

A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF THE LIFE AND DEATH

OF

DOCTOR JOHN TYLSTON.

He was born at Whitchurch in Shropshire, March 15th, 1663-4. His father was Mr. John Tylston, of Fair Oak in Staffordshire, a very pious man, and of exemplary conversation, especially for a holy contempt of the world, and the things of it, which he dealt in with a manifest indifference. I would not mention so trifling a thing as the coat of arms of his family, but that the Doctor sometimes observed with pleasure, that it was the same with that which archbishop Tillotson gave, for whom he had so great a veneration. His mother was Mrs. Hannah Weld, of Rushton in Cheshire, who was likewise a very serious, humble Christian. Under his religious parents he was carefully brought up in the fear of God, and discovered early inclinations both to piety and learning. His father died, March 13th, 1683-4, his mother, April, 1688. He often blessed God for his religious parents, and spoke of them with much respect. His father did not design him for a scholar, being his eldest son; nor did he encourage his inclinations to learning, till he saw him so strongly addicted to it, that to divert him to any thing else, would have been to put a force and hardship upon him, too great for such a kind father to put upon so good a child. He entered upon learning at Whitchurch school, afterward made considerable progress in it at Newcastle, and for some time at Salop; but Mr. Edwards, master at Newport school, put the last hand to his school learning, and gave it some very happy strokes. To speak of his industry at school, and great application, is needless, since that is supposed in such as afterwards become eminent, for the time lost at school is seldom recovered; nor are those likely to make a good day's journey that let slip the morning.

After he left Newport school, he spent some time with two or three young men in the family, and under the tuition, of the Rev. Mr. Malden, at Alking-

ton near Whitchurch, till it pleased God to take their master from their head, by death, May 21st, 1681. Here he attained to such perfection in the Greek and Hebrew, as made both those languages very familiar to him; and the half year he spent in them with Mr. Malden (for he had gone in them as far as boys ordinarily do in schools) he often reflected upon with satisfaction. The Hebrew language, though not serviceable to him in his profession, yet he carefully retained, by using his Hebrew Bible in his attendance on the public reading and expounding of the Scriptures.

In his earnest pursuit after learning, his affections and attendances to the exercises of piety were not less vigorous. He learnt betimes to write the sermons he heard in short-hand, and many of them he took pains to write at large, for the benefit of his friends. Soon after the death of Mr. Malden, by the advice of his near kinsman, and very dear friend, Mr. John Benion, Vicar of Malmsbury, he went to Oxford, and was admitted in Trinity College: his tutor was the learned Mr. Thomas Sykes, now Dr. Sykes, the Rev. Margaret's Professor of Divinity in that University. He was soon taken notice of and countenanced by the Rev. Dr. Bathurst, President of that college, who directed him in his studies. Here he so well approved himself for diligence and sobriety, that his worthy tutor, many years after, thus expresseth himself concerning him; "that he never had more reason to be pleased with the share he had in any man's education, than in his." When he was about Bachelor's standing, though he had very much applied himself to the study of divinity and the Scriptures, yet his inclinations led him to the study of physic, which he had laid a good foundation for, by his improvements in Natural Philosophy, *nam ubi definit physicus ibi incipit medicus*. Pursuant to this resolve, after he had for some time

directed his reading into this channel, in the year 1684 he removed to London, where he applied himself very closely to that study under the direction of that eminent physician, the honour of his profession, Dr. Blackmore, now Sir Richard Blackmore. After some time the learned Dr. Sydenham, (to whose ingenuity the faculty is thought to owe a great deal of its modern improvement,) hearing of him and of his character, sent for him, and was so well pleased with him, that he took him into his house, and gave him all the advantages imaginable, of acquainting him with the best methods of practice. Read what he himself had occasion to write concerning these happy instruments of his learning, in a letter to a friend, not long before he died.

“ I have ever looked upon my obligations to those to whom my education was committed as inexpressibly great, and beyond all possibility of return. My tutor, the Rev. Dr. Sykes, was always to me as a father, and as such I still love and honour him. I love the very name of Sir Richard Blackmore, who first encouraged me to the study of physic, gave me the first invitation to London, recommended me to several good friendships there, took care of me in the small-pox, put me in a way of acquainting me with the city practice, and honoured me with the freedom of his own most ingenious and instructive conversation, as well as the use of his library. As for the great Dr. Sydenham, who received me into his house, carried me with him to his patients, led me into the mysteries of the faculty, and with a most generous freedom, and perpetual expressions, both verbal and real, of a true affection, treated me not only as a son, and disciple, but as a friend and companion, interesting himself with a paternal kindness in all my concerns : I cannot think of him otherwise than as a father, a friend, and benefactor ; and as such his memory must ever be sacred to me. He often told me, that if it were possible for him to get loose from his engagements at London, he could gladly come and spend the remainder of his days with me in the country. All this was the effect of his own generous temper of mind ; for which way could I either desire such a degree of friendship, or make any suitable returns ? ”

It was a very great kindness which Dr. Sydenham retained for him while he lived. Thus he expresseth himself concerning him, in one of his letters : “ I do assure you, upon the word of an old man, I have a very entire love for you, and if it lay in my power, I should be more glad to do you service, than any one in the world, next my own children. ” Such an interest he had in the affections of that ingenious man, who in his last sickness gave him this character, that he was the most grateful man in the world. Those who knew any thing of Dr. Sydenham's principles of religion, ought to know likewise, that Dr. Tylston was his disciple in physic, but far from being

so in divinity. Dr. Sydenham taught him, that the study of physic was not the framing of a curious hypothesis, and being able to support and contend for it ; but learning by experience, and the observations of others in practice, how to cure diseases by assisting nature in its struggles with them. Every one knows how far to seek a lawyer would be in his profession, that should spend many years in reading books, and descanting upon them, and never attend the courts, nor acquaint himself with the methods of practice ; and a physician that would take the same course, would be no less at a loss in his profession. It is ill trusting a guide that knows no more of the road but what he hath learned by the map.

The Doctor was soon aware of the quickness and ingenuity of his pupil, which made him very free in communicating to him the arcana of his practice ; so that in a few months he became master of that treasure of observations, which that great man by many years large practice had gathered. This made his way at the first setting out very plain, and enabled him to proceed with very great assurances ; which was a mighty advantage to one, whose natural temper was very far from being confident and daring, and who never knew how to *boast of a false gift*, as the wise man expresseth it, Prov. xxviii. 14. nor to pretend to that knowledge, which certainly he had not.

In the beginning of the year 1687, by the advice of Dr. Sydenham, in company with the Doctor's son, he took a journey to the university of Aberdeen, in Scotland, which gave him an opportunity of enlarging his acquaintance, and there they both took the degree of Doctor in Physic, which that university conferred on them with particular marks of respect.

His great readiness to advise and assist sick people, wherever he came occasionally, his care never to give any thing that might occasion abortion, and strict caution, never to reveal any of his patients' secrets, were three instances of his careful observance. Soon after his return to London, Dr. Sydenham very much pressed him to launch out into the business of his profession. Accordingly, in May, 1687, he came down into the country, and settled in his native soil, at Whitechurch : nor did any ask, as men usually do of a prophet, in his own country, *whence hath this man this wisdom, and these mighty works ?* for his early genius had promised something great and considerable, and had anticipated the prejudice. When some of his friends at London had offered him their interest in some of the country gentlemen, to whom they would recommend him, he very thankfully declined making use of their kindness, saying, his practice he hoped could recommend him ; nor did it fail to do so, for he quickly fell into very good business, and that which was useful to many ; and without any great difficulty he

got over the prejudices which people commonly have against a young physician, and gave experimental proof, that though days should speak, and multitude of years should speak wisdom, yet neither skill nor success are tied to age.

June 30th, 1687, he married Katharine, the second daughter of Mr. Philip Henry, of Broad Oak, by whom he had six children, three sons and three daughters: one of his sons died of the small-pox, the other five he left behind him.

In the beginning of the year 1690 he removed to Chester; earnestly invited there by many of his friends, among whom he had given occasionally such proof of his abilities, as were sufficient to make a way for his advantageous settlement there, where there were several other physicians; and the event, both in the city and country about, rather outdid than fell short of expectation. Having thus brought down the story of his life to his settlement at Chester, where he spent the last nine years of it, we come to consider his character, which, in many particulars of it, was very exemplary and instructive. And we shall take a view of him,

I. As a scholar. While he lived he continued very industrious in the pursuit of knowledge; though his attainments in learning were very great, yet he was still pressing forward, and redeemed the time he could spare from practice, for study. His closet and books were to him what the tavern and glass of wine are to many men of business, a diversion from the cares, and the filling up of the vacancies, of business. Few new books came within his reach, but he found time to make himself master of their notions; but his delight was mostly in the writings of the ancients. Cicero, Seneca, and Plutarch he much admired, and made them very familiar to him. Pliny's epistles he took great pleasure in. These, and other the like, he did not only look into, or cast an eye upon, now and then; but read them through and through, digested their discourses, and was able to give a good account of their reasonings. The passages he met with, which he thought useful to illustrate any text of Scripture, he transcribed at large, into his interleaved Bible, or some other repository. He likewise marked in his book what was most considerable, that he might review them with more ease, and advantage. Some of the ancient writers of the Christian church he likewise acquainted himself with, as Tertullian; and not long before his death, he spent a great deal of time in Lactantius's works, much to his satisfaction. Out of these also he selected many things, as before, and was communicative of what he read, in discourse with his friends. In natural philosophy, he was somewhat sceptical, and though he was well able to discourse of the history of nature, yet he was always ready to own himself unable to determine concerning the secret springs and causes. Of this

he thus expresseth himself in a letter to a friend, upon occasion of his inquiry into or concerning the causes of muscular motions.

"I think it more ingenuous (and cheaper I am sure it is) for a man to confess his ignorance, than be at a great deal of pains to discover it; for my own part, I hope I can employ my time better than in such disquisitions as, after all my search and thought, will afford me no good satisfaction; it is as good to be unsatisfied at first as at last, when I find that a progress in the search does not lessen the difficulty."

Let us view him,

II. As the master of a family. In this capacity, his conversation was exemplary,

1. For prudence and virtue in his carriage towards his family and relations, as a husband, a father, and master. A very happy mixture of authority and love I have often observed in his domestic conduct, and such as renders parents and masters both easy to themselves and their families. He managed his children with great wisdom and tenderness, having them in subjection, with all gravity, as the apostle speaks, 1 Tim. iii. 4. and yet without harshness or severity, but on the contrary, with a discreet indulgence.

2. For piety and devotion in his family worship; in the discharge of which he was conscientious. Though his business hindered him often from observing a constant time for it, yet the morning and evening sacrifice of prayer and praise, and that most commonly with reading the Scriptures in course, and singing psalms, were duly offered up in his family. He furnished his house with several of Mr. Tate's new translation of the Psalms, and sung them over in order, without reading the lines. I have observed it, as an evidence of his careful and profitable reading of the Scriptures, that in discourse, he would frequently mention what he had particularly taken notice of in that course of his reading.

The sermons he heard on the Lord's day, he constantly wrote, and diligently repeated them to his family at night, that they might give the more earnest heed to the things which they had heard. Upon occasion of any special providence, merciful or afflictive, in the family, he frequently desired the assistance of some of his relations, with his family, in prayer and praise. For some years before he died, he kept an annual thanksgiving to God in his house, for the recovery of his eldest son from a dangerous fever.

III. As a physician. The calling wherein he was called is confessedly needful and honourable, and a great blessing to mankind; and all that knew him, could not but look upon him as an ornament to it. Some of his own profession were pleased to say, they doubted not but if he had lived he would

have been one of the eminentest physicians in all these parts of England. In the study of physic he was constant and indefatigable, and even after he had obtained a considerable reputation by his practice, he continued as diligent in study as if he were again to lay the foundation. He read and collected many things out of the writings of the ancient physicians, Hippocrates, Galen, and others, and few of the modern improvements that were considerable escaped his notice. He laid out himself very much to procure books that might be helpful to him, and oft complained of his distance from London and Oxford, where he might have the advantage of large libraries. Of the writers in physic, he generally valued those most who wrote by way of narrative, and of matters of fact, and observations upon them, rather than those that raised hypotheses, and built upon them. Dr. Sydenham's works he had justly a great value for, and after he had often read them over, that he might yet more thoroughly acquaint himself with them, he drew a very large and complete index to them, alphabetically.

He had, for some years before he died, laid the scheme of a great project, which, if God had spared him to carry on and finish, would no doubt have been very acceptable to the learned world. It was a universal history of epidemic diseases, digested in the order of time, through all the ages and places of the world that we have any record of, to be collected out of the most authentic historians and best physicians. From such a collection as this, he thought many useful hints might be taken, not only for the discovery of the changes of the constitution of acute distempers, but also for their cure; for what is there of which it may be said, *See this is new*, Eccl. i. 10. He laid the plan of this design, and proceeded in it as far as his own library and his friends would furnish him with materials, but let it stand for want of such books as were necessary to the conducting of it, but could not possibly be procured. What he knew, he was very willing to impart to others, that were like to do good with it. "I hate concealment (saith he in a letter to a friend) and monopoly, especially in a faculty that is conversant with the lives of men."

In the practice of physic, he was exemplary for three things:

1. His diligence, faithfulness, and concern for his patients, whose case he did naturally care for. He took pains to study such cases as had difficulty in them, and consulted his books about them. He was more frequent in his visits than most physicians are, and was very industrious in his personal attendance, to prevent any mistake in making up or administering what he prescribed; in either of which an error may be fatal. He would never (unless in a very plain and common case) prescribe any thing till he himself saw the patient, for he looked upon

the right understanding of the case (which is scarcely to be obtained but by personal view and examination) to be half the cure. In many acute diseases, he found it necessary to be much with the patient, that he might be aware of every curative indication, and observe which way nature strove to help itself, and might immediately come to its assistance. His labour and pains in travelling early and late, was not so much a fatigue to him, as his great care and concern of his patients, even those that were strangers to him, and those he got nothing by. One might see by his countenance, when he had a patient under his hand in perilous circumstances, and where life hung in doubt. Such cases often broke his sleep, and drew from him complaints, what a heavy burthen it was to him, to have the lives of people in his hands; but the great success he frequently had in the most difficult cases, yielded him a pleasure and satisfaction proportionable to the exigency of the case.

He was not very apt to give a patient over in despair of a recovery, but while there was any room left for the use of means, he would continue them; complaining that many were lost by being said to be so; and yet, where he apprehended the case very dangerous and desperate, he made conscience of letting the patients or their friends know it. He admonished them if the house were not set in order, to do it immediately. He had so great a tenderness for them that were under his care, that some of his patients have said, that he was to them no less a true friend, than a skilful physician.

2. In his charity to the poor. This he was very eminent for; as in other things, so particularly in the business of his profession. I believe I may safely say, that his patients whom he gave his advice to freely were many more than those he received fees from, for he was *the poor man's doctor*. He has sometimes travelled many miles to advise a poor body gratis, with as much kindness and cheerfulness as ever he visited the most generous and wealthy of his patients, and never neglected any for their poverty; nay, he not only gave his advice freely to the poor, but frequently gave them their physic too, to his great expense, and often lamented it, that so little care is taken of those poor, when they are sick, who, when they are well, make shift to subsist without being troublesome, and much desired that some liberal things might be devised for the support of such. To excite himself to all acts of kindness and beneficence, he wrote two Scriptures in Greek in the beginning of his pocket dispensatory, which he always carried about with him; one speaking the example of our Lord Jesus, Acts x. 38. *He went about doing good*; the other, the words of our Lord Jesus, Acts x. 35. *It is more blessed to give than to receive*. And because he was sometimes kind to those who were so rude and ungrateful as

not to own his kindness, that this might not discourage his charity, he wrote in the same book that remark of Pliny's, "It is most pleasant to be kind to the grateful, but most honourable to be kind to the ungrateful."

3. His piety and religion, which appeared even in the business of his profession, was sufficient to give the world another idea of *Religio Medici*, than it hath sometimes had. It was plain, that in following his practice, he aimed at the glory of God, and doing good, more than at getting wealth, and raising an estate. I have often heard him say, he would not take five hundred a-year to leave off his practice, (though perhaps he never got half so much by it,) such a mighty satisfaction had he in being useful and serviceable to his generation, as unto the Lord, and not unto men. It was an excellent saying, which he made his own, *Let me be God's hand*. His frequent and earnest prayers to God for his patients, and for a blessing on what he administered to them, and for direction in his prescriptions, did speak not only a tender concern for his patients, but also an active and lively belief of the providence of God, and of our dependence upon that providence, *that every man's judgment proceedeth from the Lord*. The observations he made of the influence which very small and minute circumstances had upon turning the event, strengthened his belief of the divine conduct, guiding the means to the end.

IV. We come in the last place, to take a view of him as a Christian. And here we find him in many particulars very exemplary.

He was a strict observer of the laws of morality and virtue, sobriety and temperance, justice and charity, which he looked upon as essential to pure religion, oft appealing to the most distinguishing character of good and bad men, 1 John iii. 7, 10. *He that doth righteousness, is righteous, and he that doth not righteousness, is not of God*. As he made it his business to do good unto all he was concerned with, so it was his care to do evil to none. He was ready in the Scriptures, and mighty in them. Some very judicious divines that have conversed with him in matters of religion, have been surpris'd and asham'd, to find one whose profession led him to other studies, as well acquainted with the Scriptures, as most of those whose profession obligeth them to that study. He was very much in meditation upon divine things; and when his thoughts fastened upon a subject, that was more than ordinary affecting, he committed them to writing. Many sheets of divine contemplation he has left behind him on some of the most important subjects. As, arguments to prove the being of God; another, concerning God's eternity; another, of the arguments of the truth of the Christian religion; another, of the present darkness we are in concerning

the particulars of a future state; another, concerning the extent of divine grace; another, concerning religious joy, on 1 Thess. v. 16. *Rejoice evermore*; another, which he calls *thoughts on human life*, with divers others. Some curious and uncommon things there are in these dissertations, but all savouring of great piety and devotedness to God, and an experimental knowledge of divine things. Though he was himself thoroughly furnished for every good work, yet he was very diligent in his attendance upon public assemblies for religious worship, and often complain'd of it, (as one of the greatest infelicities of his profession,) that it very often unavoidably took up a good part of his sabbath time, and hindered him from the public worship of God, which would have been an intolerable grievance to him if he had not had this to comfort him, that our Lord Jesus Christ has taught us to prefer mercy before sacrifice, whenever they are rivals.

In his profession of Christianity he was a great enemy to narrow principles, and was actuated by a spirit of catholic charity and communion; and disliked nothing more in any party than their monopolizing of the church and ministers, and unchurching and unministering those who in matters of doubtful disputation differed from them, and forbidding those members to join at any time with such religious assemblies as could not be denied to have among them all the essentials of divine worship. He had a very great veneration for the pious and moderate divines of the church of England, no man more, and joined as seriously and reverently in the Liturgy as any man, when he was occasionally present at it, but in the choice of his stated communion he was determin'd (though to his prejudice in secular interest) by these two rules:

1. That we should choose to attend ordinarily upon those administrations, (as far as the divine providence puts them within our reach,) which we find to be most for our edification in knowledge and faith, in comfort and holiness, and most likely to answer the end of ordinances. He particularly pleaded for himself, that he that had so little time to spare for his soul from the business of his profession, had reason to improve that little to the best advantage. What is most edifying and advantageous every man is best able to judge for himself.

2. That it is most comfortable to join with those who take all occasions to express their love and respect for those Christians that differ in their apprehensions from them, and uncomfortable to hear those upon all occasions condemn'd in the lump, and put under the blackest characters, some of whom we have reason to believe fear God and work righteousness, and therefore doubtless are accepted of him.

These I know to be the principles he went upon, and in his practice according to them he was

steady, uniform, and constant; and I think he was not to be called a dissenter from the church of England, but a dissenter from all parties, or a consenter to catholic Christianity. He gave this reason among others why he would have his children baptized publicly, because he would publicly own a ministry which was condemned by many as null and invalid.

He was a great promoter and encourager of works of charity and mercy, was very ready to every good work of that kind, often mentioning the rule of judgment at the great day, Matt. xxv. 36. as giving the surest rule of practice now. His generous present which he made towards the building of the new chapel at Trinity College in Oxford was one instance of his forwardness to any good work, as it was of his gratitude to the nursery of learning in which he had his education.

Two things more I shall observe as very exemplary concerning his piety in its causes and principles.

1. His good thoughts of God. He delighted to speak, and much more to think, of the infinite mercy of God; that he is a being that doth not delight in punishing his creatures, but in doing them good; and would therefore by no means admit those opinions which exclude from salvation all Gentiles and unbaptized infants. The plain and undoubted truth of God's eternal goodness to all his creatures, that have not forfeited their interest in it, must be relied upon, and nothing which divine revelation has left us in the dark about set up in contradiction to it.

In reference to the manifestly deplorable state of a great part of mankind, he pleased himself with the thought, that this earth is but a small part of the universe, and that it is probable there are many worlds of holy and blessed beings which we know nothing of; and he was very inclinable to believe, that though in this earth they who find the way to life are comparatively few, yet taking the whole creation together, the everlasting monuments of God's mercy and love will be many more than those of his wrath and justice.

He took great pleasure in speaking of his own experience of the goodness of God to him, often mentioning with comfort that Scripture, Jer. iii. 4. *My Father, thou art the guide of my youth*; and observed with pleasure, to the glory of God, and the encouragement of his friends, how the hand of divine Providence had wisely managed his affairs to his comfort, beyond any design or foresight of his own.

2. His low thoughts of this world, which he often spoke of with great contempt, as vanity and vexation of spirit, and unworthy the affections of an immortal soul. So far was he from indulging the body, that there was nothing he complained of more, than that he found it such an entanglement and encumbrance to the soul. So little love he had to this life, that he often said he did not think it worth while to live, unless it were to do good; and as to

worldly wealth, what more is it (said he) than food and raiment, and having that one may be content.

Taking example from his father-in-law, Mr. Henry, (of whom he was a very great admirer, witness the ingenious Latin epitaph he made upon him,) he interlined in his almanack each year a remark upon his birth-day, in Latin well worthy the transcribing, as speaking his thankfulness to God for the mercies of his life, his further dependence upon God's providence, and his desires and hopes of everlasting life.

On March 15th, 1696-7, he thus writes, "Ebenezer. I have been a sojourner and pilgrim in the earth these three-and-thirty years. I am obliged to say my days have been few. I cannot say they have been evil, for but few of the sorrows of mortality in events more afflictive, or health less constant, have happened to me. Divine Providence has afforded me a constant supply of life, and of all the happy conveniences of it, and with a tender care to aid me from the invading fury of those evils to which I have sometimes apprehended myself exposed."

"The issues of futurity set out by God in vast eternity shall never be viewed by mortal eye.

"March 15th, 1697-8. The fifteenth of March, 1663-4, was the day of my own birth; the fifteenth of March, 1683-4, was the day of my father's funeral: on one and the same day at the distance of twenty years, my own mother, his consort, delivered me into his tender arms, and our common mother, the earth, received him into the enclosure of the grave. So that the same time was a spring of day to him, and of grief to me. God had set the one over against the other, to prevent a luxurious mirth on the one hand, and disanimating sorrow on the other; but I am still within the lines of affliction, and that there is more occasion to lament myself, who am yet waiting for the goal, than him, who is safely arrived at it, is a thing indisputable. We are born to anguish, we die to triumph; and oh! thou happy soul, who, having piously and honourably discharged the duties and fatigues of mortality, art with endless pleasure and triumph at once got up to everlasting bliss, it remains that I follow thee. Heaven grant I may arrive at thee."

"March 15th, 1698-9. Infancy commences at birth, and continues to the 5th year of life. Puerility begins there and goes on to the 18th year. The time between that and 25 affords us the style of young men. The space between that and the 35th year is our most flourishing time. Afterwards till we arrive at 49 we are said to be middle aged. That being once passed we are justly declared old. I have therefore this very year and day entered on the last stage but one of mortality. It is most equal that now at last I abandon the vanities not only of childhood, but of youth too, and compose myself to designs that are manly. If human age must not be

reckoned beyond the 70th year, I have run over half my course. What dangers have I escaped! What blessings have I enjoyed by the mercy of my most kind God! Wherefore I entirely depend on him. I entirely commit myself to him who will certainly afford me seasonable relief in this weary pilgrimage, and bestow on me a blessed immortality in the native country of my then happy soul."

All that remains now, is to give some account of the period of his life, having seen the end of his conversation. From what he was and did it was easy to prognosticate to what an eminency he was likely to arrive, and how great a blessing his older years would prove to his age and generation; but this prospect was attended with melancholy prognostication that he would not be long-lived. His constitution was very tender and nice, his digestion bad, his body unable to bear much fatigue, and, in short, his soul too big and too active for it, and a lamp that burnt too fast to burn long.

Some slight fevers he had at his coming to Chester, which went off without any threatening symptoms, but left him very careful in the management of himself, which he did not in the way of self-indulgence, but of self-denial. But what fence can there be against the messengers of death when they come with commission from the God of life. The fever that was mortal to him arrested him March 29th, 1699, about noon, immediately after he had written a long letter to his dear friend and kinsman, Mr. Benion of Malmsbury. He feared he had taken cold the night before in the bookseller's shop, where he was detained by the perusal of a new book, but he had had a very good night and visited his patients that morning. The first invasion the disease made was very violent, in an extreme coldness and shivering, succeeded by a burning, no less violent, which after some hours went off in a very profuse sweat. He presently took the alarm, and apprehended it not unlikely that it might prove a summons to the grave.

He said he had now lived past half the age of man, which was longer than he had expected some years ago. Thus the arrests of death are no surprise to those who all the days of their appointed time wait till their change comes. He expressed much satisfaction in the mercy and goodness of God, and fastened upon his oath, that he hath no pleasure in the death of sinners. He likewise cheerfully resigned himself to the will of God whether for life or death, "What we will (said he) we think is best, but what God will we are sure is best." He addressed himself to his dying work with great seriousness and application. "I cannot think of death (said he) without concern, but I bless God I can think of it without terror;" and frequently in his sickness he spake of dying with all the concern and satisfaction that became a wise man, and a good Christian, and one who very well knew both that it is a serious thing

to die, and yet that death hath no sting in it to a child of God. Many excellent things he said in his illness which spake a great contempt of the world, an entire resignation to the divine will, and a cheerful expectation of the glory to be revealed, which cannot be recovered in his own words, but deserved to be written in letters of gold. The disease after the first onset (which was fierce) seemed to retreat for two days, and gave good hopes of a speedy recovery, though he himself spoke doubtfully of his case; but on the 4th day it rallied again, and seized his spirits with such a violent assault, that he received the sentence of death within himself, and though afterwards there were some lucid intervals, yet from thenceforward he manifestly declined apace, and set himself very solemnly and deliberately to take his leave of this world, and to make his entrance into another; and one time or other, as his distemper gave leave, he scarce left any thing untouched that was proper to be said by a dying man. He several times said, that when he reflected upon his manifold failings and defects, he had reason enough to tremble at the thoughts of going to give up his account to God, but (said he) with an air of courage and cheerfulness, "I trust to the infinite mercy of God and the all-sufficient merits and mediation of the Lord Jesus;" and here he cast anchor, as one abundantly satisfied. Sometimes he was much enlarged in blessing God for the experience he had had of his goodness to him, which he said he could never enough admire; particularly he thanked God that he had kept him from deism, or from imbibing any corrupt principles of religion when he was abroad; also that he had not lived altogether a useless life in the world, but that God had owned him in his profession, and given him success in it. "I cannot express (said he) how good God hath been to me all my days, and it is my comfort that I am going to a world where I shall be for ever praising him." He said if he had thought his time would have been so short, he would not have spent so much of it as he had done in the study of heathen authors, but he did it with a good design, that he might acquaint himself with the dictates of the light of nature, and know how far they went, and he had found this search a very great confirmation to him of the truth of the Christian religion, which doth so highly improve and perfect natural religion, and relieves us there where that is manifestly defective, and leaves us at a loss.

He frequently expressed a great willingness to die, though he had upon many accounts reason enough to desire to live, but (said he) "every man must go in his order; let this be the order appointed for me, I am very well satisfied." He encouraged his relations and friends cheerfully to resign him up to the will of God, and desired they would do it without murmuring. He much delighted in prayer,

and joined with much affection in the prayers that were frequently made with him. During all his illness he seemed to have a very great composure of mind, and settled peace, except one night when he was in a delirium, or, as he called it afterwards, a stupor, which he could give no account of; and in that he expressed a dread of God's wrath, and some amazing fears concerning his everlasting state; but in a short time (through God's great goodness) that storm passed away, and he enjoyed a constant serenity of mind till he entered into everlasting peace. He bore the pains of his distemper with an exemplary patience and easiness of mind, making the best of every thing, and seldom complaining, but very thankful to those that attended him and ministered to him. He took a solemn farewell of those about him, spoke to his dear yoke-fellow with good words and comfortable words, kissed and blessed all his children, and to them that were become capable of receiving it gave good advice. He charged his son to be sure to study the Scriptures, and make them the guide of his ways; and, said he to him, "Whatever new opinions thou mayst meet with in philosophy, play with them as thou wilt, but never affect new notions and new opinions in religion, but stick to the good old religion of Christ and his apostles, and that will bring thee to heaven." He desired his children might read Mr. John Janeway's Life, and Mr. Baxter's Poor Man's Family Book, which latter he had read a little before he sickened; as he had sometime before read with abundant satisfaction (and abridged) his Reasons for the Christian Religion, and particularly expressed himself greatly pleased with that summary of religion which is there in a few words, p. 227. "Religion is nothing else, but faith turning the soul by repentance from the flesh and world, to the love and praise and obedience of God, in the joyful hope of the heavenly glory."

He called for his servants, and took leave of them with prayer and good counsel; he earnestly pressed upon them diligence in religion, and to take heed of all sin; and "see to it (said he) that you do that which you may reflect upon with comfort when you come to be in my condition." He commended the ways of religion and godliness to those about him as good ways, and such as he himself had experienced to be ways of pleasantness, and paths of peace.

It was an expression, among many, of his great humility, that to one of his affectionate farewells he gave me (Mr. Matthew Henry) he added, "and I pray God that those who survive me may profit more by your ministry than I have done, abundantly, abundantly more." He remembered his love and respects

to many of his friends in the country, and (said he) "I must not forget the church of God. Though it be a time of trouble with the church in many places, yet those that are gone before, died in this belief, that God would do great things for his church in the latter days, and so do I too; Lord, do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion." He often comforted himself with the believing hopes and expectations of a better state on the other side death, and recited many Scriptures that speak of it: "Oh the glorious mansions (said he) in our Father's house, and glorious inhabitants in those mansions; pleasures for evermore." When he had some food given to him he said, "What a blessed state will that be when I shall hunger no more, nor thirst any more." When he was sometimes asked how he did, he answered, "I am going to another world, and I hope, through grace, to a better. I know (said he) whom I have trusted, and that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him." One present answered, "A great truth." He replied, "Yes, and a great trustee." He said, "If it were the will of God, he would desire to die in the actual contemplation of the goodness of God, and the glory to be revealed."

No advice, no help, no means that could be had, were wanting, but the weakness of his constitution came against him, and forced nature to yield to the disease; which he was himself first aware of, and spoke with much cheerfulness, and submission to the divine will. The two last days of his sickness, though he continued sensible, yet he took little notice, but lay easy, and declined gradually, and on Saturday night, April 8th, about eleven o'clock, a little before the entrance of the sabbath, he entered into his rest, and went to keep an everlasting sabbath within the veil. I never saw any who seemed to die so easily and quietly as he did; there was no conflict, no struggle, no agony in his death, but he breathed his last without the least sigh, or groan, or wrestling. There was not only no sting in his death, but no bands in his death. Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord.

The Tuesday following he was interred in Trinity Church in Chester, attended to the grave with abundance of tears and honourable testimonies; and it might be truly said at his funeral, as it was at Jacob's, "This is a grievous mourning." In so great a congregation there has seldom been so few dry eyes.

The Rev. Mr. Newcome of Tattenhall, his dear and intimate friend, preached his funeral sermon on Phil. i. 21. *To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain*, and by the character of him did him honour at his death.