to us, and delightful to God: It is harmony in his ears, our failings being pardoned, and we and our praise accepted through Christ." Such discourse is, I hope, no great rarity with good men, in the cheerfulness of prosperity in health; but for a man on the bed of tedious languishing it is more rare.

The night before he went to Bath, where he died, he said to the same person: "O how much more hath God done for you, than for all the world of unconverted persons, in that he hath wrought his image on your heart, and will bring you at last to his celestial glory. See now that you acknowledge the Grace of God, and give him the praise of it. For my part, I bless the Lord; I am full of his mercy; goodness and mercy have followed me all my days; I am full and running over: And now I charge you to walk cheerfully, and to follow me with your praises whilst I am alive."

And for such in the family as lay under doubts of their condition, he took great care of them, endeavouring daily to satisfy their doubts and answer their scruples; and still would be enquiring, whether they had yet any more settlement: And if they said, *They knew not how to try themselves*; he would

say, *Come, let me help you;* and so would take them aside, and propound some three or four sound marks, by way of question, and would ask them *Whether it were so with them or not.* And if any doubt appeared to remain about it, he would not easily leave them, till they were somewhat satisfied at that time, and would bring all down to the meanest capacity, by putting his questions several ways. And if yet doubts remained, he would use all the compassion and pitifulness that might be, and open to them the goodness of God's nature, the sufficiency of Christ, and his readiness to accept returning sinners; and after long trial by fairer means, would plainly labour to convince them of the sin of unbelief, &c. And for any in the family that seemed to stick under bare convictions, he much urged them to go on, and make a thorough, and sound, and sure work of it.

In family duties, he seemed more excellent than at other times.

He was a man of singular patience in affliction. Though he lay under such weakness for certain years, as rendered him almost wholly unable for his public work, and many times not able to move a hand or finger, or hardly any other part; yet some that have been much with him, never heard him once complain, of one pain or other, unless any asked him, and then would always make the least of it. And when he lay many nights and never took the least rest by sleep, he would never shew the least impatency, nor so much as say, *He had not slept, unless*

it were asked him: And still would justify and glorify God, and say, *Shall I receive good at God's hand, and no evil?*

Additions.

Speaking of exhortations and reproof, he said, "'Tis the safest course (where it may be done) to take the opportunity, and not to suffer our backward hearts to cheat us of the present, on pretence of staying for a fitter time."

As advice for profitable discourse, he said, "It is good for such christians as need it, to study beforehand what to speak, that they may always have something in readiness to bring forth for the benefit of others, which will prevent impertinencies."

Of prayer with others he would say, "We have need to watch against confining our thoughts and desires to the cases of our own souls, with the neglect of those that join with us; but above all, with the neglect of the miserable world, and of the church of Christ." For though indeed hypocrites use to indite almost all their public prayers from the supposed case of those that are present, and meddle but little with their own sins and wants, unless in formality; yet sincere christians are at first too apt to dwell upon their own cases almost alone, insomuch that they have need to be called outward; and as they grow in love, they will grow enlarged in the case of their brethren, but especially of public and universal consequence.

CHAP. VIII.

An intire and exact delineation of this holy person, written by one of his familiar acquaintance; presented in the last place, as the portraiture of a complete gospel-minister.

First, *His personal character, his stature, and complexion.*

AS to his personal bodily character, he was of stature tall and erect; of complexion clear and lovely, his countenance being the seat of cheerfulness, gravity, and love. It contradicted that usual saying, viz. *Fronti nulla fides*;* for his sprightly and serene countenance was the index of an active and harmonious soul. Anger, as it seldom beclouded, so it became not that face most uncapable of sour impressions. It was forced, and so not of long continuance, for it never appeared but upon summons, when commanded to interpose itself; the glory of God and honour of Religion, being concerned. Neither did his reason and virtue sooner raise than lay it when the cause was ceased. He was angry, and sinned not, by being angry chiefly or only for sin.

His Constitution.

He had not a more hale complexion than healthful constitution, hugely fitted for the employment in which he was so successful, viz. his ministerial labours and studies. Insomuch that he hath often been heard to confess, that he knew not what an hour's

* The forehead (or countenance) is not to be trusted.

sickness or indisposition was for thirty years and upward, even until after his first imprisonment, to which (as it is else-where intimated) it may well be thought that he owed the first and fatal impairs of his healthful vigour. Since which first decay, it may be affirmed that contrariwise for some years together, till the period of his life, he scarce knew what was an hour's health. Most deplorable it is, that his great and even excessive labours, and hard durance, should have been prodigal of that strength which might perchance have been hitherto employed to the most noble purposes. But, alas, the innocent flames of divine love to God, and zeal for his glory, and the good of souls, made all his strength a whole burnt sacrifice, and as well devoted, as if sacrificed to the flames of martyrdom!

His judgment.

And here some injury would be done to his worthy name, should his internal excellences, which are of all the greatest, be wholly forgotten. His judgment was as the pot of Manna, wherein were found and conserved all wholesome soul-feeding doctrines; most solid and acute it was. For though with the eye of his body he could not see far off, yet with the eye of his mind or understanding, he penetrated far into the recesses of difficult truths, and out of mental perplexities he was wont happily to extricate himself and others, the toil of his intellect herein being not so pleasant as successful. He was all judgment in his enquiries after truth, and all affection in pursuing and promoting that which is good.

His Memory.

His memory was as the tables of the covenant, God's law being his meditation day and night, and as the sacred records there kept. It was a most faithful and refined treasury, out of which he continually brought things new and old for the instruction and consolation of his hearers. So tenacious it was that it needed not, and wholly refused, those helps by which it is usually fortified, and its defects supplied. It knew not the slavery of an imposed task; for what had once engaged his love, was without delay or difficulty possessed of his mind or memory.

His Fancy.

His fancy was as Aaron's rod budding, ever producing fresh blossoms of refined divine wit and invention. It was quick and happy, a fruitful storehouse of hallowed and sublime notions. Ever pregnant, yet never bringing forth any other than the offsprings of judgment and discretion. Though it soared high, yet like a bird in a string, when it had gone to its utmost length, it was checked by his judgment and humility, lest it should ascend above its height.

His Will and Affections.

His will he had so long lost in the Divine Will, as not to find it, or to be troubled with its reluctancies under so long and sad a series of trials and afflictions, as those which attended him constantly to his grave. His affections were strong and fervent, and, to use his words, *They kept to their right objects*

and their due bounds, never enkindled but with a coal from the altar, and then they soared to marvellous heights. He was indeed, as it were, all affection in pursuing and promoting the grand interests of religion. The zeal of God's house had consumed him, and that not blind nor wild, but well attempered with light and heats. In sum, what holy Mr. Herbert said of himself, that may be said of him, that his active soul was as a keen knife in a thin sheath, ever about to cut through, and take its flight into the region of souls.

His great Gravity.

But to proceed to some of his excellent properties. His gravity appeared to be true and genuine, (as not affected or morose, not through any inability, but unwillingness, to press his wit to the service of vanity,) resulting from a mind ever in the awe of God; because his presence and deportment struck such an awe even on all with whom he conversed, and composed them to a true decorum. So that as Rev. Mr. Bolten, when walking in the streets, was so much cloathed with majesty, as by the notice of his coming in these words, *Here comes Mr. Bolton*, as it were to charm them into order, when vain or doing amiss; so this most grave divine, wheresoever he came, was as a walking ghost by his presence, conjuring them into a grave deportment, his countenance ever pointing at his awful soul. What the image or statue of Sennacherib did speak, that much more did this lively image of the most high God speak, viz, *He who looketh to me, let him be religious.*

This his great gravity was not universally discerned by all, but also more particularly and especially acknowledged and loved by his brethren in the ministry; for there being some matter of moment depending among them, the care of which was to be devolved on some one man, a worthy divine, far exceeding him in years, solicited him to take it on him, who modestly waved it, wondering that they should pitch on one so young and unexperienced as himself for so solemn an undertaking. To whom the forenamed divine replied, that of all the ministers, his brethren, whereof many for age were his fathers, he knew none of greater gravity, industry, and fitness for the management of that affair than himself.

His Affability.

Neither was he so immured in his study, as to be a stranger to, or averse from, that generous and innocent freedom and obligingness of converse; for love and affability were accurately attempered with his great gravity. He became all things to all men, that he might gain the more; and so communicative, innocent, and obliging were all his converses, that he commanded the imitation and admiration of his friends, and forced this acknowledgment from his adversaries, both profane, atheistical, and sectarian, viz. *that if there were ever a good man among them, (meaning the Nonconformists,) Mr. Alleine was he.*

His Charity.

Communicative I say he was, both of spiritual and also temporal good things together, according to,

and even beyond his power, (as it is else-where abundantly ascertained,) both when he heard the loud complaints of some, and when he listened to the silent suits of others, viz. some modest and indigent housekeepers, who only spake by their real needs, and entered their suits at the eyes of an inquisitive almoner, more than at his ears. Of the good things pertaining to this life, he was often liberal beyond his measure; and of those pertaining to another life, often beyond his strength; and by this constellation of his charity and alms-deeds, he made the one more profitable, and the other more acceptable; the one the greater, and the other the happier and more successful; and by this conjunction also, he approved himself more perfect before God, the more thoroughly furnished to every good word and work.

His utterance.

His prolation or manner of speech was free, eloquent, sublime, and weighty. Of him it may be well said, as of our Blessed Saviour, *That all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth.* It will be hard to tell what man ever spake with more holy eloquence, gravity, authority, meekness, compassion and efficacy to souls, than he did to those to whom in instruction, exhortation, consolation, reprehension, he most wisely, frequently, and successfully applied himself. Few could resist, or stand before the powerful charms and united force of his love and authority, being equally attracted by the one and awed by the other. In him, if in any, that common observation did evidently fall, viz.

*Non bene conveniunt, nec in unâ sede locantur,
Majestas et Amor.**

True it is, that this young Timothy, with whom few were like minded in caring naturally for the state of his flock, was, at his first entrance on his ministry, despised for his youth, by those who after with shame confessed their error, and deplored their rashness, resolving after for his sake no more to judge according to appearance, but to honour, for their work and intrinsic worth, those whom age hath not made venerable.

Secondly, *His Studies and Learning.*

As respects his studies, he had a strong inclination to, and delight in, the study of the natural and Ethnick Theology; in which he proceeded to a great acquaintance with the chief sects of the philosophers, especially the Academics and Stoics, of his insight into whom he made singular use, by gathering their choicest flowers to adorn christianity withal. And, indeed, scarce did he preach a sermon, wherein he did not select some excellent passage or other out of these, whereby to illustrate and fortify his discourse. And how well becoming a divine, and most laudable this his inclination and choice was, is most manifest to considering men; for hereby he more confirmed himself in the christian religion, (which he had espoused with so much judgment and zeal,) by a distinct and certain knowledge of the highest prin-

* Majesty and love agree not well together, and are never placed in one seat.

ciples and hopes of the Ethnick religions, and by a sober comparing of that with these. He also much delighted in Anatomy, in which he acquired a considerable skill, which also he not a little improved by frequent dissections. And in his public ministry, he often made use of this his insight, by composing, with Galen, hymns to the Creator, whose infinite wisdom he was often heard to admire, in the contrivance of man's outward frame, and in the rare contexture, dependance, and use of all, even the the minutest parts, in the excellent fabric of man's body. As to his skill in the languages, it was not contemptible, especially in those three* which (as Ludovicus Vives saith) Christ sanctified upon the cross.

Thirdly, *His Moderation and Humility.*

He managed his dissents in judgment from others with great charity, humility, and moderation, most strictly observing what he still exhorted his flock unto, viz. *To speak evil of no man*, much less of dignities. Insomuch that when his judgment was at any time desired concerning any sermon which he had heard, and any minister, conformist or non-conformist, though weak and mean, he would yet ever find matter of commendation, none of dispraise, judging the minister and his discourse, at least, to be honest and of good intent. He abhorred to intrench on the] Divine Prerogative, in judging of men's states before the time; and in condemning

* Latin, Greek, and Hebrew.

men's actions at all adventures, without considering their lessening or altering circumstances. And as he liked to judge no man beyond his sphere, and speak evil of no man; so in his life did he reap as great and visible reward as any for this most christian practice; for the tongues even of all did pay tribute to his good name; which was a thing so entire and sacred, that scarce a Rabsheka or Shimei could find a passage by which to invade it. His good name was as a precious box of ointment, by his death especially broken and poured forth, the delicious scent whereof all those hearts with great delight retain, which, like Lydia's, were opened to his heavenly doctrine; and not only so, but they will perpetuate it, whilst they have children's children by whom to eternize his memory.

Fourthly, *His practice as to church-communion. His judgment as to obedience to authority.*

As respects his practice and moderate opinion in point of church-communion, and his judgment in point of obedience to the supreme power, together with his great regard to, and earnest insisting on, second-table duties, much may be said to his worthy praise. He as frequently attended on the public worship as his opportunities and strength permitted, and often declared his very good liking of some sermons, which he heard from the present incumbent. He did not account that none could worship God aright, unless in all instances and smaller circumstances of worship they wholly accorded with his apprehensions; but with the divine Apostle he

had learnt to say, *Notwithstanding every way, whether in pretence or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.* He knew of how great moment it was that the public worship of God should be maintained, and that its assemblies should not be relinquished, though some of its administrations did not clearly approve themselves unto him; because upon the account of some imperfections and pollutions in them, supposed or real, to withdraw communion is evidently to suppose ourselves joined before our time to the heavenly assembly; or to have found such a one here on earth, exempt from all mixtures and imperfections of worshippers and worship. He abandoned not all forms, but their formal use; neither those in particular, publicly established, (through a fond prejudice or partiality, as may be affirmed of too many,) but hath been heard much to commend that form of thanksgiving, both excellent and ancient viz. the *Te Deum*, and particularly that sentence in it, *The noble army of martyrs praise thee;* which he was wont to mention with a certain exaltation. So moderate and calm he was in his judgment, that when the two new forms in the *liturgy*, viz. *on the horrid decollation of King Charles the First, and on the return of King Charles the Second,* were first printed, he was so far from nauseating them, because forms, or because bearing the stamp of authority, that he had ever resolved to read them, (though then only as I remember, recommended,) had not some occurrences, which I need not name, prevailed with him at present to forbear.

His Loyalty.

It appeared that he had a due sense of the grand importance of the obedience of subjects to the supreme magistrate, by some excellent sermons which he preached on that of the apostle, *Rom. xiii. ver. 1.* a little before his election; where and when his judgment was so strict, as unjustly to offend some, whose weakness and ignorance, by reason of a long proscription of the regal power, had made over-scrupulous or erroneous. His loyalty also to his prince he discovered in observing the injunction of the wise man, viz. *Not to curse the king, no not in his bed-chamber, or retiring-rooms:* For he hath often been seen with indignation to turn from, and hush into silence, all reports or surmises, true or false, which directly or indirectly, did tend to detract from, and defame dignities; accounting them no cause of withdrawing or lessening our just honour and obedience; but rather of giving ourselves the more to prayer and humiliation.

Fifthly, *His respect to Second-Table Duties.*

He was not only a man aspiring to the heights, but also respecting the due breadth and extent of religion, being well-advised how much the vitals and honour of religion in the world are conserved by, and concerned in, a conscionable discharge of second-table duties. That he had a deep sense of the great advantage or disadvantage accruing to religion, by the strict or remiss performance of the duties of the second-table, and particularly those of the fifth commandment, all bear him witness in, that he upon

several texts for a long time together, most faithfully instructed his people in relative duties, (than which, none indeed are more momentous and less observed,) and most sharply reprov'd the guilty for their failures therein; on all which relations, their duties, and defects, he particularly and with much zeal insisted. Witness also his great grief and indignations, which he frequently conceived, and with great vehemency expressed in lamenting over, and reprov'ing some professors of religion, for their wretched neglect and breach of some second-table precepts; the scandal and dishonour of which to religion, and the religious, how he resented none but God and his own soul did throughly know. He vehemently detested that impious and hellish design of putting asunder (in this matter) what God hath joined together, viz. *those commands respecting God and our neighbour*; both which he hath equally appointed to us, as rules of direction and judgment. He was neither Legalist nor Solifidian; neither Ritualist nor Enthusiast, not so much above in the mount with God as not also to come down to his neighbour, whom he did accost, as Moses, with both tables in his hand, on which his life and doctrine did constantly and excellently comment.

Sixthly, *His Labours in the Ministry.*

As respects his great industry and happy labours in the ministry, together with his great prudence and compassion in applying himself to the souls of his flock, according to their most pressing needs; none who knew the former, but must also confess and admire the latter.

1. *His Prudence in them.*

His prudence then in apportioning, as well as designing, the most suitable and seasonable instructions to his people, was most apparent, in that he was still, after he had finished a foregoing text or discourse, even at a loss, as he hath often expressed himself to some of his friends, what subject most advantageous and seasonable to his auditory he should next insist on; so far he was from aiming or shooting at rovers, in his divine instructions and exhortations. And so loath he was to labour in vain, and to pass from one discourse to another, as one unconcerned whether he had sown any good seeds or not on the hearts of his hearers; that in the close of his applicatory part on any text, (which sometimes he handled for a considerable while,) he ever expressed his great unwillingness to leave that subject, till he could have some assurance that he had not fought in that spiritual warfare against sin, as one who beateth the air; when also he expressed his great fear, lest he should, after all his most importunate warnings, leave them as he found them. And here with how much holy-taking Rhetoric, did he frequently expostulate the case with impenitent sinners, in words too many to mention, and yet too weighty to be forgotten; vehemently urging them to come to some good resolve before he and they parted, and to make their choice either of life or death.

2. *His compassion on souls.*

His compassion also towards all committed to his charge was most manifest, especially towards the

ignorant, those that were out of the way, and those that did move heavily on in the way.

(1.) *On the ignorant, in instructing and catechising them.*

To the ignorant. And here, knowing that *without knowledge the heart is not, and cannot be, good*; and considering also how too successfully the evil one, by sowing evil seeds betimes in the hearts of youth, doth ever after forestal and defeat the most laborious endeavours for their recovery and salvation: Thus knowing and considering, he was in nothing more industrious, and in nothing more happy and successful in exerting his industry, than in an early sowing those blessed seeds of divine knowledge in the hearts of all the youth that he could reach in person or otherwise; by which they were exceedingly formed to receive all good impressions. During the time of his public ministry on every Lord's-day in the afternoon he constantly catechised, before a great congregation, the youth of each sex by turns, amongst whom were several both young men and women, sometimes five or six of the chief scholars of the free-school, sometimes five or six of the apprentices of the town, some of whom, though of man's estate, accounted it not a disgrace to learn (according to the guise of this mad world,) but to be ignorant. Sometimes, of the other sex, five or six young gentlewomen, who were under his wife's tuition, (and so his domestic over-sight,) kept their turns, of whom she had not a few, and those the daughters of gentlemen of good rank far and

near, whose laudable emulation, and love to their father, (as they styled him,) and to the work, was the cause why they were not so over-bashful as to decline so advantageous a course; by which, together with domestic instructions and example, even all received a tincture of piety and religion, and many a thorough impression: Besides these, several virgins also, and among these the daughters of some of the chief magistrates in the town did keep their turns. In this his course he drew out, on the short answers in the Assembly's Catechism, an excellent discourse on all the points of the Christian Theology, which he handled successfully, reducing his discourse to several heads, which he also proved by pertinent places of scripture; which done, he gave both the heads and proofs written at length, on a week day, to those whom he designed to catechize on the ensuing Lord's-day, which, besides the short answers in the Catechism, and the annexed proofs they committed to memory, and rendered on the afternoon of the day aforesaid. Throughout all which course he approved himself to be a most substantial divine.

Neither did his catechistical labours rest here, but also on Thursdays in the afternoon (as I remember) he catechised in the church, street by street, whole families, excepting the married or more aged, in order: Which exercise (I suppose) he designed as preparatory to his Lord's day's work. Besides this, on Saturdays in the morning, he catechised the free-school of that place, instructing them in the points of christian doctrine, and excellently

explaining the answers in the *Assembly's catechism*, discovering a mine of knowledge in them, and in himself. How excellent was his design, and great his labour, besides all this, in going from house to house, and instructing both old and young, is elsewhere abundantly declared. Neither was this his labour in vain, but became even as successful as laborious; for there are few but have gratefully acknowledged that by this means they were either led into the knowledge, or induced to the belief, choice, and practice of that which was and is of sovereign advantage to this day. And how happy and likely a course he took herein to advance religion in the nation, on the hearts and lives of men; and how far less successful and probable all other means are, aiming at this end, without this initial work, it is left to all pious and considering men to judge.

(2.) *On those that err, by reproof and reducing them.*

He had not only compassion over the ignorant, but also over those who *were out of the way*. Witness his faithful and effectual discharge of that great duty of giving seasonable reproofs, of which his great faithfulness there is abundant mention elsewhere. And by so much the more did his excellent discharge hereof speak forth his high praise, by how much the more difficult he ever apprehended it aright to apply it. He had been heard often to say, *that it was far more difficult to him to give, than to take a reproof, considering how great wisdom, courage, com-*

passion, self-denial, &c. is required in order to its right discharge. And though he was so rarely passive, and often active in this work, yet the frequency of his giving a reproof, never made it so easy as to be less difficult than to receive it. But ever this work was to him, not only an act of the greatest self-denial, but also the result of a strong conflict within, betwixt his indignation at the sin and compassion on the sinner. And yet the consideration of the difficulty was not to him an argument to forbear, but rather a stronger motive to undertake it; who ever delighted to converse in, and conquer the difficulties of christianity, both in doing and suffering. Small difficulties here were not his match; and there were no noble achievements in religion to which he attained not, or vigorously aspired.

His truly Heroic Spirit.

As it is said of Themistocles, that famous Athenian captain, *that the acts of Miltiades broke his sleep;* so as truly may it be said of this blessed saint, *that the acts and monuments of the famous worthies, mentioned in the Hebrews, and of those of the same achievements with them in all ages of the world, even broke his sleep,* by impregnating his soul with high designs of aspiring after their perfections. Oft therefore he hath been heard to excite christians so long to move in the sphere of difficulties, till the sweet severities of christianity (as he often called them) were subdued, and even made familiar; encouraging them with this consideration, *that then they would highly approve their divine love and sincerity, and con-*

ceive a pleasure in those difficult acts, which would equal, yea, exceed the pleasure of their natural actions.

(3) *On the doubting, by resolving and releasing them.*

Neither had he only compassion on those that were out of the way, but also on those who moved heavily on in the way. How often hath he raised and rectified desponding christians, those who are too prone to account doubting, which is their sin, to be their duty and virtue! At once he hath often unloosened them from the straitness of their needless fears and disquiets, and undeceived them by discovering the latent unbelief that did lie lurking in such despondings, assuring them in these words, *that under a sly pretence of humility, they did call in question God's veracity.*

Seventhly, *His singular Piety.*

As respects his singular piety, all who knew him can say much, and yet all but little, considering how much more hath escaped the most tenacious memory, observant eye, and attentive ear. Yet he must be wretchedly inobservant, who, amidst so many and great instances of it, can make no reflections.

How much he conceived it as his own and others' greatest interest, ornament, and felicity herein to excel, will be manifest by his exhortation, which he gave to a young scholar ready to depart to the university, in words to this purpose: *I know, saith he, that you will labour to excel in learning, but be sure to excel as in that, so also and especially in holiness, which will render you one of the most useful and amiable crea-*

tures in the world. Learning will render you, perchance, acceptable to men; but piety both to God and men. By that you will shine only on earth to the clods thereof, and perhaps in some obscure corner of it; but this is an orient pearl, which will shine in you on earth and in heaven, both to God, angels, and men. How much he dwelt on this exhortation, and these apprehensions, will be evident by a pious letter which he sent to the person forenamed, some years after, wherein his words are these: "O study God, and study
 "yourself closely, and pursue holiness more than
 "learning, though both these together make a happy
 "constellation, and are like Castor and Pollux, which,
 "when they appear together, do ever presage good
 "to the mariners." And that it might appear that he did not only commend holiness in the general, but also in the particular and chief instances of a holy life, he excellently proceeds in the same letter, saying, "I much commend unto you those four
 "beautifying lessons, so shortly comprehended in
 "this distich,

"*Spernere mundum, spernere nullum, spernere sese,
 "Spernere se sperni, quatuor ista beant.**"

His contempt of the world.

Happy is the man that can but learn this! When once a man is arrived hereto, he is above the world's reach, and hath attained to the true heroic mind, so as that

* These four things render a man happy,---to despise the world, to despise no one, to despise one's self, and to heed little about one's being despised.

no external commotions will be able to disturb his tranquility; neither will the comforts or crosses here below make any great accession to, or diminution from, the serenity of his spirit. And indeed, nothing was more conspicuous in this blessed saint, than that generous contempt of the world, that true loftiness, and yet profound humility of spirit (of which the lessons aforementioned are but as so many instances) which he recommended unto others. He was much a stranger on the earth, like the kingly prophet; not because with old Barzillai he could not, but would not, taste or comply with its pleasures and delights; but he was chiefly induced by a forced exilement from his desired and delectable habitation, to think on his state of banishment from his heavenly country whilst here militant upon earth, and to solace his thoughts under so great a greivance, by such divine considerations as those which he mentions in the following words of his forenamed letter: *It was, saith he, the divine argument that Epictetus used for comfort in banishment, "Vbique habenda sunt colloquia cum Deo."** I met lately with a passage out of one of the Fathers, which I engraved upon my heart: § Cui Patria solùm placet, nimis dilicatus est; cui omnis terra patria, is fortis est; cui omnis terra exilium, is sanc-

* Converse with God may be maintained every where.

§ He is too delicate who is delighted with his own country only: He is a courageous man whose own country is the world: But he to whom the whole world is a place of banishment, is a saint.

tus est. That's worthy of a saint indeed to account himself always in the state of banishment, whilst in the state of mortality, like the worthies that sojourned even in the land of promise, as in a strange country. Suck a sojourner I wish both myself and you ; and may the moveableness of our present state fix our desires upon that kingdom which shall never be shaken! So far he.

His universal and uniform Obedience.

But to proceed; he declared that his piety was genuine and excellent by its universal regard and extent, as to all God's commands, so to all man's converses and employments; witness his earnest and frequent exhortations, whereby he did daily call upon his people to a constant uniform care over their hearts and ways. Nothing did he more passionately dehort them from, than from that undoing fraud unto their souls, viz. confining their religion to their closets, upon the supposal that in so doing they had there put in sufficient security for their after-conversation, and had bid fair for the divine favour, as if religion had taught men only to kneel, and not how to work; and walk, as if it were solitary or deformed, loving only to move in the private path, and narrow circle of our morning or evening devotions, and so ever before and after to appear least in sight; or as if it were a fury, and so to be limited, and not to be entrusted with the universal conduct of our lives and actions. For many there are who think fit rather to make religion their vassal, than undivided companion; to command it, rather than it should command them, and therefore they make it to keep

its times and places, its postures and due distance, and think not good that it retain to their company, or appear in their words or actions, unless when it may serve the uses of a cloak and cover of hypocrisy and iniquity.

His Care of his Thoughts and Ends, especially morning and evening.

But enough of this digression. These his fore-mentioned momentous exhortations, attended with most excellent motives, designed chiefly to direct them how well to begin and end the day in the fear, and as in the presence of God, by hallowing their thoughts, and (as his words were) “setting their ends aright in the morning, (then making their resolves, and piously fore-casting the work of the day following) and by an impartial survey and examination, in the evening, of their compliance or non-compliance with their foregoing prescriptions unto themselves; whether they obtained their designs and ends, and how they acquitted themselves in the day foregoing.”

His Delight in Self-examination.

Thus by pointing at the two extremes in each day, he happily secured the middle. He tacitly convinced them by his own example and great growth in piety hereby, and expressly by many other eminent instances, how advantageous a course he had recommended to them. To this end he much applauded those two no less excellent than common books, the *Practice of Piety*, and *Scudder's daily walk*. By this course he had taught himself and others, as by

constant though small gains, to arrive to great acquets in christianity, by constant and short accounts, the more accurately to know the state of their souls, and the more easily to discern their progress or declinings; so, as the more to rejoice in and promote the one, and the sooner to put limits to and redress the other. Also he much inculcated on each christian that important duty of fore-appointing and fixing his ends, not only in the general, but as much as might be particularly and explicitly before each action of the day, but especially each solemn action, revolving and conceiving such a thought and resolve as this in his mind,

His frequent and generous Designs.

“This, or this will I do for God, &c.” By which heedful course, he assured the observer that he would hallow all his actions, and reap this treble advantage (to say no more) both of espousing the divine direction and blessing; and of obtaining a surer testimony of his sincerity, and also a stronger motive to diligence, and an awful circumspectness in the right discharge of what he undertook. In compliance with this his excellent exhortation unto others, he knew not a day wherein he arose without some heavenly design of promoting God’s glory, and the good of souls; accounting it a shame that the covetous should arise with such anxious projects of compassing his desired wealth, the ambitious his airy honours and grandeur, the voluptuous his vain pleasures; and that the religious, who have so glorious a prize and trophies before their eyes, should be men

of no projects or designs. If of any, it may be affirmed of him, that, according to his frequent and vehement exhortation thereunto, *he made religion his business*. Which worthy advice, in the same words, he did so often inculcate, that a gentleman meeting a plain honest country man, and discoursing of Mr. *Alleine* cavilled at this passage which he had often heard from him, as appearing unto him absurd and unintelligible, *not knowing how any thing* (as he said) *could be called "a man's business," unless that which is secular;* so foolishly ignorant of the just interest and power of religion is an unhallowed heart, and so apt to quarrel with that wholesome advice, and loath to be in earnest in any thing, unless in the pursuit of vanity or vice.

His Delight in Meditation.

Neither did only the frequent and faithful performance of the two great difficulties of christianity, reproof and self-examination, (consisting of so many complicated self-denials,) proclaim and improve his great piety, but also his so great acquaintance with the delightful work of heavenly meditation. A specimen of his profitable managery of this work, and his great heights herein, he often gave in some of his most excellent devotional and contemplative discourses, both dropped from his mouth, and committed to writing. And as was his delight, so were his converses with those authors who did increase his contemplative pleasure; but particularly he delighted in Mr. Baxter's platform of meditation on the heavenly felicity, in the close of his *Saint's Everlasting*

Rest; great part whereof he so digested as often to cite it with great pleasure, prefacing his citations with these words, "Most divinely saith that man of God, holy Mr. Baxter, &c." And indeed had not his zeal for God's glory, and the salvation of souls, engaged him so much to an active life, he could have even lived and died wholly in divine contemplation and adoration; so much did he delight to shrink within himself, and to abandon the view of the desperate adventures, and antic motions of a mad world; that so, being shut to these, he might only open his soul to God and glory, displaying it to the glorious beams of the sun of righteousness. Therefore did he often delight in his devotions to converse with the fowls of the air, and the beasts of the field, since these were more innocent, and less degenerate than man.

With streams and plants did he delight to walk, and all these did utter to his attentive ear the praise and knowledge of his Creator, and in his unsettled sojournings from place to place he did often (to use his words) *look back with sweetness and great content on the places of his former pleasant retirements*, setting, as it were, a mark upon those which had marvellously pleased him in his solitudes, by administering to his contemplative delight.

His Delight in Praising, &c.

In the close, his great perfection in holiness was manifest in that he loved so much, and lived a life of praise and thanksgiving. Being arrived to some perfection, he desired and designed to antedate the

work and songs of spirits made perfect. Thus David much proclaimed his perfection in piety, by his so great heights in this heavenly employment. And it is evident that saints most devoted to this heavenly repast, are most perfect; because the more men adore and praise, the less they want. For, sad and constant complaints, and pensive thoughts, are the attendants of great wants; and the less men want, the more is their perfection. His exhortations to christians did frequently design to raise them to that sublime life of praise and thanksgiving. Often hath he reproved christians, charging them with the greatest folly and ingratitude in so much neglecting this so pleasing and profitable duty, and in interesting* it so little in their religious exercises. He much condemned them for that too general practice in thrusting so enlarging a part of their devotions into so narrow a room, as only the close of their prayers. Especially did he excite christians to this duty on the Lord's day, as the most proper work for so divine a festival; shaming them with the excellent example of the primitive christians, who welcomed in the sun, that brought so glorious a day as the christian sabbath, with their heavenly hymns to their Creator and Redeemer; and reproving them for so little considering and observing the proper end of its institution. But as it respects his own practice, a great, yea and sometimes the greatest part of his prayer was thanksgiving; and indeed he was never

* In giving it so little a share in their religious exercises.

so much in his element either in prayer, or in preaching, as when he was extolling and adoring the love of Christ, and marvelling at God's infinite goodness in the gift of his Son our Saviour.

Neither did he so gaze upon and adore Christ his Redeemer, and his redemption, as to forget to sound forth the praises of God, the Creator. For often he hath been heard, with admiration and praise, to take notice of the divine power and wisdom in the works of creation; and therefore in the open air, in the private retirement of some field or wood, he delighted to address himself to God in praise, that his eyes might affect his heart, and awake his glory. And here often he hath been heard to say, *that man was the tongue of the whole creation, appointed as the creatures' interpreter, to speak forth, and make articulate the praises which they but silently intimate.*

He much delighted in vocal musick, and especially in singing *psalms* and *hymns*, particularly Mr. Barton's; witness his constant practice after dinner else-where related. In him it may be said, in as high a degree as of most saints on earth, *That each thought was to him a prayer, each prayer a song, each day a sabbath, each meal a sacrament, a foretaste of that eternal repast to which he hath now arrived.*

His Time-redeeming Thrift.

To conclude; that he might effect all the excellent purposes of a holy life, he set a high value on his most precious time; and did, with so wise and holy fore-cast, each day redeem and fill it up, that he did, not only not do nothing, but also not little, though

in a little and short time. All companies did hear him proclaim the price of time; and how excellently and advantageously he did it in public before his ejection, in several most useful sermons on Ephes. v. 16, many that heard him, do to this day, to their great comfort and profit, remember. And the more remarkable was this his holy thrift, because prophetic of his short abode here on earth.

His diligence and holiness in this his sphere of action, was a presage of his speedy translation, as with Enoch, to the sphere of vision and fruition, for a reward of his singular piety; it being not probable that he who made so great a haste to dispatch his heavenly work, should be long without his desired recompence.

CHAP. IX.

*A few Additions to the former Character, by his
Reverend and intimate Friend Mr. R. F.*

HE was a person, with whom for many years I was well acquainted, and the more I knew him, the more I loved and admired the rich and exceeding grace of God in him: I looked on him as one of the most elevated, refined, choice saints, that ever I knew or expect (while I live) to know; and that because (among others) I observed these things of him;

1. A most sincere, pure, and absolute consecration of himself to God in Christ Jesus: his soul had first practised the covenant-dedication, which his hand

afterward prescribed, as a pattern to others, in his father-in-law's book.

There seemed no sinister end, or false affection, to move or sway him in his way; but the good pleasure of the Lord, the edification of his church, and the salvation of souls, were the only marks his eye seemed at all to regard, in his designs and acts: I know no other man's heart; but thus he appeared to my most attentive observation; and so I fully believe concerning him, as much as of any person I ever saw.

2. In this his dedication to God, he was carried with the highest and purest flame of divine love that ever I observed in any: And that love arising from a clear vision of the beauty of divine perfections, especially his gospel love; the sight of which beauty and excellency seemed perpetually to possess and ravish his soul: This love seemed wholly unmixed from all that carnal heat that would carry him into fantastic or indecent expressions; but his mind seemed to be always ascending with its might in the greatest calmness and satisfaction. Thus have I oft observed him in frequent and silent elevation of heart, manifested by the most genuine and private lifting up of his eyes, and joined with the sweetest smile of his countenance, when (I am confident) he little thought of being seen by any: Thus have I oft heard him flow in prayer and discourse, with the clearest conviction, and dearest taste of divine excellency and goodness; and the fullest, highest, and most pleased expression of his being overcome by it, and giving up his all in esteem to it. But this love,

in the greatest demonstration, appeared by his perpetual greedy and unsatiable spending of his whole self for the glory of God, good of the church, and salvation of souls. His head was ever contriving, his tongue pressing, and his whole man acting some design for these; so he lived, and so he died: He laboured and suffered himself into the maladies which ended him: And when he was at Bath, like a perfect skeleton, and could move neither hand nor foot, when his physicians had forbidden him all preaching, and dissuaded him from vocal praying, (as being above his strength,) yet then would he almost daily be carried in his Bath chair to the alms-houses, and little children's schools, and there give them catechisms, teach them the meaning of them, and call them to an account, how they remembered and understood. And he died designing a way how every poor child in Somersetshire might have, learn, and be instructed in the Assembly's catechism; yea, and at the expression of his affection, I cannot but mention, the frequentest extacies or raptures of spirit, wherein he lay on his bed, (when his body was even deprived of all power of its own motion, but with no great pain,) in consideration of divine love to him in general, and in particular that he felt no great pain: Never heard I God so loved, and thanked, in the highest confluences of pleasing providences by others, as he was by him in his affliction for not inflicting great pain upon him; though he was other ways so sad a spectacle of weakness, and looked so like death, that some great ladies oft hindered his

coming into the Bath, the ghastliness of his look did so affright them.

3. His pure and sacred love wrought in him a great spirit of charity and meekness to men of other judgments and persuasions, and great affection towards all such in whom he found any spiritual good. His zeal was all of a building, and no destroying nature; he had too much wisdom to esteem his own thoughts to be the standard of all other men's: His clear light and pure heat made him of a more discerning, substantial, and divine temper than to reject any, (in whom charity could see any thing of a new nature,) for differing from him in the modes or forms of discipline or worship, or in disputable points.

4. Suitably to his high degree of holiness and divine communion, he enjoyed the richest assurance of divine love to himself in particular, and his saving interest in Christ. I believe few men were ever born that attained to so clear, satisfied, and powerful evidence that his sins were pardoned, and his person accepted in Jesus, into eternal life, and had more glorious foretastes of Heaven. I remember once, coming in when he was kneeling down to family prayer, his heart was in that duty carried forth into such expressions of love and praise for the sealings of everlasting love and life, as I never heard before or since; and such as I am fully satisfied none could express, but who had received *the white stone with the new name in it.*

But this was not accidental to him, or unusual; for (whatever clouds he might possibly have, though

I know of none,) yet I am sure for a good time before his death he lived in the very dawning to glory, both in the full assurance of it as his portion, and a spirit of sanctity, love, and praise, like unto it.

And though, in the very hour of his dying, his disease had heated his head; and in his raptures, he had expressions, which at another time his grace and reason would not have used; yet, all the copies I have seen of those transports, in the substance of them, speak only fuller assurance of God's love to him, and his highest returns of love to Christ again.

And I do not at all wonder that a person shining so much with the divine image, and living so uninterruptedly in the clearest and nearest divine communion, should enjoy such assurance of God's everlasting love, and be filled so with joy therein, and making such returns of love and praise thereto.

CHRISTIAN
LETTERS

FULL OF SPIRITUAL INSTRUCTIONS

TENDING TO THE

Promoting of the Power of Godliness,

BOTH IN

PERSONS AND FAMILIES.

BY THE REV. JOSEPH ALLEINE,

Author of "A Call to the Unconverted," &c.

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CHRISTIAN

LETTERS,

Full of Spiritual Instructions, tending to the promoting of
the Power of Godliness, both in persons and families.

LETTER I.

*To his Wife, to dispose her to his acceptance of Taunton, on
small maintenance.*

MY DEAR HEART,—By this time I hope thou hast received mine by Martin, and also an answer touching their resolution at Taunton. My thoughts have been much upon that business of late, so small as the outward encouragements in point of maintenance are; and methinks I find my heart much inclining that way. I will tell thee the principles upon which I go:

First, I lay this for a foundation, That a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things that he possesseth. It was accounted a wise prayer that Agur put up of old, that he might only be fed with food convenient for him. And certain it is, that where men have least of the world, they esteem it least, and live more by faith and in dependance upon God, casting their care and burden upon him. O the sweet breathings of David's soul! the strong actings of his faith and love, that we find come from him, when his condition was low and mean in the world!

How closely doth he cling! How fully doth he rely upon God! The Holy Ghost seems to make it a privilege to be brought to a necessity of living by faith, as, I think, I have formerly hinted to thee, out of Deut. xi. 10, 11, where Canaan is preferred before Egypt, in regard of its dependance upon God for the former and latter rain, which in Egypt they could live without, and have supplies from the river. And certainly could we, that are unexperienced, but feel the thorns of those cares and troubles that there are in gathering and keeping much, and the danger when riches increase of setting our hearts upon them, we should prize the happiness of a middle condition much before it. Doubtless, godliness, with contentment, is great gain. *Seekest thou great things for thyself?* (saith the prophet to Baruch) *Seek them not.* Certainly a good conscience is a continual feast, and enough for a happy life: No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier. We should be but little incumbered with the things of this world, and withal free from a world of entanglements, which, in a great place committed wholly to our charge, would be upon our consciences as no small burden.

Secondly, I take this for an undoubted truth, *That a dram of grace is better than a talent of wealth;* and therefore such a place where our consciences would be free, and we had little to do in the world to take off our hearts and thoughts from the things of eternity, and had the advantage of abundance of means,

and the daily opportunities of warming our hearts with the blessed society and conference of heavenly christians, and no temptations to carry us away, nor discouragements in our walking with God, and the due performance of our duty, is (if we pass a true and spiritual judgment, as the Holy Ghost in scripture would,) without comparison before another place void of those spiritual helps and advantages. Let us think with ourselves, *What though our purses, our estates, may thrive better in a place of a larger maintenance! Yet where are our graces, our souls, like to thrive any way answerable to what they are in this?* We should have but little in the world, and we could live hereafter; but alas! what is this if it be made up to us, as it will surely be in communion with God and his people? If we thrive in faith and love, humility and heavenly-mindedness, as above all places I know we are likely to do there, what matter is it though we do not raise ourselves in the world? The thing! it may well be accounted but mean; but alas! let us look upon it with a spiritual eye, and then we shall pass another judgment of it. Oh! who would leave so much grace, and so much comfort in communion with Christ and his saints, as we may gain there, for the probabilities of living with a little more gentility and handsomeness in the world? It is a strange thing to see how christians generally do judge so carnally of things, looking to the things that are seen and temporal, and not the things that will stick by us to eternity. "What is it worth a year? "Is the maintenance certain and sure? What charges

“are there like to be?” These are the questions we commonly ask first, when we speak of settling. But alas! though those things are duly to be considered too, yet “What good am I like to do; What good am I like to get?” Both which questions, I think, might be as comfortably answered concerning this, as any place in England. These should be the main interrogatories, and the chief things we should judge of a place to settle in by. What if we have but a little in the world! Why then we must keep but a short table, and shall make but a little noise in the world, and must give the meaner entertainments to our friends. O! but will not this be abundantly made up, if we have more outward and inward peace, as we may well count we shall have? One dram of saving grace will weigh down all this. Let others hug themselves in their corn, and wine, and oil, in their fat livings, and their large tables, and their great resort; if we have more of the light of God’s countenance, more grace, more comfort, who would change with them? Surely if Paul were to chuse a place, he would not look so much what it was a year, but would wish us to take that where we might be most likely to save our own and others’ souls.

Thirdly, That the best and surest way to have any outward mercy, is to be content to want it. When men’s desires are over eager after the world, they must have thus much a year, and a house well furnished, and wife, and children thus and thus qualified, or else they will not be content; God doth usually, if not constantly, break their wills by denying them, as one

would cross a forward child of his stubborn humour; or else puts a sting into them, that a man had been as good had he been without them; as a man would give a thing to a froppish* child, but it may be with a knock on his fingers, and a frown to boot. The best way to get riches, is out of doubt to set them lowest in one's desires. Solomon found it so: Alas, he did not ask riches, but wisdom and ability to discharge his great trust; but God was so pleased with his prayer, that he threw in them into the bargain, If we seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness in the first place, and leave other things to him, God will not stand with us for these outwards; though we never ask them, we shall have them as over-measure; God will throw them in as the vantage. And to this suits the experience of our dear Honoratius: "And indeed" (saith he speaking of God,) "Honoratius finds that his only hiding-place
 "and refuge, and a place of succour, from the storms
 "that fall upon him, and hath had such helps at
 "dead-lift there, that he is engaged for ever to trust
 "there. For when he hath been lowest, and in the
 "greatest straights, he hath gone and made his moan
 "heaven-ward, with free submission to the rightful
 "disposer of all things, and he hath been so liberally
 "supplied, as makes him very confident the best
 "way to obtain any mercy or supply is to be content
 "to be without it: And he is persuaded nothing sets
 "God's mercies farther off, than want of free submis-

* Peevish,

sion "to want them." Certainly God will never be behindhand with us. Let our care be to build his house, and let him alone to build ours.

Fourthly, That none ever was, or ever shall be, a loser by Jesus Christ. Many have lost much for him, but never did, never shall any lose by him.

Take this for a certainty, whatsoever probabilities of outward comforts we leave, whatsoever outward advantages we balk, that we may glorify him in our services, and enjoy him in his ordinances more than otherwhere we could, we shall receive a hundred fold in this life. It is a sad thing to see how little Christ is trusted or believed in the world. Men will trust him no farther than they can see him, and will leave no work for faith. Alas! hath he not a thousand ways, both outward and inward, to make up a little outward disadvantage to us? What doth our faith serve for? Have any ventured themselves upon him in his way, but he made good every word of the promise to them? Let us therefore exercise our faith, and stay ourselves upon the promise, and see if ever we are ashamed of our hope.

Fifthly, That what is wanting in the means, God will make up in the blessing: This I take for a certain truth, while a man commits himself and his affairs to God, and is in a way that God put him into. Now if a man have but a little income, if he have a great blessing, that's enough to make it up. Alas! we must not account mercies by the bulk. What if another have a pound to my ounce, if mine be gold for his silver, I will never change with him.

As it is not bread that keeps men alive, but the word of blessing that proceedeth out of the mouth of God; so it is not the largeness of the means, but the blessing of the Lord that maketh rich. Oh! if men did but believe this, they would not grasp so much of the world as they do. Well, let others take their course, and we will take ours, to wait upon God by faith and prayer, and rest in his promise; and I am confident that is the way to be provided for. Let others toil to enlarge their income, (but alas, they will find they go not the right way to work,) we will bless God to enlarge our blessing, and I doubt not but we shall prove the gainers.

Sixthly, That every condition hath its snares, crosses, and troubles, and therefore we may not expect to be without them wherever we be; only that condition is most eligible that hath fewest and least. I cannot object any thing against the proposal of Taunton, but the meanness of the maintenance; but if our income be but short, we can, I hope, be content to live answerably; we must fare the meaner—that will be all the inconvenience that I know; and truly I hope we are not of the nature of that animal that hath his heart in his belly. I know how Daniel thrived by his water and pulse, and think a mean diet is as wholesome to the body, yea, and far less hurtful than a full and liberal is; and persuade myself it would be no such hard matter for us contentedly to deny our flesh in this respect. But let us consider how little and utterly inconsiderable this inconvenience is, in comparison of those we must

reckon upon meeting with, if God cast us into another place, and whether this be not a great deal less than the trouble we shall have for want of comfortable and christian society, for want of the frequent and quickening means we shall here have, in wrangling and contending with the covetous, or else losing our dues, in the railings, and scandalous and malicious reports, that are, we see, raised upon the best by the wicked in most places, in their contentions about their right to the sacraments, in our intanglement in the cares and troubles of this life; &c. all which we should be here exempted from. Upon these and the like considerations, I find my heart very much inclined to accept of their offer at Taunton. I beseech thee to weigh, and thoroughly consider the matter, and tell me impartially thy thoughts, and which way thy spirit inclines, for I have always resolved the place I settled in should be thy choice, and to thy content. The least intimation of thy will to the contrary, shall overbalance all my thoughts of settling there, for I should account it the greatest unhappiness if I should thus settle, and thou shouldst afterwards be discontented at the straitness of our condition. But I need not to have written this; hadst thou not fully signified thy mind already to me, I had never gone so far as I have. Well, the Lord, whose we are, and whom we serve, do with us as it shall seem good unto him! We are always as mindful as is possible of thee here, both together and apart. Captain Luke desired me to entreat thee to meet him one or two hours in a

day, for the commemoration of mercies upon the twenty-third day of every month. Send word to me of their resolution at Taunton, in two letters, least possibly one should miscarry, though never a one did yet. I dare not think of settling under sixty pounds at Taunton, and surely it cannot be less. I have written as well as I could on a sudden my mind to thee. I have been so large in delivering my judgment, that I must thrust up my affections into a corner. Well, though they have but a corner in my letter, I am sure they have room enough in my heart: But I must conclude; the Lord keep thee, my dear, for ever in his bosom. Farewell, mine own soul!

I am, as ever,

Thine own heart,

JOSEPH ALLEINE.

Oxon. May 27th. 1659.

LETTER II.

[Prepare for suffering.]

*To my dearly beloved, the flock of Christ in Taunton, grace
and peace.*

MOST DEAR CHRISTIANS,—My extreme straits of time will now force me to bind my *long* loves in a few *short* lines; yet I could not tell how to leave you unsaluted, nor choose but write to you in a few words, that you should not be dismayed either at our present sufferings, or at the evil tidings that by this time I doubt not are come unto you. Now,

brethren, is the time when the Lord is like to put you upon the trial; now is the hour of temptation come. Oh! be faithful to Christ to the death, and he shall give you a crown of life: Faithful is he that hath called you, and he will not suffer you upon his faithfulness to be tempted above what you are able. Give up yourselves and your all to the Lord, with resolution to follow him fully; and two things be sure of, and lay up as sure grounds of everlasting consolation:

1. If you seek by prayer and study to know the mind of God, and do resolve to follow it in uprightness, you shall not fail either of direction or pardon; either God will shew you what his pleasure is, or will certainly forgive you if you miss your way. Brethren, fix upon your souls the deep and lively affecting apprehensions of the most gracious, loving, merciful, sweet, compassionate, tender nature of your Heavenly Father, which is so great that you may be sure that he will with all readiness and love accept of his poor children when they endeavour to approve themselves in sincerity to him, and would fain know his mind and do it, if they could but clearly see it, though they should unwillingly mistake.

2. That as sure as God is faithful, if he do see that such or such a temptation (with the forethought of which you may be apt to disquiet yourselves, lest you should fall away when thus or thus tried) will be too hard for your graces, he will never suffer it to come upon you. Let not, my dear brethren, let not the present tribulation, or those impending, move you. This is the way of the kingdom: Persecution is one of your land-marks: Self-

denial and taking up the cross is your A B C of religion; you have learnt nothing that have not begun at Christ's cross. Brethren, the cross of Christ is your crown; the reproach of Christ is your riches; the shame of Christ is your glory; the damage attending strict and holy diligence, your greatest advantage. Sensible you should be of what is coming, but not discouraged; humbled, but not dismayed; having your hearts broken, and yet your spirits unbroken; humble yourselves mightily under the mighty hand of God; but fear not the face of man: may you even be low in humility, but high in courage; little in your own apprehensions of yourselves, but great in holy fortitude, resolution, and holy magnanimity, lying in the dust before your God, yet triumphing in faith and hope, and boldness and confidence over all the power of the enemies. Approve yourselves as good soldiers of Jesus Christ, with *no armour* but that of righteousness; *no weapons* but strong crying and tears; looking for no victory but that of faith; nor hope to overcome but by patience. Now for the faith and patience of the saints! Now for the harness of your suffering graces! O gird up the loins of your minds, and be sober, and hope to the end! Fight not but the good fight of faith: here you must contend and that earnestly. Strive not but against sin, and here you may resist even unto blood: now see that you choose life, and embrace affliction rather than sin. Strive together mightily and frequently by prayer: I know you do, but I would you should abound more and more. Share my loves among you, and continue your earnest

prayers for me; and be you assured that I am and shall be, through grace, a willing thankful servant of your souls' concernments.

JOSEPH ALLEINE.

From the common gaol,

May 28, 1663.

LETTER III.

[Warning to Professors.]

*To my most dearly beloved, my Christian Friends in Taunton,
Salvation.*

MOST LOVING BRETHREN,—I shall never forget your old kindnesses, and the entire affections that you have shed upon me, not by drops, but by floods; would I never so fain forget them, yet I could not, they are so continually renowned; for there is never a day but I hear of them; nay, more than hear of them, I feel and taste them. The God that hath promised to them that give to a prophet though but a cup of cold water, shall receive a prophet's reward;—he will recompence your labour of love, your fervent prayers, and constant cries, your care for my welfare, your bountiful supplies, who have given me, not a cup of cold water, but the wine of your loves, with the sense and tidings whereof I am continually refreshed. I must, I do, and will bless the Lord as long as I live, that he hath cast my lot in so fair a place, to dwell in your communion; and especially to go in and out before you, and to be the

messenger of the Lord of Hosts to you, to proclaim his law, and to preach his excellencies, to be his spokesman to you, and to woo for him, and to espouse you to one husband, and to present you as a chaste virgin unto Christ. Lord! how unworthy am I, everlastingly unworthy of this glorious dignity, which I do verily believe the brightest angels in heaven would be glad of, if the Lord saw it fit to employ them in this work! Well, I do not, I cannot repent, notwithstanding all the difficulties and inconveniences that do attend his despised servants, and hated ways, and that are like to attend them; for we have but sipped yet of the cup; but I have set my hand to his plough; my ministry I took up with you, and my testimony I finished with you, though I thought I had espoused you till death: and when I was entered into that sacred office, which through rich grace I was employed in, I told you, in the close of what I spake before the laying of the holy hands upon me, "Most gladly do I take up this office with all the persecution, affliction, difficulties, tribulation, and inconveniencies, that do and may attend it." And, blessed be God, I am, through his goodness, of the same mind still, and my tribulations for Christ do (to him be glory! for to me belongs nothing but shame and confusion of face) confirm my choice and my resolution to serve him with much more than my labours. Verily, brethren, it is a good choice that I have commended to you: Oh! that there might not be one found among you that hath not made Mary's choice, I mean of that

good part which shall never be taken away from you. Brethren, let them take up with the world that have no better portion: be content that they should carry the bell, and bear away the riches and preferments, and glory and splendor of the world. Alas! you have no reason to envy them: verily they have a lie in their right hand. Ah! how soon will their hopes fail them! How soon will the crackling blast be out, and leave them in eternal darkness! They shall go to the generation of their fathers, they shall never see light, like sheep they shall be laid in their graves, and the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning. But for my brethren, I am jealous that none of you should come short of the glory of God. I ambitious for you, that you should be all the heirs of an endless life, the living hopes of the saints, the inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fades not away.

Ah! my brethren, why should not you be all happy? I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy, lest a promise being left you of entering into his rest, any of you should come short of it. O look diligently, lest any man fail of the grace of God. Alas! how it pities me to see this rest neglected! How it grieves me that any of you should fall short of mercy at last! That any of that flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made me in part overseer, should perish; when Christ hath done so much for you, and when his under-officers (through his grace, for we are not sufficient of ourselves,) have done somewhat to recover and save them. Ah! dear brethren, I was in

great earnest with you when I besought you out of the pulpit, many a time, to give a bill of divorce to your sins, and to accept of the match and the mercy that in the name of God Almighty I did there offer to you. Alas! how it pited me to look over so great a congregation, and to think that I could not, for my life I could not, persuade them, one quarter of them in likelihood, to be saved! How it moved me to see your diligence in flocking, not only to the stated exercises, but to the repetitions, and to most hazardous opportunities, for which you are greatly to be commended, since the law forbad my public preaching; and yet to think that many of you that went so far, were like to perish for ever for want of going further! I must praise your diligent attendance on all opportunities. Blessed be God that made a willing ministry and a willing people! For I remember how I have gone furnished with a train! How I went with the multitude to the House of God, with the voice of joy and praises, with the multitude that kept holy-days. The remembrance of which moves my soul; but, O my flock, my most dear flock, how fain would I carry you farther than the external and outward profession! O! how loath am I to leave you there! How troubled to think that any of you should go far and hazard much for religion, and yet miscarry for ever by the hand of some unmortified lust; as secret pride, or untamed passion, or an unbridled tongue, or, which I fear most of all, *a pre-dominant love of the world in your hearts*. Alas! must it be so, and is there no remedy but I must carry

you to heaven's gate and leave you there? Oh! that I should leave the work of your souls but half done; and bring you no farther than the *almost* of christianity! Hear, O my people, hear, although I may command you, upon your utmost peril, in the name of the Lord Jesus, that shall shortly judge you, I beseech you, I warn you as a father doth his children, to look to the settling and securing of your everlasting condition, and for life take heed of your resting in the outer-part of religion; but to be restless till you find the thorough change of regeneration within, that you are quite new in the frame and bent of your hearts: for here is the main of religion in the hidden man of the heart. For Christ's sake, for your souls' sake look to it, that you build upon the rock, that you be sure in the foundation work, that you do unfeignedly deliver yourselves over to the Lord to be under his command and at his dispose in all things. See that you make no exceptions, no reserve, that you cast over-board all your worldly hopes, and count upon parting with all for Christ: that you take him alone for your whole happiness. Wonder not that I so often inculcate this: if it be well here, it is well all; if unsound here, the error is in the foundation, and you are undone. Brethren, I see great trials coming on, when we shall see professors fall like leaves in the autumn, unless they be well settled: therefore it is that I would fain have you look to your standing, and to secure the main. And for you whose souls are soundly wrought upon, O make sure whatever you

do; get and keep your evidences clear! How dreadful would your temptations be, if you should be called to part with all for Christ, and not be sure of him neither. Get a right and clear understanding of the terms of life, which I have set before you in that form of covenanting with God in Christ, that I commended to you: I would that none of you should be without a copy of it. Be much in observing your own hearts, both in duties and out-crying mightily to God for assurance. If you cannot discern your estate yourselves, go to somebody that is able and faithful, and fully open your case, your evidences, and doubts, and be extraordinary strict and watchful in your whole course, and I doubt not but you will quickly grow up to assurance.

I cannot tell how to make an end, methinks I could write all the day to you, but my straights of time are great, and my letter already too long, yet I cannot conclude till I have given you my unfeigned thanks for your most kind and gracious letter. Surely it shall be in store with me, and laid up among my treasures. That God is pleased so to unite your hearts to me, and to make use of me for your edification, is matter of highest joy unto me; as also to see your stedfastness in Christ, your unshaken resolutions notwithstanding all the tempter's wiles. Go on, my dearly beloved, and the Lord strengthen your hands and your hearts, and lift you up above the fears of men. My most dear brother Norman salutes you with manifold loves and respects, earnestly wishing that you may wear the

crown of perseverance; as also brother Turner. The Lord strengthen, establish, settle you, and after you have suffered a while, make you perfect. I leave my brethren in the everlasting arms; and rest,

Your Ambassador in bonds,

JOSEPH ALLEINE.

From the common gaol at Juelchester,

June 13th, 1663.

LETTER IV.

[A Call to the Unconverted.]

To the beloved people, the inhabitants of the town of Taunton, grace, mercy, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

MOST ENDEARED AND BELOVED FRIENDS, I do most readily acknowledge myself a debtor to you all, and a servant of all, and therefore I have sent these few lines to salute you all. My lines did fall in a fair place when the Lord did cast my lot among you; for which I desire to be thankful. God hath been pleased to work a mutual affection between me and you. I remember the tears and prayers that you have sent me hither with, and how I saw your hearts in your eyes. How can I forget how you poured out your souls upon me? And, truly, you are a people much upon my heart, whose welfare is the matter of my continual prayers, care, and study. And Oh! that I knew how to do you good: Ah! how certainly should never a son of you miscarry if I knew taht to save you. Ah! how it pities me to think

how so many of you should remain in your sins, after so many and so long endeavours to convert and bring them in. Once more, Oh! my beloved, once more hear the call of the Most High God unto you. The prison preaches to you the same doctrine that the pulpit did. Hear, O people, hear; he that hath an ear let him hear. The Lord of life and glory offers you all mercy, and peace, and blessedness: Oh, why should you die? Whosoever will, let him take of the waters of life freely. What! miss of life when it is to be had for the taking? God forbid! O my brethren, my soul yearns for you, and my bowels towards you. Ah! that I did but know what arguments to use with you: who shall chuse my words for me that I may prevail with sinners not to reject their own mercy? How shall I get within them? How shall I reach them? Oh! that I did but know the words that would pierce them! That I could but get between their sins and them. Beloved brethren, the Lord Jesus hath made me, most unworthy, his spokesman, to bespeak your hearts for him: and oh, that I knew but how to woo for him, that I might prevail! These eight years have I been calling, and yet how great a part do remain visibly in their sins; and how few, alas! how few souls have I gained to Christ by sound conversion! Once more I desire with all possible earnestness to apply myself to you. I have thought, it may be a sermon out of a prison might do that which I could not do after my long striving with you, but have left undone: come then, O friends, and let us reason together.

Many among you remain under the power of ignorance: Ah! how often have I told you the dangerous, yea, damnable estate that such are in. Never make excuses, nor flatter yourselves that you shall be saved though you go on in this; I have told you often, and now tell you again, *God must be false of his word, if ever you be saved without being brought out of the state of ignorance: If ever you enter in at the door of Heaven, it must be by the key of knowledge; you cannot be saved, except you be brought to the knowledge of the truth.* A people that remain in gross ignorance, that are without understanding, the Lord that made them will not have mercy on them. O why will you flatter yourselves, and wilfully deceive your own selves, when the God of truth hath said you shall surely die if you go on in this estate? Oh, for the love of God and of your souls, I beseech you awake and bestir yourselves to get the saving knowledge of God: you that are capable of learning a trade to live by, are you not capable of learning the way to be saved? Yea, I doubt not but you are capable if you would but beat your heads about it, and take pains to get it. And is it not pity that you should perish for ever for want of a little pains, and study, and care to get the knowledge of God? Study the catechism; if possible, get it by heart; if not, read it often, or get it read to you; cry unto God for knowledge; improve the little you have by living answerable. Search the scriptures daily, get them read to you if you cannot read them. Improve your sabbaths diligently, and I doubt not but in the use of

these means you will sooner arrive to the knowledge of Christ than of a trade. But for thee, O hardened sinner, that wilt make thy excuses that thou hast not time nor abilities to get knowledge; and to sit still without it, I pronounce unto thee that thou shalt surely perish. And I challenge thee to tell me, if thou canst, how thou wilt answer it before the Most High God, when he shall sit in judgment upon thee, that thou wouldst be contented to undergo a seven years' apprenticeship to learn how to get thy living, and that thou mightest have got the knowledge of the principles of religion in half the time, but thou wouldst not beat thy head about it.

Many are swallowed up in mere profaneness: Alas! that there should be any such in a place of such means and mercies! But it cannot be concealed. Many of them proclaim their sin like Sodom, and carry their deadly leprosy in their foreheads. I am ashamed to think that in Taunton there should be so many alehouse-haunters and tipplers, so many lewd gamesters, and rioters, and debauched livers; so many black-mouthed swearers, who have oaths and curses for their common language, so many railers at godliness, and profane scoffers, so many liars and deceitful dealers, and unclean and wanton wretches. O what a long list will these and such like make up, if put together: it saddens me to mention such as these. O how crimson is their guilt! How often have you been warned, and yet are still unreformed, yea loose and profane. Yet one warning more have I sent after you from the Lord, to repent. Return, O

sinner. What! will you run into everlasting burnings with your eyes open?

Repent, O drunkards, or else you shall be shut out of the kingdom of heaven. (1 Cor. vi. 9, 10.) Repent, O swearers, else you shall fall into condemnation. (James v. 12.) Repent, O liars, put away lying, and speak every one truth to his neighbour; else you shall have your part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone. (Rev. xx. 8.) Repent, O company-keepers, forsake the foolish and live; but a companion of the wicked shall be destroyed. (Prov. xiii. 20.) Repent, you deceivers, of your unrighteous dealings, or else you shall have no inheritance in the kingdom of God. (1 Cor. vi. 9, 10.) The Lord, that made us, knows my earnest desire for your conversion and salvation; and that I speak not this to you out of any evil will toward you, for I would lie at your feet to do you good, but out of a sense of your deplorable estate while you remain in your sins. I know there is mercy for you if you do soundly repent and reform, and bow to the righteousness and government of the Lord Christ: But if you go on, and say, you shall yet have peace, I pronounce unto you, that there is no escape, but the Lord will make his wrath to smok against you, he will wound the head of his enemies, and the hairy scalp of such an one as goeth on still in his trespasses.

Others have escaped the gross pollutions of the world, but stick in the form of godliness, and content themselves with a negative righteousness, that they are no drunkards, nor swearers, &c. or at best

with an outward conformity to the duties of religion, or some common workings, instead of a saving. O I am jealous for you that you should not lose the things that you have wrought, and miss your reward for want of sincerity: for the Lord's sake put on, and beware of perishing in the suburbs of the city of refuge. Beg of God to make through-work with you, and be jealous for yourselves; get a right understanding of the difference between a hypocrite and a sincere christian, and try your estates much, but only with those marks that you are sure from the scripture will abide God's trial.

But for you that fear the Lord in sincerity, I have nothing but good and comfortable words: I have proclaimed your happiness in the last token I sent to the town: I mean the abstract of the covenant of grace, upon the privileges, comforts, mercies there summed up, and set before you. May your souls ever live! What condition can you devise wherein there will not be abundance of comfort, and matter of joy unspeakable, to you? O beloved, know your own happiness, and live in that holy admiring, commending, adoring, praising of your gracious God that becomes the people of his praise. I have been long, yet methinks I have not emptied half my heart unto you: I trespass much, I fear, upon the bearer, therefore in haste I commend you to God. The good-will of Him that dwelt in the bush be with you all! The Lord create a defence upon you, and deliverance for you! The Lord cover you all the day,

and make you to dwell between his shoulders! I desire your constant, instant, earnest prayers for me; and rest,

A willing labourer, & thankful sufferer for you,

JOSEPH ALLEINE.

From the common gaol in Juelchester,

July 4th, 1663.



LETTER V.

[Trust in God, and be sincere.]

To my most endeared friends, the servants of Christ in Taunton, grace and peace.

*Most dearly beloved and longed-for,
my joy and crown,*

MY heart's desire and prayer to God for you is, that you may be saved. I know that you are the but of men's rage and malice: but you may satisfy yourselves as David in his patient sustaining of Shimei's fury and curses: It may be the Lord will look upon our affliction, and requite good for their cursing this day. But however it be for that, be sure to hold on your way: your name indeed is cast forth as evil, and you are hated of all men for Christ's sake, for your profession of his gospel, and cleaving to his ways and servants. But let not this discourage you, for you are now more than ever blessed; only hold fast, that no man take your crown. Let not any

that have begun in the Spirit, end in the flesh. Do not forsake God, till he forsake you. He that endureth to the end shall be saved. The promise is to him that overcometh; therefore think not of looking back. Now you have set your hands to Christ's Plough, though you labour hard and suffer long, the crop will pay for all: Now the Lord is trying what credit he hath in the world, and who they be that will trust him. The unbelieving world are all for present pay; they must have ready money, something in hand, and will not follow the Lord when there is like to be any great hazard and hardship in his service. But now is the time for you, my beloved, to prove yourselves believers, when there is nothing visible but present hazard and expence, and difficulty in your maker's service. Now it will be seen who can trust the Lord, and who trusts him not: Now, my brethren, bear you up, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong: Now give glory to God by believing. If you can trust in his promises for your reward now, when nothing appears but the displeasure of rulers, and bonds, and losses, and tribulation on every side, this will be somewhat like believers. Brethren, I beseech you to reckon upon no other but crosses here. Let none of you dream of an earthly paradise, or flatter yourselves with dreams of sleeping in your ease, and temporal prosperity, and carrying heaven too. Think not to keep your estates, and liberties, and consciences too: Count not upon rest till you come to the land of promise. Not that I would have any of you to run

upon hazards uncalled: No, we shall meet them soon enough in the way of our duty, without we will balk it, and shamefully turn aside. But I would have you cast over-board your worldly hopes, and count not upon an earthly felicity, but be content to wait till you come on the other side of the grave. Is it not enough to have a whole eternity of happiness yet behind? If God do throw in the comforts of this life too in the bargain, I would not have you throw them back again, or despise the goodness of the Lord: But I would, my brethren, that you should use this world, as not abusing it; that you should be crucified to the world, and the world to you; that you should declare plainly that you seek a country, a better country, which is a heavenly. Ah! my dear brethren, I beseech you carry it like pilgrims and strangers; I beseech you abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against your souls. For what have we to do with the customs and courses and fashions of this world, who are strangers in it? Be contented with travellers' lots: know you not that you are in a strange land? All is well as long as it is well at home; I pray you, brethren, daily and frequently to consider your condition and station. Do you not remember that you are in an inn? And what, though you be but poorly attended, and meanly accommodated; though you fare hard, and lie hard; —Is this a strange thing? What should travellers look for else? Will you set forth in a journey, and promise yourselves nothing but fair way and fair weather? Shall a man put forth to sea and reckon

upon nothing but the calm? If you were of the world, the world would love his own. But now God hath chosen you, and called you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you: But remember, my brethren, it is your duty to love them, even while they hate you; and to pray for mercy for them that will shew no mercy, nor do any justice for us. This I desire you to observe as a great duty of the present times: And let not any so far forget their duty and pattern, as to wish evil to them that do evil to us, or to please themselves with the thoughts of being even with them. Let us commit ourselves to Him that judgeth righteously, and shew ourselves the children of the Most High, who doth good to his enemies, and is kind to the unkind and unthankful: And what though they do hate us? Their love and good-will were much more to be feared than their hatred, and a far worse sign. Brethren, keep yourselves in the love of God; here is wisdom. O happy souls, that are his favourites! For the Lord's sake look to this, make sure of something: look to your sincerity above all things in the world: let not any of you conclude, that because you are of the suffering party, therefore all is well: Look to the foundation, that your hearts be soundly taken off from every sin, and set upon God above as your blessedness: Beware that none of you have only a name to live, and be no more than *almost christians*. For the love of your souls, make a diligent search, and try upon what ground you stand; for it heartily pities me to think that any of you should be

in so deep, and hazard so much, as these must do that will not cleave to the hated ways of the people of God, and yet lose all at last for want of being thorow and sound in the main work, I mean in conversion and regeneration. None so miserable in all the world as an unsound professor of religion now is; for he shall be hated and persecuted of the world, because he takes up a profession, and yet rejected of God too, because he sticks in a profession. But when once you bear the marks of God's favour, you need not fear the world's frowns: Cheer up therefore, brethren, be strong in the Lord, and of good courage under the world's usage: Fear not, in our Father's house there is bread enough and room enough; this is sufficient to comfort us under all the inconveniences of the way, that we have so happy a home, so worthy a portion, so ready a Father, so goodly a heritage, so sure a tenure. Oh, comfort one another with these words. Let God see that you can trust in his word: let the world see that you can live upon a God. I shall share my prayers and loves among you all, and commit you to the Almighty God. The Keeper of Israel that never slumbereth nor sleepeth, be your watchman and keeper to the end! Farewell.

I am

A fervent well-wisher

of your temporal & eternal happiness,

JOSEPH ALLEINE.

From the common gaol at Juelchester,

July 24th, 1663.

LETTER VI.

[Look out of your Graves upon the World.]

To my most dearly beloved Friends, the chosen of God in,
Taunton, grace and peace.

Most endeared Christians,

MY heart is with you, though I am absent as to my bodily presence from you, and therefore as I have often already, so I have now written to you to stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance, and to call upon you for your stedfast continuing, and vigorous proceeding, in the ways of God. Dear friends, and fellow soldiers under Christ the Captain of our salvation, consider your calling and station, and approve yourselves as good soldiers of Jesus Christ, as men of resolution and courage, be discouraged with no difficulties of your present warfare. As for human affairs, I would have you to be, as you are, *men of peace*: I would have you *armed, not for resisting*, (God forbid!) but for *suffering only*, as the Apostle hints: You should resist, even to the uttermost, striving against sin. Here you must give no quarter, for if you spare but one *Agag*, the life of your souls must go for the life of your sins. You must make no peace, for God will not smile on that soul that smiles on sin, nor have any peace with him that is at peace with his enemy. Other enemies you must forgive, and love, and pray for; (which I again desire you to mind as one special duty of the times;) but for these spiritual enemies, all your affections and all your prayers must be engaged against them; yea, you must admit no

parley: It is dangerous to dispute with temptations. Remember what Eve lost by parleying with satan: You must fly from temptations, and put them off at first with a peremptory denial. If you will but hear the devil's arguments, and the flesh's pleas and fair pretences, it is a hundred to one but you are ensnared by his sophistry. And for this present evil world, the Lord deliver you from its snares. Surely you had need watch and be sober, and use your spiritual weapons dexterously and diligently, or else this world is like to undo you, and destroy you. I have often warned you not to build upon an external happiness, and that you should promise yourselves nothing but hardship here. Oh still remember your station: Soldiers must not count upon rest and fullness, but hunger and hardness. Labour to get right apprehensions of the world. Do not think these things necessary; one thing is needful: You may be happy in the want of all outward comforts. Do not think yourselves undone, if brought to want or poverty: Study eternity, and you will see it to be little material to you, whether you are poor or rich; and that you may never have such an opportunity for your advantage in all your lives, as when you put all to hazard, and seem to run the vessel upon the rocks. Set your enemies one against the other; death against the world; no such way to get above the world, as to put yourselves into the possession of death. Look often upon your dust that you shall be reduced to, and imagine you saw your bones tumbled out of your graves, as they are like shortly

to be, and men handling your skulls, and enquiring "Whose is this?" Tell me of what account will the world be then, what good will it do you. Put yourselves often into your graves, and look out from thence upon the world, and see what judgment you have of it then. Must not you be shortly forgot among the dead? Your places will know you no more, and your memory will be no more among men, and then what will it profit you to have lived in fashion and repute, and to have been men of esteem? "One serious walk over a church-yard," as one speaks, "might make a man mortified to the world." Think upon how many you tread, but you know them not. No doubt they had their estates, their friends, their trades, their businesses, and kept as much stir in the world as others do now. But alas, what are they the better for any, for all this? Know you not that this must be your own case very shortly? Oh the happiness of deceived man! How miserably is he bewitched, and befooled, that he should expend himself for that which he knows shall for ever leave him! Brethren, I beseech you, lay no stress upon these perishing things, but labour to be at a holy indifference about them. Is it for one that is in his wits to sell his God, his conscience, his soul, for things that he is not sure to keep a week, nor a day; and which he is sure, after a few sleepings and wakings more, to leave behind him for ever? Go and talk with dying men, and see what apprehensions they have of the world: If any should come to such as these, and tell them "Here is such

“and such preferments for you, you shall have such titles of honour and delights, if you will now disown religion, or subscribe to iniquity:” Do you think such a motion would be embraced? Brethren, why should we not be wise in time? Why should we not now be of the mind of which we know we shall be all shortly? Woe to them that will not be wise till it be to no purpose! Woe to them whose eyes nothing but death and judgment will open! Woe to them that, though they have been warned by others, and have heard the world’s greatest darlings in death to cry out of its vanity, worthlessness, and deceitfulness, and have been told where and how it would leave them, yet would take no warning, but only must serve themselves to be for warnings to others! Ah, my beloved, beware there be no worldly professors among you, that will part rather with their part in Paradise than their part in Paris; that will rather part with their consciences than with their estates; that have secret reserves in heart to save themselves whole, when it comes to the pinch; and not to be of the religion that will undo them in the world. Beware that none of you have your hearts where your feet should be, and love your Mammon before your Maker. It is time for you to learn, with Paul, to be crucified to the world.

But it is time for me to remember that ’tis a letter, and to contain myself within my limits. The God of all grace stablish, strengthen, and settle you in these shaking times, and raise your hearts above the fears of the world’s threats, and above the ambition of its

favours. My dearest loves to you all, with my fervent desire of your prayers. May the Lord of Hosts be with you, and the God of Jacob your refuge! Farewell, my dear brethren, farewell, and be strong in the Lord. I am,

Yours to serve you in the gospel,
whether by doing or suffering,

JOSEPH ALLEINE.

From the common gaol at Juelchester,

June 21st, 1663.

LETTER VII.

[First, Christian Marks: Second, Duties.]

*To the beloved, my most endearing and endeared Friends, the
Flock of Christ in Taunton, Salvation.*

*Most dearly beloved and longed-for,
my joy and crown,*

I MUST say of you as David did of Jonathan, "Very pleasant have you been unto me, and your love to me is wonderful." And as I have formerly taken great content in that my lot was cast among you, so through grace I rejoice in my present lot, that I am called to approve my love to you by suffering for you; for you, I say. For you know that I have not sought yours but you; and that for doing my duty to your souls, I am here in these bonds, which I do cheerfully accept through the grace of God that strengtheneth me. Oh! that your souls might be quickened and enlarged by these my bonds! That

your hands might be strengthened, and your hearts encouraged in the Lord your God by our sufferings! See to it, my dearly beloved, that you stand fast in the power of the holy doctrine which we have preached from the pulpit; preached at the bar; preached from the prison to you. It is a gospel worth the suffering for: See that you follow after holiness without which no man shall see God. Oh! the madness of the blind world, that they should put from them the only plank upon which they can escape to heaven. Surely the enemies of holiness are their own enemies. Alas for them! They know not what they do. What would not these foolish virgins do at last, when it is too late for a little of the oil of the wise? Oh, for one dram of that grace which they have scorned and despised! But let not any of you, my dear people, be wise too late: Look diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God. Beware that none of you be cheated through the subtlety of satan and deceitfulness of your hearts with counterfeit grace. There is never a grace but hath its counterfeit: And there is nothing in all the world that is more common or more easy, than to mistake common and counterfeit grace for true and saving; and remember, you are undone for evermore if you should die in such a mistake. Not that I would shake the confidence of any sound believer, who upon often and thorough search into the scripture and his own heart, and putting himself upon God's trial, hath gotten good evidence that his graces are of the right kind: Build your confidence

sure. See that you get the knowledge of the certain and infallible marks of salvation; and make sure, by great observing your own hearts, that these marks be in you, and then you cannot be too confident. But, as you love your souls, take heed of a groundless confidence. Take heed of being confident before you have tried. Dear brethren, I would fain have you all secured against the day of judgment; I would that the states of your souls were all well settled. Oh how comfortably might you think of any troubles, if you were but sure of your pardons! Were your salvation out of doubt, no matter though other things were in hazard. I beseech you, whatever you neglect, look to this: I am afraid there are among you that have not made your peace with God yet; that are not yet acquainted with that great work of conversion: Such I would warn and charge before the living God to speed into Christ, and without any more disputes or delays, to put away their iniquities, and to come in and deliver up themselves to Jesus Christ, that they may be saved. It is not your profession, nor performing external duties, nor partaking of external privileges, that will save you. No, no; you must be converted or condemned. It is not enough that you have some love and liking to God's ways and people, and are willing to venture something for them. All this will not prove you sound Christians. Have your hearts been changed? Have you been soundly convinced of your sins; of your damnable and undone condition in yourselves; and your utter inability to lick yourselves whole again

by your own duties? Have you been brought at least to such a sight and sense of sin, as that there is no sin, though agreeable to your constitution, though a support to your gain, but you do heartily abhor it, and utterly disallow of it? Are you brought to such a sense of the beauty of holiness, and of the laws and ways of God, as that you do desire to know the whole mind of God, and would not excuse yourselves by ignorance from any duty, and that you do not allow yourselves in the ordinary neglect of any thing that conscience charges upon you as a duty? Are your very hearts set upon the glorifying and enjoying of God, as your greatest happiness, which you desire more than corn, and wine, and oil? Had you rather be the holiest, than the richest and greatest in the world? And is your greatest delight (ordinarily, and when you are yourselves) in the thoughts of God, and in your conversings with God in holy exercises? Is Christ more precious than all the world to you? And are you willing, upon the thorough consideration of the strictness, and holiness, and self-denying nature of his laws, yet to take them all for the rule of your thoughts, words, and actions? And though religion may cost you dear, do you resolve, if God will assist you by his grace, to go through with it, let the cost be what it will? Happy the man that is in such a case! This is a christian indeed; and whatever you be and do short of this, all is unsound. But you, that bear in your souls the marks of the Lord Jesus above-mentioned, upon you I should lay no other burden, but to hold fast,

and make good your ground, and press forward towards the mark. Thankfully acknowledge the distinguishing grace of God to your souls; and live rejoicingly in the hopes of the glory of God, the hopes that shall never make you ashamed. Live daily in the praises of your Redeemer: Be much in admiring God, and study the worthiness, excellency, and glory of his attributes. Let your souls be much taken up in contemplating and commending his glorious perfection, and blessing yourselves in the goodly portion you have in him: Live like those that have a God, and then be disconsolate if you can. If there be not more in an infinite God to comfort you, than in a prison, or poverty, or other affliction to deject you, our preaching is vain, and your faith is vain. Let the thoughts of God be your daily repast; and never be satisfied, till your hearts run out as freely, naturally, constantly, unweariedly after God, as others do after the world. A little force upon your heart for a while to turn them into this holy channel, may quickly come so to habituate your minds to holiness that they may naturally run that way. But it is time to shut up: Farewell, my dear brethren! The Lord God Almighty be a protection to you, and your exceeding great reward! Farewell in the Lord!

I am,

Yours in the bowels of the Lord Jesus,
JOSEPH ALLEINE.

From the prison at Juelchester,

Sept. 11th, 1663.

P. S. Just now I received your melting letter, to which I am not able now to return an answer, but shall with speed. Your very great affections for me cannot but move me, and make me ready to repeat again the first words of my letter above. The Lord enable me to return something to you for your great loves: I am sensible I have come very short of my duty to you; but I must needs tell you, my bowels are moved with your loves, which I hope I shall greatly prize. Once more farewell!

My dear brother Norman remembers you with much love, desiring that you may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye should shine as lights in the world.

LETTER VIII.

[How to shew love to Ministers, and live joyfully.]

*To the most loving and dearly beloved, my Christian Friends
in Taunton, grace, mercy, and peace, from God our Father,
and from the Lord Jesus Christ.*

Most endeared Brethren,

I HAVE received your moving melting letter, and could not look over such tender expressions of your working affections, without some commotions in my own. I may confidently say, I spent more tears upon those lines, than ever you did ink. Your deep sense of my labours in the ministry I cannot but thankfully acknowledge, and take notice of; yet

withal, heartily and unfeignedly confessing that all was but the duty which I did owe to your precious and immortal souls; which, God knows, are very much short of my duty. The omissions, imperfections, defects, deadness, that accompanied my duties, I do own, I must and will own; and the Lord humble me for them! But all that was of God (and that was all that was good) be sure that you give to God alone. To him I humbly ascribe both the will, and the deed, to whom alone be glory for ever.

My dear brethren, my business, as I have often told you, is not to gain your hearts, or turn your eyes towards me, but to Jesus Christ. His spokesman I am: Will you give your hearts to him; will you give your hands, your names to him; will you subscribe to his laws, and consent to his offices, and be at thorough defiance with all his enemies? This do, and I have my errand. Who will follow Christ's colours; who will come under his banner? This shall be the man that shall be my friend; this is he that will oblige me for ever. Do these letters come to none that are yet un sanctified; to no loose sinner; to no ignorant sinner; to no unsound professor? Oh that there were none such indeed! Oh that I had left no such behind me! But would they do me a kindness, as I believe they would? Oh then, let them come away to Jesus Christ at this call! Lie no longer, O sinner, in thy swill; be no more in love with darkness; stick no longer in the skirts and outside of religion; demur no longer, dispute not and waver no more, halt no further, but strike in through-

ly with Jesus Christ; except nothing, reserve nothing, but come off throughly to the Lord, and follow him fully. And then happy man that thou shalt be, for thou wilt be made for ever; and joyful man that I shall be, for I shall save a soul from death. The earnest and pitiful beggings of a poor prisoner do use to move some bowels: Hear, O friends, will you do nothing for a minister of Christ? Nothing for a prisoner of Jesus Christ? Methinks I hear you answer, "Yea, rather what will we not do? He shall never want while we have it; he shall need no office of love, but we will run and ride to do it." Yea, but this is not that I beg of you; will you gratify me indeed? Then come in, kiss the Son, bow to the name of Jesus; not in a compliment, with cap and knee, but let your souls bow, let all your powers bend sail, and do him homage. Let that sacred name be graven into the substance of your hearts, and lie as a bundle of myrrh between your breasts. Let me freely speak for him; for he is worthy for whom you shall do this thing; worthy to be beloved of you; worthy to have your very hearts; worthy to be admired, adored, praised, served, glorified to the uttermost by you and every creature; worthy for whom you should lay down all, leave all. Can any thing be too much for him? Can any thing be too good for him, or too great for him? Come, give up all, resign all, lay it at the feet of Christ Jesus, offer all as a sacrifice to him, see that you be universally the Lord's; keep nothing from him. I know, through the goodness of God, that

with many of you this work is not yet to do: but this set solemn resignation to the Lord is to be done more than once; and to be followed with an answerable practice when it is done: see that you walk worthy of the Lord. "But how?" In the *fear of the Lord*, and in the *comfort of the Holy Ghost*;—let these two go together. So shall you adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour; and experience the heavenly felicity of a christian's life. While holiness is made the butt of others' persecution, do you make it the white, the mark of your prosecution; that you live it up, as much as others cry it down. O watch, and keep your garments about you; the plain, but comely clothing of humility, the seamless coat of christian unity, the strait and close garment of strictness, mortification, and self-denial, the warm winter-garment of love and charity: this garment will keep you warm in the winter; love will not be quenched by the waters, nor cooled by the nipping frosts of persecution and opposition. Cleave fast to Christ; never let go your hold; cling the faster, because so many are labouring to knock off your fingers, and loosen your hold. Hold fast your profession, hold fast your integrity, hold fast the beginning of your confidence stedfast to the end. If you do but keep your hold, and make good your ground, and keep your way, all that the world can do, and all that the powers of darkness can do, can never do you harm. Keep your own vineyard with constant care and watchfulness, and be sure that there be no inroad made upon your consciences, that the enemy do not get between you

and home, between your souls and God; and then let who or what will assail you without, you need not fear. Let this be your daily exercise, to keep your consciences void of offence: Keep fair weather at home, however it be abroad. But I would not only that you should walk *holily*, but that you should walk *comfortably*: But I need say the less to this, because the fear of the Lord, and the comfort of the Holy Ghost, do lie together. Oh the provision God hath made for your continual joy and comfort! Dear brethren, do but understand your own blessedness, happy men that you are, if you did but know and consider it! Who would count himself poor and miserable that hath all the fulness of the Godhead for his soul? Sound in this deep; can you find any bottom? Take the height of the divine perfections if you can; till then you cannot tell your own felicity. Take a survey of immensity, tell me the longitude or latitude of infinite goodness and mercy, of the eternal Deity: if you can do this, you may guess at your own happiness. Oh christians! live like yourselves, live worthy of your portion, of your privilege, and your glorious prerogatives. I am in haste, and it is time for me to end; however, that you may walk worthy of your glorious hopes, and may live answerably to the mercies you have received from above, is the great desire of

Your souls' fervent well-wisher in the

bonds of affliction and tribulation,

JOSEPH ALLEINE.

From the prison at Juelchester,

September 18th, 1663.

LETTER IX.

[Easy Sufferings.]

*To the most beloved and beloved, my Christian Friends, at
Taunton, salvation:*

DEARLY beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, for whom I am an Ambassador in bonds, what thanks to render to God in your behalf I know not, for your fervent charity towards me, and all the servants of my Lord, for all your labours of love, for all your diligence, and boldness, and resolution, in owning the despised ways and hated servants of the Lord Jesus, in an evil day. The Lord is not unrighteous to forget this: is not this upon record with him, and sealed up among his treasures? Surely the Lord will have mercy upon *Taunton*. I have no doubt but that the God of your mercies hath yet a choice blessing in store for you: Be not weakened by my bonds. Glory be to God in the highest, that he hath accounted me worthy, not only to preach the gospel to you, but also to confirm it by the parting with my much valued liberty, so dear a people, so sweet relations, comforts, conveniences, which I enjoyed in all abundance when I was with you. When I look back upon all the circumstances of the late providence, I must say as they of Christ upon his miracles, *He hath done all things well*; it is all as I would have it; I am fully satisfied in my Father's good pleasure. Verily there is no little honour and happiness, no little peace and privilege in these bonds. Verily all is true that I have told you of the all-sufficiency

of God, of the fulness of Christ, of the satisfactoriness of the promises, of the peace, tranquility, content, and security, that is to be had in a life of faith. Surely, methinks, I should be content to seal to these things at a much dearer rate than this; but my gracious Father will not put me to the hardest lesson at first. Oh what reason have I to speak good of his name! What else should I do all my days, but love, and fear, and preach, and praise so good a God? When I look back upon the gentle dealings of God with me, I often think he hath brought me up as indulgently as *David* did *Adonijah*, of whom it is said, *His father had not displeased him*. I have received nothing but good at the hands of the Lord all my days; and, now he doth begin to afflict, I see so much mercy in this very gaol, that I must be more thankful for this than for my prosperity. Surely the name of the place is, *The Lord is here*: Surely it may be called *Peniel*. Be strong in the Lord, my brethren, be patient, stablish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord draws nigh. In nothing be terrified by your adversaries. Now let those that fear the Lord be often speaking one to another. I hear that satan is practising to send more of you after me: I desire and pray for your liberty: but if any of you be forced hither for the testimony of the gospel, I shall embrace you with both arms. Fare you well, my most dearly beloved: be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace, and the God of love and peace shall be with you. My brethren in in bonds salute you with much affection, rejoicing

to behold your order and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ. Share my heart among you, and know that I am

The willing servant of your faith and joy,

JOSEPH ALLEINE.

From the common gaol at Juelchester,

September 28th, 1663.

LETTER X.

[The love of Christ.]

*To my beloved in the Lord, The flock of Christ in
Taunton, grace and peace.*

Most loving and best beloved,

MY heart is with you, my affections are espoused to you. And methinks I could even say with the apostle, *You are in my heart, to live and die with you.* And who can but love where they have received so much love (and continually do) as I have from you? The Lord requite your love which is great (and if compared with his, but little) with his which is infinite: This is a love worthy of your ambition, worthy of your adoration and admiration. This is the womb that bore you from eternity, and out of which have burst forth all the mercies, spiritual and temporal, that you enjoy. This was the love that chose you; when less offenders, and those that being converted might have been a hundred fold more serviceable to their Maker's glory, are left*

* *Left*, through their own perverseness, in rejecting the offers of salvation: Not *left* on account of any horrible pretended decree of reprobation by the Merciful Father of all mankind. ED.

to perish in their sins: May your souls be filled with the sense of this love! But it may be you will say, "How shall I know if I am an object of electing love?" Least an unbelieving thought should damp your joy, know, in short, that if you have chosen God, he hath certainly chosen you. Have you taken him for your blessedness? And do you more highly prize, and more diligently seek after conformity to him, and the fruition of him than any, than all the goods of this world. If so, then away with doubts; for you could not have loved, and have chosen him, unless he had loved you first. Now may my beloved dwell continually in the thoughts, the views, the tastes of this love. Get you down under its shadows, and taste its pleasant fruits. Oh the provisions that love hath made for you, before the foundation of the world! Ah, silly dust, that ever thou shouldest be thought upon so long before thou wast; that the contrivances of the Infinite Wisdom should be taken up about thee; that such a crawling thing, such a mite, a flea, should have the consultations of the Eternal Deity exercised about thee! Verily his love to thee is wonderful. Lord, what is man? Thou tellest us he is *dust and vanity, a worm, nothing, less than nothing*; how then dost thou love him? Oh wonderful! be astonished, ye heavens, at this! Be moved, ye strong foundations of the earth! Fall down, ye elders; strike up, ye heavenly choirs, and sing yet again, *Glory to God in the highest*: For all our strings would crack to reach the notes of love, praise, and admiration that this love doth call for. Oh that ever emptiness and vanity should

be thus prized! that *Jehovah* should make account of so worthless, so useless a thing as man! that ever baseness should be thus preferred! that ever nothing should be thus dignified! that ever rottenness should be thus advanced; a clod, a shadow, a potsheard, should be thus glorified! Oh brethren, study, I beseech you, not to requite or retaliate (there's impossibility and blasphemy in such a thought) but to admire and imitate his love. Let love constrain you, let love put you upon doing, and prepare for your suffering: Forget not a love so memorable, undervalue not a love so invaluable. I would have you all the captives of love: May the cords of love draw you towards, and knit you to, your Redeemer; may the divided streams be united in him. Alas, that our souls are so narrow, that the waters are so shallow with us! How little, how very little would our love be, if he had it all! Infinitely less than the glow-worm to the sun, or the atom to the universe. And have we any of this little to spare for him? Oh that we might love him with our little all! that all our little powers were engaged for him! Brethren, here is no excess. Oh love the Lord, ye his saints! He is worthy for whom you shall do this. Do but think, what love hath done for you, and think, if you can, what it means to do for you. This is the love that yearned upon you, when in your blood, no eye pitying you. This is the love that took you up, when you were robbed, and wounded, and left for dead, and poured in wine and oil into your wounds. This is that love that reprie-

ved, and spared, and pardoned, when the law had condemned you, and justice would have had you delivered up; and your self-condemning consciences gave up all for lost, concluding there was no hope. This is the love, the expensive love that bought you from the power of darkness, from the eternal burnings, the devouring fire in which you must otherwise have dwelt. Do you not remember how you were hungry, and it fed you, naked and it cloathed you, strangers and it took you in, sick and it visited you, in prison and it came unto you? You were dead and are alive, you were lost and are found. And methinks I see how love runs to meet you, and falls upon your necks, and kisseth the lips that deserve to be loathed, and rejoices over you, and makes a festival and as it were a holiday in heaven for you, inviting angels to rejoice. And if the *friends* do rejoice, how much more doth the *Father*? For saith he, *These my sons were dead and are alive, were lost and are found.* Oh melting love! Ah brethren, how strange is this, that our recovery should be heaven's triumph, the joy of God and angels! that this love should feast us, and feast over us, and our birth-day should be kept in heaven; that this should be the round at heaven's table, and the burden of the songs above—"For this *my son was dead, and is alive and well!*" What remains, but that you should be another manner of people than ever yet you have been, more holy, more humble, more even, more resolved, more lively, more active? Where is your zeal for the Lord of Hosts? Will slender returns suffice you in answer

to such a love? God forbid! But necessity calls me off from going any further. May the love that chose you, and redeemed you, for ever dwell in you, and overshadow you and bear you safe to the Kingdom! In the holy arms of Divine love I desire to leave you. May you live under its daily influences, and be melted and overcome with its warming beams, with its quickening, piercing, powerful rays! My most dear love to you all. See that you live not in a dull, fruitless, lifeless course. Be patient, be watchful, instant in prayer, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. I am very healthful and cheerful, through grace. See that none of these things that befall us move you. Fare you well, my dear brethren; farewell in the Lord.

I am

Yours in the strongest bonds of
affection and affliction,

JOSEPH ALLEINE.

*From the prison at Juelchester,
Octob. 25th 1663.*

LETTER XI.

[Remember Christ crucified, and crucify sin.]

*To the faithful and well-beloved people, the servants of Christ
in Taunton, Salvation.*

Most dear Christians,

I am by office a remembrancer, the Lord's remembrancer for you, and your remembrancer in the behalf of Christ. My business is, with the apostle, *to stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance.* And

what or whom should I remember you of, but your most mindful Friend, your Intercessor with the Father, who hath you always in remembrance, appearing in the presence of God for you? May his memory ever live in our hearts, though mine should die! Oh remember his love more than wine; remember in what a case he found you, and yet nothing could annihilate his heart, nor divert the purpose of his love from you: He loathed not your rags, nor your rottenness. He found you in a loathsome vomit and filthiness, a nasty and verminous tatters; (think not these expressions too odious; no pen can describe, no heart can imagine, the odiousness of sin in his sight, in which you lay and rolled yourselves as the filthy swine in the mire;) yet he pitied you, his bowels were moved, and his compassions were kindled, when one would have thought his wrath should have boiled and his indignation have burned down to hell against you: He loathed not, but loved you, and washed you from your sins in his own blood: Ah monstrous and polluted captives! ah vile and putrid carcasses! that ever the holy Jesus should take the hands of you, and should his own self wash you, and rinse you! Methinks I see him weeping over you; and yet it was a more costly bath by which he cleansed you. Ah sinners! look upon the streaming blood flowing out warm from his blessed body, to fetch out the ingrained filthiness that you by sin had contracted. Alas! what a horrid filthiness in sin, that nothing but the blood of the covenant could wash away! And what a love is Christ's; that, when no soap or nitre could

suffice to cleanse us, when a whole ocean could not wash nor purify us, would open every vein of his heart to do the work! Look upon your crucified Lord: Do you not see a sacred stream flowing out of every member? Ah, how those holy hands, those unerring feet do run a stream to purge us! Alas, how that innocent back doth bleed with cruel scourgings to save ours! How the great drops of blood fall to the ground from his sacred face in his miraculous sweat, in his bitter and bloody agony, to wash and beautify ours! How his wounded heart and side twice pierced, first with love and pity, and then with soldiers' cruelty, do pour out their healthful and saving floods upon us! Lord, how do we make a shift to forget such a love as this! Ah mirrors, or rather monsters, of ingratitude, that can be unmindful of such a friend! Do we thus requite him? Is this our kindness to such an obliging friend? Christians, where are your affections? To what use do you put your faculties? What have you memories for, but to remember him? What have you the power of loving for, but that you should love him? Wherefore serves joy or desire, but to long for him and delightfully to embrace him? May your souls and all their powers be taken up with him; may all the little doors of your souls be set open to him! Here fix your thoughts, here terminate your desires; here you may light your candle and kindle your fire when almost out. Rub and chase your hearts well with the deep consideration of the love of Christ, and it is a wonder if they do not get some warmth.

The Lord shed abroad his love in your hearts by the Holy Ghost: Oh! that this love might constrain you! Brethren, what will you do now for Jesus Christ? Have you never a sacrifice to lay upon his altar? Come, and I will shew you what you shall do,—let your hands be in the blood of your sins, fall foul with them, search them out with diligence, search your hearts and your houses? Whatever iniquities you find there, out with them, put them far from your tabernacles; if you crucify them not, you are not Jesus his friends. God forbid that there should be a lying tongue, or any way of deceit in your shops! That his service should give place to the world in your families! Far be it from any of you, my brethren, that you should be careful to teach your children and servants the way of your trades and callings, and neglect to instruct them in the way of life. Is weekly catechising up in every one of your families? The Lord convince any of you that may be guilty of this neglect! Oh! set up God in your houses; and see that you be not slovenly in closet performances: Beware of serving the Lord negligently; serve not the Lord with that which costs you nothing: Look to it that you content not yourselves with a cheap and easy religion. Put your flesh to it. Be well assured that the religion that costs you nothing, will yield you nothing: Keep up the life of religion in your family and closet duties. Fear nothing like a customary and careless performance of God's service. Judge your own selves whether lazy wishes, idle complaints, and yawning prayers, are like

to carry you through the mighty difficulties that you must get through if ever you come to heaven. When you find yourselves going on in a listless, lifeless, heartless course, and have no mind to your work, ask yourselves, "Is this to take the kingdom of heaven by violence; or can I hope to win it without?" See that you sacrifice yourselves to the Lord, that you deliver up yourselves to him, that now you live to Christ himself. As Christ hath made over his life and death to you, so let it be your care to live and die to him: Labour to forget yourselves and look upon all your enjoyments as Christ's goods; upon your time, parts, strength, as his talents: Look upon yourselves only in the quality of servants and stewards, that are to husband all these for your Lord's advantage, and as those that must give an account. And pray for me that I may take the counsel that I give. I bless the Lord, I want nothing but the opportunity of being serviceable unto you, and to enjoy you: But I hope the Lord will make my bonds for you to be useful to your edification; that is the white I aim at, if I may glorify God, and serve your souls best by being here, I shall never wish to come out, though I confess liberty of itself is very precious. Finally, brethren, farewell: Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace, and the God of love and peace shall be with you. I am

The ready servant of your faith and joy,

JOSEPH ALLEINE.

From the prison at Juelchester,

October 14th, 1663.

My dear brother Norman salutes you tenderly, desiring you to be patient, to stablish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.

LETTER XII.

[For daily self-examination.]

To the most beloved people, the flock of Christ in Taunton, salvation.

Most dear brethren,

I would my time were as long as my heart, that I might open myself to you; but I was not without some discontent diverted, when I was setting myself to have written at large to you. Now I am pinched; however I could not leave my dear charge altogether unvisited, but must needs salute you in a few lines. Brethren, how stands it with you? Doth the main work go on? Do your souls prosper? This is my care: beware that you flag not, that you faint not now, in the evil day. I understand that your dangers grow upon you; may your faith and courage and resolution grow accordingly, and much more abundantly to overtop them.

Some of your enemies I hear are in great hopes to satisfy their lusts upon you: Well, be not discouraged, my dear brethren, but bless the Lord, who, of his abundant mercy, hath so remarkably preserved you so long beyond all expectation. Let it not be a strange thing to you, if the Lord do now call you to some difficulty: Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is. I

plainly see the coal of religion will soon go out, unless it have some better helps to cherish it, than a carnal ministry, and lifeless administration. Dear brethren, now is the time for you that fear the Lord, to speak often one to another: Manage your duties with what prudence you can, but away with that carnal prudence that will decline duty to avoid danger. Is the communion of saints worth the venturing for? Shut not up your doors against godly meetings. I am told that it is become a hard matter, when a minister is willing to take pains with you, to get a place: Far be this from you, my brethren. What! shut out the word! Suppose there be somewhat more danger to him that gives the minister entertainment; is there not much more advantage accordingly? Did not *Obed Edom*, and his house, get the blessing, by entertaining the ark there? Or do you think God hath never a blessing for those that shall, with much self-denial, entertain his messengers, his saints, his worship? Are you believers, and yet are afraid you shall be losers by Christ? Do you indeed not know that he that runs most hazard for Christ, doth express most love to Christ, and shall receive the greatest reward? Away with that unbelief, that prefers the present safety before the future glory.

I left you some helps for daily examination; I am jealous least you should grow slack, and slight, and careless in that duty. Let me ask you, in the name of the Lord, doth never a day pass you, but you do solemnly and seriously call yourselves to an account, what your carriage hath been to God and men?

Speak, conscience, is there never an one, within the hearing of this letter, that is a neglecter of this duty? Doth every one of your consciences acquit you? Oh that they did! Oh that they could! Tell me, would not some of you be put shrewdly to it, if I should ask you when you read or thought over the questions that were given you for your help? And would you not be put to a blush, to give me an answer? And will you not be much more ashamed, that God and conscience should find you tardy? Not that I would necessarily bind you up to that very method, only till you have found a way more profitable, I would desire you, yea, methinks, I can not but deeply charge you, to make daily use of that. Awake, conscience, and do thou fall upon that soul that thou findest careless in this work, and never let him be at rest till thou canst witness for him, that he is a *daily and strict observer of himself*, and doth live in the constant practice of this duty. What shall neither God's charge, nor your promise, nor profit, hold you to your work? Yet I may not doubt, but some of you do daily perform this duty. The Lord encourage you in it: yet give me leave to ask you what you have gained. Are you grown more universally conscientious, more strict, more humble, and more sensible of your many and great defects, than you were before? If so, blessed are you of the Lord; if otherwise, this duty hath been performed but slightly by you. What can you say to this question? Doth your care of your ways abate, or doth it increase, by the constant use of

this duty? If it abate, remember from whence you are fallen, and repent; as good not do it at all, as not to the purpose.

My pen is apt to run, when I am writing unto you. I beseech you, that my letters may not be as so much waste paper to you; may they be provocations to your duty, and medicines to any corruptions that they meet with: Oh that they might find out men's sins, and excite their graces! I have run much farther than I thought I should have done, but now I am called upon, and must shut up. The Lord God be a sun and a shield to you. My most dear love to you all; fare you well in the Lord.

I am

Your Ambassador in bonds,

JOSEPH ALLEINE.

*From the common gaol at Juelchester,
October 20th, 1663.*

LETTER XIII.

[Motives and marks of growth.]

*To the most loving, and best beloved, the servants of Christ
in Taunton, grace and peace:*

Most dear and tender friends,

WHOSE I am, and whom, under God, I desire to serve; to build you up in holiness, and comfort, hath been, through grace, my great ambition. This is that which I laboured for; this is that which I suffer for; and, in short, the end of all my applications to

you, and to God for you. How do your souls prosper; are they in a thriving case? What progress do you make in sanctification? Doth the house of Saul grow weaker and weaker, and the house of David stronger and stronger? Beloved, I desire to be jealous of you with a godly jealousy, lest any of you should lose your ground in these declining times: and therefore I cannot but be often calling upon you to look to your standing, and to watch and hold fast, that no man take your crown. Ah! how surely shall you reap in the end, if you faint not! Take heed therefore that you lose not the things you have wrought; but as you have begun well, so go on in the strength of Christ, and give diligence to the full assurance of hope to the end. It is your thriving, I tell you, I drive at.

Do you need motives? 1. *How much are you behind-hand?* Oh, the fair advantages that we have lost! What time, what sabbaths, sermons, sacraments are upon the matter lost? How much work have we yet to do? Are you sure of heaven yet? Are you fit to die yet? Surely they that are in so much poverty, under so many great wants, had need to set upon some more thriving courses.

Secondly, *Consider what others have gained, whilst we, it may be, sit down by the loss:* Have we not met many vessels richly laden, while our souls are empty? Oh, the rich booties, the golden prizes that some have won, while we have folded the hands to sleep! Have not many of our own standing in religion left us far behind them?

Thirdly, *Consider what a spending time there is coming:* Affliction and tribulation seem to be not far from you: Had you not need to be well stocked against such a day? Go to the ant, thou slug-gard; she layeth up her meat in summer. Happy man that can say to his soul on good grounds, what he vainly spake, *Thou hast much goods laid up for many years:* Who will not victual the castle against the siege, and the ship against the voyage?

Fourthly, *Consider you will find all little enough when you come to die:* The wise among the virgins have no oil to spare at the coming of the bridegroom: Distress, and temptations, and death, will put all your graces to it. How much ado have many poor saints had at last to put into this harbour? David cries for respite, till he had recovered a little more strength.

Fifthly, *Consider how little it will avail you to thrive in your estates, and not thrive in your souls:* Poor Gehazi! what did he get by it when he gained *Naman's* talents, and came off with his leprosy?

Sixthly, *Consider how short your time for gathering, in all probability, is:* The Israelites gathered twice so much manna against the sabbath as they did at other times, because at that time there was no manna fell. Brethren, you know not how long you have to lay in for.

Seventhly, *Consider God's expectations are great from you:* He hath been lopping and pruning you, and now he looks for *more fruit:* He hath had you for some time under his more severe discipline, and therefore expects you should be better proficient.

He hath tried new means with you, and is come to you with a rod; and he will be angry with a witness if he do not find you now to mend. Times of affliction use to be gaining times to God's people; God forbid that you alone should be losers!

Do you ask for marks how you may know your souls to be in a thriving case?

First, If your appetites be more strong. Do you thirst after God, and after grace more than heretofore? Do your cares for, and desires after, the world abate; and do you hunger and thirst after righteousness? Whereas you were wont to come with an ill-will to holy duties, do you come to them as a hungry stomach to its meat?

Secondly, If your pulses beat more even. Are you still off and on, hot and cold? Or is there a more even-spun thread of holiness through your whole course? Do you make good the ground from which you were formerly often beaten off?

Thirdly, If your natural heat do grow more vigorous, and your digestion more quick. Do you take more notice of God in every thing, than heretofore; and let none of his works or words pass without some careful attention, and observation? Do you ponder upon, and pray over, his word and his providences?

Fourthly, If you do look more to the compass and latitude of religion, and mind more than ever the carrying on together the duties of both tables. Do you not only look to the keeping of your own vineyards; but do you begin to look more abroad, and to lay out yourselves for the good of others, and are filled

with zealous desires for their conversion and salvation? Do you manage your talk and your trade, by the rules of religion?

Do you eat and sleep by rule? Doth religion form, and mold, and direct your carriage towards husband, wife, parents, children, masters, servants? Do you grow more universally conscientious? Is piety more diffusive than ever with you; doth it come more abroad with you, out of your closets into your houses, your shops, your fields? Doth it journey with you, and buy and sell for you? Hath it the casting voice in all you do?

Fifthly, If the duties of religion be more easy, sweet, and delightful to you. Do you take more delight in the word than ever? Are you more in love with secret prayer, and more abundant in it? Cannot you be content with your ordinary seasons, but are ever and anon making extraordinary visits to heaven; and upon all occasions turning aside to talk with God in some short ejaculations? Are you often darting up your souls heavenwards? Is it meat and drink for you, to do the will of God? Do you come off more freely with God, and answer his calls and open at his knocks, with more alacrity and readiness of mind?

Sixthly, If you are more abundant in those duties which are most displeasing to the flesh. Are you more earnest upon the duty of mortification? Are you more strict and severe than ever in the duty of daily self-examination and holy meditation? Do you hold the reins harder upon the flesh than ever? Do you

keep a stricter watch upon your appetites? Do you set a stronger guard upon your tongues? Have you a more jealous eye upon your hearts?

Seventhly, *If you grow more vile in your own eyes.* Pride is such a choaking weed, that nothing will prosper near it. Do you grow more out of love with men's esteem, and set less by it? Are you not marvellous tender of being slighted? Can you rejoice to see others preferred before you? Can you heartily value, and love them that think meanly of you?

Eighthly, *If you grow more quick of sense, more tender of sinning, more sensible of divine influences, or withdrawals.* Are you more afraid of sin than ever? Are your sins a greater pain to you than heretofore? Are your very infirmities your great afflictions? And the daily workings of corruption, a continual grief of mind to you?

Ninthly, *If you are acted more by love to God and faith in these promises.* Fear is a slavish principle: do you find that you are acted less by fear, and more by love? Do you look more frequently than ever to the things not seen; and doth the world abate in your esteem? Do you go more out of yourselves? Do you live upon Christ as the spring of your life, and make more use of him upon all occasions than ever? Do you prize the promises more, and hug and embrace them with greater dearness, and live more upon them?

Tenthly, *If you grow of a more publick spirit.* A selfish spirit is unworthy of a christian: are the common concernments of God's glory, and the prospe-

rity of the church, much upon your hearts? Will it no way content you to dwell in plenty, peace, and safety, yourselves, except you may see peace upon *Israel*? Do the wounds in God's name and glory go deep into you? Are the sins of others your sorrows?

Time, and room, and strength, fail to add means too, as I intended. I have trespassed in length already, may these be helps to you to put you forward and to help you in discerning your growth. I must conclude abruptly, and commend you to God. With my dear loves to you all, I take leave, and can only tell you, that I am,

Yours in the Lord Jesus,

JOSEPH ALLEINE.

From the prison at Juelchester,

October 31st, 1663.

LETTER XIV.

[Persuasion to sinners, and comfort to saints.]

To my dearly beloved, the inhabitants of the town of Taunton, grace, mercy, and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Most dearly beloved,

I HAVE been through mercy many years with you, and should be willingly so many years a prisoner for you, so I might eminently and effectually further your salvation. I must again, yea again and again, thank you for your abundant and entire affections to me, which I value as a great mercy, not in order

to myself, if I know my own heart, but in order to your benefit, as I may thereby be a more likely instrument to further your good. Surely, so much as I do value your love, which is not a little, yet had I rather (if I am not unacquainted with myself) be forgotten and forsaken of you all, and buried in oblivion, so that your eyes and hearts might be hereby fixed on Christ, and sincerely engaged to him. Brethren, I have not bespoken your affections for myself: O that I might win your hearts universally to Jesus Christ, though I had lost them for ever! O that I might be instrumental to convert you to Him, though you were diverted from me! I am persuaded that I should much rather choose to be hated of all, so this might be the means to have Christ honoured, and set up savingly in the hearts of you all. And indeed there is nothing great but in order to God; nothing is much material or considerable, as it is terminated in us: It matters not whether we are in riches or poverty, in sickness or health, in honour or disgrace, so Christ may be by us magnified in the condition we are in. Welcome prison and poverty, welcome scorn and envy, welcome pains or contempt, if by these God's glory may be most promoted! What are we for but for God? What doth the creature signify separated from his God? Why just so much as the cypher separated from the figure, or the letter from the syllable; we are nothing, or nothing worth, but in reference to God and his ends. Better were it that we had never been, than that we should not be to him. Better that we

we were dead, than that we should live, and not to him. Better that we had no understandings, than that we should not know him. Better that we were blocks and brutes, than that we should not use our reason for him. What are our interests, unless as they may be subservient to his interest; or our esteem or reputation, unless we may hereby glorify him? Do you love me? I know you do. But who is there that will leave his sins for me? I mean, at my requests. With whom shall I prevail, to give up himself in strictness and self-denial to the Lord? Who will be intreated by me, to set upon neglected duties, or reform accustomed sins? O wherein may you rejoice me? In this, in this, my brethren, in this you shall befriend me, if you obey the voice of God by me, if you be prevailed with to give yourselves up thoroughly to the Lord! Would you lighten my burden? Would you loosen my bonds? Would you make my heart glad? Let me hear of your owning the ways and servants of the Lord in adversity, of your coming in, of your abiding and patient continuing in, the ways of holiness. O that I could but hear that the prayerless souls, the prayerless families among you, were now given to prayer! that the profane sinners would be awakened, and be induced by the preaching of these bonds, who heretofore would not be prevailed with, to leave their drunkenness, their loose company, their lying and deceit, and wantonness, by all the threatenings of God that could be pronounced against them, nor all beseechings, wooings, and entreaties that I was able to use with

them! Will you not be made clean? When shall it once be? How long shall the patience of God wait for you? How long shall the Lord Jesus stretch out his hands toward you? O sinners, cast yourselves into his arms! Why should you die? Why will you forsake your own mercy? Will you perish when mercy woos you? Confess and forsake your sins, and you shall find mercy. Will you part with Christ, and sell your souls to perdition, for a little ease and delight to your flesh; or a little of the gain of unrighteousness; or a little ale or vain mirth; or loose company? Why, these are the things that part between sinners and Christ.

I know many are spun with a finer thread, and are not so far from the kingdom of God as the prayerless, ignorant, sabbath-breaking, intemperate sort are. But I must once again warn you of staying in the suburbs of the city of refuge. O what pity is it that any should perish at the gates! that any should escape the pollutions of the world and do many things, yea, and suffer, it may be too, and yet should fall short of the glory of God, for want of a thorough work of grace! Oh, you halting christians, that halt between Christ and the world, that are as *Ephraim*, like a cake not turned, dough-baked, professors that have lamps without oil, that cry, "Lord, Lord," but do not the will of Our Father which is in heaven! How long will you stay in the place of the breaking forth of children, and stick between the womb and the world? Your religion will carry you among the profane despisers of godliness; but you do own the peo-

ple of the Lord, and do love the ministers and ordinances, therefore all is well. I tell you, godliness is a heart-work, it goes deep and spreads far. Unless the frame of your hearts, and the drifts of your course be changed, unless you be universally conscientious, and unreservedly delivered up to the Lord for all times and conditions, whatever be the cost, you are none of Christ's, how far soever you go in common workings and external performances. Hear then, O people, and let not profaneness swallow you up: let not an almost christianity deceive you, or ignorance carry you blindfold to perdition. Oh the thousands, and ten thousands that have been undone by one of these! Ah! how often have you been warned against them, lest you should split against these dangerous rocks. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem," said Christ, and "O Taunton, Taunton," may I say from him, "how often?" Who can tell how often would God's servants have gathered you, and you would not? Many, very many of you would not. But will you now? Will you *yet* come in? I cannot forbear once more, even out of the prison, to call after poor sinners, and make one tender of mercy more. O come to the waters of life, wash you, make you clean; read with diligent observation the melting passages, Prov. i. 22, to the end, Isa. i. 16, 21. Isa. lv. 6, 10. Oh obdurate sinners, if none of these things move you!

But for you whose very hearts are set against every sin, and are deliberately resolved for God and holiness before all the world's delight; you that have

experience of a thorough change, and are brought to have respect to all God's commandments, who will have none but God for your happiness, none but Christ for your treasure, that must and will have him, come what will come, blessed are you of the Lord. O happy souls, rejoice in the Lord, and again I say, rejoice: let your souls magnify the Lord, and your spirits rejoice in God your Saviour. Live you a life of praise, you are highly favoured of the Lord; your lines are fallen in a pleasant place; only stick you fast to your present choice. Beware lest any man beguile you of your reward: watch and keep your garments about you, lest you walk naked, and men see your shame. Many will be plucking, to pull you out of Christ's hands; but the harder they pluck, the harder do you cling and cleave to him, and the better hold-fast do you take of him: Blessed is he that overcometh.

And now the God of heaven fill you all with himself, and make all grace to abound in you, and toward you, and may he be a sun to comfort you, and a shield of protection to you, and shine with his happy beams of grace and glory on you all: Farewell in the Lord. I am

Yours in the bonds of the gospel,

JOSEPH ALLEINE.

August 28th, 1663.

LETTER XV.

[How to live to God.]

*To the beloved people, the inhabitants of the town of Taunton,
Grace and Peace.*

Most endeared Christians,

TO tell you I love and long for you, seems somewhat needless. I cannot doubt of your confidence that you have a deep share in my tenderest affections: for this let my labours among you, and the hazards for you speak, rather than I myself. Beloved, I am, without a compliment, the devoted servant of your souls' prosperity, and the interest of Christ in you. May the Lord Jesus be set up higher in your hearts! May his name ever live in you, and be magnified by you, and I have what I ask. If this work be not promoted among you, I shall account all my letters but waste paper, and all my pains but lost labour. Brethren, I beseech you, that none of you live to yourselves, for this were directly to cross the very end of Christ's death. For therefore he died that you should not live to yourselves. (2 Cor. v. 15.) Oh live to him that died for you! Live to him that is the God of your life! Live to him that bought your lives with the expense of his own! To him that bought you from destruction; and not only so, but bought your names into the eternal inheritance, reserved in the heavens for you. Will a man be easily persuaded to lose his life? How infinitely tender are men here! And yet, in the worst sense, the most of men do lose their lives, yea, lose them for nothing. Beloved, consider, I beseech you, that life is lost that is not lived unto

God. If you would not lose your lives that you live, see to him who is the end of your lives. Oh remember this, and reckon that day lost which you have not lived unto God! Brethren, how great a part of our lives have we really, alas! too really lost? I beseech you take heed: here you are careful about many things, but beware that other things do not put out this which should be the main of your cares, to wit, the spending your days and strength for him that made you. Would it not be dreadful for a man to find at last when he comes to his account with God, that his whole life, or at least the main of it, had been but damnable self-seeking; that a man should have so many years allowed him by God, and he should at last be found to have been but a false and wicked servant that had set up for himself with his master's stock, and alienated his goods, and turned them to his own use? Well, that you may thoroughly learn the grand lesson of living unto God, take these counsels:

First, *Settle it upon your heart that it is the sum of all your business and blessedness to live unto God: It is your business; for his pleasure you are and were created. What have you else to do but to serve your Maker in your general and particular callings? "What was the candle made for," saith one, "but to be burnt?" Beloved, what else have you strength for, but for God? Doth he maintain servants, and shall not he look for their work? Would you endure it that the servants that you find with meat and wages, should set up for themselves; that they*

should eat your bread, and all the while do their own work? Beloved, God's service is your business, and he made you and keeps you for no other end; and it is your blessedness too. Labour to be under the rooted conviction of this principle, that your very happiness lies in pleasing and honouring of God. Let the sense of this live fresh upon your hearts, and it will regulate your whole course.

Secondly, *Remember what a dangerous, yea, damnable thing it is to live to yourselves:* To make it our main care and business to please and gratify ourselves, or to have applause from and reputation with others, or to grow rich in the world, and greaten ourselves and posterity, is the certain evidence of a graceless heart. And though the godly do make God their principal end in general, yet they must know, that for so much of their lives as is spent besides this end, (which is too too much) they shall suffer loss.

Thirdly, *Labour to keep alive upon yourselves a deep sense of your strong obligations to God.* Often think with yourselves what a righteous, what a reasonable thing it is, that you should, with all that you have, serve the Lord. Beloved, shall not the vessel be for the use of the potter that made it? Shall not the servant trade for his master with whose goods he is entrusted? Do you not fetch all your bread from God's door? Is not he the Rock that begat you; the author of your being and well-being? Is not this he that can crucify you or release you; can save you or damn you at his pleasure? Is it not from him that you fetch every breath? Your interest obliges you

to please him. Why should *Belshazzar's* charge be against you?—that the God in whose hand your breath is, and whose are all your ways, you have not glorified. (Dan. v. 23.)

Fourthly, *Do not only intend God as the general end of your course, but in every solemn action actually mind your end.* Though a man need not, cannot think of his journey's end at every step, yet with care he might come to this, in every solemn action particularly and expressly to mind his end. A man cannot (nor need he) think at every bit that he puts into his mouth, "I will eat this for God:" yet he might, every time he sits down to his table, remember to eat and drink, not to gratify his flesh, but to glorify God, by getting strength for his work. You cannot think of it in every step in your journey, but without intending some glory to God by serving his will in your place and station; and so in your visits and labours.

Fifthly, *Every morning let this be your first and firm resolution, "I will set forth this day in the Name of God."* Your first and last thoughts are of greatest consequence; and therefore I advise you to begin and end with this: whenever you lie down, say in yourselves, "I will make use of my bed as an ordinance of God, that a servant of his may be refreshed and fitted for his work." Whenever you rise up, think "I will spend this day for God, and follow the business of my calling, because I am so appointed by God." (Zech. x. 12.) *And they shall walk up and down in his name, saith the Lord, &c.*

Beloved, I design the sweetness and comfort, as well as strictness of your lives. Live to God as you are directed, and you shall marvellously prosper in both. I am not sure yet, whether or not I shall see you at the assizes, which I earnestly desire to do. I leave all things to our Father's wise disposal, and commending you to God, I divide my loves among you, and so rest

Yours in the bonds of the Lord Jesus,

JOSEPH ALLEINE.

From the prison at Juelchester,

Nov. 14, 1663.

LETTER XVI.

[Motives to set ourselves to please God.]

*To my most dearly beloved, the servants of Christ in Taunton,
Grace and Peace.*

Most dear christians,

YOUR prisoner in the Lord saluteth you with all dearness: you are the care of my heart, the desire of my eyes, the joy of my bonds, and the sweet of my liberty. I am much satisfied in the wise disposal of our Heavenly Father, whether he see it good for me to be a bond-man, or a freeman, so I may but serve your souls to the greatest advantage. Methinks I begin to feel in myself, more than ever, the benefit of your prayers; the influences of heaven, through the riches of free-grace, (to which alone be the praise) being more fully sensible, and sweet upon me. I hope the Lord will restore us one to ano-

ther in his time, much better than we parted; in the mean time, see that you stand fast in the hope of the gospel. The Lord taketh infinite care for you; see that it be your care, the care of your very hearts, to please the Lord. Set your hearts to it as the business of your lives, and the very end of your beings, to walk worthy of the Lord unto all well-pleasing. Set home on yourselves such considerations as these:

First, *It is the very business you were made for, and sent into the world for, to please your Maker.* For his pleasure you are, and were created. Why should the Lord repent that he had made you? (Gen. vi. 6.) What treacherous and damnable falsehood is this, that when the Lord hath given us breath and being, and sent us into the world on purpose on his service, we should, like false and wicked servants, set up for ourselves? Why should your Creator say, he hath made you in vain?

Secondly, *If you set your hearts to please the Lord, you are sure you shall please him.* It is not so with men, all the care in the world will not suffice to please some men. How often do princes forsake their greatest favourites? So that if you set to please men, you are not sure to attain your end at last; yea, rather you are sure not to attain it. But if the Lord doth see your very hearts be set to please him, he will accept you, though you come short. (2 Cor. viii. 12.) Read that sweet passage, 2 Chron. vi. 30, 36, 37.

Thirdly, *It will be a certain sign of your sincerity when the pleasing of the Lord is your greatest business.*

(Col. i. 10.) To such the promise runs, Isa. lvi. 4, 5. It is a distinguishing evidence, truly to seek and prize God's favour, more than corn and wine. (Psal. iv. 6, 7.)

Fourthly, *This will set all in order, and bring all your business to a head, when you have set down this as the one thing necessary, that you are resolved to please the Lord, this will regulate your whole lives, and bring all your business into a little compass.* A christian hath but *one thing* to do in all conditions, and that is to carry it so in his present state, as that he may please God. A man-pleaser!—*O how many hath he to please!* What an endless work hath such an one to do?

Fifthly, *Consider but how careful the man-pleasing parasite, and time-serving hypocrite, is to please men:* And shall not we take as much care to please our God? Oh how doth the flattering courtier study the humour of his prince! Be you as careful to study, and to be acquainted with, the mind of God. What will not men do to screw themselves into the favour of the mighty? Oh that you were but as diligent, and unwearied, and punctual in your endeavours, to get and keep the favour of the Almighty!

Sixthly, *Consider whose favour or displeasure is of that consequence to you, as the Lord's is of.* What, if men should be angry with you,—have they the keys of hell and of death? No, no; fear them not. Can they undo your souls? Can they send you to hell? Alas! they cannot. See that you dread his displeasure that can. Alas! what will their favour avail you? If they be pleased, can they stand between the wrath of God

and you? Can they pardon your sins, save your souls, secure your eternal concernments? Where is all their favour or good-will, when they or you come to die? It will not be worth a rush, when most needed. Therefore, beloved brethren, whatever you do, keep in with God. Resolve upon it. *He must be pleased, though all the world be displeased.* Let it be enough to you to have his good-will: Let this be the *one thing* that you bend yourselves to seek; and if you set to seek it, you may be sure to find it. The messenger stays for me, and so I must here shut up my letter, as Jude doth his—*Ye, beloved, building up yourselves in your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.* Unto his grace I commend you all, and shall add nothing but to share my loves among you, and so rest,

Your ambassador in bonds,

JOSEPH ALLEINE.

Juelchester, Nov. 22d, 1663.

LETTER XVII.

[The worth of holiness].

To the beloved people, the flock of God in Taunton, grace and peace.

Most dear friends, and brethren,

I AM now a prisoner of the Lord for you Gentiles, and therefore have sent these few lines, to beseech you by these bonds, which I gladly endure for your

sakes, to hold forth and hold fast the profession of your faith without wavering. The Lord make you stedfast in the holy doctrine wherein you have been taught: I have not shunned to declare unto you the whole counsel of God. O remember that, by the space of eight years, I ceased not to warn you every one; and kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have taught you publickly, and from house to house, warning every man, and teaching every man, that I might present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. Oh that impenitent sinners would yet remember the invitations, and the obsecrations, and the obtestations, that they have had! Have they not been sought unto? Have they not been entreated? Have they they not been followed from the publick, to their own houses? Hath not the word been brought to their doors? Hath not mercy wooed them? Have they not been called under the wings of mercy? And yet they would not. Oh that they would consider it now in the latter days! (Jer. xxiii. 20.) Oh that they would remember, and repent, that there might be yet an after-harvest! That they would yet come in and live! Are you yet willing to turn? Hear how wisdom calls after you, (Prov. xi.) *How long, ye simple ones, will you love simplicity, and fools hate knowledge? Turn you at my reproof.* But if they will not hear, good were it for them that they had never been born: It shall be more tolerable and better for Sodom and Gomorrah, than for them.

But for you that have taken upon you the profession of strict godliness, I shall only press you to fol-

low on, and press towards, the mark. You have much work yet to do, and God hath given you no time to loiter in. I beseech you to put on. That person that sits down when he hath gotten to that pitch that he thinks will bring him to heaven, is never like to come thither. Grace is one of those things that saith, it never hath enough. Let me urge upon you the Apostle's counsel, (Heb. xii. 14.) *follow after holiness.*

First, Holiness is the choicest ornament: It is an adorning, in the sight of God, of great prize. It is the glory of God, and will you count it your shame? (Exodus, xv.) God is glorious in holiness, and grace is called glory. (2 Cor. iii. 18.) But we may now cry out as the Psalmist, in his complaint, *O ye sons of men, how long will ye turn my glory into shame?* (Ps. iv. 2.) But be of good comfort, the shame of holiness is real glory. How confidently doth Paul shake his chain! (Acts xxviii. 20.) We read of some that did glory in their shame, in a sad sense, that is, in that which was real ground of shame, to wit, their sin. (Phil. iii. 19.) But we meet with others that, in a happy sense, did glory in their shame; that is, in the shame of religion, which is indeed a crown of glory. So did Peter and John. (Acts v. 41.)

Secondly, Holiness is the safest muniment. Grace is not only for ornament, but for use. Righteousness is a breastplate that keeps the vitals, and is sure defence from any mortal wounds. (Ephes. vi. 14.) When the politicians have done their best, with all their politic fetches, it is he *that walketh uprightly, that walketh*

surely. (Prov. x. 19.) *Let integrity and uprightness preserve me,* saith David. (Psa. xxv. 21.) I desire no other protection than innocency. I desire to be no longer safe than these can preserve me. When I must let go my integrity or my safety, I will choose the danger rather than the sin; and yet will never doubt but my integrity will save me harmless, and prevent me for ever coming off a loser. Never persuade me that that man doth choose wisely, or will consult his own safety, that runs upon the displeasure of the infinite God, who is a devouring fire, to fly the danger of man's displeasure. Did you ever read or hear of a man so mad as to run upon the sword's point, to avoid the scratch of a pin? Or to run upon a roaring cannon, rather than endanger his being wet-shot? Why, this is the best wisdom of the distracted world, who will sin rather than suffer, and to save themselves harmless in the world, will run upon God, even upon his neck, and the thick bosses of his buckler. (Job xv. 25, 26.)

Thirdly, Holiness will be found to be your real happiness: Eat of this tree, and you shall indeed be as God. Godliness is God's likeness. The beauty of holiness is this very image; sin is the disease of which holiness is the cure. Pride is the tympany, passion the fever of the mind; how restlessly raging is the mind where they reign? Holiness, humility, meekness, are a present ease, a present cure, if the patient can take but enough. O what peace and tranquility doth holiness work in the mind! *Great peace have they that love thy commandments, and nothing shall of-*

send them. (Psalm cxix. 165.) Read Isa. xlvi. 18, 22, and xxvi. 3, and xxxii. 17. Holiness will be a treasure of riches, (James ii. 5.) and a crown of honour, (Acts xvii. 11.) a paradise of pleasure to you. (Prov. iii. 17.) In a word, holiness is the perfection of man's nature, (Heb. xii. 21.) the communication of the divine nature, (2 Peter i. 4.) the earnest of glory, (Mat. v. 8,) and the very entrance of heaven. (Phil. iii. 20.)

Let me say now to every one of you, as our Saviour to Martha, (John xi. 26.) "Believest thou this?" If you do, live like believers; and do you follow after holiness, as others follow their trades or studies. Let religion be your business, and not a thing by the by with you. Follow as hard upon the pursuit of grace, as if you did indeed believe riches and honour were in it. Count yourselves well, as long as you keep within the line of your duty. Let holiness sit in your lips, and season all your speech with grace. Profess it, own it, plead stoutly and resolve for it; be you advocates for holiness, in an adulterous and wicked generation. Wear it as a robe of honour, when the spiteful world cast the dung of their reproaches at you for it: Let it dwell in your hearts: Let it adorn your houses: Let it be your companion in your closets: Let it travel with you in your journies: Let it lie down and rise up with you: Let it close your eyes in the evening, and call you out of your beds in the morning. Be you the votaries of holiness: Keep her, and she shall keep you.

I shall close with my loves to you all, only because I know you love to hear of my welfare: I must tell

you that goodness and mercy do follow me perpetually every day, and every night—Glory to God in the highest! Dear brethren, fare you well in the Lord. I am

Your devoted servant in the gospel,
whether a bond-man or a free,

JOSEPH ALLEINE.

From the prison at Juelchester,

Dec. 3rd, 1663.

Most dearly beloved,

This was intended for you a week sooner than it comes to be communicated. I purposely write in the middle of the week, that if any opportunity be suddenly offered, I may have somewhat ready for you: But last week I failed of a conveyance. I shall not add any thing further now, but that I shall follow my counsels with my prayers, and shall be a humble intercessor night and day before God for you: To Him I commend you, and to the word of his grace,

Remaining yours while I am,

J. A.

LETTER XVIII.

[1. Try. 2. Rejoice.]

*To the most loving, and best beloved, the Flock of Christ in
Taunton, Grace and Peace.*

Most endeared Friends,

MY heart is solicitous for you. Your spiritual and eternal welfare is the matter of my desires and de-

signs. Let not my beloved think they were forgotten by me, because you heard not from me the last week: Sleep departed from my eyes to write to you at large; but, in the morning, I concluded it best to defer the imparting of it to you for a season, that you might have it a better way. Can a woman forget her child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget; but Christ will earnestly remember you still. Natural parents may be so far unnatural; spiritual parents may be so far carnal, as to forget their own children. I would have you count nothing as certain but Christ's love and care. This you may build upon: You need not fear lest time and distance should wear out the remembrance of you with him: Your names are inrolled in the everlasting decrees of heaven, and a whole eternity hath not been able to wear them out.

Do any of you question whether you are so happy as to have your names recorded above? I shall bring it to a speedy issue: Do you question whether Christ hath taken your names? Whether you are upon his heart? Let me ask you, *Is heaven upon your hearts?* Is the name of Jesus deeply engraven upon your souls? Is his image and superscription there? If you can find that heaven is the main of your cares, that your hearts are set upon it as your home and your country, and that it is your great business to seek it and to secure it, then never doubt, if your hearts be chiefly upon heaven, your names are unquestionably written in heaven. Again, hath Christ recorded his

name in your hearts? Is the name of Jesus the beloved name with you; precious above all; next to your hearts? Is there no other name under heaven so dear and sweet to you? What room hath Christ in you? If any thing be deeper in your hearts than He is, you are unsound. As the Father hath given him, so do your hearts give him a name above every name. Is Christ uppermost with you in your estimations and affections? Then rejoice and leap for joy, for your names are most precious with Christ, if his name be above all dear to you. Once more, hath Christ drawn out his own similitude upon you? Is Christ within you? Doth he dwell in your hearts? Then be sure you have a room in his heart. The image of Christ is in holiness. Is this that which your very hearts are set upon? Do you thirst for holiness? Do you follow after holiness? Do you prize it above all prosperity and worldly greatness? Do you hate every sin, and long to be rid of it as your most irksome burden, and use all God's means against it, as far as you know them? If it be thus with you, Christ hath set his stamp upon your hearts, and so you may be sure he hath set you as a seal upon his heart.

Rejoice then, O christians, and bless yourselves in the happy privilege that you have, in being under Christ's care. Fear not, little flock; stronger is He that is with you, than he that is against you. What! though satan should raise all his militia against you, adhere to Christ in a patient doing and suffering his pleasure, and he shall secure you. The Lord will not forsake you, because it hath pleased the Lord to

make you his people: God hath entrusted you with his Son: You are his Care and his charge. Many will be lifting at you, many will be plucking at you; but fear not, you shall not be moved, none shall pluck you out of Christ's hand; He hath all power. (Mat. xxviii. 18.) Can Omnipotence secure you? He is all treasures. (Col. ii. 3.) Can unsearchable riches suffice you? In a word, he is all fulness. (Col. i. 21.) Can all content you? Can fulness fill you? If so, you are blessed and shall be blessed.

Beloved, we lose unutterably for want of considering, for want of viewing our own privileges and blessedness. O man, is Christ thine, and yet dost thou live at a low rate and comfort? Is thy name written in heaven, and yet dost thou not rejoice? Shall the children of the kingdom, the candidates of glory, the chosen generation, the royal priesthood, be like other men? O christians, remember who and whence you are, consider your obligations, put on a better pace; bestir yourselves, run and wrestle, and be strong for the Lord of hosts; and earnestly, yet peaceably, contend for the faith once delivered to his saints. What! shall we make nothing of all God hath said and done for us? Christians, shall he that hath gotten an enriching office, boast of his booty? Or he that hath obtained the king's patent for an earldom, glory in his riches and honour? And shall the grant of heaven signify little with thee? Or Christ's patent for thy sonship and partnership with himself be like a cypher? Shall Haman come home from the banquet with a glad heart, and glorying in

the greatness of his riches, the multitude of his children, and all the things wherein the king had promoted him above the princes? And shall we turn over our bibles and read the promises, and find it under God's own hand, that he intends the kingdom for us, that he will be a Father to us, that he gives and grants all his infinite perfections to us, and yet not be moved? Beloved christians, live like yourselves; let the world see that the promises of God, and privileges of the gospel, are not empty sounds, or a mere crack. Let the heavenly cheerfulness and the restless diligence, and the holy raisedness of your conversations, prove the reality, excellency, and beauty of your religion to the world. Forget not your prisoner. Labour earnestly for me in your prayers, who am night and day labouring and suffering for you. I can never bless God enough for his most tender and indulgent care for you, which appears so wonderfully in his fatherly protection, and his fatherly provision. See that you receive not the grace of God in vain. Remember with trembling, that of our Lord, *to whom much is given of him much shall be required.* With my most dear loves to you all, I commend you to your Father and my Father, your God and my God, remaining

Yours in all manner of obligations,

JOSEPH ALLEINE.

From the prison of Juelchester,

January 20th, 1663.

LETTER XIX.

[The Felicity of Believers.]

*To the most beloved people, the servants of God in Taunton,
salvation.*

Most endeared christians,

I HAVE longed and waited for a little breathing time, wherein I might write unto you, but I have been oppressed hitherto with so many cares, and such a throng of business, that till now (and scarcely now) I have had no time for respiration, wherein I might sufficiently reflect on you or myself. But although so great a part of Taunton be translated to Juelchester with me, yet I may not, I cannot forget you that are behind.

“Alas, poor Taunton! how should I bewail thee, did I look upon thee only with the eye of sense! Alas for thy wonted liberties, for thy former plenty and variety, wherewith the Lord hath blessed thee! He had spread a table for thee in the midst of thine enemies; bread hath been given thee, and thy waters have been sure. But now a famine seems to threaten thee; and the comforters that should relieve thy soul, are far from thee. Thy shepherds are removed. Thou seest not thy signs, nor thy prophets, and thy wonted helpers are now disabled from giving thee supplies. Alas, how do thine enemies triumph, and thy teachers and thine inhabitants are become their captives! And how great is the city of thy poor, and thine oppressed!”

Such would be the language of sense, if that were suffered to be the speaker. But faith will speak in

another dialect. And therefore amongst my other counsels, that I shall send you, this shall be the first:

Judge not of the present providences, by the conduct of sense, but by the eye of faith. Faith will see that we are then most honoured, when we are most vilified, and reproached, and set at nought for the sake of Christ; and that we are then most happy, when the world hath done its worst to make us miserable. Faith will tell you, that God is a very present help, when you seem quite to fail of help; and will shew you the well of water that is near, when the water in the bottle is spent. What! though you seem to have lost ministers, husbands, friends for a season; faith will tell you, that they are well bestowed, and that it will be both your and their advantage, in the day of retribution.

Brethren, what are you for? Are you for the present world, or for that to come? Are you for your temporal enjoyments, or do you seek for glory, honour, and immortality? If you are for this world, you have made a very imprudent choice in taking up the profession of godliness, and cleaving to and owning the hated ways of the Lord. But if you are for glory, and for eternity, then be of good cheer; all these things do make for us. You are witnesses, how often I have told you of these things, and I can say, with the apostle, "I believed, therefore have I spoken," and therefore I am nothing moved with all these things, nor with the things that do yet further abide me. I believed, and therefore I told you, that you should never be losers by Jesus Christ. Nay, do

I say, I told it you?—You know the Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed you, that the persecuted are doubly blessed; that such should rejoice, and leap for joy because great is their reward in heaven. Hath not God said, that if we suffer with him we shall also reign with him; and that these light afflictions work for us a weight of glory? And if this be true, I pray you, tell me whether God hath not dealt well with us in counting us worthy of this little tribulation for his name? Indeed the sufferings are but little; but verily the reward will not be little. I know whom I have trusted: I am well assured the glass is turned up, and every hour reckoned of our imprisonment, and every scorn and reproach of our enemies is kept in black and white. I believe, therefore do I speak; God is infinitely tender of us, my brethren, though a poor and despicable generation. I value not the pop-gun threats of a frowning world; it is well with us, we are God's favourites. Come, my beloved, let us sit down under his shadow: Here is safety and rest; if God be for us, who can be against us? Verily He bottles all our tears, and tells all our wanderings: He numbers all our hairs; whosoever toucheth us shall not be innocent. Know you not that we are the apple of his eye? Hath not he reprov'd the greatest for his people's sakes, saying, "Reproach not mine anointed?" And so we forget how he loved us. Are not we his jewels? Doth He not own us for his members, for his children?

Ah, what a block doth unbelief make of man! What! do you think that all this doth signify no-

thing? Can you forget your children? Will you suffer your jewels to lie in the dirt, or make no reckoning of them whether they are lost?

Verily I write not this without shaming reflections upon my own stupidity. What! beloved of God, adopted by God!—What! a member of Christ Jesus! A vessel of mercy! An heir of glory! What! and not yet swallowed up in the sense of God's infinite love! Blush, oh my soul, and be confounded before the Most High, and cover thy face with shame.

I remember what the heathen Seneca writes, observing the expressions of God's love to man in his common providence, *Verum est, usque in delicias amamus*, that is, *It is a very truth that we are beloved of God, even as his darlings.*

My brethren, have faith in God. Believe his promises: Walk in the sense of his love. Comfort yourselves in God's love towards you, under all the hatred and envy of men, and the contradiction of sinners that you meet with. Be strong and of a good courage; God is for you. Be assured that he that walketh uprightly, walketh surely: Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together. Now see that you speak often to one another, and build up each other in the holy faith. God knows I cannot do for you as I would; I would have been larger to you, but I cannot. My most dear loves I desire you to share among you. I am greatly yours. The peace that passeth all understanding keep your hearts and minds! I am

Yours to serve you and for you,

with all readiness of mind,

From the prison at Juclchester, JOSEPH ALLEINE.

July 28th, 1665.

LETTER XX.

[What do you more than others?]

*To the most dearly beloved, the Servants of God in Taunton,
Grace and Peace.*

Most loving and entirely beloved,

YOU are a great joy to me. I know not what thanks to render to the Lord for you, when I hear of your constancy, and fidelity, and zeal, in adhering to him and his ways, even in such a time as this. You are highly favoured. Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, that he hath regarded the low estates of his servants; that he should ever indulge you as he hath, and hover over you, even as the eagle stirreth up her nest, and fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings! For so hath the Lord your God dealt with you. He hath kept you as the apple of his eye; and since the streams of Cherith were dried up, yet to this day he hath not suffered the handful of meal to waste, nor the oil in the cruse to fail, but (though you have no certainty to trust to) hath continually provided for you to the full. How should I love and bless the Lord, for this his great grace towards you, while I live! Now I beseech you, my brethren, that you consider the kindness of the Lord, for the Lord your God is He that careth for you: and that you love the Lord your God, and fear him for ever, for he is your life, and the length of your days. And as Job had a holy fear of his children, lest they should have offended; so, my most dearly beloved, I am jealous of you with a godly jealousy, lest any of you should receive this grace of God in vain. I must not

cease to put you in mind, that God doth look for no small matters from you. Remember, my most endeared charge, that the Lord doth look for singular things from you, that there be not a barren tree, nor a dwarf christian among you; where the Lord doth strow much, he looks to gather much; and where he soweth much, he expects to reap accordingly. Whose account, my beloved, is like to be so great as yours? O look about you, and think of the Master coming to reckon with you for his talents; when he will expect no small increase. Beloved, what can you do? How much are you grown? What spoil have you made upon your corruptions? What progress in grace?

Suppose Christ should put that awakening question to you, "What do you more than others?" Beloved, God doth expect more of his people, than of any others in the world besides: And well he may. For

First, *He hath bestowed more on them than on others:* Now where much is given, much shall be required; can you think of that without trembling? He hath bestowed on them singular love more than on others: *You only have I known in all the families on earth.* He hath a distinguishing love and favour for his people, and he looks that his love should be a constraining argument to obedience. Again, he hath laid out a singular care on his people, more than on others: He cares for no man, for nothing in all the world, in comparison of them. He reproveth kings for their sakes.—He will give nations and kingdoms for their ransom. So precious are they in his sight, and so

dearly beloved, that he will give men for them, and people for their life. He withdraweth not his eyes from the righteous, he will not endure them out of his sight. The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous. And *first* the eye of his more accurate observation: God can wink at others, as it were, and overlook what they do with little notice; but he hath a most curious eye upon his people, he marketh their steps, and booketh their words, he weigheth their actions, and pondereth all their goings. And should not they walk more cautiously, and charily,* than any alive, that are under so exact and curious an eye? *Secondly*, the eye of special care and protection. Behold the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him. I will guide thee with mine eye. And should not they be infinitely tender and careful how to please the Lord, who have his singular care laid out on them? In short, God hath bestowed on them singular privileges more than others. These are a peculiar treasure to him above all people, a kingdom of priests, a holy nation, a singular separated people; they dwell alone, they are diverse from all people. When the whole world lies in wickedness, these are called, and chosen, and faithful; washed, and justified and sanctified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God. The rest are the refuse: These the jewels. These are taken, and they are left. Shall not God's priests be cloathed with righteousness, and shall not princes live above the rate of peasants?

* Warily.

Secondly, *He hath entrusted them with more than others:* Not only with the talents of his grace (for the increase whereof they must give a strict account) but also with the jewel of his glory. How tenderly should they walk that are entrusted with such a jewel! Remember, your Maker's glory is bound up in your fruitful walking.

Thirdly, *He hath qualified them more than others.* He hath put into them a principle of life, having quickened them together with Christ. He hath set up a light in their minds, when others lie in darkness. He hath given them other aids than others have, even his Spirit to help their infirmities, when others lie like vessels that are wind-bound, and cannot stir.

Fourthly, *He hath provided for them other manner of things than for others.* These are the little flock to whom it is his good pleasure to give the kingdom; great are the preparations for them. The Father hath prepared the kingdom for them from the foundations of the world. The Son is gone to heaven, on purpose to prepare a place for them. The Spirit is preparing them, and making them meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: And should these be like other people?

Brethren beloved, God and men do expect you should do more than others, see that you be indeed singular. For

(1.) If you do no more for God than others, he will do more against you than others: *You only have I known, therefore will I punish you.* The barren tree in the vineyard must down, whereas had he been in

the common, he might have stood much longer. God looked for grapes from his vineyard, on which he had bestowed such care and cost more than ordinary, but when they bring forth wild grapes, he will lay them waste in a worse manner than the forest. When Christ came to the fig-tree, seeking fruit, and met with none, he curst it from the root; whereas had it been a thorn or bramble, it might have stood as before.

(2.) If you do no more than others, you must look for no more than others: If you should put off God with a common obedience, you must expect to be put off with common mercies.

(3.) Except you do more than others, God will be dishonoured more by you than others.

I have been too long with you, but I am earnestly desirous you should be sensible of God's extraordinary expectations from you. And truly, as God looks for more from his own than others, so he looks for more from you than others, even of his own, because that he hath done more: See that you be shining Christians; that you be strong in the grace of God; that you press toward the mark. But I must conclude. I give my loves among you all, being able to add no more, but that

I am

Yours in fervant loves

and longings,

JOSEPH ALLEINE.

From the prison at Juelchester,

Jan. 2nd, 1663.

LETTER XXI.

[Christian care, faith, self-denial.]

*To the most beloved people, the servants of God in Taunton,
salvation:*

Most endeared Christians,

THE reason why my letters have not of late come so thick as formerly to you, is not because I forget to love you, and to care for you; but because I have been busily taken up in other labors of sundry kinds for you. I am yours, and love to be so; being ambitious not to have dominion over your faith, but to be a helper of your joy. Christ's officers are so your rulers in the Lord, as yet to preach not themselves, but the Lord Jesus Christ, and themselves your servants for Jesus' sake. I have no greater felicity under God, than to serve the good of souls. Brethren beloved, how fares it with your souls? Are they in health? Do they prosper? I wish your temporal prosperity. It is a joy to me to hear when your trade doth flourish. But these are very little things, if we look into eternity. Brethren, my ambition for you is, that you should be cedars among the shrubs, that from you should sound out the word of the Lord; and that in every place your faith to God-ward should be spread abroad; that Taunton should be as a field that the Lord hath blessed; that you should not only have the name, but the spirit, life, power, heat, growth, vigour of christianity among you. Let not Taunton only have the name to live, and be noted for the profession of religion; but see to it, my

brethren, that the kingdom of God be with you. Oh that every one of your souls might be a temple of God! Oh that every one of your families might be a church of God!

Beloved, look to it, that every one that nameth the name of Christ among you do depart from iniquity, secret as well as open, of the heart as well as of the life. Let no man think that to make an out-cry upon the wickedness of the times, and to be of the professing party, will serve his turn; many go to hell in the company of the wise virgins. That no man may be a self-deceiver, let every man be a self-searcher. He that keeps no day-book in his shop, and no account, no record in his conscience, his estate and his soul will thrive both alike.

Beloved, I would that you should remember whither you are a going. If a man be after a few months to be transported into another country, never to return more, he will send over whatever he can, and make the best provision that he may, against he comes into another country. Dear brethren, you are strangers and pilgrims here, and have but a few months' abode in this country; see that you traffick much with heaven. Christ is our common factor; O send over to him what possibly you can. Give alms plentifully; pray continually; be much in meditation and consideration; reckon with yourselves daily; walk with God in your callings; do all the duties of your relations as unto God; live not one day to yourselves, but unto Christ; set forth continually in his name, so shall you be continually transporting into

another world, and laying up treasure in heaven. And O the blessed store that you shall find there, after a few years' diligence in such a holy course! Beloved, while you are here in this world, you are but like a merchant's ship in a strange port, the day for your return is set, and you are to stay no longer than till your freight is ready. Be wise, know your season, improve your time. You are made or marred for ever, as you speed in this one voyage. There is no returning again to this country to mend a bad market. God will call in all his talents. Time shall be no longer. Oh! come in, come and buy now, while the market is open; that you that want, may have grace; and you that have, may have it more abundantly. Go and plead with the Lord Jesus, that he hath bid you come, buy, and eat without money, and without price; that he hath counselled you to come buy of him gold, raiment, and eye-salve. Tell him you are come according to his call, and wait upon him for grace, for righteousness, for light, and instruction. Lay hold on his word, plead it, live upon it. He is worthy to be believed, worthy to be trusted; go out of yourselves to him, unlearn yourselves.

There is a threefold foot that carnal self stands upon, our own wisdom, our own righteousness, our own strength; these three feet must be cut off, and we must learn to have no subsistence in ourselves, but only in Christ, and to stand only on his bottom. Study the excellent lesson of self-denial, self-annihilation. A true christian is like a vine that cannot

stand of itself, but is wholly supported by the prop it leans on. It is no small thing to know ourselves to be nothing, of no might, of no worth, of no understanding or reality; to look upon ourselves as helpless, worthless, foolish, empty shadows. This holy littleness is a great matter; when we find that all our inventory amounts to nothing but folly, weakness, and beggary; when we set down ourselves for cyphers, our gain for loss, our excellences for very vanities, then we shall learn to live like believers. A true saint is like a glass without a foot, that, set him where you will, is ready to fall every way till you set him to a prop: Let Christ be the only support you lean unto. When you are thoroughly emptied and nullified, and see all comeliness to be but as a withered flower, dead, dried, and past recovery; then you will be put upon the happy necessity of going out to Christ for all.

The messenger's haste forceth me abruptly to end here. I can add no more, but my prayers to my counsels; and so, commending you to God and the word of his grace, I rest

The fervent well-willer of your souls,

JOSEPH ALLEINE,

*From the prison of Juelchester,
April 16th, 1663.*

LETTER XXII.

[Right reasons in suffering.]

*To my dearly beloved, the flock of Christ in Taunton, grace
and peace.*

Most loving and dearly beloved,

I KNOW not what thanks to render to you, nor to God for you, for all the unexpressible love which I have found in you toward me; and not terminatively to me, but to Christ in me. For I believe it is for his sake, as I am a messenger and ambassador of his to you, that you have loved me and done so much every way for me; and I think I may say of Taunton, as the psalmist of Jerusalem, *If I forget thee, let my right hand forget her cunning; If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth.*

I would not, my dear brethren, that you should be dejected or discouraged at the late disappointments: For through the goodness of God I am not; but am rather more satisfied than before: and this I can truly say, nothing doth sadden me more than to see so much sadness in your faces. As on the contrary, nothing doth comfort me so much, as to see your cheer and courage. Therefore I beseech you, brethren, faint not because of my tribulation, nor of God's delays; but strengthen the hands and the feeble knees. And the Lord bolster up your hands, as they did the hands of Moses, that they may not fall down till Israel do prevail. Let us fear lest there be some evil among us, that God being angry with us doth send this farther trial upon us. Pray earnestly for me, lest the eye of the most jealous God should

discern that in me which should render me unfit for the mercy you desire. And let every one of you search his heart, and search his house, to see if there be not cause there: Let not these disappointments make you to be never the less in love with prayers, but the more out of love with sin. Let us humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, and he shall exalt us in due time.

And for the enemies of God, you must know also that their foot shall slide in due time. Let the servants of God encourage themselves in their God: For in the things wherein they deal proudly, he is above them. Therefore fret not yourselves because of evil-doers; commit your cause to him that judgeth righteously. Remember that you are bid, if you see oppression of the poor, and violent perverting of judgment and justice in a province, not to marvel at the matter: Verily, there is a God that judgeth in the earth. And you have the liberty of appeals: Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him, and fret not yourselves because of the men that bring wicked devices to pass. Take heed that none of you do, with Peter, begin to sink, now you see the waters rough, and the winds boisterous. These things must not weaken your faith, nor cool your zeal; for they are great arguments for the strengthening of it. What clearer evidence can there be for the future judgment and perdition of the ungodly, and coronation of the just in another life, than the most unjust proceedings that are here upon earth? Shall not the Judge of all the earth see right to be done?

We see here nothing but confusion and disorder, the wicked receiveth according to the work of the righteous, and the innocent according to the work of the wicked. The godly perish and the wicked flourish; these do prosper, and those do suffer. What! can it be ever thus? No; doubtless, there must be a day when God will judge the world in righteousness, and rectify the present disorders, and reverse the unrighteous sentences that have been passed against his servants. And this evidence is so clear, that many of the heathen philosophers have from this very argument (I mean the unrighteous usage of the good) concluded that there must certainly be rewards and punishments adjudged by God in another world.

Nor yet lose your zeal: Now is the time that the love of many doth wax cold. But I bless God it is not so with you: I am sure your love to me is, as true friends' should be, like the *chimney's*, warmest in the winter of adversity; and I hope your love to God is much more, and I would that you should abound yet more and more. Where else should you bestow your loves? Love ye the Lord, ye his saints, and cling about him the faster, now ye see the world is striving to separate you from him. How many are they that go to knock off your fingers! O, methinks, I see what tugging there is. The world is plucking, and the devil is plucking. Oh! hold fast, I beseech you; hold fast, that no man take your crown. Let the water that is sprinkled, yea, rather poured upon your love, make it to flame up the more. Are you not betrothed unto Christ? Oh remember, remember

your marriage-covenant! Did you not take him "for richer for poorer, for better for worse?" Now prove your love to Christ to have been a true conjugal love in that you can love him when most slighted, despised, undervalued, blasphemed among men: Now acquit yourselves, not to have followed Christ for the loaves. Now confute the accuser of the brethren, who may be ready to suggest of the best of you, as he did of Job, *Doth he serve the Lord for nought?* And let it be seen that you loved Christ and holiness, purely for their own sakes; that you can love a naked Christ when there is no hopes of worldly advantage, or promoting of self-interest in following him.

Yet beware that none of you do stick to the ways of Christ and religion upon so carnal an account as this, because this is the way that you have *already taken up*, and you count it a *shame* to recede from *your principles*. I am very jealous lest some professors should miss of their reward for this,—least they should be accounted turn-coats and hypocrites; therefore they will shew a stoutness of spirit in going on, since they have once begun, and cannot with honour retreat. Would you choose holiness and strictness, if it were to do again? Would you enter yourselves among God's poor people, if it were now first to do? Would you have taken up the profession of Christ, though you had foreseen all this that is come and coming? This will do much to evidence your sincerity. But I forget that I am writing a letter, being prone to pass all bounds

when I have thus to do with you. The Lord God remember and reward you and your labours of love. The Eternal God be your refuge, and put under you his everlasting arms. The peace of God that passeth all understanding, keep your hearts. Christ's legacy of peace I leave with you; and rest, with my dear affections to you all,

Your ambassador in bonds,

JOSEPH ALLEINE.

LETTER XXIII.

[Counsel for salvation.]

*To the most beloved, the servants of Christ in Taunton,
salvation.*

Most endeared christians,

MY continual solicitude for your state, will not suffer me to pass in quiet one week without writing to you, unless I am extraordinarily hindered. Your sincerity, stedfastness, and proficiency in the grace of God, is the matter of my earnest desire, and that which I should account myself happy in. I have a longing desire to see the faces of you all, and (besides mine expectation) shall (I trust) speedily have the opportunity to see you at the approaching assizes, which I shall greatly rejoice in, notwithstanding our coming may be otherwise attended with many inconveniencies. In the mean time I send you a few prison counsels. As,

1. *To improve for eternity the advantages of your present state.* Though you are at many disadvan-

tages with respect to the publick ordinances, yet you have many wondrous and most happy privileges, which spiritual wisdom would make no small improvement of. Oh, what a mercy have you, that you may serve God while you will in your families! That you may be as much as you will with God in secret prayer, and holy meditation, and self-examination! I beseech you, consider what a blessing you have above others, that have your health, and a competency of the comforts of this life, and are free from these continual pains, or heart-eating cares, that others are disabled by, from looking after God and their souls, as you may do. Oh, consider what a blessed seed-time you have for eternity! Now be wise, and improve your happy season, your day of grace. Prepare for death, make all sure. Press on towards the mark; lay up in store for yourselves a good foundation against the time to come. In the morning sow your seed; and in the evening withdraw not your hand. Treasure up much in heaven. What profit is it, that you have more than others,—more liberty, more comfort, more health, more wealth, than others, except you love God more, and serve him better than others? Now ply your work, and despatch your business, so as that you may have nothing to trouble you upon your death-beds.

2. *To consider also the temptations and disadvantages of your state.* Study to know your own weaknesses, and where your danger lies, that you may obviate satan, and prevent your miscarrying: There

is no condition but hath its snares. See that you acquaint yourselves with his devices, least you be beguiled by him, and caught in his trap through your own unwariness. You that are well provided for in the world, had need to watch yourselves, least you fall in love with present things, least you be lifted up, least you trust in those carnal props, and put confidence in the creatures, least you warp, and decline, and balk your duties through carnal fear, and the desire of preserving your estates. You that have little in the world, are not without your temptations neither. Oh! take heed of envying others' prosperity, of murmuring and discontent, of diffidence and distrustfulness, of using indirect means to help yourselves. Be sure you make not the world's pressures upon you, an excuse from your daily serving of God in your families and in secret. Set this down as your rule and unchangeable resolution, that God, and your souls, and your families shall be looked duly and continually after, go the world which way it will. Consider what sins your tempers, relations, callings, do most expose you to. Be not strangers to yourselves. Prove yourselves upright in keeping from your iniquities.

3. *To converse often with your dust.* Brethren, we are going, we are going, the grave waiteth for us. Oh! forget not that corruption is your father, and the worm your mother, and your sister. These are your poor kindred that you must shortly dwell with, when you come to your long home. Remember the days of darkness, which shall be many. Take every

day some serious turns with death. Think where you shall be a few days and nights hence. Happy he that knew what to-morrow meant for twenty years together! Believe it, you will find it no little thing to die. Think often how you are provided, how you should receive the sentence of death. Were you never within sight of death? How did it look? What did you wish for most, at that time? What did then trouble you most? Oh! mark these things, and live accordingly. Often ask your hearts, "What! if God should this night require my soul?"

4. *To serve your generation with your might while you have time.* You have but a very little time to bring God any glory here, or to do your friends any good; now up and be doing. Now or never live in the deep and constant sense of the very little time that you have for this world, and the great work you have to do. You are going whence you shall not return. There's no after-game to be played. What! but one cast for eternity, and will you not be careful to throw that well?

Most dearly beloved, I covet after your furtherance in mortification, and growth in grace. And oh, that I could but represent death to you, as shortly it will shew itself; or could but open a window into eternity to you: How effectually would this do the work! Then the cripple would fling away his crutches, and betake himself to his legs. Then the slothful would pluck his hand out of his bosom, and shake off his excuses, and be night and day at his work. Then the Laodicean would be recovered

from his benumbed frame; then we should have no halving in religion, no lazy wishing and complaining; but men would ply the oars to purpose, and sweat at their work.

But oh! unhappy man, how powerfully hath the world bewitched thee! How miserably hath sin unarmed thee, that thou shouldest look no farther than thou canst see, and to be taken up with present things, and forget so momentous concernments as are before thee!

But you, my brethren, lift up yourselves above the objects of sense. May you be men for eternity; and carry it like those that seek for glory, honour, and immortality. I am apt to be too long with you: I commend you to divine grace. My dearest loves among you. I am

Yours in the bonds of the gospel
of our Lord Jesus,

JOSEPH ALLEINE.

*From the prison of Juelchester,
March 5th, 1665.*

LETTER XXIV.

*To the loving and most beloved people, the servants of God in
Taunton, grace and peace.*

Most dearly beloved,

ALTHOUGH I am forced at the present, to be at a distance from you; yet I would not have you ignorant, that the dear remembrance of you is always

fresh with me, and the care of your eternal welfare is always living upon my heart. Therefore as my beloved friends I warn you, and cease not to stir you up by way of remembrance, being jealous for you with a godly jealousy, that no man take your crown. My dearly beloved, I know you have many enemies, and above all, I fear your bosom enemies; and, as the watchman of the Lord, I give you careful warning, and exhort you all not to be high-minded, but fear. Blessed is the man that feareth always. Look diligently, lest any of you fail of the grace of God. You have made much and long profession of the name of Jesus Christ: Oh, look to your foundations, see upon what ground you stand. Look to your sincerity. You must every one of you stand shortly before the judgment-seat of Christ, and be tried for your lives: Oh, try yourselves thoroughly first. It is easy to mistake education for regeneration, and common conviction and illumination for conversion, and a partial reformation and external obedience for true sanctification. Therefore I beseech you every one, to examine whether you are in the faith. Prove your own selves. Tell me not, *you hope you are sincere, you hope you shall go to heaven.* Never put it off with *hopes*; but pray, and try, and search, till you are able to say, *yea, and know you are passed from death to life, and that you know you have a building, not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.*

Suppose I should ask you, one by one, "Where are your evidences for heaven?" Could you make out your claim? Can you bring me scripture-proof?

Can you shew me the marks of the Lord Jesus? What mean you, to live at uncertainties? Brethren, it is an intolerable ignorance, for any of you in these days of glorious light, not to be able to tell the distinguishing marks of a sound believer. And it is intolerable carelessness of your everlasting welfare, if you do not bring yourselves to the trial by these Marks. What! are your hands filled with books, and your ears filled with sermons, that tell you so plainly, from the word of God, how you shall know whether you are in Christ, and are you still to seek? Oh, stir up your own selves. Take heed, lest a promise being left of entering into his rest, any of you fall short of it at last by unbelief. You are a professing people; you pray, and you hear, and you run upon some adventures for Jesus Christ. But, O! look to your sincerity. Look to your principles, look to your ends; else you may lose all at last. Examine, not only what is done, but whence it is done; look to the root, as well as to the fruit. Eye, not only your actions, but your aims. Remember what a strict and severe eye you are under. The Lord Jesus makes strict observation upon all your works and ways. He observes who of you be fruitful, and who be barren and unprofitable. He knows who of you be thriving, and who be declining. He observes who be warm, and who lukewarm; who be sound christians, and who of you have only a name to live.

Return, O backsliding christians. You have lost your former convictions, and lost your former affec-

tions. You are grown remiss in your watch, and your zeal is turned into a kind of indifferency, and your diligence into negligence. Your care is turned into security, and your tenderness into senselessness. Oh! your case is dangerous. The Lord Jesus hath a great controversy with you. Oh, remember whence you are fallen, and repent, and do your first works. Strengthen the things that remain, and are ready to die, Oh, rub and chafe your swooning souls, and ply them with warm applications, and rousing considerations, till they recover their former heat. And know ye from the Lord, that the backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways.

O, ye barren and fruitless trees, behold the axe is lifted up to fell you to the ground, except you bring forth fruits, and those worthy of repentance. May not Christ say to some among you, *Behold these three years have I come, seeking fruit, and finding none?* How is it then that you read not the sentence passed on the fruitless tree? O, sleepy professors, how long will you drive on in this heavy course? How long will you continue in an unprofitable and customary profession? Would you be the joy of our Lord? Why, know ye, that the thriving plant is the master's praise, and his heart's delight. Christians, put on, press towards the mark, be adding to your faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge, &c. See that you grow extensively, in being abundant in all sorts of good works. Be pitiful, be courteous, gentle, easily to be entreated. Be slow to anger, soon reconciled. Be

patient, be ye temperate, be ye cheerful. Study not every one only his own things, but the good of his neighbour. Think it not enough to look to your own souls, but watch for others' souls. Pray for them, warn them, be kind to them, study to oblige them, that by any means you may win them, and gain their souls.

Labour to grow intensively, to do better the things that you did before, to be more fervent in prayer, more free and willing in all the ways of the Lord, to hear with more profit, to examine yourselves more thoroughly, to mind heaven more frequently than heretofore.

And you, O carnal and unsound professors, that reckon yourselves to be in Christ, but are not new creatures; that, because you have the good opinion of the godly, and are outwardly conformable to the ways of God, persuade yourselves you are in a good condition, although your hearts have not yet to this day been renewed. O, repent speedily. Repent, and be converted. What! though we cannot distinguish the tares from the wheat: Yet the Lord of the harvest can. Christ will find you out, and condemn you for rotten and unsound, unless you be soundly renewed by repentance, and effectually changed by converting grace.

Brethren, I fervently wish your salvation; and to this, while I am able, I shall bend my ardent endeavours. I am now taking advice for my health, and hope in some few weeks to be restored to you. In

the mean time, I commend me to your prayers, and you to the grace of God, remaining

Yours in the Lord Jesus,

JOSEPH ALLEINE.

Dorchester, July 7th, 1666.

LETTER XXV.

[The characters and privileges of true believers.]

To the loving and beloved people, the servants of God in Taunton, salvation.

Most dearly beloved,

I LONGED to hear of your welfare, but, by reason of the carrier's intermitting his journeys, could not till now obtain my desires; neither had I an opportunity, till the last week, of writing to you. I rejoiced to hear, by Mr. Ford, of God's continual goodness towards you; He is your shepherd, and therefore it is you that you do not want. Me you have not always, but he is ever with you; his rod and staff shall comfort you. Nay more than all this, you may hence conclude comfortably for all times, yea, for the whole eternity to come. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow you all the days of your lives, and you shall dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

In this, my dear brethren, in this rejoice, and again I say, rejoice, that God is engaged in so near and so sweet relation to you. Doubtless, your souls shall lodge in goodness, and be provided for

carefully, and lie down in everlasting safety, that have the Almighty for your Shepherd. Blessed are the flock of his hands, and the sheep of his pasture! Happy is the people that is in such a case.

But who are Christ's sheep? Not all professors. I beseech you, take heed how you rest in profession. It is not *profession*, but *conversion*, that turns a man from a swine to a sheep. Let none of you be deceived: nor flatter yourselves that, because you bear the name of christians, and do many things, and have escaped the open gross pollutions of the world, therefore you are surely among the number of Christ's true sheep. All this you may attain to, and yet be but washed swine; here must be an inward, deep, and thorough, and universal change upon your natures, dispositions, inclinations, or else you are not Christ's sheep.

In a word, if you will be put out of doubt whether you are his sheep or not, you must try it by this certain mark that Christ sets upon all his sheep, even your *sanctification*. You that will stand to the trial, answer me truly and deliberately to these questions: Do you hate every sin, as the sheep doth the mire? Do you regard no iniquity in your hearts? Do you strive against, and oppose all sin, though it may seem ever so necessary, ever so natural to you, or have you not your secret haunts of evil? For every swine will have his swill. Do you abstain from sin out of fear, or out of dislike? Are you at peace with no sin, or do you not hide some iniquity, as a sweet morsel under your tongue? Is there not some

practice that you are not willing to know is a sin, for fear you should be forced to leave it? Do you love the commandment that forbids your sin; or do you not wish it out of the bible, as that evil man wished God had never made the seventh commandment? Again, How do you stand affected towards holiness? Do you love it? Do you choose it? Do you hunger and thirst after it, and desire it more than any temporal good? Have you chosen the way of God's precepts; and had rather live holily than be allowed to live in your sins? Do you, in your very hearts, prefer a godly strict life, in communion with and conformity to God, before the greatest prosperity of the world? Do you choose holiness, not out of bare necessity, because you cannot go to heaven without it, but out of *love* to it, and from a deep sense that you have of the surpassing excellency, and loveliness, and beauty of it? If it be thus with you, you are the persons that the Lord Jesus hath marked for his sheep.

And now, come, ye blessed; all that have this mark upon you, come and understand your happiness. You are marked out for preservation; and let it go how it will with the rest, this I know, it shall go well with you that fear the Lord, that fear before him. You are the separated ones, the sealed ones, upon whom the angel hath set the seal of the living God; and so you are redeemed unto God from among men, being the first-fruits unto God, and unto the Lamb, and have your Father's name written in your foreheads.

Hear, O beloved flock, I may give you the salutation of the angels, *Hail, you are highly favoured of the Lord. Blessed are you among men;* though you are but poor and despised, and like little Benjamin among the thousands of Judah, you carry away the blessing and the privilege from all the rest. God hath done more for the least of you than for the whole world of mankind besides, put all their mercies together. *Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Blessed are you of the Lord; for yours is the kingdom of heaven.* All that the scripture speaks of that kingdom of glory, that kingdom of peace, of righteousness, that everlasting kingdom, it speaks it all to you. Behold your inheritance. See that you believe. What! know you not your own selves? You are the sons of God, inheritors of the kingdom of heaven, joint heirs with Christ the Lord of Glory. Do you believe this? Take heed you make not God a liar. His word is nigh you; have you not the writings in your hands? Do I speak any thing but what God hath spoken? Shall I tell you of the thing which shall be hereafter? Why thus it shall be:—The Son of man shall come in his glory, and all his holy angels with him: Then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory, and he shall separate you as a shepherd divideth the sheep from the goats, and he shall set you at his own right hand: Then shall the King say, *Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you.*

Do you believe yet? Do you thoroughly believe? If so, then my work is done, then I need not bid

you *rejoice*, nor bid you be *thankful*, only *believe*. Do this, and do all. *Believe*, and you *will rejoice* with joy unspeakable, and full of glory. *Believe*, and you will be *fruitful*, and shew your faith by your works. *Believe*, and you will *love*, for faith worketh by love. In a word, keep these things upon your hearts by daily and lively consideration; and this will bring heaven into your souls, and engage you to all manner of holy conversation and godliness. This will mortify you to the world, the grand enemy of which I advise, nay, I charge you to beware. When Saul had gotten his kingdom, he left off taking care for the asses. O, remember yours is the kingdom. What are you the better, that you have all this in your bibles, if you do not weigh it by frequent and serious consideration, and ponder these sayings in your hearts? Beloved, I have written these things to *you* that your joy may be full. And now, peace I leave with *you*. I am Christ's Ambassador to you, an Ambassador of peace; his peace I pronounce unto you. In his name I bless you. Farewell in the Lord. I am

The fervent well-willer of your souls,

JOSEPH ALLEINE.

Devises, June 29th, 1666.

LETTER XXVI.

[Of the second coming of Christ.]

To the faithful, and beloved, the servants of God in Taunton,
grace and peace.

Loving and most dearly beloved,

THOUGH I trust my bonds do preach to you, yet methinks that doth not suffice me; but the conscience of my duty, and the workings of my heart towards you, are still calling upon me to stir you up by way of remembrance, notwithstanding you know and be established in the present truth. And if Paul do call upon so great an evangelist as Timothy, to remember that *Jesus was raised from the dead according to the gospel*; why should not I be often calling upon myself, and upon you, my dearly beloved, to remember and meditate upon, and closely apply the great and weighty truths of the gospel, which you have already received? And in truth, I perceive in *myself and you* another manner of heat and warmth in the insisting upon the *plainest principles* of Christianity, and the setting *them* home upon *mine own heart and yours*, than in dwelling upon any more *abstruse speculations*, in the clearest handling of which the preacher may seem to be too much like the winter nights, very bright, but very cold.

But now, my brethren, I shall not with Paul call upon you so much to remember the resurrection of Christ, as the *return* of Christ: *Behold he cometh in the clouds, and every eye shall see him*; your eyes and

mine eyes. And all the tribes of the earth shall mourn because of him: But we shall lift up our heads, because the day of our redemption draweth nigh. This is the day I look for, and wait for, and have laid up all my hopes in. If the Lord return not, I profess myself undone; my preaching is vain, and my suffering is vain; and the bottom in which I have intrusted all my hopes, is for ever miscarried. But I know whom I have trusted: We are built upon the foundations of that sure word, we are not built upon the sand of mortality. Nor do we run so as uncertainly, but the word of the Lord abideth for ever upon which word do we hope. How fully doth this word assure us that this same Jesus that is gone up into heaven shall so return; and that he shall appear the second time unto salvation, to them that look for him. Oh, how sure is the thing! How near is the time! How glorious will his appearing be!

The thing is sure; the day is set; God hath appointed a day wherein he will judge the world by that man whom he hath ordained. The manner of it is revealed,—*Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints.* The attendants are appointed and nominated,—*The Son of man shall come in his glory, and all his holy angels with him.* The thing, you see, is established, and every circumstance is determined. How sweet are the words that dropped from the precious lips of our departing Lord! What generous cordials hath he left us in his parting sermons, and his last prayer! And yet of all the rest those are the sweetest, *I will come again and*

receive you to myself, that where I am, there you may be also. What need you any further witness? You have heard him yourselves, assuring you of his return. Doubtless he cannot deceive you. You have not only known, but seen and felt the truth of his promises.

And will he come? Tremble then, ye sinners; triumph, ye saints; clap your hands, all ye that look for the consolation of Israel. O sinners, where will you then appear? How will you look upon him whom you have pierced, whom you have persecuted, whose great salvation you have neglected and despised? Wo unto you that ever you were born, unless you should then be found to be *new-born!*

But you, O children of the Most High, how will you forget your travail, and be melted into joy! This is He in whom you have believed; whom having not seen ye loved. But how will love and joy be working (if I may so speak) with pangs unutterable, when you shall see him, and hear his sweet voice commending, applauding, approving of you, and owning you by name before all the world! Brethren, thus it must be, the Lord hath spoken it. See that you stagger not at the promise, but give glory to God by believing.

Again, the time is near, *Yet a little while, and he that shall come will come.* Behold I come quickly, saith he. And again, *The Lord is at hand.* Sure you are, that death cannot be far off. O christian, thou dost not know but the next year, nay possibly the next week, thou mayest be in heaven. Christ will

not long endure thine absence, but will have thee up to him till the time of his general appearing; when he will take us up altogether, and so we shall be ever with the Lord.

Soul, believest thou this? If thou dost indeed, what remains but that thou shouldest live a life of love and praise; studying to do all the good thou canst till thou come to heaven; and waiting all the days of thine appointed time till thy change shall come? O my soul, look out and long. O my brethren, be you as the mother of Sisera, looking out at the windows, and watching at the lattices, saying, "Why are his chariot-wheels so long a coming?" Though the time till you shall see him be but very short, yet love and longing make it seem tedious.

My beloved, comfort your hearts with these words. Look upon these things as the greatest realities, and let your affections be answerable to your expectations. I would not have told you these things, unless I had believed them: For it is for this hope that I am bound with this chain. The blessing of the Holy Trinity be upon you! I am yours, and will be. The God of peace be with you.

I rest,

Your Ambassador in bonds,

JOSEPH ALLEINE.

From the prison at Juelchester,

August 5th, 1666.

LETTER XXVII.

[Of the love of Christ.]

*To his most endeared friends, the servants of God in Taunton,
salvation.*

Most dearly beloved,

METHINKS my breasts are not easy, unless I do let them forth unto you. Methinks there is something still to do, and my week's work is not ended, unless I have given my soul vent, and imparted something to the beloved flock that I have left behind. And Oh, that my letters in my absence might be useful to you! Assuredly it is my joy to serve you, and my love for you is without dissimulation: Witness my twice lost liberties, and my impaired health, all which I might have preserved, had it not been for my readiness to minister to you.

But what do I speak of my love? It is the sense of the infinite love of God your Father that I would have to dwell upon you. Forget me, so you remember him. Let me be very little, so he be very lovely in your eyes. Let him be as the bucket that goes up, though I be as the bucket that goes down. Bury me, so that you do but set the Lord always before you. Let my name be written in the dust, so his name be written deep upon all your souls.

O Lord, I am thy servant, truly I am thy servant: Glorify thine own name by me; and thou shalt have my hand to it, that I will be content to be hid in obscurity, and to disappear through the overcoming lustre and brightness of thy glory.

Brethren, understand mine office;—I preach not myself, but the Lord Jesus Christ, and myself your servant for Jesus' sake. Give him your hearts, and I have my errand. I am but the friend of the bridegroom, and my business is but to give you to understand his love, and to gain your hearts unto him. He is an object worthy of my commendations and of your affections. His love is worth the writing of, and worth the thinking of, and worth the speaking of. O my brethren, never forget, I beseech you, how he loveth you. He is in heaven, and you are on earth; he is in glory, and you in rags; he is in the shining throne, and you in dirty flesh;—and yet he loveth you. His heart is infinitely tender over you, even now while he is at the right hand of the Majesty on high. How feelingly doth he cry out at the hurt of his poor members on earth, *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?* Oh, of what quick sense is the sense of our dear Lord unto us! When we are touched on earth he feels it in heaven.

Brethren, Christ is real in all that he speaks unto you. He is not like a flourishing lover, who fills up his letters with rhetorick, and hath more care of the dress of his speech, than of the truth. Who ever gave demonstration of the reality of his love at so dear a rate as Christ hath done? Men do not use to die in jest. Who will impoverish himself to enrich his friend? And divest himself of his honour to advance him? And debase himself to admiration below his own degree to contract affinity with him? And all this but to make him believe that he loves him?

Brethren, possess your very hearts with this, that Christ's love doth go out with infinite dearness towards you. Even now, while he is in all his glory, he earnestly remembers you still. This is the High Priest that now is entered into the holy of holies, doth bear your names particularly, remembering every poor believer by name. He bears your names,—but where? “Upon his breast-plate, upon his heart,” saith the text, Exod. xxviii. 29. Ah! christians, I may salute you as the angel did Mary, *Hail you that are highly favoured: Blessed are you among men.* Sure your lot is fallen in a happy place. What! in the bosom of Christ? Yea, and verily you may believe, and doubt not. I may apply that of Gabriel, *O Daniel, thou art greatly beloved,* unto you; you are beloved indeed, to have your names written upon the very heart of Christ, now he is in glory.

Oh, let his *name* be written then on *your* hearts. Do not write his name in the sand, when he hath written yours upon his *own breast!* Do not forget him who hath taken such care, that while he is, he may never forget you, having recorded your names not only on his *book*, but on his *flesh*, and set you as a seal upon his heart. He hath you upon his heart: but why? “For a memorial before the Lord continually,” so saith the text. Beloved, your Lord is so far from forgetting you in all his greatness and glory, that he is gone into heaven, on purpose, there to present you before the Lord, that you may be always in remembrance before him. O beloved, glory, yea, and triumph in his love. Doubtless it must

go well with us. Who shall condemn? It is Christ that died, and rose again, and is now making intercession. His interest is potent. He is always present. Our advocate is never out of court. Never did cause miscarry in his hand. Trust you safely in him. Happy is that man for whom he shall undertake to speak.

Oh, the riches of Christ's love! He did not think it enough to die for you. His love and care doth not end with his natural life on earth, but "he ever liveth to make intercession for us." His love is like his life, ever, and ever; knowing no remission in degree, nor intermission of time, no cessation of working, but is ever, ever in motion towards us.

But when shall I end, if I suffer my soul to run out its length, and my running pen to enlarge according to the dimensions of this boundless field of divine love? If the pens of all the world were employed to write volumes of love; if the tongues of all the living were exercised in nothing else but talking of this love; if all the hearts that be were made up of love; and all the powers and affections of the mind were turned into one, to wit the power of love; yet this were no less than infinitely too little, either to conceive, or to express the greatness of Christ's love.

O my dearly beloved, may your souls be swallowed up in this love. Think, and think while you will, you can never think how much you are beloved. See that ye love again, by way of *gratitude*,

though not of *requital*. What, though your souls be but narrow, and your powers but little, yet love him with all you have. Love him with all your hearts, and all your strength. To the meditations, and to the embraces of divine love I leave you, thinking it now not worth while to tell you of my love, remaining

Yours in the bonds of your most

dear Lord Jesus,

JOSEPH ALLEINE.

August 11th, 1665.

LETTER XXVIII.

[Warning to professors of their danger.]

To the most beloved people the servants of God in Taunton, salvation.

Most dear friends,

MY top joy is, that my Beloved is mine and I am his: But next to that I have no joy so great as that you are mine and I am yours, and you are Christ's. My relation to Christ is above all; He is my life and my peace, my riches, and my righteousness: He is my hope and my strength, and mine inheritance, and my rejoicing. In him will I please myself for ever, and in him will I glory. I esteem myself most happy, and rich, and safe in him, though of myself I am nothing. In him I may boast without pride, and glory without vanity. Here is no danger of being over much *pleased*; neither can the christian exceed his bounds in overvaluing his own riches and happiness in

Christ. I am greatly pleased with the lot that is fallen to me: The Lord hath dealt bountifully with me, and none shall stop this my confidence of boasting in Christ. But as my lot in him is above all, so, I will assure you, it is no small content to me, that my lot is fallen with you. And though many difficulties have fallen to my lot among you (for I have broken my health and lost my liberty once and again, for your sakes) yet none of these things move me. I wish nothing more than to spend and to be spent upon the service of your faith. I bless the Lord for it, as an invaluable mercy, that ever he called me to be an Ambassadour of the Lord Jesus Christ to you-wards. In this station I desire to approve myself to him; and that I am withdrawn from my work for a season, it is but that I may return to you refreshed, and enabled for my work among you. You may not think that I have forgotten you, and consulted my own ease and pleasure: But if God prosper my intentions, I shall be found to have been daily serving you in this retirement. I will assure you, I am very tender of preserving all that little strength, that God doth add to me, entirely for your sakes; being resolved not so much as once to broach the vessel till I draw forth to you.

I bless the Lord, I am in great tranquility here in this town, and walk up and down the corporation without any questioning me. Only it hath pleased the Lord to add to my affliction since my coming, by taking away my dear father, the day of whose glorious translation was the day after my arriving here. But

I bless the Lord, I do believe and expect the return of the Redeemer with all his saints, and the most glorious resurrection of my own dead body with all believers: And this makes me to rest in hope, and fills me with unspeakably more joy than the death of myself or any other saint can with grief. And now I make it my business to be rendered serviceable to you; and do, by this, return you my hearty thanks for your earnest prayers and intercessions to God in my behalf. For it is he that must do the cure: I seem to myself to be retired to this place, as a vessel rent and shattered and torn in the service, that is come to recruit in the *harbour*. And here I am as it were rigging, and repairing, and victualling, to put forth again in the service; which I shall do with the first wind, as soon as I am ready. What is my life, unless I am serviceable? And though I must for the present forbear my wonted labour, yet I shall not cease to exhort you, and call upon you while I am absent from you, to stand fast, and to grow up in your holy faith.

Be warned, my dearly beloved, that you fall not upon those dangerous rocks upon which so many professors have been split.

There are three things which I beseech you carefully to beware of:

First, *Lest while Christ is in your mouths, the world run away with your hearts*: There is many a seeming professor that will be found a mere idolater. Many a soul goes down to *hell* in this sin, in the midst of his profession, and never discerns it till it be too late. Remember, I beseech you, that the oxen, the farm,

wife, merchandize, (all of them lawful comforts,) did as effectually keep men from a sound and saving closing with Christ, as the vilest lusts of the worst of men. Whatever you find your hearts very much pleased in, and in love with, among these earthly comforts, set a mark upon that thing, and remember that *there* lies your greatest danger. What you love most, you must fear most; and think often with yourselves, "This, if any thing, is like to be my ruin." Oh, the multitudes of professors that perish for ever, by the secret hand of this mortal enemy, I mean the overvaluing of earthly things. The hearers compared to the thorny ground, did not openly fall away and cast off their profession, as the stony ground did; but while others withered away, the blade of profession was as green and fresh as ever; and yet their inordinate affection to the things of this life, did secretly undo all at last. Little do most professors think of this, —while they please themselves in their estates, while they delight themselves so freely in their children, in their wives, in their habitations and possessions; —that *these* be the things that are like to undo them for ever. How little is that scripture thought of, which speaks so dreadfully to worldly professors, *Love not the world, for if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.* Are there not many among us, who though they do keep up prayer, and other holy duties; yet the strength and vigour of their hearts goeth out after earthly things? And these are their chief care and their chief joy. Such must know that they are none of Christ's; and they were better, to

understand it now and seek to be renewed by repentance, than hereafter when there shall be no place for repentance.

Secondly, *Lest while iniquity doth abound, your love to Christ doth wax cold.* Remember what an abomination Laodicea was to Christ, because she grew so lukewarm; and what a controversy he had with Ephesus, a sound church, because she did but slacken and grow more remiss in her love. A friend is born for adversity; and now is the time, if you will prove the sincerity of your love and friendship to Jesus Christ, by following him zealously, resolvedly, fully, now he is most rejected and opposed.

Thirdly, *Lest you keep up a barren and fruitless profession, without progression:* See to it, my brethren, that you be not only professors. but proficient. Many professors think all is well, because they keep on in the exercises of religion; but alas! you may keep on praying and hearing all the week long, and yet be not one jot the further. Many there are that keep going; but it is like the horse in the mill, that is going all day, but yet is no further than when he first began. Nay, it oft times happens in the trade of religion, as it doth in trading in the world, where many keep on in trading still, till for want of care and caution, and examining their accounts whether they go forward or backward, they trade themselves out of all. Oh, look to it, my brethren, that none of you rest in the doing of duties, but examine what comes of them. Otherwise, as you may trade yourselves into poverty, so you may hear and pray your-

selves into hardness of heart, and desperate security and formality. This was the very case of wretched Laodicea, who kept up the trade of religious duties, and verily thought that all was well, because the trade still went on, and that she was increased in spiritual goods, and in a gaining way: But when her accounts were cast up at last, all comes to nothing, and ends in wretchedness, poverty, and nakedness. Most dear brethren, I wish and pray for the prosperity of you all: But above all, I wish your souls' prosperity; with which, after my most dear loves to you all, having already exceeded the bounds of an epistle, I commend you to the living God, remaining

Your fervent well-wisher

and Ambassador in Christ,

JOSEPH ALLEINE.

Devises, June 22, 1666.

LETTER XXIX.

[An admiration of the love of God.]

*To the loving and most dearly beloved, the servants of God
in Taunton, salvation.*

My most dear friends,

I LOVE you, and long for you in the Lord; and I am weary with forbearing that good and blessed work that the Lord hath committed to me, for the furtherance of your salvation. How long, Lord? How long shall I dwell in silence? How long shall my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth? When will

God open my lips, that I may stand up and praise him? But it is my Father's good pleasure yet to keep me in a total disability of publishing his name among you; unto him my soul shall patiently subscribe. I may not, I cannot complain that he is hard to me, or useth me with rigour: I am full of the mercies of the Lord, yea, brimful and running over: And shall I complain? Far be it from me.

But though I may not murmur, methinks I may mourn a little, and sit down and wish, "O if I may not have a tongue to speak, would I had but hands to write, that I might from my pen drop some heavenly counsels to my beloved people." Methinks my feeble fingers do even itch to write unto you; but it cannot be, alas! my right hand seems to have forgotten her cunning, and hath much ado with trembling to lift the bread unto my mouth. Do you think you should have had so little to shew under my hand, to bear witness of my care for you and love to you, if God had not shaken my pen as it were out of my hand? But all that he doth is done well and wisely, and therefore I submit. I have purposed to borrow hands wherewith to write unto my beloved, rather than to be silent any longer.

But where shall I begin, or when should I end? If I think to speak of the mercies of God towards me, or mine enlarged affections towards you, methinks I feel already how strait this paper is like to be, and how insignificant my expressions will be found, and how insufficient all that I can say, will prove at last to utter what I have to tell you. But shall I say no-

thing, because I cannot utter all? This must not be, neither.

Come then, all ye that fear the Lord, come, and I will tell you what he hath done for my soul. O help me to love that precious name of his, which is above all my praises. O love the Lord, all ye saints, and fear before him! Magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together! He hath remembered my low estate, because his mercy endureth for ever. O blessed be you of the Lord, my dearly beloved; O thrice blessed may you be, for all your remembrances of me before the Lord. You have wrestled with the Lord for me, you have wrestled me out of the very jaws of death itself: O the strength of prayer! Surely it is stronger than death. See that you even honour the power and prevalency of prayer. Oh be in love with prayer, and have high and venerable thoughts of it. What distresses, diseases, deaths, can stand before it? Surely I live by prayer. Prayer hath given a resurrection to this body of mine, when physicians and friends had given up their hopes.

Ah! my dearly beloved, methinks it delights me to tell the story of your love: How much more of the love of God towards me! I have not forgotten, O my dearly beloved, I have not forgotten your tender love in all my distresses. I remember your kindness to me in my bonds, when once and again I was delivered up to a prison for your sakes. I remember with much delight, how you refreshed and comforted me in my tribulations, how open your hearts were; and your hands were not straitened,

neither,—for I was in want of nothing. I may not, I must not forget what painful journies you took to visit me, when in places remote the hand of the Lord had touched me; and though my long sickness was almost incredibly expensive to me, yet your supplies did not a little lighten my burthen.

And though I put it last, yet I do not mind it least, that you have been so ready in returning praises to God in my behalf. Your thanksgiving to God, my dear brethren, does administer abundant cause to me of my giving thanks unto you.

And now my heart, methinks, is big to tell you a little of my love to you: Surely you are dear unto me; but though it be sweet to tell the story of love, yet in this I will restrain myself. For I fear least, as the wise man saith of the beginning of strife, so I should find of the beginning of love, that “it is like the letting forth of the water;” and the rather I do forbear, because I hope you have better testimonies than words, to bear witness herein unto you.

But if I sing the song of love, O let divine love overcarry the praise. I found myself in straits when I began to speak of the natural love between my dear people, and an unworthy minister of Christ to them; and it seemed that all that I have said was much too little; but, now I have to speak of the love of God, it seems to be by far too much.

O Infinite Love never to be comprehended, but ever to be admired, magnified, and adored by every creature! O let my heart be filled, let my mouth be filled, let my papers be filled, ever ever filled with

the thankful commemoration of this matchless love! O turn your eyes from other objects! O bury me in forgetfulness, and let my love be no more mentioned nor had in remembrance among you, so that you may be thoroughly possessed and inflamed with the love of God.

This, my beloved, this is that love which is ever to be commended and extolled by you. See that you study this love; fill your souls with wonder, and feast your souls with joy, and be ravished with rich contentment in this divine love. Take your daily walk, and lose yourselves in the field of love. Drink, O friends, yea drink abundantly, O beloved, fear no excess. O that your souls may be drenched and drowned in the love of Christ, till you can every one say with the ravished spouse, *I am sick of love*. Marvel not that I wander here, and seem to forget the bounds of a letter;—this obligeth me, yea, rather constraineth me. Who in all the earth should admire and commend this love, if I should not? I feel it, I taste it; the sweet savour thereof reviveth my soul, it is light to mine eyes, and life to my heart. The warm beams of this blessed sun,—O how they have comforted me, ravished, and refreshed me, both in body and soul! My benumbed limbs, my withered hands, my feeble knees, my bones quite naked of flesh, do yet again revive through the quickening, healing, and raising influence of divine grace and love. Now my own hands can feed me, and my own feet can bear me, my appetite is quick, my sleep comfortable, and God is pleased to give some increase continually, though by

insensible degrees: And shall not I praise that love and grace that hath done all this for me? Yea, what is this to all I have to tell you? My heart is enlarged; but I told you, paper could not hold what I have to speak of the goodness of the All-Gracious God in which I live. I am forced to end, lest you should not bear my length. My dearly beloved, I send my heart unto you, divide my love among you all, and particularly tender it to your reverend and faithful pastor, whose presence with you, and painfulness, and watchfulness over you, and zeal and courage for you in so dangerous a time, is matter of my great joy and thanksgivings unto God. The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you all. Fare you well in the Lord. I remain

Your unworthy minister and fervent
well-wisher in the Lord,
JOSEPH ALLEINE.

LETTER XXX.

*To the most endeared people, the inhabitants of Taunton,
salvation.*

*Most dearly beloved and longed-for,
my joy and crown,*

MY heart's desire and prayer for you is, that you may be saved. This is that which I have been praying, and studying, and preaching for, these many years; and this is the end of my venturing, and suffering, and writing, at this present time. God that knoweth all

things,—he knoweth that this is my wish, “Oh that I could but come at their souls!” And that this is the prize and the gain that I run for,—that I might win souls. I seek not other gifts, give me your hearts, let me but part between your sins and you; suffer me but to save you; give me leave to carry you over to Jesus Christ, and I will not ask you any more. I will serve you gladly, I will suffer for you thankfully, so I may but save you. Do not wonder why I follow you so pressingly, why I call upon you so frequently; let not my importunity be grievous to you, all this is but to save you. Christ did not bethink his blood, and shall I bethink my breath, or ink, too dear in order to your salvation? What a pity is it, that any of you should miscarry at last, under the power of ignorance, or by a profane negligence, or a formal and lifeless profession of strict godliness!

Beloved, I am afraid of you lest (as to many of you) I have run in vain. I cannot but most thankfully acknowledge, that (considering the paucity of those that are saved) there are not a few of you who are the joy of your ministers, and the glory of Christ. But it cannot be dissembled, that far the greater number give little ground to hope, that they are in the state of salvation. And must not this be a pinching thought to a compassionate teacher, to think, that he cannot for his heart persuade men, but that the most of them will wilfully throw away themselves? Is it not a woful sight, to behold the devils driving a great part of our miserable flocks, (as they did once the

herd of swine, the keepers themselves amazed looking on,) I say, driving them violently down the hill, till they be choaked in the water, and drowned irrecoverably in the gulf of endless perdition? Ah, miserable spectacle! What through the wilful blindness of some, what through the looseness and sensuality of others, what through the halving, and cold and customary religion of others, how great a number of our poor flocks is satan like to carry utterly away from us, after all that hath been done to save them.

Yet I cannot but call after them—"Hearken unto me, O ye children. How long will ye love vanity, and follow after leasing, and trust in lying words? As the Lord liveth, you are lost, except you turn. Wherefore turn yourselves and live ye. Ah how mercy wooeth you! How it waiteth to be gracious to you? Hear, O sinners, hear. See you not how the merciful Saviour of the world stretcheth forth his hands all the day long, and spreadeth forth his wings, and calleth you as a hen doth her chickens! Hear you not the soundings of his bowels? He hath no need of you; yet how do his compassions melt over perishing sinners? His heart is turned within him; and shall not this turn your hearts? His repentings are kindled together; and shall not this lead you to repentance? Behold, he standeth at the door and knocketh. O man, wilt thou keep Jesus at the door, and lodge Barabbas in thy bosom, and prefer thy cruel lusts before thy compassionate Lord? O his melting love to sinners! He calleth after them, Isa. lv. 1. He weepeth over them, Luke xix. 41, 42.

He crieth to them, Prov. i. 21, 22, 23. How long ye simple ones, will you love simplicity? Will you not be made clean? When shall it once be? Why will you die? Turn you at my reproof: Behold, I will pour out my Spirit upon you. Sinner, art thou not yet melted? Oh come in at his loving calls, come out from thy sins: touch the sceptre of grace, and live: Why shouldest thou be dashed in pieces by his iron rod? Kiss the Son. Why shouldst thou perish in the way? Set up Jesus as thy King, lest he count thee for his enemy, because thou wouldst not that he should reign over thee, and so thou be called forth and slain before him. Oh how dreadful will this case be, to perish under the pitiful eyes of his mercy, and to die by the hand of a Saviour! Oh! double hell, to have thy Redeemer become thine executioner! And the hand that was so long stretched forth to save thee, to be now stretched forth to slay thee! And the merciful heart of Christ himself hardened against thee, so as that he should call thee forth, and with his own hand hew thee in pieces, as Samuel did Agag before the Lord.

But I have been too long in prefacing to what I intended forthwith to have fallen upon: Indeed I am apt to run out in matters that do so nearly touch upon your greatest concernments.

Beloved, I despair of ever bringing you to salvation, without sanctification; or possessing you with *happiness*, without persuading you to *holiness*. God knows, I have not the least hope ever to see one of your faces in heaven, except you be converted and

sanctified, and exercise yourselves unto godliness. This is that I drive at. I beseech you, study to further *personal godliness*, and *family godliness*.

1. *Personal godliness*. Let it be your first care to set up Christ in your hearts. See that you make all your worldly interests to stoop to him, that you be entirely and unreservedly devoted unto him. If you wilfully, and deliberately, and ordinarily harbour any sin, you are undone. See that you unfeignedly take the laws of Christ, as the rule of your words, thoughts, and actions; and subject your whole man, members and mind, faithfully to him. If you have a true respect to all God's commandments, you are sound at heart. Oh study to get the image and impress of Christ upon you within! Begin with your hearts, else you build without a foundation. Labour to get a saving change within, or else all external performances will be to no purpose. And then study to shew forth the power of godliness in the life. Let piety be your first and great business. It is the highest point of justice, to give God his due. Beware that none of you be a prayerless person: for that is a most certain discovery of a Christless and a graceless person, of one that is a very stranger to the fear of God. Suffer not your bibles to gather dust. See that you converse daily with the word. That man can never lay claim to blessedness, whose delight is not in the law of the Lord. Let meditation and self-examination be your daily exercise, else the papists, yea the pagans, will condemn us. That the short questions which I have given you as a help to

self-examination, may be daily perused by you, is the matter of my passionate request unto you. If ever you come to any growth in holiness, without the constant use of this practice, I am grossly deceived. And therefore I would beseech, yea, even charge you, by the Lord, that you would daily examine yourselves by these questions, till you have found a better help to this duty.

But piety without charity, is but the half of christianity, or rather impious hypocrisy. We may not divide the tables. See therefore that you do justly, and love mercy, and let equity and charity run, like an even thread, throughout all your dealings. Be you temperate in all things, and let charity and sobriety be your undivided companions. Let truth and purity, seriousness and modesty, heavenliness and gravity be the constant ornaments of your speech. Let patience and humility, simplicity and sincerity, shine out in all the parts of your conversations. See that you forget and forgive wrongs, and requite them with kindness, as you would be found children of the Most High. Be merciful in your censures, and put the most favourable construction upon your brethren's carriage that their actions will reasonably bear. Be slow in promising, punctual in fulfilling. Let meekness and innocency, affableness, yieldingness, and courtesy, commend your conversations to all men. Let none of your relations want that love and loyalty, that reverence and duty, that tenderness, care, and vigilancy, which their several places and capacities call for. This is throughout godliness. I charge

you before the Most High God, that none of you be found a swearer, or a liar, a lover of evil company, or a scoffer, or malicious, or covetous, or a drunkard, or a glutton, unrighteous in his dealing, unclean in his living, or a quarreller, or a thief, or a backbiter, or a railer: for I denounce unto you from the living God, that destruction and damnation is the end of all such. Prov. xiii. 20. James v. 12. Rev. xxi. 8. 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10. Gal. v. 19, 20, 21.

2. *Family godliness.* He that hath set up Christ in his heart, will be sure to study to set him up in his house. Let every family with you be a christian church; every house, a house of prayer; every household, a household of faith. Let every housholder say with Joshua, *I and my house will serve the Lord*; and resolve with David, (Psalm cxxi. 2.) *I will walk within my house, with a perfect heart.* Let me press upon you a few duties, which I have been long harping upon, but alas (I speak it to your shame) with many (too too many) of you, to little purpose in general.

First, Let religion be in your families, not as a matter by the by, (to be minded at leisure, when the world will give you leave,) but the standing business of the house. Let them have your prayers, as duly as their meals. Is there any of your families, but have time for their taking food? Wretched man! canst thou find time to eat in, and not time to pray in?

Secondly, Settle it upon your hearts, that your souls are bound up in the souls of your family. They are committed unto you, and (if they be lost through your neglect) will be required at your hands.

Sirs, if you do not, you shall know that the charge of souls is a heavy charge, and that the blood of souls is a heavy guilt. O man, hast thou a charge of souls to answer for, and dost thou not yet bestir thyself for them, that their blood be not found in thy skirts? Wilt thou do no more for immortal souls, than thou wilt do for thy beasts that perish? What dost thou do for thy children and servants? Thou providest meat and drink for them agreeable to their natures; and dost thou not the same for thy beasts? Thou givest them medicines, and cherishest them when they be sick; and dost thou not so much for thy swine? More particularly,

(1.) Let the solemn reading of the word, Isa. xxxiv 16. Job. v. 31 and singing of psalms, be your family exercises, Psal. cxviii. 15. See Christ singing with his family, viz. his Disciples, Mat. xxvi. 30, Luke ix. 18.

(2.) *Let every person in your families be duly called to an account of their profiting by the word heard or read, as they be about doing your own businesses.* This is a duty of consequence unspeakable, and would be a means to bring those under your charge to remember and profit by what they receive. See Christ's example in calling his family to an account, Mat. xvi. 11, 13, 15.

(3.) *Often take an account of the souls under your care, concerning their spiritual estates.* Herein you must be followers of Christ. Mat. xiii. 10, 36, 51. Mark iv. 10, 11. Make enquiry into their conditions; insist much upon the sinfulness and misery of

their natural estate, and upon the necessity of regeneration and conversion in order to their salvation. Admonish them gravely of their sins, encourage beginnings. Follow them earnestly; and let them have no quiet for you, till you see them in a saving change. This is a duty of high consequence, but (I am afraid) fearfully neglected by some that are godly. Doth not conscience say "Thou art the man?"

(4.) *Look to the strict sanctifying of the sabbath, by all of your households.* Exod. xx. 10. Lev. xxiii. 3. Many poor Families have little time else. O improve but your sabbath-days as diligently in labouring for knowledge, and doing your Maker's work, as you do the other days in doing your own work, and I doubt not but you may come to some proficiency.

(5.) *Let the morning and evening sacrifice of solemn prayer, be daily offered up in all your families.* Psal. xcii. 1, 2. Exod. xxx. 7, 8. Luke i. 9, 10. Beware they be not found among the families that call not upon God's name; for why should there be wrath from the Lord upon your families? Jer. x. 25. O miserable families, without God in the world, that are without family prayer! What! have you so many family sins, family wants, family mercies? What! and yet no family prayers? How do you pray with *all prayer and supplication*, if you do not with family prayer? Say not, "I have no time." What! hast thou all thy time on purpose to serve God, and save thy soul? And is this that for which thou canst find no time? Find

but a heart, and I will find time. Pinch out of your meals and sleep, rather than want for prayer. Say not "My business will not give leave." This is thy greatest business, to save thyself, and the souls committed to thee. Besides a whet will be no let. In a word, the blessing of all is to be got by prayer, Jer. xix. 11, 12. 2 Sam. vii. 29. And what is thy business without God's blessing? Say not, "I am not able." Use thy one talent, and God will increase it, Mat. xxv. 24, &c. Helps are to be had till thou art better able. But if there be no other remedy, thou mayest join with thine abler neighbour. God hath special regard to joint prayer, James v. 14, to 19. Acts xii. 5, to 12. 2 Cor. i. 11, and therefore you must improve family advantages for the performing of it.

(6.) Put every one in your families upon private prayer. Observe whether they do perform it. Get them the help of a form, if they need it, till they are able to go without. Direct them how to pray, by minding them of their sins, wants, and mercies, the materials of prayer. This was the practice of John, and of Jesus, Luke xi. 1, 2.

(7.) Set up catechizing in your families, at the least once every week. It was my parting, dying request, that you would set up and maintain this duty in your families. Have you done it all accordingly? Cannot your consciences witness, cannot your families witness, you have not? Well, I thought my parting words would have done something with you: I hoped the fervent request of a

dying minister, would have prevailed for such a small matter with you. What, to this day without solemn catechizing in your houses? Ah, what a discouragement to your teacher is this? Brethren, shall I yet prevail with you? Will you reject me now also? O let me persuade you, before you take off your eyes from these lines, to resolve to set upon the constant exercise of this duty. Surely I have done and suffered more for you than this comes to. Will you deny me? I beseech you, let me find, if ever God do bring me again to visit your houses, that the words of a suffering minister have some power with you. I have sent you a help on purpose. What! shall all my persuasions be but speaking in the wind? And all my pains but labouring in the fire? Beloved, you have no dread of the Almighty's charge,—That you should *teach these things diligently to your children, and talk of them as you sit in your houses, &c.* (Deut. vi. 6, 7, 8, 9. and iv. 9, 10. and xi. 18, 19, 20.) and *train them up in the way they should go.* (Prov. xxii. 6, in the margin.) Hath God so commended Abraham, that he would teach *his children and household,* (Gen. xviii. 19.) and that he had so many *instructed servants,* (Gen. xiv. 14. in the margin,) and given such a promise to him thereupon, and will not you put in for a share, neither in the praise nor the promise? Hath Christ honoured catechizing with his presence, (Luke ii. 46.) and will not you own it with your practice? Say not, “They are careless, and will not learn.” What have you your authority for, if not to use it for God, and the good of their

souls? You will call them up, and force them to do your work; and should you not at least be as zealous in putting them upon God's work? Say not, "They are dull and are not capable." If they be dull, God requires of you the more pains and patience; but so dull as they are, you will make them learn how to work; and can they not learn as well how to live? Are they capable of the mysteries of your trade, and are they not capable of the plain principles of religion? Well! as ever you would see the growth of religion, the cure of ignorance, the remedy of profaneness, the downfall of error, fulfil you my joy in going through with this duty.

I have been too long already, and yet I am afraid my letter will be ended before my work be done. How loath am I to leave you, before I have prevailed with you to set to the work to which you are here directed! Will you pass your promise, will you give me your hands? Oh that you would! You cannot do me a greater pleasure. Ask what you will of me; see if I will not do as much for you. Oh that your families might be a joy to me, as that twice noble lady's to John; who professes he had no greater joy, than to find her children walking in the truth! Beloved, why should you not give the hand one to another, and mutually engage each to other, for more vigorous and diligent endeavours, in promoting family godliness? I must tell you, God looks for more than ordinary from you, in such a day as this. He expects that you should do, both in your hearts and in your houses, somewhat more

than ever, under these his extraordinary dispensations. My most dearly beloved, mine own bowels in the Lord, will you satisfy the longings of a travelling minister? Will you answer the calls of divine providence? Would you remove the incumbent, or prevent the impending calamities? Would you plant nurseries for the church of God? Would you that God should build your houses, and bless your substance? Would you that your children should bless you; that your Father should bless you? Oh, then set up piety in your Families, as ever you would be blessed, or be a blessing! Let your hearts and your Houses be the temples of the living God, in which his worship (according to all the forementioned directions) may be with constancy reverently performed. Pardon my prolixity and importunity in so earnest pursuing of you; I am yet afraid I have done too soon, and shall end without my errand. The Lord God persuade you! To Him I turn me; for I am well assured, he can prevail with you:

O FATHER of Spirits, that hath set me over thy flock to watch for their souls, as one that must give an account. I have long studied thy will, and taught in thy name, and do unfeignedly bless thee that any have believed my report. I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me, and they have received them. I have manifested thy name unto them, and they have kept thy word. And now I am no more with them, but I come unto thee: Holy Father, keep them through thine own name; for they are thine. As they have kept the word of thy patience,

so keep thou them in the hour of temptation. They are but a flock, a little and a helpless flock; but thou art their Shepherd; suffer them not to want. Do thou feed them, and fold them. Let thy rod and thy staff comfort them; and let not the beasts of prey fall upon them, to the spoiling of their souls.

But what shall I do for them that will not be gathered? I have called after them, but they would not answer; I have charged them in thy name, but they would not hear; I have studied to speak persuasively to them, but I cannot prevail. Then I said "I have laboured in vain; I have spent my strength for nought; and in vain;" yet I cannot give them over, much less may I give thee over. Lord, persuade Japhet to dwell in the tents of Shem. Lord, compel them to come in, and lay the hands of mercy upon them, as thou didst on lingering Lot, and bring them forth, that they may escape for their lives and not be consumed. Lord, I pray thee, open their eyes that they may see, and lay hold upon their hearts by thy omnipotent grace. Do thou turn them, and they shall be turned: O bring back the miserable captives, and suffer not the enemy of mankind to drive away the most of the flock before mine eyes, and to deride the fruitless endeavours of thy labourers, and boast over them that he can do more with them, though he seek to ruin them, than all the beseechings, counsels, and charges of thy servants that seek to save them. Lord, if I could find out any thing that would pierce them, that would make its way into their hearts, thou knowest I would

use it. But I have been many years pleading thy cause in vain. O let not these endeavours also be lost! O God, find out every ignorant, every profane sinner, every prayerless soul, and every prayerless family, and convince them of their miserable condition, while without thee in the world. Set thy image upon their souls, set up thy worship in their families. Let not pride, ignorance, or slothfulness, keep them in neglect of the means of knowledge. Let thine eyes be over the place of my desires for good, from one end of the year to the other end thereof. Let every house therein be a seminary of religion; and let those that cast their eyes upon these lines, find thee sliding in, by the secret influence of thy grace, into their hearts, and irresistibly engaging them to do thy pleasure. *Amen. Amen.*

LETTER XXXI.

[He that endureth to the end shall be saved.]

To the loving and well-beloved, the servants of Christ in Huntingdon, grace and peace.

Most dear christians,

I DO thankfully acknowledge, both to God and you, that I am many ways obliged to love and serve you: And surely when the Lord shall turn our captivity, I will (through his grace) endeavour to shew myself thankful, wherein I may, unto you. I am the more sensible of your great love, because I cannot be insensible how little I have deserved such a mercy, and how little I have been able to do to oblige you.

Able, I say; for I am sure, I have been willing to be much more serviceable to you. But now, letters and prayers are all that I have for you; of these I shall be ready to be prodigal. Your love to me hath been very bountiful: I may not forget the liberal supplies that you have sent, many of you even out of your poverty, to me; and not to me only, but to the whole family of my brethren, and fellow-prisoners, who do all bless you, and send by these with me their thankful respects unto you. I fervently pray, and do not doubt to speed, that you may reap in grace and glory what you have sown to us in bounty. *Verily, there is a reward for the righteous.* Ah, how sure is it! And how great and how near is it!

Come on, my dear brethren, and fellow-travellers. Stir up yourselves, and set to your race. See that you loiter not, but speed apace in your holy course. What! tire by the way, or think of looking back, when heaven is the prize? God forbid. To him that soweth righteousness there shall be a sure reward. What! though it should seem slow: As long as it is so sure, and so great, never be discouraged. In the end you shall reap, if you faint not. Wait but a while, and you shall have a blessed harvest. The Lord speaks to the christian, as he to his creditor in another case, "Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all." Oh, now for faith and patience! How safely, how sweetly would these carry us to our home and harbour, through all difficulties! Brethren beloved, be ye followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises. It

is want of patience that undoes the world. *Patience*, I mean, not so much in the bearing the inflicted evil, as in waiting for the deferred good. If the reward of religion would be presently in hand, who would not be religious? Who but the deceitful world count it doubtful and distant? And they are all for something in hand, and so take up with a present felicity. The Lord deals all upon trust; and upon that account is but little dealt with. You must have patience, and be content to plow and sow, and wait for the return of all at the harvest, when this life is ended. They that like not religion upon these terms, may see where they can mend their markets. But you, my brethren, be stedfast, unmoveable, abounding in the work of the Lord; for as much as you know your labour shall not be in vain in the Lord. Wait a little, there is but a short life between you and the blessed inheritance of the endless glory. Ah, wretched unbelievers! How worthy are you to be shut for ever out of the kingdom, that did so undervalue all the glory that God had promised, as not to count it sufficient to pay them for a little waiting!

Beloved, lift up your eyes and behold your inheritance,—the good land that is beyond the Jordan, and that goodly mountain. The promises are a map of heaven. Do but view it believingly and considerately, as it is darkly drawn there, and tell me, what think you of that worthy portion, that goodly heritage? Will not all this make you amends for your stay? Why, then, act like believers. Never bethink the pains, nor expenses of religion. Let

no man fear he shall come off a loser. What! though you are much upon the spending hand: I might tell you, God is beforehand with you, however. But I would have you principally to look forward. It is much that God hath laid out upon you; but who can tell what he hath laid up for them that fear him?

And will you miss of all, for want of patience? God forbid. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruits of the earth, and hath long patience, till he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient, stablish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh. What! shall the husbandman have more patience for the fruits of the earth, than you for the precious fruits of your faith? The husbandman hath no such certainty as you: He hath but a probability of a harvest; and yet he hath patience; he is content to venture. He is at great pains, and much cost, he is still laying out, and hath nothing coming in; and yet he is content to wait for his reimbursement, till the corn be grown. But your harvest is most sure, as sure as the irrevocable decree, the infallible promise, the immutable oath of a God, a God that cannot lie, that knows no place for repentance, can make it.

Again, the husbandman hath no such increase to look for as you. Oh, if he were but sure, that every corn would bear a crown, with what exultation and joy, rather than patience, would he go through all his cost and labour! Why, brethren, such is a believer's increase. Every grain shall produce a crown; and every tear shall bring forth a pearl; and every

minute in pains or prayers, an age of joy and glory. Besides, the husbandman hath *long* patience; and will not you have a *little* patience? It is not long patience that God doth expect of you: For, behold, the coming of the Lord draweth nigh. Will the garrison yield when relief is at hand? Or the merchant sit down and give up his hopes, when within sight of the harbour? Or will the husbandman despond, and give up all for lost, when he sees the fields even white for the harvest? Or shall he do more for a crop of corn, than you will do for a crop of glory? Far be it. Behold the judge is even at the door. The Lord is at hand. He cometh quickly, and his reward is with him. He comes with the crown in his hand, to set upon the head of patience. Therefore cast not away your confidence, which has great recompence of reward.

The prisoners of the Lord, your brethren in the patience of Jesus, can tell you, it is good suffering for such a Master. We must tell you, as they said to our Lord in another case, "he is worthy for whom you should do this." God is beyond measure gracious to us here. He shines bright into our prison, blessed be his name! He waters us from heaven and earth. As, we trust, you forget not the poor prisoners, when you pray; so we would that many *thanksgivings* should abound in our behalf. And prayer being the only key that can open our prisons, we trust that you will not slack, nor let your hands be heavy, but pray and not faint: and doubtless prayer will do it. But I am apt to pass the bounds of a let-

ter, yet I promise myself now an easy pardon for so loving a trespass. With my dear loves to you all, I commend you to God, and the word of his grace. Though I have done writing, yet not praying. I will promise, where my letter ends, my prayers shall begin. Farewell, dear brethren: fare you well in the Lord. I am

An unworthy Ambassador of Jesus
in bonds,

JOSEPH ALLEINE.

*From the prison at Juelchester,
Oct. 29th, 1663*

LETTER XXXII.

[For perseverance.]

To my dear friends, the servants of Christ in Luppit, salvation.

Beloved Christians,

HAVING taken up a resolution to write to, and to endeavour to confirm, all the places where I have gone up and down preaching the kingdom of God, you were by no means to be omitted. You were the people that were last upon my heart, before my taking up; and had I not been made a prisoner, I think I had in a few hours after the time of my apprehension been with you. Now I can no way, but by prayers, letters, and counsels, visit you; and so have sent these, to let you know that you are upon my heart, and that your welfare is dear unto me. I bless the

Lord to hear that his work doth not cease among you. It is the joy of our bonds, beloved, to hear that the word is not bound, and that satan hath not his design upon the people of God, who doubtless intended by these sufferings to have struck terror into them, and to have made their hands weak.

Know, dear christians, that the bonds of the gospel are not tedious through grace unto us; that Christ is a master worth a suffering for; that there is really enough in religion to defray all our charges, and to quit all the cost and expence you can be at in or upon it; that you may build upon it that you can never be losers by Jesus Christ; that Christ's prison is better than the world's paradise; that the divine attributes are alone an all-sufficient livelihood; that the influences of heaven, and shines of God's countenance, are sufficient to lighten the darksomest dungeon, and to perfume and sweeten the noisomest prison to a poor believer; that if you can bring faith and patience, and the assurance of the divine favour with you to a prison, you will live comfortably, in spite of earth and hell. These are truths that the prisoners of Christ can in a measure seal unto; and I would have you to be more soundly assured of and established in them.

Brethren, we are of the same mind in a prison that we were of in the pulpit; that there is no life to a life of holiness; that Christ, and his yoke, and his cross, are worthy of all acceptation; that it is the best, and wisest, and safest, and gainfulest course in the world, to stick close to Christ and his ways, and

to adhere to them in all hazards. Come on, beloved christians, come on; slack not your pace, but give diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end, and be ye followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises. Strengthen the hands that hang down, and the feeble knees. If you faint in the day of adversity, your strength is small.

Cheer up, my brethren; look what a crown, what a kingdom here is! What say you? Is not here a worthy portion, a goodly heritage? Were it not pity to lose all this for want of diligence and patience? Come, dear christians, and fellow-travellers, I pray you, let us put on. Pluck up the weary limbs; our home is within sight. Lift up your eyes from the Pisgah of the promises: You may see the land of rest. Will any of you think of returning into Egypt? God forbid! A little patience, and Christ will come. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruits of the earth, and hath long patience till he receive the early and latter rain: Be ye also patient, stablish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh. He is not a christian indeed, that cannot be content to tarry for his preferment in another world. Cast upon it, my brethren, that your kingdom is not of this world; that here you must have tribulations; and that all is well, as long as we are secured for eternity. Exhort one another daily: Strive together in prayer, unite your strength therein, and pull a main: Mercy will come sooner or later; however, we will be content to wait till the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Ah, how surely will he come! He will ren-

der tribulation to them that trouble us; and to us that are troubled, rest with him. Only believe and wait.

What! not watch with him one hour? Why the Judge is even at the door! And how blessed will you be, if you do but continue and hold fast till he come! Watch therefore, and stand fast, quit you like men: Be zealous, and let your hearts be strong: God is your friend and you may trust him. He is able to bear you out, and bear you up. Faint not therefore, but be stedfast, unmoveable, abounding in the works of the Lord. Speak often one to another, provoke to love, and to good works. Let the bay of opposition against godliness, make the torrent of your zeal break over with the more violence. But it is time to end. I have been bold to call upon you, you see, and to stir you up by way of remembrance. May the Spirit of the Most High God excite you, encourage you, enflame you! May these poor lines be some quickening to you! May the good-will of Him that dwelt in the bush, dwell with you! My dear loves to you all. Pray for the prisoners. Farewell, dear brethren, farewell in the Lord. I am

Yours in the bonds of the Lord Jesus,

JOSEPH ALLEINE.

Oct. 11th, 1665,

LETTER XXXIII.

[To a backsliding fellow-student.]

SIR,—Whom this will find you, or *when*, or *where*, I know not; but I have shot this arrow at a venture. Once you were an associate with me in Corpus Christi:

I remember your blameless conversation, and your zealous affection for, and adhesion to, the ways and people of God. May you be still found in the same paths of holiness, without which no man shall see God! The vows of God are upon me (which, I confess, I have been too slack to pay) that I would put you in remembrance, and in all brotherly tenderness advise you, to remember from whence you are fallen. I was informed, before your leaving of England, of many unhappy miscarriages, which to the great reproach of your holy profession, you had been too manifestly guilty of. I am not without some hope, that the Lord may have since recalled you, and brought you back to himself: And yet not without more fear, lest, if the power of corruption were so strong as to precipitate you with such violence, at such a time as that was, and in such a place as England, or Oxon., where you had so many encouragements and inducements, examples, and faithful, friendly, watchful observers, you may now much more be carried away, in such a place and among such company, as now you may be likely to be in.

Sir, I beseech you to be assured, that nothing but the conscience of my duty hath engaged me, now you have been so many years a stranger to me, and are at so many thousand miles' distance from me, to write notwithstanding to you. And I beseech you, bear a little with me. Is it wisdom, after you have begun in the Spirit, to end in the flesh? You did run well, who hath hindered you? I remember your strict walkings, your holy converse, your many tears:

Will you lose the things that you have wrought? Have you found out another, a nearer way to heaven? Do you hope to get in at the wide gate, in the broad way? Need I to mind you, that it had been better for you never to have known the way of life, than, after you have known it, to turn aside from the holy commandment? Can you ever enter into God's hill, without you be of clean hands and pure heart?

I know, you are not ignorant *that strait is the gate, and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it:* And will you yet do as the most, and decline the way of strictness and holy self-denial, and give the flesh the reins? What! when God that cannot lie, hath said, *If you live after the flesh, you shall die?* Do you not know, that you do in vain name the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, except you depart from iniquity? I am sure you know it: Oh sir, consider it, improve it. Oh! have you so learnt Christ, as to think that the way of carnal liberty and looseness, the way of evil company and fleshliness, is the way to eternal life?

I am not for tying up salvation to this or that opinion: But certainly, let men be of what opinion they will, without strictness, self-denial, and holy diligence, they cannot be saved. (Mat. xvi. 42. Mat. xi. 12. 1 Pet. i. 15. 16.) Once you could say with David, *I am a companion to all them that fear thee:* Is it so now? O sir, let not the wicked entice you. Hath not God said, *A companion of fools shall be destroyed;* (Prov. xiii. 20.) that you must forsake the foolish, if you desire to live? (Prov. ix. 6.)

Sir, I have no more hopes ever to meet you more on earth: O that I might meet you in heaven! Let us tread the same path of holiness, and then we shall doubtless meet there. But surely you must deeply and timely repent of, and return from, your grievous back-slidings; or else I desire never to meet in your heaven. But why should not we, that have so often met in serious and holy prayer together, we that have so often met at the Lord's table together, we that have so often eaten together, and fasted together, meet in glory together? I beseech you, dear sir, if the Lord hath not already smitten you to the dust, and broken you, and reduced to the ways of holiness, now consider your ways, and turn your feet to his testimonies. Oh! remember that *the back-slider in heart shall be filled with his own ways*. God hath said it, and who shall reverse it?—*If any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him*. And once again, *When the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, shall he live? In his trespass that he hath trespassed, shall he not die?* I know prayers can reach you, though at so vast a distance; I shall add them to these counsels, and commit you to God, remaining

Your real friend in Christ,

JOSEPH ALLEINE.

Juelchester, May 18th, 1664.

LETTER XXXIV.

[Good counsel to his wife.]

My most dear Theodosia,

Thou seemest to have been long from me: Let nothing any longer detain thee, but my sister's necessity, or father's authority. I am very sorry that thou shouldst lose two sacraments. I am in a comfortable state of health, through divine goodness, to which be glory for ever! See that thou love and admire that Fountain of our life and peace; and be ever mindful that it is all thy business to love, and serve, and praise thy Creator and Redeemer. I have no other business but this, to write to thee about: But this is all our business. What we use to call business is but vanity and pastime, and some bye matter, in comparison of this.

Remember and forget not, that it is thy chief end to glorify God, and enjoy him for ever. Learn well that lesson; and know that it is the one thing necessary. Every morning remember that thy serving and pleasing of God, is the whole business of that day, and therefore set out accordingly with an express design and intention to please God in thy eating, drinking, visiting, conversing, calling, and duties of thy relations throughout the day. My most dear heart, I have nothing in the world that doth concern thee, or me so much to write of to thee, as this is. Oh, that thou mayst still be laying up in heaven; still furthering thy account; still adding to the heap, and encreasing thy glorious reward! Nothing is

is done for God, but thou shalt hear of it again. Whatever is not done for God, is but so much lost. Those things which others do, being led by their *natural* affections and desires, those things do thou do with holy aims for *spiritual* ends; and then God will put it on the account, as so much done for him. So it is, my dearest; God keeps a true account. See that thou believe it, and so plow in hope, and sow in hope; pray and hear, with an eye to the sure reward. Let thy hopes be strong and lively; and then thy hands will be strong, and thy resolutions and affections will be strong. My time is very precious, and I would not lose an inch of it. See thou to it, that my time in writing this letter be not lost time. Love God the more, and set thine heart the straighter towards him, and do but practise this one thing,—IN EVERY SOLEMN ACTION TO LOOK TO THY ENDS; and then I have got well, and thou better, by these counsels.

My dearest, I love thee in truth and tenderness; but my love signifies little, unless it serve thine eternal good. I rest

Thine own,

JOSEPH ALLEINE.

LETTER XXXV.

[Desires after heaven.]

To his wife.

My dear heart,

MY heart is now a little at rest to write to thee. I have been these three days much disturbed, and

set out of frame. Strong solicitations I have had from several hands, to accept very honourable preferment in several kinds; some friends making a journey on purpose to propound it. But I have not found the invitations (though I confess very honourable, and such as are or will be suddenly embraced by men of far greater worth and eminency) to suit with the inclinations of my own heart, as I was confident they would not with thine. I have sent away my friends satisfied with the reasons of my refusal, and am now ready with joy to say with David, *Soul, return unto thy rest!*

But, alas, that such things should disturb me! I would live above this lower region, that no passages or providence whatsoever might put me out of frame, nor disquiet my soul; and unsettle me from my desired rest. I would have my heart fixed upon God, so as no occurrences might disturb my tranquility, but I might be still in the same quiet and even frame. Well, though I am apt to be unsettled, and quickly set off the hinges; yet methinks I am like a bird out of the nest,—I am never quiet till I am in my old way of communion with God, like the needle in the compass, that is restless till it be turned towards the pole. I can say through grace, with the church, “With my soul have I desired thee in the night, and with my spirit within me have I sought thee early.” My heart is early and late with God, and it is the business and delight of my life to seek him. But alas, how long shall I be a seeking? How long shall I spend my days in wishing and desiring,

when my glorified brethren spend theirs in rejoicing and enjoying? Look, as the poor imprisoned captive sighs under the burdensome clog of his irons, and can only peep* through the grate, and think of and long for the sweetness of that liberty which he sees others enjoy; such methinks is my condition: I can only look through the grate of this prison, my flesh; I see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, sitting down in the kingdom of God, but alas, I myself must stand without, longing, striving, fighting, running, praying, waiting, for what they are enjoying.

Oh happy, thrice happy souls! When shall these fetters of mine be knocked off? When shall I be set at liberty from this prison of my body? You are clothed with glory, when I am clothed with dust. I dwell in flesh, in a house of clay, when you dwell with God in a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. I must be continually clogged with the cumbersome burden of this dung-hill body, that had it not a soul dwelling in it, like salt as it were to preserve it, it would soon turn to putrefaction and corruption, and be as odious and loathsome as the filthiest carrion, when you have put on incorruption and immortality. What continual molestation am I subject to by reason of this flesh! What pains doth it cost me to keep this earthen vessel from breaking! It must be fed, it must be clothed, it must be exercised, recreated, and, which is worst of all, cherished with time-devouring sleep; so that I live but little of the short time I have allotted me

* Peep.

here. But oh, blessed souls, you are swallowed up of immortality and life; your race is run, and you have received your crown. How cautious must I be to keep me from dangers! How apt am I to be troubled with the cares and fears of this life, molesting myself with the thoughts of what I shall eat, and what I shall put on, and wherewithal I shall provide for myself and mine; when your souls are taken with nothing but God and Christ, and it is your work to be still contemplating and admiring that love that redeemed you from all this. Alas, how am I encompassed with infirmities, and still carry about me death in my bosom! What pains and cost must I be at to repair the rotten and ruinous building of this earthly tabernacle, which, when I have done, I am sure will shortly fall about my ears; when you are got far above mortality, and are made equal with the angels.

Oh! I groan earnestly to be clothed upon with my house which is from heaven, being willing rather to be absent from the body, and present with the Lord. Oh, when shall I come and appear before him? When shall I receive the purchase of my Saviour, the fruit of my prayers, the harvest of my labours, the end of my faith, the salvation of my soul? Alas! what do I here? This is not my resting place. My treasure is in heaven, and my heart is in heaven. Oh! when shall I be where my heart is? Woe is me that I sojourn in Mesech, and dwell in the tents of Kedar! Oh that I had wings like a dove, that I might fly away and be at rest! Then would I hasten my

escape from the windy storm and tempest, and be out of the reach of fears, disturbances, and distractions.

How long shall I live at such a distance from my God, at such a distance from my country? Alas, how can I be merry, how can I sing the Lord's song in a strange land! No, I will hang my harp upon the willows, and sit down and weep when I remember Sion. But yet my flesh shall rest in hope, and I will daily bathe my soul in the sweet thoughts of my blessed home. I will rejoice in hopes of what I do not yet enjoy, and content myself with the taste of what I shall shortly have my fill of. But stay, this pen; run not beyond thy commission. Alas, now I receive what I have gotten, I perceive I have set down what I would be, rather than what I am; and wrote more of my dear's heart, than my own penning; rather a copy for myself, than a copy of myself. Well, I thank God I have got some heat by it for all; the Lord grant thou mayst get a thousand times more. The Lord grant the request I daily pour out before him, and make us helps and furtherances to each other's soul, that we may quicken and promote and forward one another in his ways. Help me by thy prayers, as thou dost always. The God of all peace and comfort be with thee, my sweet love. Farewell.

Thine beyond expression,

JOSEPH ALLEINE.

LETTER XXXVI.

[God is a satisfying portion.]

My most dear Pylades,

HAD not my right hand long since forgotten her cunning, and the Almighty shaken the pen out of my hand, I should long ere this have been writing to thee: But it is a wonder of divine power and goodness that my soul had not before this time dwelt in silence, and that death had not put the long period to all my writing and converse.

O my Pylades, what shall I say unto thee? Now I begin to write, where shall I begin, when shall I end? Methinks I am as a full bottle quite inverted, where the forward pressing of the over-hasty liquor makes the evacuation more slow, and my thoughts are like a thronging crowd sticking in the door.

Long is the song of love that I have to tell thee; I rejoice in the constancy of thy love, that the waters of so long a silence, and so great a distance, have not yet quenched it, but thy desires are towards me, and thy heart is with me, though providence hath hindered me from thy much-desired company. I will assure thee, it hath been a pleasure to my heart a good part of this summer to hope that I should come one half of the way to give thee a meeting; but such is my weakness hitherto, that I am forced to put off those hopes till the spring, when, if God give me strength to ride, I intend to see thee before mine own home. I thank thee for all the dear expressions of thy fervent love: Methinks I see it, and feel how it runs through all the veins of every letter, nay, every line.

I needed not so chargeable a testimony as thy golden token, with which I was something displeased, because I thought thou needest more than myself: But the love thereby expressed is most dearly welcome to me. What thou talkest of *retribution* and of *justice*, doth not so well relish with me, because the phrases seem improper to the love profest between us. I never looked for any return from thee but love, which is the paying of all thy debts.

My expences have indeed been vast, and almost incredible; but surely goodness and mercy have followed me, and do follow me in every place, and in every change of my condition: So that as to temporals, I have lack of nothing; and as for spirituals, I abound and superabound, and the streams of my comforts have been full and running over. The joy of the Lord hath been my strength at the weakest; and in the multitude of my thoughts within me, his comforts have refreshed my soul. I have found God a satisfying portion to me, and have sat down under his shadow with full delights, and his fruit is most sweet to my taste. He is my strength and my song, for I will talk of him and write of him with perpetual pleasure. Through grace I can say, Methinks I am now in my element, since I have begun to make mention of him, I am rich in him, and happy in him, and my soul saith unto him with David, *Thou hast made me most blessed for evermore*, and happy is the hour that ever I was born to be made partaker of so blissful a treasure, so endless a felicity, so angelical prerogatives, as I have in him. O! sweet are his converses; how delightful it is to triumph in his love!

Suffer me to be free with thee: Where should I pour out my soul, if not into thy bosom? Did the poor woman call upon her friends and neighbours to rejoice together with her at the finding of a lost groat? And shall not I tell to thee, the keeper of the secrets of my soul, and the friend of my inmost bosom, what a friend is the Lord to me, though an unworthy sinner? Shall not I run and tell thee what a treasure I have found? And here methinks the story of the lepers comes not unaptly to my mind, who said one to another when they had eaten and drunk, and carried away silver and gold, and raiment, and went and hid it, *We do not well;—this day is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace.* It is fit that I should be cloathed with shame; I acknowledge before God, who trieth the hearts, I am unworthy, everlastingly unworthy: But it is not fit that He should lose his praise, nay rather, let Him be the more adored, and magnified, and admired for ever and ever, and let my secrets say, “Amen.”

Bless the Lord, O my soul, bless the Lord. O my friend, let us exalt his name together. He is my solace in my solitude, he is my standing comforter, my tried friend, my sure refuge, my safe retreat; he is my paradise, he is my heaven; and my heart is at rest in him. And I will sit and sing under his shadow, as a bird among the branches; and whither should I go but unto him? Shall I leave the fatness of the olive, and sweetness of the fig-tree, and of the vine, and go and put my trust under the shadow of the bramble? No, I have made my everlasting

choice: This is my rest for ever, he is my Well-beloved in whom I am well-pleased.

Suffer me to boast a little here. I may glory without vanity, and I can praise him without end or measure: But I have nothing to say of myself. I find thou dost overvalue me, and magnify me above my measure. Set the crown upon the head of Christ; let nothing be great with thee but Him; give Him the glory. But thy love pleaseth me; only I have this exception, that thou art in love with thine own idol, as Austin somewhere speaks to a friend of his that did too much magnify him, and magnifiest a creature of thine own fancy, and not thy poor Orestes: God that knoweth all things, knoweth my poverty, how little, how low, and how mean I am, and how short I come of the attainments of the saints, who yet do themselves come so exceedingly short of the rule that God hath set before us. I often think of the complaint of the devout *Monsieur*:* “I feel myself
“very poor this week, and very defective in the love
“of God; if you would know wherein you may please me, love God more; that what is wanting in
“me, may be made up in the abundance of your love.” In this, my Pylades, in this thou mayest most highly pleasure me; love God a little the better, praise him a little the more for my sake; let me have this to please myself in, that God is a little the better loved for me, and that I have blowed up, if it be but one flash, nay, but one spark of divine love in the bosom of my dearest friend towards Him.

* M. de Renty.

But why, my Pylades, why is thy style towards me changed? Why hast thou lost the old and wonted strain of our former pleasing familiarity? This I could not but observe with some disgust. Is it because thy heart is changed? But this is a question in which I cannot ask any resolution. I am satisfied and at rest in thy love: But what this alteration means, I know not. Art thou willing by degrees to grow strange? It cannot be; thou seest however that I cannot change my voice.

Besides, I find some jealous passages in thy last lines unto us; but canst thou think that T. B. can be put into the balance against my old friend, my own, my covenant Pylades? Or can *a friend of words* come into any competition or comparison with thine *experienced love*? I cannot entertain the thoughts of this without some disdain.

But thy needful cautions are acceptable to me. I desire to foresee and provide for manifold changes and storms; I know I am not yet in the harbour; O pray with me that I enter not into temptation, for I am very weak in spirit, as well as in body, God knoweth. But there is no end with me, somewhere or other I must break off, and thou wilt say "It is time to shut up." For once only know, that I am thy daily orator, and will be whilst I am. And yet once more, I must have room to add my thankful acknowledgment of thine, and thy costly kindness; and so, with our most dear affections to you both, I commend you to the God of love, still abiding

Thy fast and sure

Bath, Oct. 13th, 1668.

ORESTES.

LETTER XXXVII.

[To a person of Quality to be constant.]

Most Honoured Sir,

MANY changes have passed over both you and myself, since my last writing to you; but I am glad to hear that in that great change of your condition, you have made so wise and happy a choice. Mine unfeigned desire to God is for your temporal and spiritual prosperity; and that the blessings of both worlds may be heaped up upon you. Yet I should desire you not to expect too much here; nor to count it a strange thing, if you meet with disappointments. It is enough if you have the Lord for your portion, and heaven for your inheritance, though the world should not answer your expectations. I doubt not but you will be likely, as well as we, to meet with manifold temptations: The Lord make you, when you have done all, to stand. Hold out a while in faith, patience, and self-denial; and you shall be as sure as God can make you of the crown.

Now arise and shine, and hold forth the power of holiness in all your converse. We have lived in times when religion was the way to credit and esteem, and then it was more difficult to discern the sincerity of one's profession, because men might be drawn to it upon worldly ends. But now is the time when God will prove us, if we will appear for him, and own his ways, when they are the common scorn of the world. Oh Sir, think it not hard if God do call you forth to own him in such a time as this, when

few of your rank and quality will bear you company: But look upon it as a special advantage to prove your sincerity, and your fidelity to the Lord your Maker.

The holy and blessed life of that noble Marquis Galeacius, I should much commend to your reading and imitation. Court not the world nor its preferments. Moses his self-denying choice, which the world would have branded for unparalleled folly, when he voluntarily left all the court-preferments and pleasures, the Wisest Judge commends for the greatest wisdom. If religion will make you vile, resolve with that royal worthy, that you will be yet more vile. Remember who accounted the reproaches of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt. Verily it is a greater honour to you to be vilified for Christ, than to be dignified with the highest titles that the greatest on earth can confer: And to be called Puritan, or Fanatic, for the bold and constant owning of the power of christianity, than to have whole pages filled up with the honourable offices and marks of dignity that earthly princes can bestow. Now then is your time to get the true honour. Few of your places and dignity will take this way to get it: But he that can but use the prospective of faith, and look as far as the approaching judgment, will easily see the vanity of the world's riches and flattering preferments, and the everlasting glory and honour wherewith the despised saints shall surely be crowned. Fix your eyes and meditations here, and that will set you above the world's temptations, when by its offers or threatenings it would make

you to warp, and to let go your hold-fast of eternal life.

Now is the time for you to make heaven sure; and when that is done, you are prepared for the worst that can come. I desire you to accept of my service and respects, and my wife's, which I do hereby present unto you, and to your most deserving yoke-fellow, whom I unfeignedly honour, though I never saw her, not so much for her noble blood, which yet calls for great respects, as for her far more noble qualifications, and privileges of her second birth. Pardon my boldness with you in troubling you so long. I am, Sir,

Your most obliged friend and servant,

JOSEPH ALLEINE.

Feb. 26th, 1661.

LETTER XXXVIII.

Dear Cousin,

THOUGH I have been in the valley of the shadow of death, though I have had more than one foot in the grave, and have been in deaths often, yet the love and remembrance of you ever liveth on my heart. I have long had neither feet to walk, nor hands to write, yet I have borrowed hands, as you see, rather than I would stay any longer from warning and admonishing of you. Dear cousin, that soul of yours, that precious immortal soul, is of no light value with me! I pray hard for its salvation. I have a godly fear for you, lest your soul should miscarry in a crowd of worldly business, and of earthly cares. Ah, my

dear niece, it comforts me that you are so settled for this world and are in want of nothing: I bless the Lord for this, but methinks this doth not satisfy me. Oh, that I could be sure that you were once safe settled in Christ! Though you are, I trust, comfortably furnished with earthly things, yet in this you are but half provided for: Have you a treasure in heaven? Have you laid hold on eternal life? Have you made sure work for everlasting? Have you past the straits of the new-birth? Do you bear upon you the marks of the Lord Jesus?

If you shall pass by a sumptuous fabrick, and a great lordship, and should lay claim to all as your inheritance, and please yourself with the hopes of enjoying all this, when you had nothing to shew, no writing, no evidence to produce, as a ground for any such hope, would not every one say, this were a piece of strange vanity and imprudence? Much greater folly is it to promise ourselves a part in paradise, and rest satisfied in a mere persuasion that we are the heirs of heaven, when we cannot prove our title from the book of God, nor produce, from within ourselves, the sure and certain marks of the children of God.

Ah, dear cousin, rouse up yourself, make conscience to deal plainly and freely with your soul. Say within yourself, "I have hopes for heaven; but where are my grounds and my evidences? Do I not build without a foundation? Do I venture my salvation upon mere uncertainties? What have I, what do I more than others? I pray, I hear, I read;

“but may not a mere hypocrite do all this? I run not with others into the wretched practice of lying, and couzening, whoredom, and the like; but what is this more than a pharisee may have to say for himself? Can I prove by scripture my claim to heaven? Can I produce chapter and verse to justify myself?”

Oh cousin, fear, lest a promise being left of entering into rest, you should, by any mistakes or self-deceits, fall short through unbelief; fear lest you should take counters for gold, or some common workings for saving grace. Oh, there is a world of counterfeit coin going! Multitudes perish by mistake, and wake in hell, whilst they dreamt they were in heaven. The tempter is very subtle, and will surely deceive, if he can: Your heart is deceitful above all things, and is willing to cheat you, if it can. Therefore am I engaged so earnestly to call upon you, as one that watcheth for your soul, to arise speedily and to set roundly to your work. Oh, consider your danger, and work out your salvation with fear and trembling! Away with these lazy prayers, away with these cold and heartless professions, away with this drowsy, lifeless, listless religion! Bestir yourself to purpose for your soul, before it be too late. Search your conscience, as with candles; be jealous of yourself. Consider, now is your time; what you do, you must do quickly. The patience of God is waiting, Christ is knocking, the Spirit of God is striving, and death is at the door. Oh, now take your opportunity, and take heed lest a slothful

heart, and the cares of this world, or a presumptuous confidence that all is well and safe already, should at last shut you out of the kingdom of God.

I cannot write distinctly to your husband, but I beseech you to call upon him to set his heart to these counsels which I have written to you; I earnestly entreat him to make religion his business, and to look heedfully to it, that the gain of the world prove not the loss of his soul. I desire him that closet and family prayers, and weekly catechising of his household, and strict sanctifying of the sabbath, and reading of the scriptures, singing of psalms, repeating of sermons, and diligent attendance upon powerful preaching, may be his continual exercises; that so his house may be a little church, and God may delight to dwell in his family. Pray give me to understand what is done of these things, for I have a zeal for your welfare, and that you and your household should serve the Lord, that you may enter into his rest, and carry children, and servants, and friends, and all, to heaven with you.

As to my own estate, I have lost all my limbs; and have been about these twelve months useless, and again and again under the sentence of death; but was brought in a horse-litter to Bath, where God hath wonderfully restored me, so that I can feed myself, and go alone, and speak with a little more freedom. Oh, love the Lord, praise the Lord for me; notwithstanding I continue weak, and have not strength to write, yet I could not tell how to die in silence from you; but have made use of a friendly

hand to send these counsels and calls after you, which I beseech you to accept in the fear of God; for it is not unlike that they may be my last to you that ever you may receive. I now commend you to the Lord; and, with mine own and my dear wife's love to you both, rest,

Your loving and careful uncle,

JOSEPH ALLEINE.

Oct. 21st, 1668.

LETTER XXXIX.

[The concernments of our souls are especially to be regarded.]

Dear Cousin,

YOU may think you are forgotten with me, because you have not heard so long a time from me; but this may let you know, that though God hath taken away your father, and suffered your mother to be helpless to you; yet you have one friend on earth that careth for you. The welfare of your immortal soul is dear to me, and is the matter of my solicitous care and prayer.

Dear cousin, methinks I feel a godly jealousy of you within my heart, lest you should lose your soul amongst a crowd of worldly cares and business. Oh remember the story of him in the book of the Kings, who relates that he had a soldier committed to his keeping, upon condition that he should lose his life if he did let him go: *But while thy servant went hither*

and thither, the man escaped. But the king replies presently, *Even so shall thy judgment be; thy life shall go for his life.* Ah cousin, take earnest heed, lest while you are going hither and thither, minding many things, tossed in a hurry of worldly affairs, the enemy run not away with your soul.

Oh beware that the world doth not secretly steal away your heart! Consider, that, whatever your business be, you must and will have an eating time, and a sleeping time. Oh be as solicitous every day to keep your praying times, which are a thousand times more necessary than a time to eat in or sleep. Be sure that there doth not a morning or evening pass over your head, in which you have not perfumed your closet with solemn and fervent prayer. And take heed, if you love your salvation, lest satan beguile you with the bare outward performance of duties, and outward acts of religion. See to it, that you do not rest in a worldly religion; to give God your knees while the world carries away your heart. You may pray, hear, and read, and all to no purpose, except your very soul be employed and engaged in these duties; and the life, vigour, and strength of your affections be found to go after God in them. If therefore you will have Christ and heaven, see that you renounce the world. You must cast overboard your worldly hopes, and take up with God, with a naked Christ, as your whole happiness, both for this life and that which is to come.

There is no hopes of your salvation, without a sound mortification to the world; you must be mortified to

your worldly expectations. Look not for much from the world; promise not yourself much from the world; seek not great things for yourself: Say unto God, "So I may have thee for my portion, and thy kingdom for my inheritance, give or deny me what thou wilt, poverty or riches, any thing or nothing, I will be contented with my lot." Say unto your soul, "So I may but have Christ, so I may but carry it for the other world, let this world go which way it will: I must be converted or condemned; I must be born again, or else would I had never been born! But of this present world there is no such necessity; I may be poor, and yet happy: But woe to me if I remain unsanctified! I must have grace, or perish for ever." Dear cousin, if I live, you shall find me a friend to your worldly prosperity; but whether I live or die, I charge you by the Lord, that you be infinitely tender of your immortal soul's everlasting concernments. Will you not spin a fair thread of it, if while you are pursuing after earthly things, you lose your soul in the throng? While I live, I shall pray and care for you. Farewell in the Lord. I am

Your truly loving and careful uncle,

JOSEPH ALLEINE.

LETTER XL.

[Godly counsels.]

Dear Cousin,

THE welcome tidings of your safe arrival at Barbadoes, is come to my ears; as also the news of your escape from a perilous sickness, for which I bless the Lord, and desire to be thankful with you. For I am not without a care for your well-being; but do look upon myself as really concerned in you. I have considered, that God hath bereft you of a careful father, and that your mother takes but little care for you; so that you have none nearer than myself to watch for your soul, and to charge and admonish you in the Lord, and to take care of you.

But yet, dear cousin, be not discouraged by these things, but look to heaven, fly unto Jesus, put away every known sin, set upon the conscientious performance of every known duty; make Christ your choice, embrace him upon his own terms; deliver up yourself, body and soul, to him. See that you have no reserves, no limitations in your choice of him; give him your very heart; cast away your wordly hopes and expectations; make religion your very business. O cousin, these things do, and you shall be sure of a friend in heaven to take the care of you; and, if I may be any comfort to you, you shall not fail, while I live, to have one friend on earth to take care for you. You are gone far from me, even to the uttermost parts of the earth; but I have sent these letters to call even thither after you; yea, not only to call, but to cry in

your ears, "O what is like to become of your soul? "Where is that immortal soul of yours like to be "lodged for ever? Amongst devils, or amongst an- "gels? Upon a bed of flames, or in the joys of pa- "radise?"

Dear cousin, go aside by yourself in secret, retire from the noise of the world, and say to yourself, "Oh "my soul! Whither art thou going? Do not I know, "in my very heart, that I must be converted or con- "demned; that I must be sanctified, or can never be "saved? Oh, my soul, what seekest thou? What de- "signs do I drive at? What is my chief care? Which "way do I bend my course? Is it for this world, or "for the world to come? Do I first seek the kingdom "of heaven, and the righteousness thereof? Do I "think heaven will drop into my mouth; that glory "and immortality will be gotten with a wet finger, "with cold prayers, and heartless wishes, while the "world carries the main of my heart? Do I think "to be crowned, and yet never fight? To get the "race, and never run? To enter at the strait gate, and "never strive? To overcome principalities and pow- "ers, and never wrestle?" No, no; say within your- self, "Oh my soul, either lay by the hopes of heaven "for ever, or else rouse up thyself, put forth thy "strength in seeking after God and glory; either lay "by thy worldly hopes, or thy hopes of immortality; "away with thy sins, or thou must let Christ go for "ever; think not to have Christ and the world too, "to serve God and mammon;—it cannot be. If thou "follow the world as thy chief desire and delight, if

“ thou live after the flesh, thou must die; count upon
 “ it, the Lord hath spoken it, and all the world can
 “ never reverse it.” Thus reason the case with your
 own soul, and give not rest to yourself night nor
 day, till you are gotten off from the world, broken
 off from the wilful practice of every known sin, and
 gotten safe into Christ.

Dear cousin, I charge you by the Lord, to observe
 these things; pray over them, weep over them, read
 them again and again; do not pass them over as
 slight and ordinary things: Your soul is at stake,
 it is your salvation which is concerned in them.
 Think not I am in jest with you. Ah cousin, I travail
 in birth with you, till Christ be formed in you. Why
 should you die? Oh repent and live; lay hold on
 eternal life; win Christ, and you win all. O be thank-
 ful to the Lord, that though now you are fatherless
 and friendless, yet you have one remembrancer to
 warn you to fly from the wrath to come. God for-
 bid that I should find you at last in the place
 of torments, for your not embracing these godly
 counsels!

To conclude, in short, I charge you as a minister,
 as a friend, as a father to you, take heed of these three
 things:

1. *Lest the gain of the world prove the loss of your
 soul:*

2. *Lest the snare of evil company withdraw you from
 God, and so prove your final ruin.*

3. *Lest a lofty and worldly heart should thrust you
 out of the kingdom of heaven.*

God abhors that the proud should come near him. Oh labour, whatever you do, for a humble heart; be little, be vile in your own eyes; seek not after great things; be poor in spirit; without this, heaven will be no place for you, God will be no friend to you. Dear cousin, your lot is fallen, as I fear, in a place of great wickedness, where your soul is in much danger, where your temptations are many, and your helps for heaven but few; where godly examples are rare, and many will entice you to sin and vanity. O! if you love me, or love your soul, look about you, consider your danger, fear lest you should miscarry for ever by worldly loss and vain company, which proves to so many the fearful cause of their eternal perdition.

I can but warn you, and pray for you: But though you have none to oversee you, remember the strict and severe eye of God is upon you, to observe all your actions, and that he will surely bring all your practices into his judgment. Your aunt, with myself, commends our dear love to you; and I commend you to the Lord, and remain,

Your loving and careful uncle,

JOSEPH ALLEINE.

August 19th, 1668.

LETTER XLI.

Dear Cousin,

THOUGH you are removed far from me, out of my sight, and the seas as a great gulf are fixed be-

twixt you and me; yet my prayers follow you, and my good wishes for your present and everlasting welfare, like the wings of a dove, take speedy flight. I look upon myself, now God hath removed my brother, to be as in the room of a father to you, yea and of a mother too; for I know you have but little help from her.

My dear neices, my heart is careful for you; and therefore I cannot cease, while I am in being in this world, to warn and admonish you, as my children, and to call upon you, in the name of the Eternal God, to awaken yourselves with all godly fear and holy diligence, lest by any means you should come short of the glory of God.

Let me mind you, dear cousins, of the dangerous place you stand in; and look about you with trembling. Methinks I see satan watching for your souls, as the dragon did for the seed of the woman, waiting to devour it as soon as she should be delivered. Know you not, that you must wrestle with principalities and powers? Methinks I see temptations surrounding you, and beleaguering you, as the enemy about the walls of the treacherous party within you, I mean carnal affections and corruptions, complotting how to deliver up the castle. Know you not, that your fleshly lusts do war against your souls? And that your own hearts are not true to you, but deceitful above all things?

Lord! what need have you to bestir yourselves, and to fly unto Jesus! to distrust yourselves, and to trust only in him and his righteousness! Oh

work out your salvation with fear and trembling! Do you ever think to escape these mighty enemies, to conquer the power, and avoid the plots and snares, of those potent adversaries, without most painful diligence O cry to heaven for help; watch and pray; fear, lest a promise being left of entering into rest, either of you should come short of it.

My dear nieces, you have many who do watch for your souls, to devour them; but I doubt too few, except myself, do watch for your souls, to save them. Therefore I look upon myself, who am now upon the matter your only monitor, to be the more concerned to awaken myself to your help, and to look after you, and to watch for you, lest by any means you should miscarry, by the deceits and temptations wherewith you are encompassed. I would not have you over careful for the things of this life, though I commend your laudable care and diligence, that you may not be burdensome to any man; but I commend to you a better and more necessary care, and that is that which the apostle speaks of, the virgin's care; *The unmarried* (saith he) *careth for the things of the Lord.* Ah, let this be your care; seek first the kingdom of God and the righteousness thereof, and then all these things shall be added; you have God's sure promise for it.

If the Lord give me to live and prosper, you shall see and know, that I am not a friend only in words to you; but however that shall be, see that you embrace the counsels of God from me. Oh make sure of heaven betimes, walk humbly with God, beware

of a proud heart and a lofty spirit; abhor yourselves, else God will not accept you; be displeased with yourselves, else God will not be pleased with you; condemn yourselves, that God may acquit you. The leaven of pride will sour the whole lump, and mar all your profession and religion, and render your persons, and prayers, and all, an abomination to the Lord, if it prevail in you. Oh, therefore, be not high-minded, but fear; and by prayer and watchfulness restrain and root up this wretched corruption of pride, which is a sin so natural to you, that you had need to use an infinite care and caution to keep it under.

As to myself these may acquaint you, that I have been often at the very gates of death: I have lost all my limbs; but prayer hath redeemed me from my extremities, and God hath blessed the use of the *Bath* to me. Oh praise the Lord; praise him for my sake, and give glory to the God of my life. Love him, honour and glorify him, whose favour and friendship hath filled my soul with comforts, and given a resurrection to my body. I can now walk alone, and feed myself: but am altogether unable to write, which is the reason why these come to you in another hand.

Dear cousins, you may think me too tedious; but you must pardon me, if I err in my love and zeal for your welfare. And now I shall trespass no more; but with my own and dear wife's love to you, I commend you to God, and rest,

Your loving and careful uncle,

JOSEPH ALLEINE.

LETTER XLII.

[Do all in reference to God and his glory.]

Dear Friend,

I HAVE received yours of the 19th of September; but it came to me in the time of my sickness, in which I was much a stranger to writing; it continued upon me five months, and to this day so much weakness remains in my arms, that I am not able to put off or on my own clothes. Your letter was exceeding welcome to me, not only as reviving the remembrance of our old friendship; but also as bringing me news of some spiritual good that you received by me, which is the best tidings that I can receive: For what do I live for, but to be useful to souls in my generation? I desire to know no other business than to please and honour my God, and serve my generation in that short allowance of time that I have here, before I go hence, and be seen no more. Shall I commend to you the lesson that I am about to learn? But why should I doubt of your acceptance, who have so readily embraced me in all our converses?

The lesson is, *To be entirely devoted unto the Lord, that I may be able to say after the apostle, "To me to live is Christ."* I would not be serving God only for a day in the week, or an hour or two in the day; but every day, and all the day: I am ambitious to come up towards that of our Lord and Master, *To do always those things that please God.* I plainly see, that self-seeking is self-undoing; and that then we do promote ourselves best, when we please God.

most. I find, that when I have done all, if God be not pleased, I have done nothing; and if I can but approve myself to God, my work is done. I reckon I do not live that time I do not live unto God.

I am fain to cut off so many hours from my days, and so many years from my life (so short as it is,) as I have lived unto myself. I find no enemy so dangerous as self; and O that others might take warning by my hurt! O that I had lived wholly unto God! then had every day and every hour that I have spent, been found upon my account at that great day of our appearing before God; then I had been rich indeed, in treasure laid up there, whither I am apace removing; then I had been every day and hour adding to the heap, and increasing the reward which God of his mere grace hath promised, even to the meanest work that is done to him. (Col. iv. 24.)

I verily perceive I am an eternal loser by acting no more as for God; for what is done to myself, is lost; but what is done for God, is done for ever, and shall receive an everlasting reward. Verily, if there be another world to come, and an eternal state after this short life, it is our only wisdom to be removing, and, as it were, transplanting and transporting what we can from hence into that country to which we are shortly to be removed, that what we are now doing, we may be reaping the fruit of for evermore. The world think themselves wise; but I will pawn my soul upon it, that this is the true wisdom.

Well, let us be wholly swallowed up in the concerns of religion, and know no other interest but

Jesus Christ's. I cannot say, I have already attained; but this is that my heart is set to learn, *That in all that I do, whether sacred or civil actions, still I may be doing but one work, and driving one design, That God may be pleased by me, and be glorified in me;* that not only my praying, preaching, alms, &c. may be found upon my account, but even my eating, drinking, sleeping, visits, discourses, because they are all done as unto God.

Too often do I take a wrong aim, and miss my mark; but I will tell you what be the rules I set myself, and do strictly impose upon myself from day to day,—*Never to lie down, but in the name of God,* not barely for natural refreshment, but that a wearied servant of Christ may be recruited, and fitted to serve him better the next day: *Never to rise up but with this resolution, "Well, I will go forth this day in the "name of God, and will make religion my business, "and spend the day for eternity:"* *Never to enter upon my calling, but first thinking, "I will do these "things as unto God,"* because he requireth these things at my hands in the place and station he hath put me into: *Never to sit down to the table, but resolving, "I will not eat merely to please my appetite, "but to strengthen myself for my master's work: "Never to make a visit, but upon some holy design, "resolving to leave something of God where I go; "and in every company to leave some good savour behind."* This is that which I have been for some time a learning, and am pressing hard after; and if I strive not to walk by these rules, let this paper be a witness against me.

I am not now in my former publick capacity, such things being required of me to say and subscribe, as I could by no means yield to, without open lying and dissembling with God and men. Yet, that I am unuseful, I cannot say; but rather think, that possibly I may be of more use than heretofore. I thank the Lord, I have not known what it is to want a tongue to speak, but in my sickness; nor a people to hear; but so, as that we both follow the things that make for peace.

I perceive you are otherwise persuaded in some things, than I am: But, however, I trust we meet in our end. Since you are in, may it be your whole study to gain souls, and to build them up in holiness, which is with too many the least of their cares! One duty (miserably neglected!) I shall be bold to commend to you, from my own experience; and that is, the visiting your whole flock from house to house, and enquiring into their spiritual estates particularly, and dealing plainly and truly with them about their conversion to God. To the usefulness of this great work, I can set my *Probatum est*.*

I hear you have two parsonages. O tremble to think how many precious souls you have to look to! And let it be seen, however others aim at the fleece, you aim at the flock; and that you have indeed *curam animarum*.†

You see how free I am with you; but I know your candour.

* *It has been proved.*

† *The care of souls.*

I rejoice in your happy yoke-fellow: salute her from your old friend; and accept the unfeigned respects of him who is, Sir,

Your real and faithful friend,

JOSEPH ALLEINE.

LETTER XLIII.

[Prison-Comforts.]

To a minister in prison.

Worthy Sir,

I OWE you a letter, and more than a letter, for your particular respects to me, your brotherly sympathy, your multiplied and earnest prayers, your tenderness of my health, your welcome jewel in *Mr. Ruth's* letters, from which I trust my soul and others may reap no small benefit. Much more do I owe you for your common respects to the people of my desires; and not only to them, but to the whole church of God; in all whose concernments, I see, you are concerned. Your indefatigable labours with us we do with all thankfulness accept, as the undoubted evidence of your great love: For all which, may He requite you who will shortly say, *Inasmuch as thou didst it unto the least of these my brethren, thou didst it unto me!*

It was but a little after my release from my own confinement, that I heard of yours; and now write to you, as one that hath taken a higher degree than ever, and more truly honourable, being commenced

prisoner of Christ. I was once affected with the picture of a devout man, to whom a voice came down from heaven, saying, *Quid vis fieri pro te?** To which he answered, *Nihil, domine, nisi pati ac contemni pro te?*† Undoubtedly, Sir, it is our real glory to be throughout conformed to Jesus Christ, not only in his sanctity, but in his sufferings. Paul counted all things but dung for this, that he might win Christ, &c. and know the fellowship of his sufferings, and be made conformable to his death. I doubt not but your consolations in Christ do much more than superabound in all your tribulations for him: Yet let me add this one cordial, That now you have a whole shoal of promises come in to you, which you had not before; I mean all the promises to suffering saints, in which they have not so immediate, but only a remoter right, unless in a suffering state. And doubtless he hath gotten well, that hath gotten such a number of exceeding great and precious promises. If the men of the world do so rejoice when such or such an estate is fallen to them; should not you much more, that have such a treasure of promises fallen to you?

I can tell you little good of myself; but this I can tell you, That the promises of God were never so sweet in this world to me, as in and since my imprisoned state. Oh the bottomless riches of the covenant of grace! It shames me that I have let such a

* *What wouldst thou that I should do for thee?*

† *Nothing, Lord, except that I may suffer and be despised for thee.*

treasure lie by so long, and have made so little use of it. Never did my soul know the heaven of a believer's life, till I learnt to live a life of praise, and by more frequent consideration to set home the unspeakable riches of the divine promises, to which I trust, through grace, I am made an heir. I verily perceive, that all our work were done at once, if we could but prevail with ourselves and others to live like believers; to tell all the world by our course and carriage, that there is such pleasantness in Christ's ways, such beauty in holiness, such reward to obedience, as we profess to believe. May ours and our people's conversations but preach this aloud to the world—That there is a reality in what God hath promised; that heaven is worth the venturing for; that the sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us!

Verily, Sir, it is but a very little while that prisons shall hold us, or that we shall dwell in dirty flesh. Porphyry tells us of Photinus, that he was ashamed to see himself in the body; to see a divine and immortal soul in a prison of flesh, (for so they held the body to be;) but the worst shackles are those of sin. Well, they must shortly off all together; our Lord doth not long intend us for this lower region: Surely he is gone to prepare a place for us. Doubtless it is so; yea, and he will come again, and receive us to himself, that where he is, we may be also. And what have we to do, but to believe, and wait, and love, and long, and look out for his coming, in which

is all our hope? It will be time enough for us to be preferred then. We know beforehand who shall then be uppermost. Our Lord hath shewed us where our place shall be, even at his own right hand; and what he will say to us, *Come, ye blessed, &c.* Surely we shall stand in his judgment. He hath promised to stand our friend. Let us look for the joyful day: As sure as there is a God, this day will come; and then it shall go well with us. What! if bonds and banishments abide us for a season? This is nothing but what our Lord hath told us, *The world shall rejoice, but ye shall weep and lament: You shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy.* Oh how reviving are his words! *I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you.*

If that miserable wretch leaped cheerfully off the ladder, saying, *I shall be a queen in hell;* with what joy should we do and suffer for God, who have his truth in pawn, that we shall be crowned in heaven? Verily, they are wonderful preparations that are making for us: The Lord prepare us apace, and make us meet to be partakers! It was the highest commendation that ever that worthy, R. Baxter, received, which fell from the pen of his scoffing adversary Tilenus, who saith of him, *Totum Puritanismum totus spirat.*† Oh that this may be true of us and ours!

Let your true yoke-fellow, and my christian friends with you in the bonds of the gospel, have my hearty

† *He breathes nothing but Puritanism.*

cemmendations. And these counsels, I pray you, give them from me, for the improving of their present state:

1. *To habituate themselves, both as to their thoughts and discourses, more thoroughly than ever unto holiness.* Brethren, I would teach you the lesson that I resolve to learn with you,—That your minds and tongues may as naturally run on the things of heaven, as others on the things of this world. Why should it not be thus? I am sure, God and heaven do as well deserve to be thought on, and talked of, by us, as froth and vanity can deserve of the world. There are many that have in a great measure learnt this lesson, and why should not we be some of them? What! if it be hard at first? Every thing is so to a beginner. Besides, is not ours a religion of self-denial? Further, if we do but force ourselves awhile to holy thoughts and heavenly discourse, it will grow habitual to us, and then it will be most natural, familiar, and heavenly sweet. Oh what gainers will you be, if you do but learn this lesson!

Verily, it is the shame of religion, that christians are so unlike themselves, unless upon their knees. Sirs, our lives and language should tell the world what we are, and whither we are going. Christians, let little things content you in the world, but aspire after great things in the grace of God. Many real christians do little think what high frames of holiness they might grow up to, even in this life, with pains and diligence. Sirs, be you men of great designs: Think it not enough if you have wherewith

to bear your charges to heaven ; but aspire with a holy ambition to be great in the court of heaven, favourites of the Most High, of tall growth, great experience, singular communion, that you may burn and shine in your places, and convince the world; that you may savour of heaven wherever you come; and that there may be an even-spun thread of holiness running through your whole course.

It is the disgrace of profession, that there is so little difference to be seen in the ordinary conversation of believers from other men. Is it not a shame, that when we are in company with others, this should be all the difference that is to be seen,—only that we will not curse and swear as do the worst of men? Christians, if you will honour the gospel, bring forth your religion out of your closets (the world cannot see what you do there,) into your shops, trades, visits, &c. and exemplify the rules of religion in the management of all your relations, and in your ordinary converse. Let there be no place or company that you come into, in which you do not drop something of God: This will be the glory of religion; and we shall never convince the world till we come to this. May you come, my brethren, out of your prisons, with your faces shining, having your minds seasoned, and your tongues tipt with holiness! May your mouths be as a well of life, from whence may flow the holy streams of edifying discourse! May you ever remember, as you are sitting in your houses, going by the way, lying down, rising up, what the Lord doth then require of you! (Deut. vi. 7.)

2. *To improve their present retirements from the world, for the settling of their spiritual estates.* It is a common complaint amongst christians, That they want assurance. Oh, if any of you that wanted assurance when you came to prison, may carry that blessing out, what happy gainers would you be! Now you are called, more than ever, to self-searching. Now bring your graces to the touchstone. Be much in self-observation. See what your hearts do with most love and delight go out unto; what are your greatest hopes and your chief designs. See whether God's interest be uppermost in you: Prove this, and prove all. Rest not in probable hopes. Think not that it is enough that you can say, *You hope it is well.* God looks for extraordinary things from you under such great helps, such extraordinary dispensations. Be restless till you can say, that *You know it is well;* that *you know you are passed from death to life.*

Think not that this is a privilege that only a few may expect. Observe but these three things:

1. *To acquaint yourselves thoroughly with the conditions of life, and take heed of laying the marks of salvation either too high or too low.*

2. *To be much in observing the frame, and bent, and workings of your own hearts.*

3. *To be universally conscientious, and to be constant in even and close walkings;* and then I doubt not but you will grow up speedily to a settled assurance, and know and feel that peace of God that passeth all understanding: And this will be somewhat worth your carrying out of prison.

But I return to yourself. But what shall I say? I have more need to receive from you, than ability to give; only I will tell you my wishes for you: I wish, that your body may prosper, as your soul also prospereth. I wish that you may see the travail of your soul; that you may find your people thriving under your hands in all manner of holy conversation and godliness, that whosoever converses with them, may see and hear by them *That God is in them, of a truth.* I wish your enlargement *from* your bonds, and your enlargement *in* them; that your prison may be but the lanthorn, through which your graces, experiences, communion, and prison-attainments, may shine most brightly to all beholders. I wish your prison may be a paradise of peace, and a Patmos of divine discoveries. *Lord Jesus set to thy Amen!*

I am, Sir,

Your unworthy brother and companion
in the kingdom and patience of Jesus,

JOSEPH ALLEINE.

Jan. 10th, 1664.

LETTER XLIV.

[Directions to the ministers of Somersetshire and Wiltshire,
for the instructing of families by way of catechising.]

SIR,—This letter cometh to you, like the men of Macedonia to Paul, crying to you, *Come and help us.* O how insufficient do we find ourselves for the praises of God! What reason have we to call upon ourselves, and to call upon all our friends! And yet we foresee

that all will be too little a sacrifice at last, and too slender a return to the Most High God, who hath made us such wonders of mercy, and such signal instances of his divine power and rich grace. You are not ignorant of our estate, how the sentence of death had passed upon us; how our flesh and our hearts failed, and friends and physicians gave up their hopes. But God, that raised the dead, was pleased to make us the monuments of his wondrous mercy. O that the same God would make us the special instruments of his praise and glory!

Of a truth, Sir, we perceive our hearts are too little, our tongues are too short, our expressions are too low, either to conceive or to utter what we owe to the Great God. O help! help! Bless the Lord, O our souls! Bless the Lord, O our friends! O that all that have wrestled with God for us, might join hand in hand, to make some suitable returns to the God of our lives, and may bring in every one his sacrifice, and all contribute to make one common stock of praises, that many thanksgivings may abound to God on our behalfs. O what hath prayer done for us! While we live we must honour prayer, and admire the power of prayer: We owe our limbs and our lives to prayer. O that a goodly crop of praise may grow up unto God, as a return for his mercies; that the seed of prayers, and showers of tears, may procure sheaves of joy, and songs of deliverance.

But O what shall we render? Wherewithal shall we come before the Lord, or bow ourselves to the Most High God? Oh, where shall we find a fitting

sacrifice? Verily we will give ourselves and our all to him. But, alas, what are we, and what is this little that we call "*our all?*" Therefore have we found in our hearts to write to you and others, that we might excite you to the divine praises with us. And O that the Lord might be loved the better, and glorified the more for our sakes! Will you tell us wherein we may shew our love to him? Wherein we may best please and serve him? O that you would! Herein, assuredly, you would most highly gratify us. O that we might do some singular thing for God; for certainly they are not common things that he hath done for us.

We pray you call upon those that fear the Lord, to help us in celebrating his lovingkindness. O how it pleaseth our very hearts to think that God should be loved and honoured the better for us; that we may be instruments, if it be but for the blowing up of one flash, nay, the kindling of one spark, of divine love in the hearts of his children towards him! Sir, you cannot pleasure us in any thing so much as in this, to love and admire God, and spread his praise more and more; that what is wanting through our weakness, may be made up in your abundance. But we have need to crave your pardon for our length; but the love of Christ constraineth us, and we hope you will pass by an error of love.

While we have been devising what to do for our God, we thought we could no way better serve him, than by provoking such as you are to set up his great name with us. We love and honour you, not only

as you are a member, but a minister of Christ Jesus our Lord, and therefore deserve to be doubly dear unto us: And because we could think of no more pleasing a sacrifice of thanksgiving, we have stirred up ourselves and friends with us, to send to you a prophet in the name of a prophet, this poor token of love, which, though but small, yet we trust will be a sweet savour unto God, and will be accepted with you, being our two mites cast into God's treasury. But look not upon yourself as obliged to us hereby: But put it upon the account of Christ, to whose precious name we dedicate it, and from whom (although he be so much already beforehand with us, yet) we expect a recompence at the resurrection of the just.

And being further desirous to promote the work of God in our low and slender capacities, we have been bold to provoke yourself, with others our fathers and brethren in the ministry, to set about that necessary and much neglected work of catechising; not a little pleasing ourselves in the sweet hope, that by your means we may be instrumental to spread the sweet savour of the knowledge of our God in every place: And being well persuaded of your readiness to forward so blessed a work, we have stirred up ourselves and our friends to expend a considerable sum of money, to furnish ministers with catechisms, a hundred whereof we have sent unto you, beseeching you to use your best prudence and utmost diligence for the spreading of them, and for others' improvement by them, that our labour and charge in so good a work prove not at last of no effect.

Sir, we shall humbly propose unto you, but not impose upon you. But let us be bold with you in Christ, to lay our requests before you as touching this concernment, they being indeed what judicious friends and brethren have thought fit to propound.

1. That the people be publickly and privately instructed about the high necessity and great usefulness of this duty.

2. That these catechisms be freely given to all that will promise to use them.

3. That you would be pleased to acquaint yourself with all the schools that are within your verge; and that you would do your utmost to engage the teachers thereof to teach their scholars this catechism; and that you would furnish all their scholars that are capable and willing to learn.

4. That you will endeavour, from house to house, to engage the master or mistress of every family, for the forwarding of this work.

5. That you will appoint set-times wherein to take an account of the proficiency of all such as have promised to learn; and that, if it may be, they may be engaged to learn weekly a proportion, according to their capacities.

6. That you would favour us so far, as to let us know as speedily as you may, of the receipt of these lines; and if we may presume so far upon you, we pray you to indulge us some assurance under your hand,—that you will to your power promote this happy design, and that by our Lady-day next you will acquaint Mr. Bernard what progress is made.

Sir, our souls will even travail in birth for the success of this undertaking; and therefore we request you, for the love of God, and by the respect which we are persuaded you bear to us, that you will labour to comfort and encourage us in our endeavours for God, which you can no way in the world do so well as by letting us see, that there is some blessed fruit of our cost and pains; and that we have not run in vain, nor laboured in vain. If there be any of these catechisms remaining in your hands that you cannot dispose of by our Lady-day, be pleased to send them to Mr. Bernard, or to Mr. Rositer in Taunton. If you should need any more, give us speedy notice, and you shall not fail to be furnished with what number you desire.

Thus upon the bended knees of our thankful souls, we commend our poor sacrifices, together with yourself, to the eternal God, and remain,

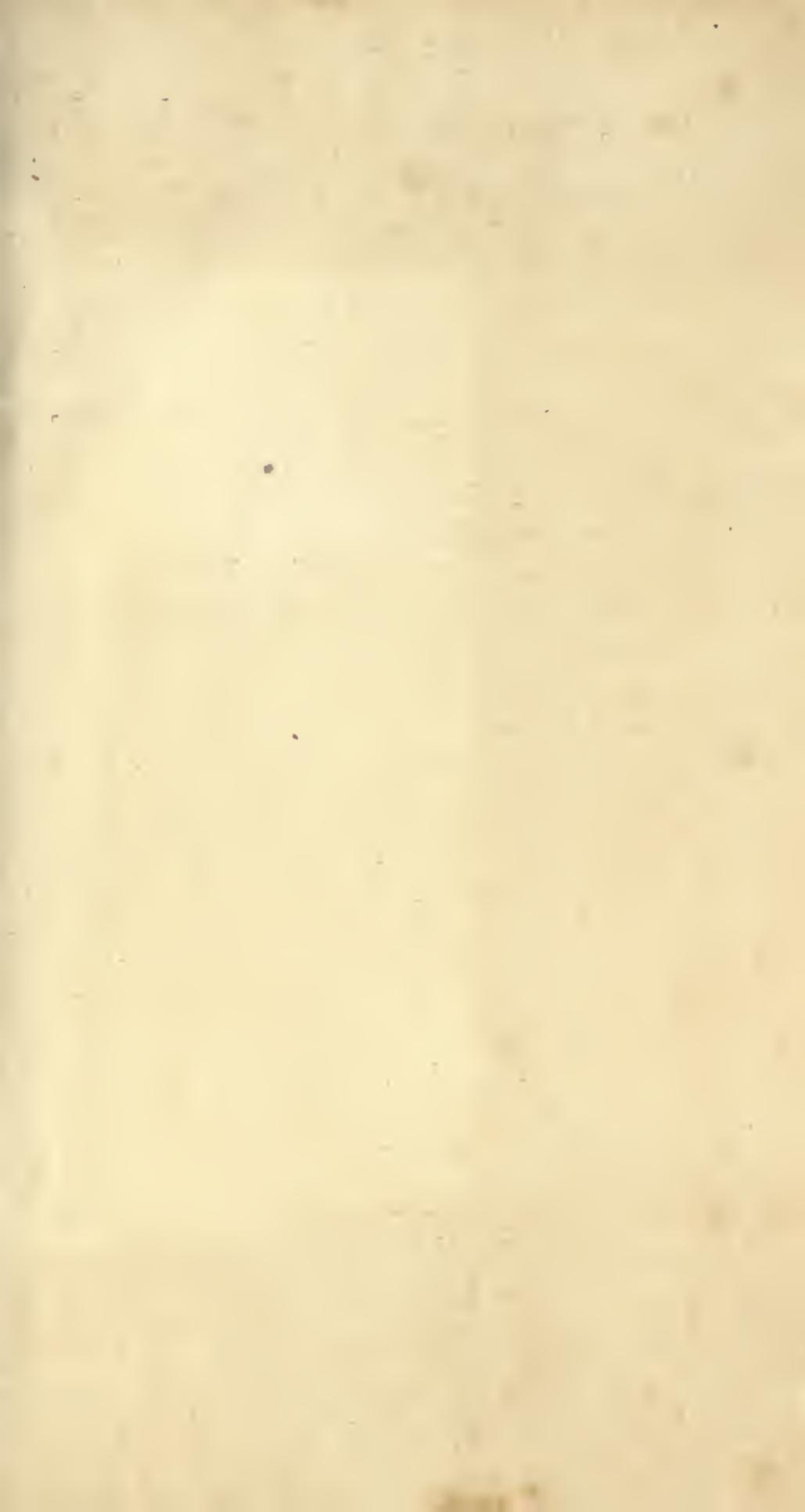
Christ's devoted servants, and your friends,

JOSEPH BERNARD,

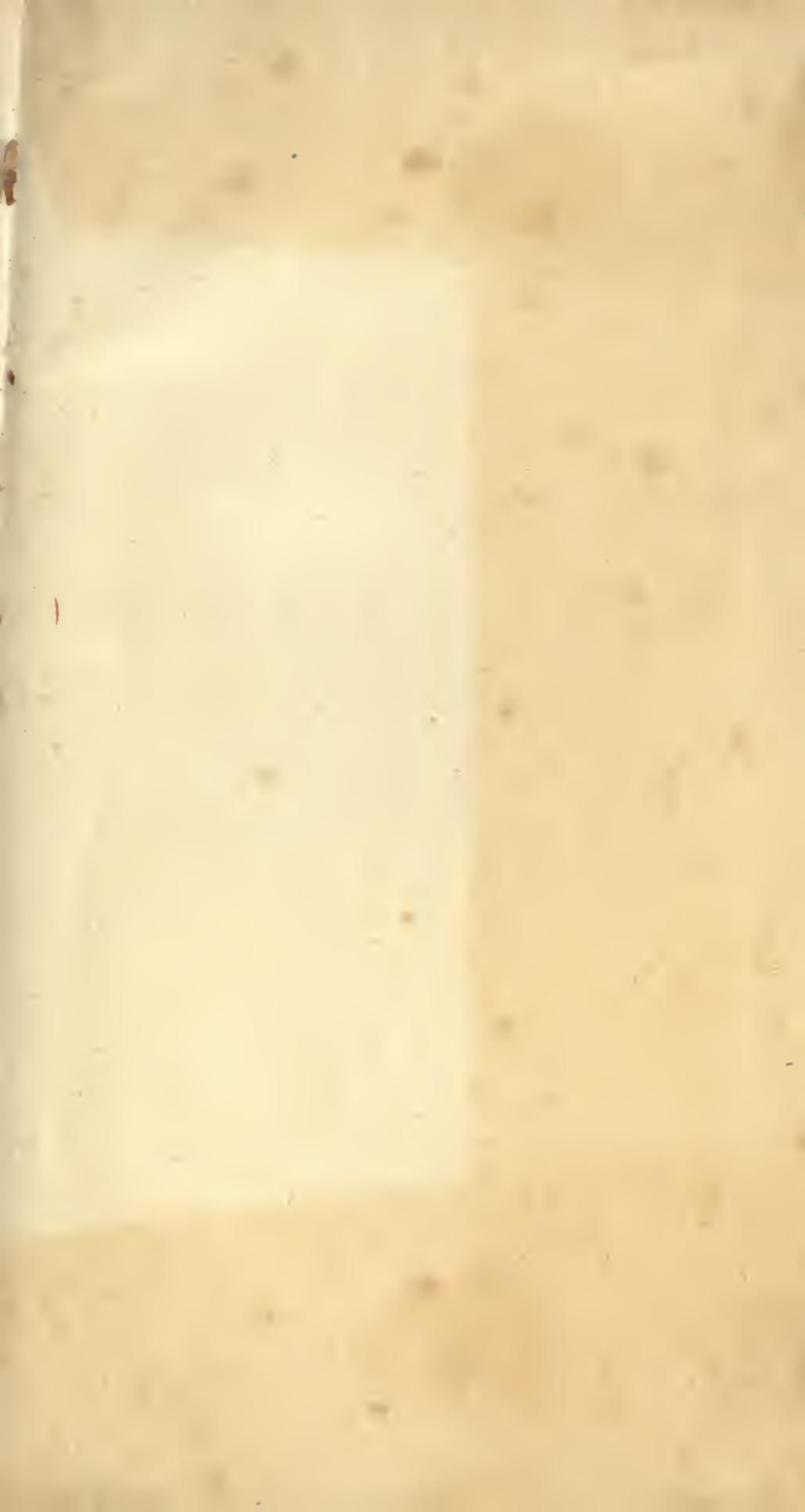
AND

JOSEPH ALLEINE.

FINIS.









BX Baxter, Richard
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A55B38 death of that excellent
1815 minister of Christ

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