

PREFACE.

FAITHFUL ministers are styled the chariots and horsemen of Israel ; these are the watchmen of the city that give warning of danger, intercede with the Lord ; and doubtless the church of God must receive great detriment, by the removal of such worthies. It is a saying of the Jewish Rabbins, *Quando luminaria patiuntur eclipsin, malum est signum mundo*, When the heavenly luminaries are eclipsed, it is a dreadful presage of approaching evil to this lower world. The church in these districts hath been successively blessed with famous ministers, and gracious Christians, whose praise is in the churches of Christ ; many of whom now sleep in the Lord ; yet through God's wise care for the preservation of the churches, not a few are springing up in their room as hopeful slips ; on whom and the people surviving, I would here take occasion to drop a word of counsel.

1. You that are expected to succeed this old stock of preachers, worn or wearing out, look to your planting in Christ ; let your own souls be duly engrafted into the true vine ; presume not to be ministers before you be Christians ; get experience of divine truths in your own hearts, and transcribe them in your daily practice ; believe, repent, obey yourselves, or you will teach these things badly and unconcernedly ; whatever your gifts be, see you have sincere grace, and dedicate your all to God ; you serve a holy God, you preach a holy gospel, you have before you holy examples, be you also holy in every change, in all circumstances. Aaron's ornaments signified nothing, if holiness to the Lord was not written upon his forehead on a plate of gold ; if you had profound genius and learning, tenacious memories, extraordinary elocution, so that you could speak with the tongues of men and angels, all is of no worth without grace within, and universal sanctity ; one allowed sin will worm-eat the goodliest trees, and blast the most pleasant fruits. Some ministers are eminent for one rare gift, others for different accomplishments ; all have some, few have all ; some modest young men look upon themselves as much behind others, and are apt to be discouraged ; my advice to such is, to make up their deficiency in diligence, in holiness, and in faithfulness. When nature or art denies any thing, seek after an equivalent from additional supplies of grace. Grace within, vigorously

exercised, the assisting grace of God procured by faith and prayer will avail much; be faithful to what you have, if you cannot attain much; that is, a fine saying of Luther's, and shall be my motto, "I desire to be found a faithful minister of Christ and his church, if I cannot be wise or skilful." Let not inability discourage you; some ordinary men of humble gifts, may honour God more than some famous learned doctors. Be industrious in your studies; daily improve your talents, you have more helps than your predecessors; give not occasion for the complaint of that Hebrew Rabbi, that the father had plowed, sown, reaped, winnowed the wheat, and set bread on the table, but that the children had no appetite. The greatest abilities may rust away from idleness; but the feeblest grow bright and useful by diligent improvement; the diligent hand with God's blessing makes rich; but be sure you keep humble, despise not, but reverence your forefathers; if you surpass their attainments in literature in some points, it will be well if you fall not below them in real worth, as to the power of godliness; read their lives in Mr. Clarke's collection, especially the last volume printed since his death, and be dissatisfied with yourselves, and excited to a holy emulation in true piety and zeal; get into retirement, mourn to see yourselves thus outstript, and implore more grace from heaven.

I have but a word to say concerning this narrative, the life of this holy man of God; I confess many discouragements lay in the way of this undertaking, not necessary now to be named; the principal was: That we were not capable of doing any thing worthy of him, and it is better do nothing at all, than not to the purpose, or not adequately; but my answer is, that of the Poet Lucan,

"Quod si digna tuâ minus est mea pagina, laude,
At voluisse sat est."

And, "*difficilium facilis est venia*:" if I am not able to make a fine portrait, exhibiting all the features gracefully; it may be, this rough sketch may exceed some of our attainments, may excite us to imitation, and some way tend to the glory of our great Master; and then I gain my object. If any say, it is imperfectly done, and might have been done better; I confess it, and let them contribute something to mend it; but this is the best we can produce, according to our information; and if we cannot bring a lamb, our two turtle doves may be accepted both by God and man. May the infinite, omnipotent, faithful God, send labourers into the harvest, supply vacancies, second his servants' efforts with his blessing, and continue his church, ministry, and presence with these nations to the end of the world. Amen.

A
NARRATIVE OF THE LIFE AND DEATH
OF THE
REV. JOHN ANGIER,

*Minister of the Gospel, at Denton.**



MR. JOHN ANGIER was born at Dedham, in Essex, of pious parents, and was baptized there, October 8th, 1605. He was carefully instructed by his parents betimes, in the principles of religion, and educated in school learning in the same place; being apt and capable from his childhood, he was much inclined to his book, and very desirous of being trained up for the ministry, which he made his early choice, as appears from the following anecdote, which I have heard confidently related by credible persons. As this John, (who was the first-born son, named after his father,) with his three brethren, Bezaleel, Samuel, and Edmund, were coming from school to their father's house, there fell a shower of rain; they all ran under a tree in a hedge for shelter; standing there and seeing it rain apace, they began to make their several wishes: one wished it would rain learning; another, wool; another, money; and another, plums: thus pleasing themselves with their juvenile fancies; which options, manifested their different inclinations, and became presages of their future disposal. For a neighbour overhearing them, acquainted their father, who calling them to him, examined them one by one, saying, John, what did you wish it might rain at such a time, in such a place? He was then something abashed and loth to answer, but being further urged, said, Sir, I wished it would rain learning. Why? said his father, what profession wouldst thou be of? he answered, I would be a preacher. Come, Beza, said the father, what didst thou wish it would rain? he answered, wool. Why? said he, what calling wouldst thou choose? he answered, I would be of your calling, a clothier. Samuel, said the father, what hadst thou a mind it would rain? He answered, money, for I have a mind to be a merchant. And lastly, calling Edmund, demand-

* This Life of Mr. Angier, was written by Mr. O. Heywood.

ing the same, he answered, that he desired it might rain plums, for he would choose to be a grocer. The father being an intelligent, considerate man, thus ascertained every one's genius; and being furnished with a competent estate, adapted their callings according to their wishes. Bezaleel was a rich clothier in Dedham, and a gracious man; he died October, 30, 1678. Samuel, the third son, being brought up a merchant, lived in good repute in Holland, and there died in March, 1667. Edmund, the youngest, being bound apprentice to a grocer at Cambridge, went into New England, and is the only survivor; he has many years kept a grocer's shop in that country, and I suppose is living at present.

But to return to the eldest son John, the subject of this memoir. Being trained up a scholar, he proved of singular service as an instrument in advancing the glory of God, and promoting the spiritual welfare of others in his generation. And thus they all answered the purpose of their education, and were successful; a good admonition to parents in disposing of their children, rather to consult their children's capacities and inclinations, than their own humours and conveniences; things do always best when voluntarily chosen; when the stream of natural inclination runs through the channel of an adopted vocation, it bears down all opposition, and attains the desired object in the most arduous enterprises; hence Dr. Harris saith, he never attempted any thing within the verge of his calling, though it seemed difficult at the entrance, but with God's blessing on his industrious prosecution, he found it feasible and easy; but *nil invitâ Minervâ*, that which is attempted against the heart, or without an adequate capacity, goes on heavily, and seldom renders a man fit to manage his calling to purpose, or arrive at any eminence in it, because it goeth against the grain; Athenians therefore acted wisely, who brought their youth into a place where utensils for every calling were laid up, that making their choice from them, each might have the calling he, in this way, had chosen.

And as his proficiency at school was according to his time, so divine grace did early begin to touch and affect the heart of our young Timothy, who from a child had known the holy scriptures;* for at twelve years of age, the Lord reached his conscience, with some rays of illumination and darts of conviction, which produced more effect through Mr. Rogers' ministry after his father's death; but from his first convictions, he had much trouble upon his spirit, which he kept in a great measure to himself, and often retired privately, being ashamed that any one should

* 2 Tim. iii. 15.

know of his distress of mind. His mother being an excellent and gracious Christian, often spoke to him of soul concerns, wept and prayed much for him. At a competent age his father sent him to the University of Cambridge; he was admitted in Emanuel College, where, notwithstanding his pious education, and hopeful impressions, before mentioned, he fell off to vain company and loose practices, (see the slipperiness of youth!) to the great grief of his parents, and his own present guilt and subsequent bitterness in the review. There he continued, and commenced Bachelor of Arts, before his father's death; who being sick, sent for him to come home from Cambridge, but he came so late, that in the afternoon as he approached towards Dedham he met the people going from his father's funeral, which made a very deep impression upon him; and God took hold of this occasion more effectually to awaken his conscience, and alarm him respecting his duty.

Mr. Angier was kept a season at his mother's house, followed his studies, and attended to Mr. Rogers' ministry: this Mr. John Rogers, of Dedham, was a prodigy of zeal and success in his ministerial labours; it was wont to be said, Come, let us go to Dedham to get a little fire. He was lecturer there, and preached once on the Lord's day, and a lecture on the Tuesday, to which multitudes of people flocked from the parts adjacent; and his plain preaching was blessed with a large harvest. However, some expressions and gestures he used, would now seem unbecoming; yet the gravity of the man, and the general reverence people had for him, rendered them not only not offensive, but sometimes they produced wonderful effect: his taking hold of the supporters of the canopy over the pulpit with both hands at one time, and roaring hideously, to represent the torments of the damned, had an awakening force attending it. Mr. Thomas Goodwin, afterwards Dr. Goodwin, when a Fellow at Cambridge, and an eminent preacher, occasionally hearing Mr. Rogers, fell under such convictions, that he afterwards professed, that he looked on himself neither as a Christian, nor a preacher before. The following relation Mr. Angier hath often repeated, Mr. Rogers being called to preach a marriage sermon, I think insisted on the wedding garment; God made the word so effectual, that the marriage solemnity was turned into bitter mourning, so that the ministers who were at the marriage were employed in comforting or advising those whose consciences had been awakened by that sermon. O blessed espousals between Christ and souls! such sorrow was better than carnal mirth, and laid a solid foundation for spiritual joy. A gentlewoman who had travelled ten miles to hear plain and

powerful Mr. Rogers, being in great trouble of conscience, desired some conference with him; and after she had related her condition, telling long and sad stories of her wicked heart, deplorable state, God's wrath due to her, danger of dropping into hell, &c. the good old man, hearing all this, at last started up, and pacing across the floor, cried out, God be thanked, God be thanked; the gentlewoman thought the old man mad, and was strangely surprised to see him rejoice in her sorrow; but he knew what he said, and rejoiced in that sorrow, which was the seed of a blessed harvest; for that gentlewoman proved an eminent saint, and an amiable consort in exile and tribulation to a very holy and eminent minister of Christ.

After attending Mr. Rogers' lecture, while others stayed, conversed, and despatched business, it was Mr. Angier's custom to go home to his chamber to meditate, and pray, and apply the sermon to his heart for about an hour, and thus imprinted it so lastingly upon his memory, that he never forgot many passages; and by the time that the family had got home, he was ready to take his dinner with them.

He lived a season at Mr. Rogers' house, who sometimes put him upon praying in the family, which he performed with so much experience, humility, and feeling, that Mr. Rogers would often commend him, and say to his friends, this Mr. Angier will make an excellent man in his generation. Another season, he was with one Mr. Witham, whom I have often heard him commend as a great scholar, and an intelligent man, though not so successful in his ministry as a neighbouring minister of far inferior abilities; one being asked the reason, answered, there were too many for God to work by. I know some say, it was Mr. Hooker's expression relative to the famous Mr. Richardson, on the same account; alluding to Gideon's first army, of which God said, "The people that are with thee are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hands;"* but to whomsoever it was applied, the lesson is useful, to convince us of the Lord's sovereignty in owning or disowning the ministry of men; and his wisdom, lest too much should be ascribed to them, and God should lose his glory.

After this, his dear mother being tender of her son's spiritual good, consulted with her christian friends how to dispose of him; she was one of a thousand for grace, holiness, and charity, saying, she would not have her hand out of a good work. Oh, the prayers and tears she poured out for all her children, but especially for her son John, not only because he was her first-born, but chiefly because he was devoted to God's special work

* Judges vii. 2.

in the ministry, and because of his former backslidings, and her jealousy over him for the future. On consultation with friends, and begging advice from God, she being afraid to send him again to Cambridge, resolved to send him to Mr. John Cotton, at Boston, in Lincolnshire, where he boarded, studied, and sometimes preached; there he contracted an intimate friendship with those three divines, Dr. Tuckney, Dr. Hill, and Dr. Winter: Mr. Anthony Tuckney was Fellow of Emanuel, and so continued a good while, till he was called to be vicar of Boston; he was a serious, decided good man before he went to Boston; he was afterwards Master of Emanuel, and after that of St. John's, Cambridge. And for Mr. Thomas Hill, Dr. Preston, when Mr. Hill was Bachelor of Arts, intending to make him Fellow, sent him to Mr. Cotton for some time, and when he returned from thence, chose him Fellow, designing to ascertain his settled seriousness in religion before his election; for which he thought Mr. Cotton's family might be conducive, and so it proved; afterwards Dr. Hill was Master of Trinity-College, Cambridge, and Dr. Winter, Master of Trinity-College, Dublin; all famous lights in the church of God; Mr. Angier survived them all.

And by the way, it will not be thought censurable to digress a little, and give a few particulars concerning Mr. Cotton, that reverend and worthy man, for though his life was written at large by a New England minister, and Mr. Samuel Clarke afterwards gave extracts out of it: yet some things Mr. Angier hath occasionally mentioned of him to a few of his brethren, which may not be uninteresting: Though Mr. Cotton was an excellent text man, yet he would never deliver his judgment concerning the sense of a scripture, till he had first consulted both the original and context; an excellent pattern. Mr. Angier hath sometimes related to his intimate friends, that Mr. Cotton never went into his study after having been called out on any occasion, but he began his studies again with prayer.

When I was travelling in Cheshire with Mr. Angier, where the roads were exceedingly deep and foul, after he had told me that Mr. Rogers used to say that a good conscience after trials, was like a good wife after a distressing journey, he proceeded to relate a comparison which Mr. Cotton had made: You, said he, in this level country, (Lincolnshire,) in summer time, when the roads are good and dry, are apt to think and say, surely this road will never be foul and miry again; and in the winter you think, when the ways are deep and impassable, it is impossible that these ways should be dry again, or dusty; just so when God shines on the believer's soul with the light of his

countenance, he is apt to say, my "mountain stands so strong, I shall never be moved;" but God "hides his face, then he is troubled;" and when God is withdrawn, oh, saith the Christian, it will never be otherwise; but he lives to see things changed, the sun breaks out from under a cloud, and the black clouds disperse, and so his state is comfortably cleared up. Again Mr. Cotton observed, that God ordered all changes in the world, for comfort or correction to his own people, and modelled all things according to their condition and necessities.

Thus much for the digression concerning Mr. Cotton. To return to Mr. Angier, whom we left at Boston with Mr. Cotton, where his conversation was as became the gospel, only then and afterwards, in reference to the work of conversion on his soul, he was at a loss to decide from what time he must date it, whether before his declension at the University, or after: this case of conscience he opened to an eminent divine, (Mr. White,) with its aggravating circumstances; yet that pious man gave him encouragement, said with some confidence, that he was persuaded the first work of God upon his heart at twelve years of age, was effected by saving grace, notwithstanding his after-miscarriages, and that God might have gracious purposes in permitting such backslidings, for his further humiliation, and preparation for further service.

At this time there lived in Mr. Cotton's family, a pious young woman, called Ellen Winstanley, born near Wigan in Lancashire, niece to Mrs. Cotton; and it pleased God to incline Mr. Angier to form a connection with her, so that within a year after he came thither, they were married in the parish church at Boston, April 16th, 1628; and they continued there till his son John was born, who was baptized in the same church, June 13th, 1629. Mr. Anthony Tuckney being then vicar, there; about this time several ministers and Christians went into New England, to enjoy the liberty of the gospel, Mr. Angier had some thoughts of going also, however, he first took a journey into Lancashire to visit his wife's relations, and take leave of them; they prevailed with him to preach at Bolton; R. M. one from Ringley chapel, hearing him, obtained from him a promise to come to Ringley on a week day, and preach with Mr. Mather, then at Toxteth Park chapel, and preparing to go into New England; Mr. Mather began, Mr. Angier was to succeed him; but it being a hot summer day, and an exceedingly throng place, Mr. Angier was overcome with heat, and swooned away, not being able to proceed further than about the middle of his sermon. Mr. Mather, however, went up and continued the services; that evening many of the chapelry fol-

lowed Mr. Angier to E. Walworth's house, in Ringley-fold, and solicited him to be minister at Ringley ; he deferred his answer until Monday se'nnight after ; at which time he was to deliver the lecture at Bolton ; many of the chapelry then heard him, and after the lecture, at one Widow Rothwell's, presented to him a paper, wherein were the names of the principal people in the chapelry, that vote in public concerns ; he asked, whether the names of all were in that paper ; they told him, the names of all that had votes ; but if he pleased all the rest might readily be had. After Mr. Angier's return to Boston, a letter was sent to him with the names of all the families, masters, and others, and a letter was returned from him to the chapelry, informing the people, that if they would fetch him and his family, he might be theirs ; whereupon, in the beginning of September, 1630, two good men were sent with horses and furniture, John Jackson, and Francis Critchley, who stayed several days at Boston. Mr. Cotton judged the call to be clear, Mr. Angier was well satisfied ; the two faithful messengers brought Mr. Angier, his wife, his son, and his maid to Ringley, to the great joy of those that feared God in the place. The text he preached on, was Philemon 22, " But withal prepare me also a lodging, for I trust that through your prayer I shall be given unto you." Some time they had to lodge with another family, till a convenient house was made ready ; his residence was in Ringley-fold, in an ordinary house, with which he was well content ; when people came to repetition in his little house, and wanted room and seats, he said, Better want room than good company ; people were kind and very helpful, and the word of God mightily succeeded, and prospered exceedingly, " much people was added to the Lord." Now Ringley had her day, a conversion-day to not a few, an enlivening day to many of God's children, that flocked thither like doves to the windows, so that all the Christians that were capable and willing to attend private days and duties of prayer, could not meet in one place ; two places were often appointed for that purpose, as some yet living testify ; this was a time of God's signal appearance, the Lord casting many souls into the mould of the gospel, and a good impression remains to this very day, though many of that old description are fallen asleep.

With respect to his investiture in his ministerial office, he had episcopal ordination. Mr. Cotton having interest with Lewis Bayley, a bishop in Wales, (who published the *Practice of Piety*) he wrote to him, with Mr. Angier, and he ordained him without subscription : yet Mr. Angier continued a Non-conformist to the ceremonies, and therefore had some adversa-

ries; for Dr. Bridgeman, bishop of Chester, lived at Great Lever at that time, to whom were brought various and heavy complaints against Mr. Angier for not conforming. The bishop sent for him, and expostulated with him, it being a kind of affront to preach so near him, only about two miles distant; he admonished him, and exhorted him to conform; he sent for him many times, yet usually gave him very good words, and professed his great respect for him. God ordered it so by his providence, that the bishop's wife being a pious woman, was at that time much afflicted in conscience, and Mr. Angier, by God's blessing, was an instrument of much good to her, by his counsels and prayers, which became a furtherance of his liberty; for the bishop would usually say, Mr. Angier, you must see my wife before you go, and she interceded for him; yet notwithstanding the bishop was not suffered to be quiet, but some or other inveighed strongly against Mr. Angier, insomuch that he was suspended twice in one year, but restored by the mediation of his friends. At last the bishop said,—“Mr. Angier, I am disposed to indulge you, but cannot; for my Lord's Grace of Canterbury (Archbishop Laud) hath rebuked me for permitting two Nonconformists, the one within a mile on one hand (good Mr. Horrocks at Dean Church) and another on the other, yourself; and I am likely to come into disfavour on this account. As for Mr. Horrocks, said he, my hands are bound, I cannot meddle with him, (it is thought he meant by reason of some promises to his wife :) but as for you, Mr. Angier, you are a young man, and doubtless may get another place, and if you were any where at a little further distance, I could better connive at you; for I study to do you a kindness, but cannot as long as you are thus near me,” &c. Some judged that one reason was, the bishop's sons were at this time on the rising ground, and his connivance might be an obstacle in the way of their preferment. He did suspend Mr. Angier, who continued a while under that suspension; however he had been ordained, June 28, 1629, and a provincial license was obtained for him, at a provincial visitation at Manchester, Oct. 23, 1630. He continued, though not without some interruption, about a year and a half at Ringley chapel.

One circumstance I shall take the liberty of inserting as evidence of the grace of God accompanying Mr. Angier's ministry, while he was at Ringley:—A Richard Hardman of Ratcliff-bridge having received good from Mr. Angier's ministry, a sister of his living near to Houghton chapel in Dean parish, came with her husband to his house at Ratcliff-bridge on the Saturday evening, the night before what is called Mid-Lent

Sunday, to be merry at the wakes; for on that day, Ratcliff wakes (which is a mad revelling or feasting time) began and continued most of the week following. But God had turned the bias of Richard Hardman's heart another way, and he plainly told his sister and her husband, they would have been more welcome at another time, but since they were then come, they must not expect his accompanying them, but he rather desired them to go along with him to Ringley; and after family duty, he went into a private place to pray, where he found so much of God's presence and assistance in a special manner for his sister, that he was satisfied God would do her good. They both went with him to Ringley to hear Mr. Angier, where God did lay hold on her heart by a sound conviction and deep humiliation; formerly she was wont to scoff at religion, but now she commenced the serious practice thereof, so far as could be judged; her husband also was much restrained, and both of them as they went home on the Monday, heard Mr. Angier at the lecture at Bolton; she being so overpressed in spirit, that she could not forbear but went to Mr. Angier at widow Norris's house, where she had some conversation with him: and she continued stedfast in religion to her dying day.

As for his removal from Ringley to Denton, it was thus:—He continued suspended at Ringley for near half a year, and there was no hope of his restoration to his former liberty there. At this time, Denton chapel in Manchester parish was vacant, Mr. Broxholm being banished from thence also by a suspension: the people seeking for a pious minister, several were proposed; Mr. Hyde of Norbury and Mr. Hyde of Denton had pitched on Mr. Henry Root, but Mr. Holland of Denton did not consent. He told them of a little man at Ringley, one Mr. Angier, and, said he, I hear much good of him; if you will give him a call, you shall have my heart and hand. Accordingly they sent to him, he came and preached at Denton, they generally approved of him and chose him, and he came thither in the year 1632. He preached his first sermon on Easter Sunday: when Mr. Holland, and Mr. Hyde of Norbury, and Mr. Hyde of Denton, brought him thither,—he said, By God's grace he would attend to his work, but would look to them under God for maintenance: there he continued to his dying day, notwithstanding all public and personal vicissitudes, from which he met with various interruptions in the course of 45 years and 4 months. His removal to a greater distance from the bishop, did not serve him, even at Denton he found adversaries, but at the same time he found God his friend there, who raised up

for him many friends. Hear himself relating how the Lord had dealt with him, in his Epistle Dedicatory prefixed to his book, called *A Help to better Hearts for better Times*, printed A. D. 1647. Thus he saith: "Though in nine or ten years at Denton chapel, I preached not above two single years (to my best remembrance) without interruption, and in that time was twice excommunicated; though Sabbath assemblies were sometimes distractedly and sorrowfully broken up, and my departure from my habitation and people often forced, no means of return left in sight, yet through the fervent prayers of the church, God renewed liberty.

It was muttered that Mr. Angier had a hand in a certain book which reflected upon the bishop, in consequence of which he was much disturbed, and was in danger of being brought into the High-Commission Court. The book was found in Stockport, casting some reflections upon the archbishop's speech in the Star-chamber; and though Mr. Angier was suspected of it, yet he professeth his innocence in his diary. But pursuivants came to apprehend him, and this trouble occasioned him to sell the land at Dedham which his father left him, worth £40. a year, turning it into money, as being less visible, and so less subject to danger. God hid his person, as he did Jeremiah and Baruch. Some Lord's days he hath preached in his house, because he could not safely go into the chapel; afterwards he travelled into Essex, and abode there with his friends till the storm was blown over. R. R. a very stout man, once riding with him near to Huntingdon, they were in danger of being robbed, but he taking a pistol in his hand, gave Mr. Angier the case, and God disposed the thieves to withdraw from them. He once met a pursuivant on Delamere forest. Mr Angier knew the pursuivant at a great distance, and his wife was much afraid, but the pursuivant passed by and discovered him not. There was also one Starkey, an agent of the Spiritual Court in Cheshire, an adversary to Mr. Angier, who frequently came and disturbed him, whom God took away. Mr. Holland travelled to York for him once, if not oftener; where he had an old friend high in office, who told him he would do any thing for him he desired. Mr. Angier informed me that as he was once going to York to get off his suspension or excommunication, Providence cast him at Wakefield on the Lord's day: on hearing Mr. Lister, the vicar there, he was exceedingly pleased with his preaching, and perceiving that the Lord's supper was to be administered that day in the church, Mr. Angier stayed and joined with the assembly; he had his liberty of posture, and found the Lord graciously present with him in the ordinances

of that day ; having got a good repast, he went on his journey, and prospered in his business. He often inquired after Mr. Lister, for whom he had a great respect ; and indeed he had catholic principles, and loved *aliquid Christi*, any thing of Christ wherever he saw it, and continued this good old Puritan spirit to his dying day. Mr. Lister, when he died, had been vicar of Wakefield 50 years ; he was buried there, Jan. 17, 1678. When these storms were blown over, and new confusions arose in the kingdom ; when civil dissensions and open wars took place, he continued in his work and station : and though he adhered to the Parliament, yet his affectionate prayers for the king, temperate spirit, and faithful attachment to his principles, procured him good will from his greatest adversaries ; he maintained a friendly intercourse with all sober persons of different persuasions in political and ecclesiastical affairs, instances whereof I could give, and testimonials of his inoffensive behaviour, even from such as differed much from him : but I forbear, his own works justify him before men. About this time his first wife died, Dec. 14, 1642, shortly after she had borne him a daughter. She had been exceedingly tender in her bodily constitution, and of a troubled spirit ; she occasioned him some trials ; though she was a gracious woman, yet being of a melancholy habit, Satan had a great advantage in casting his fiery darts into such combustible matter, which occasioned much affliction both to herself and her husband, though he bore it with unparalleled wisdom and patience. She died at the beginning of the wars, intimating to her husband, who she thought might prove a good second wife, and, according to her suggestion, about a year after he married Mrs. Margaret Moseley of Ancoats, a very prudent, pious gentlewoman : they were married very publicly in Manchester church, in the heat of the wars ; which was noticed as an act of faith in them both. Mr. Horrocks and Mr. Root preached the marriage sermons, providence directing their thoughts to pitch both on one text, which was Gen. ii. 18, “ I will make him a help-meet for him : ” both presaging what indeed she proved, an excellent, suitable partner, a tender mother to his three children, and a useful mother in Israel ; for though God denied her issue, yet she was very fruitful in good works, of excellent disposition and well ordered activity, of a public spirit and rare accomplishments for piety, charity, and sobriety ; with whom he lived with abundant, mutual satisfaction, above 30 years. She died of a tympany, and was buried in Denton chapel, Oct. 31, 1675 ; after whose death he lived solitarily, till God translated him to her. Nor was the solemnity on his marriage, any result of vain-glory or

ostentation, but well considered ; it was his settled judgment and advice, that marriage should be publicly solemnized ; yea, his view also was, that a regular approach should be made to marriage by mutual contract : this rule he followed when his daughter Elizabeth was to be married to a Yorkshire minister.*

He stayed at that little chapel at Denton in those free times wherein he was at liberty, and had some calls to greater places, as it respects worldly preferment, but that was not of much consideration in his account. Some of his brethren can yet testify how much he was courted to more public spheres of labour ; but his frequent refusal was evidence of his great self-denial. Few men in his circumstances shut the mouths of malignant censurers on that point, as he did. Old Mr. Langley, of Middlewich in Cheshire, may also be mentioned, who was minister there before the wars ; and though he was seven years together silenced, yet when he was restored to his liberty, he returned to them, where he had but a very pitiful maintenance, and continued there to the day of his death. Before one of the bishops of Chester, since the deprivation of ministers by the Act of Uniformity, it was observed that it was a signal favour to Mr. Angier, that he should be permitted to live with that people still, as a reward for his tarrying with them when he might have removed to his greater advantage : and indeed all his actions spoke very great self-denial. How much worldly wealth he might have hoarded up, if he had taken what was offered him and retained what he had, take an instance or two : Mr. L. sent a man and horses for him to bring him into Craven, 30 or 40 miles, to baptize his child. Mr. Angier went, preached in Gisburn church (which some remember to this day) and God did marvellously work upon his wife's heart by that sermon. When he returned, Mr. L. gave him five broad pieces of gold into his hand, desiring him to accept them ; but he only took one, and gave him four back again. Another urging him to accept a broad piece, he absolutely declined the present, excusing himself with much modesty. Another time preaching a lecture at Braintree, a gentleman came to him, a stranger, desiring him to accept a 20s. piece of gold, for the offer of which he thanked him, but refused. But I forbear more instances.

About this time, the good people of Ringley exerted themselves to obtain Mr. Angier again to be their minister, because he was first theirs, and forcibly driven from them ; they thought they had the best right to him, therefore they wrote a large and pathetic letter to Mr. Angier, which I have by me,

* See Page 36.

entreating him to return, addressing themselves to Denton people, with engaging terms persuading them to release him, if it were but one year, to settle things amongst them; and again affectionately urging ministers that were called on to give their advice, to direct him that way. The letter is full of christian affection, and deserves recording, to manifest the endearing love of a people to their quondam pastor, and their high respect for him. Take a few expressions.

Reverend and much honoured Sir,

We whose names are here under-written, being few in number, and long and not a little afflicted in condition, belonging to that unworthy congregation to whom God first lent you, (in this county) having for a great while been pressed under the sad burden of the heaviest affliction that this life can endure, namely, not the bare fear, but the plain sense of the Almighty's displeasure and hot indignation gone out against us. For a short time, he was pleased to cause his glory to shine in our public and private assemblies, and to set up his standard in our house of worship; giving many of us, and others about us, our first effectual call, and coming near to all his people. But oh, how soon began our dark night, (nay, age) to approach. God, by his all-disposing providence, has been saying to this sad place for 20 years and upwards: "Let very few or none more of this people be converted; let them have little of my presence in their house of public meeting, let none of my ministers be set over them for their profit; let them be decreased by death, by schisms, and by scandals; yea, let their public assemblies be broken up, and let help and healing be looked for in vain; let them look for light, and behold obscurity, for brightness, but walk in darkness." For these things, reverend sir, we do mourn, and our hearts are troubled: and to whom (under God) shall we lay open our sad afflictions, thereby to get ease, but to yourself, whom it pleased God once to make his blessed instrument for planting and watering so many souls amongst us? We have had experience of your love to us, for which we desire to be thankful and do bless God; and do therefore make bold to acquaint you with our broken condition, entreating your intercession for us: and if it were the good will of the Lord, your return to us, with the consent of your people, without offence, though it could be but for a short space, &c.

And thus they go on imploring it with great importunity for the church's sake, and the Lord's sake, though but for one year.

To this there are twenty-four names subscribed; but the people of Denton having possession, would by no means yield; and ministers gave in their judgment, upon due consideration of circumstances, that for the public good of the church, Mr. Angier should continue at Denton, in which he was willing to acquiesce.

As to Mr. Angier's judgment in ecclesiastical affairs: in free times, as he had not turned aside to conformity on the one hand, so now he adhered firmly to sound and catholic principles, not turning aside to any ways of sinful separation; though some of his intimate friends forsook him, and some of his brethren censured him for too liberal principles and practices in church-administration; yet as he had a tender respect for congregational brethren, so they had, (at least many of them) a great reverence for him; he was a principal member of the reverend class, or association of ministers at Manchester, and was of great account, and very useful among them; such was their esteem of him, that they would scarce do any thing of importance without him; he oftentimes presided as chairman or moderator; frequently attended the provincial assembly at Preston; had ruling elders in his own congregation, but loved not dividing principles, nor distinguishing names, nor lordly domineering by arbitrary impositions. I have often heard him say, that in a little time, who ever lived, would see that much of the government of Christ would be carried on in particular churches amongst themselves.

He was of a sweet, moderate, healing spirit, both at home and abroad; yet he was very faithful, and dealt plainly, whereby some were for a time offended, and possibly some of his principles or proceedings suited not the principles or humours of many; yet even those persons received what he spoke with high veneration; and if at any time they broke out into passions or unruly animosities, his love and lenity, his mild carriage and compassionate spirit, did so mollify and qualify their minds, that in time, they were either overcome to a compliance, or won to cherish apprehensions of his candour and ingenuousness; so that I have often thought of that passage of Melchior Adam, one of the German divines, as applicable to Mr. Angier; speaking of Schwebellius, who had much to do with Anabaptists, and Schwenckfeldians, *Quorum impetus mansuetudine fregit, patientia vicit, et lenitate in ordinem coegit*; * thus this good Mr. Angier "hath by mildness broke, by patience conquered, and by lenity reduced to good order" such as have been exasperated by the severity and rigour of others.

And with respect to his judgment and practice in public and

* Melch. Ad. in Vit. Ger. Theo. page 65.

political affairs. He was fixed in his attachment to Monarchy, and was not wheeled about with the change of times; he was one of those who bore their testimony against the unparalleled murder of King Charles the First, and the usurpation attending it; he refused to enter into *The Engagement*, though to his great prejudice, for he told a pious minister that he lost £200. by his refusal of it. He durst not give God thanks for the army's success against the loyal Scots; he poured out many hearty prayers and tears for his present Majesty, asserted his right to the crown in the face of apparent danger; joined his brethren in that solid plea for the non-subscribers of the Engagement, which was to be true and faithful to the Commonwealth of England, as it is now established without king or house of lords, for which they were threatened and endangered, till God broke that snare. Some troubles Mr. Angier and some ministers and gentlemen went through, for owning his majesty's cause, they were carried prisoners to Liverpool, and from thence to Ormskirk because of the plague; they had indeed permission for their friends to visit them, and free intercourse; they spent much time in prayer, and thus strengthened one another's hands in God, and left a good savour behind them, the remembrance of which continues to this day.

At this time was the conception, and afterwards the birth of that excellent treatise of Mr. Edward Gee's, then minister of Eccleston, and prisoner with them, about *prayer*. The occasion of which was this: Amongst the debates conducted by those holy men, this case of conscience was discussed, on which they desired satisfaction, namely, Whether God may disregard his people's prayers, grounded upon his promise, and seem by his providence to answer prayers which are directly the reverse? whether this can be shown to be the case by any examples? in what sense God may do this? what may be the reason thereof? what use may be made of God's proceedings in this way? This multifarious question being the peculiar subject of that day, and not being themselves satisfied in their present conversation, they judged it proper to refer it to a fuller discussion by some able pen, and pitched upon Mr. Gee, who undertook it, and wrote an excellent treatise, which is extant, and of great use at this day.

Other cases of conscience did occur at that time, wherein Mr. Angier's advice was desired. One was, whether justices of the peace, or other officers might take commissions from, and act under the usurping powers? Mr. Angier thought they might, bringing instances of civil officers acting in their stations during the six years of Athaliah's usurpation; there is a large

Treatise in manuscript upon this subject. Many such cases were propounded to him, and judiciously resolved ; and indeed he was esteemed by good men, the living oracle of this period, as Mr. Hildersham had been before him, and by some ill-willed persons he was called the idol of Lancashire, because of the great value most men set upon him. But more of this subject shall be subjoined in the close, respecting his faculty in resolving weighty cases of conscience.

He was not a man for war, yet his counsels and prayers had influence on weighty affairs. And this was the sphere in which he moved, not thrusting his sickle into another's harvest, but declaring his judgment as a minister of the gospel, when consulted with. He could not but inquire how it went with the church of God at home and abroad, that he might accordingly order his prayers ; and for this reason it is said of the reverend Mr. Hooker, of New England, that he was a great inquirer after news ; he also said he did it on the same account ; and thus like Nehemiah he made enquiry, not out of Athenian curiosity, but christian conscientiousness, to sympathize with the church of God ; he had no hand in public revolutions, hence it was that he enjoyed so much peace, and that all the parties had a high esteem of him ; in Lord Delamere's appearance for his majesty's cause, Mr. Angier stayed at home ; though his heart and prayers were that way, yet he foresaw the event, and in that, God graciously heard his prayers for preventing the effusion of blood, and bringing in the king in so remarkable a manner. The year following, in consequence of this change, Mr. Angier kept solemn days of thankfulness, though he also predicted an approaching storm on many of the ministers of Christ, who could not run the same length that others did ; at a service at Eccles he gave remarkable hints of what was coming on, from Exod. xiv. 12, in a full assembly of several descriptions of hearers ; but so wisely, that the most malicious Momus could not take advantage from his sermon ; and indeed, he might be allowed to speak what others could not, his integrity and known loyalty, his uprightness and peaceableness being deeply engraven on the consciences of all that knew him, and his name being precious to all that heard him. When the Act of Uniformity came out, he preached very plainly on Esther iv. 1. It was very admirable to observe what appropriate scriptures he chose, for public or personal occasions, and how sweetly and suitably he accommodated his matter at those times.

His natural genius led him mostly to be a son of consolation. He had a peculiar gift in opening the sweet promises of the gospel, and pouring oil into wounded consciences, encouraging

drooping spirits, and answering desponding objections, to abundant satisfaction. He could, (and sometimes did) act the part of a Boanerges, to thunder out the menaces of the law against secure and obstinate sinners; and the Lord blessed his ministry both ways, for levelling high mountains, and lifting up valley-souls. He was an excellent text-man, a solid expositor; his way was to compare one scripture with another, wherein he had a singular art, showing the main scope of the Holy Spirit, raising pertinent doctrines; though he had consulted expositors, of which he had great choice, yet he made no ostentation of his acquaintance with them by numerous quotations, but extracted the marrow out of them, and pitched upon what seemed most proper.

He did not concern himself with controversies in the pulpit, but preached the most plain, practical, experimental truths, and often inculcated the essentials of religion, still teaching the people knowledge, insomuch that the Christians who were brought up under his ministry were solid, judicious, intelligent, and peaceable professors, few warping off to the errors of the times; and if he had occasion to deal with the petulant sceptics or dogmatizers of the age, he laid down positive truths, and solidly confirmed them, without following the wild vagaries of erratic spirits to disprove them; judging with Zuinglius, (*Veris intellectis, falsa etiam haud difficulter agnoscuntur.*) When truth is discovered, error is detected, and is either acknowledged or falls of itself. But indeed he loved not disputes, nor did his studies or genius carry him out to controversies, except God's glory, and the necessary defence of truth required it, and then also he managed things so calmly and fairly, that he won adversaries, and won credit to his cause. Dissensions were his burden, unity his delight, and God gave him his desire, "for the divisions of Reuben he had sad thoughts of heart;" and for disputes among divines, was ready to breathe out with honest Summerhald, that sad phrase, *Quis me tandem liberabit ab istâ rixosâ theologiâ*, Who will at length set me free from this quarrelsome theology? Mr. Angier constantly expressed sad regret on such unwelcome occasions of dispute and contention; his usual expression being, this is tedious work, and goes on wearily.

It is true, he was a great peace-maker in sacred and civil broils. If any of his neighbours had quarrels with one another, the matter was brought before him, and his wisdom found out some expedient to reconcile them, and his grave exhortations usually prevailed for accommodation; if not, he laid it deeply to heart, and still made it the matter of prayer; but God ordi-

narily blessed him with success, and gave him the benediction pronounced for peace-makers, to be called one of the children of God. In some cases of difference, I have known him, (said one that had reason to know, and is faithful in the relation,) give money out of his purse to compose some quarrels; and though those days were very grievous to him, yet when his success answered his designs, the issue and review were sweet to his spirit, and he did not repent his fatiguing labours.

Mr. Angier did not offer to the Lord that which cost him nothing, he engaged his whole man in that which he went about, not doing the work of the Lord negligently: he took great pains in studying his sermons, and they were elaborate, full fraught with spiritual treasure, very exact, no waste words nor repetitions; but he went on smoothly, pertinently and sententiously, though he studied matter rather than words, and never used notes in all his life, but took pains to commit his sermons to memory, which he had before diligently penned; he stood not to look for proofs, but repeated the words of scripture, he quoted exactly, yet *memoriter*, so improving them to the present occasion, holding up his hands all the time of his sermon, speaking with an equal, audible voice, with much ardour and energy both of spirit and speech; his sermons were not long nor full of divisions, but well compacted and methodical, (which is a help to memory,) and under a few particulars he had suitable and perspicuous enlargements; he preached longer in his younger days, and in his old age, about an hour, scarcely any more or less, and it exceedingly spent him, being usually in a state of perspiration at his coming out of the pulpit; warming a scarlet cloth, he laid it on his breast, for he was very subject to catch cold after preaching; and I have heard him say of old Mr. Rogers, that in his early life when he came out of the pulpit, one stayed him, to have some conversation with him, then another, in the open air when the pores were open: but he found sensible prejudice from it, and learned to take more care of himself, for people did not consider.

It was little less than a miracle, that a man of such a weak constitution as Mr. Angier's was, could bear up so long under such daily and indefatigable labours; his constant preaching twice every Lord's day, most part of his time travelling, and preaching often abroad on week-days, his monthly attendance at the class-meetings of the Presbytery, his frequent journeys to the Provincial assembly, his constantly assisting in the ordination of ministers, observing many private fasts amongst his own people and abroad, yea, extraordinary fasts in public, especially the monthly fasts kept for Ireland, at that time; he

ordinarily kept the fast himself, wherein he spent six or seven hours in wrestling with God in prayer, or in preaching; he was wonderfully enlarged, and had a great measure of the Spirit poured upon him, and his body was much supported, for he said, private fasts spent his natural strength more than his sabbath-day's work did, as he still kept the posture of kneeling, and feelingly united with others that were exercising; for he put others on to pray, and himself closed up the day with a short but fervent melting prayer, being more brief towards the latter end of his days.

His observing fasts with his people was an evidence that his delight was in that kind of exercise; for he hath often said, that one great thing which tied and endeared him to that poor people, was, that whenever they had occasion they appointed a fast and joined together in prayer, and also in praise; and he had a particular regard for his worthy friend, Col. Richard Holland, on that account, because whenever he had been in trouble, he constantly called good people together to pray to God with him.

He was so constant in his ministerial work, and diligent in his studies and preaching to his own people, that though Mr. Harrison of Ashton, his intimate friend, and he lived near together for twenty years, yet never did they exchange places for one day in all that time to relieve themselves; Mr. Herle told him he had a weak body, yet a Venice glass, well looked to, would last a considerable time: and notwithstanding his excessive labours, God maintained in him a considerable measure of health, possibly more than he enjoyed in his younger years; and next to divine Providence, much may be ascribed to his severe temperance, observance of diet, composedness of mind, and care of himself, according to his experience of what he had found salutary or hurtful to him: and though he was of a far weaker constitution than Mr. Harrison, and older by several years, yet he survived him; to whom he sometimes said, "Mr. Harrison, you think you can do any thing, but your body will fail you," and indeed it did, for though that learned, gracious, zealous man of God had a very strong, healthful, robust body, yet by his excessive studies, and assiduous labours, and watchings, and sitting so close without fire in cold winter nights, his sinews became so contracted, and his body so weak, that some years before he died he could not stir hand or foot; yet was hearty, and would often say, "If I were in the pulpit I should be well." But to return to Mr. Angier: he was a man much in prayer, it may be said of him as of David, Psal. cxix. 164, "That he prayed or praised God seven times

a-day :” at least, twice (I think thrice) with his wife, twice alone, and twice with his family ; in his family exercises he was very profitable, every one got a verse or more out of the chapter read at prayer : he gathered some useful instructions, short but valuable, and accommodated to the condition of the family : eight o’clock in the morning, and betwixt five and six at night before supper, were the ordinary seasons for family worship, beginning with a psalm, by which the family had notice to come together. His constant course was to have a chapter read after dinner and supper, before they rose from the table, and before thanks were returned ; and he said he took up that custom of having a chapter read at meals, from Mr. Rogers, of Dedham ; worthy Mr. Samuel Hildersham had constantly two stanzas of a psalm sung after meals, so had the first christian emperor, Constantine the Great, as Eusebius tells us ; and I have known some profit from it.

And as Mr. Angier was much in prayer, so he was mighty in prayer ; fervent as well as frequent, he wept and made supplication, Jacob-like ; yea, he was an Israelite—a prince with God ; he was by some called weeping Angier ; for as he seldom rose off his knees without tears, so some have observed tears at some seasons trickle down to his band in great abundance. Mr. Isaac Ambrose, in his *Diary* printed with his *Media*, saith, “ Upon a solemn day of fasting and prayer in Manchester church, Mr. A. concluding, his prayer was so affecting, that I believe it melted all hearts : and for my own,” continues he, “ it pleased the Lord so to soften and to break it, that so far as I remember, it was never in such a melting frame in any public ordinance before ; and as it affected men’s hearts, so it was prevalent and reached God’s heart, as the event demonstrated : thus the in-wrought prayer (δέησις ἐνεργουμένη) of a righteous man availeth much. Certainly Mr. Angier had many remarkable returns of prayer ; whereof it may be, something shall be added out of his own papers hereafter. In such great esteem was he generally held, that he was often sent for to pray with melancholy persons, and some possessed, as was supposed ; and at times they brought such persons to him from afar, and God was pleased in some cases to hear prayer : but various particulars reported, I dare not relate, except I had clear and undoubted testimony for the truth of reports.

Besides as he was instant and prevalent in prayer, so he was excellent and abundant in praises. Frequent ejaculations and expressions of God’s grace and mercy were in his mind and mouth : they that conversed with him, often heard (Deo gratias) thanks be to God, from him. But as he took more occasions than many

others, of keeping days of thanksgiving, so God gave him still more occasions of thankfulness: and it is usual for God to put new songs of praise into the mouths of those who are thankful. It was his frequent observation, that when a day of thanksgiving was appointed, God sent in some fresh matter to increase joy in the Lord; and sometimes the intervening providence merited such a day as much as the former: so well doth God take the discharge of this pleasing duty, that he encourages to it. And O how enlarged was he in those days and duties! He seemed to be transported into ecstasies of admiration: he even appeared to be elevated above the earth, amongst the celestial inhabitants: his heart and mouth were enlarged and raised to a high strain, in rehearsing the loving-kindness of the Lord. He expatiated especially upon spiritual mercies, to the astonishment of those that united with him; often adopting David's holy rhapsody, 2 Sam. vii. 18—20, "Who am I, O Lord God? and what is my father's house, that thou hast brought me hitherto?" It would have done one's heart good to hear him an hour together reckoning up the mercies of God, in infancy, childhood, youth, riper age, in all estates, relations, conditions, afflictions; and then magnifying the free grace of God in giving his Son for us, his Spirit to us, promises, privileges, gospel ordinances, &c. and afterwards the great kindness of God to his particular congregation in public liberty, for which he kept many days of thanksgiving, and for national mercies; yea, there was not any of his relations, or in his congregation, under any affliction or temptation, but as he prayed for them, so he gave God thanks for their deliverance. He shared the sensations of every one's heart: he mourned with such as mourned, rejoiced with such as rejoiced. God had given him a sympathizing heart; he might say, who is weak, and I am not weak? *

But especially he was deeply concerned for the church of God both at home and abroad: he gave God no rest, but was the Lord's remembrancer, standing between the living and the dead, in the breach that sin had made, to hold off wrath. He had great interest at the throne of grace, and notably improved it, by believing prayer, and filling his mouth with arguments. He had skill and disposition for his work: often was he in the mount, and conversed with God as a man with his friend. He had an excellent art in humble expostulation with God: surely the church militant parted with a friend when he was translated to glory. It appeared in the congregation that God had set him over, what weight he bore up, by the dreadful effects attending his death: thereby the people lost their privileges; for

* 2 Cor. xi. 29.

from the day of his funeral to this day, no Nonconformist has ever preached in his pulpit, so that it appears for whose sake the liberty was maintained. Denton has found the smart, it will be well if England feel not the fatal consequences of the removal of such pillars. Methusalem died the same year that the deluge overspread the world: Hippo was sacked by the Vandals, immediately after Augustine's death there: Heidelberg taken after Pareus's death: Luther died a little before the wars in Germany. Lord, prevent temporal evils threatened, that the prediction may not be accomplished, that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come:* this worthy, fallen in Israel, speaks heavy things to England.

Mr. Angier was very solemn and grave in all his addresses to God, or in his delivering messages from God. It was his usual manner, before he spoke a word in prayer, to pause a considerable while looking upwards, composing his thoughts, possessing his heart with awful apprehensions of the divine Majesty, and by mental ejaculations imploring God's quickening presence, and after a season, he arrived gradually to a great degree of zeal and fervency in prayer, agonizing in the duty with sweat and tears, which rendered his speaking at some seasons both painful and difficult; yet was he not only actuated by zeal and affection, but had also appropriate matter, exact method, and well adapted expressions. Mr. Harrison was wont to call him a ponderous man, for every word had its weight and emphasis: he had no waste words either in prayer or preaching, but as his affections were excited, so his words were few and well weighed.

He was not usually long, except upon extraordinary occasions, and then not tedious, because variety of matter and his impassioned manner rendered his prayers interesting. He proposed this question, whether the Spirit of God did ordinarily dictate matter of prayer? he did conceive it might, from Rom. viii. 26, "The Spirit helpeth, for we know not what we should pray for." Yet he was far from enthusiasm; nor was he altogether against forms of prayer, nor joining in public with the liturgy, though he judged that inconvenient modes of worship must be our affliction, but may not be our sin, when we are not in a capacity to procure a remedy; nor did he think that mere presence signifies consent to or the approbation of every thing we hear. As for the Lord's prayer, his judgment was, that it was delivered chiefly by our Saviour as a pattern or platform of prayer, to which (as to several heads) all our prayers should be referred.

He seldom insisted long upon a text, (except he took a

* Isa. lvii. 1.

scripture before him) because, as he used to say, a minister may have frequent occasions in the course of his ministry, to return again to the same subjects, therefore he needs not to say all that can be said upon it at once, but extract the marrow of the text, and select what at present he judgeth proper to the principal occasion for which he chose it, and drive that nail home : yea, though a minister should say all that he can collect upon such a text or subject, yet he will be forced to leave some gleanings that he may return again to gather up, and those as pertinent and useful as he obtained at his first vintage-reaping : so just was that saying of Tertullian, I adore the fulness of the Scriptures.* On quoting the following passage, Heb. xi. 32, "For the time would fail me tell of Gideon ;" he observed, that a minister must have respect, not only to what he should say, but to the time in which he is to speak or write it ; all things cannot be spoken at one time. Christ taught as the people were able to bear ; people, yea the best people have but a measure of attention, memory, or susceptibility. Good old Mr. Horrocks was wont to say, I would rather leave my hearers longing than lothing.

And as Mr. Angier constantly preached, so he carefully catechized the youth of his congregation, according to the Assembly's Shorter Catechism, and explained it, opening the principles of religion in a plain and familiar way ; sometimes taking an account of their proficiency. If he heard of the breaking out of sin in any of his hearers, he faithfully admonished them privately, and sometimes publicly, and sometimes he sent for the persons and pleaded with them, with much gravity and humility and bowels of compassion. Ordinarily when strangers came to settle under his ministry, he sent for them, conversed with them, counselled, instructed, and exhorted them : thus he dealt with new married persons ; and indeed God brought several from other places to fix themselves under his ministry, for the benefit of the ordinances.

His usual saying was, if God will help me to take care of my duty, I will leave him to take care of my comfort. His main design was to bring glory to God in the conversion of sinners, and edification of saints : the attaining of these ends was his reward ; when any sent him tokens of their regard, he looked at God in it, and was more glad of it as an indication of their proficiency, than a means of his enriching himself. So Paul, Phil. iv. 17, "Not because I desire a gift, but I desire fruit that may abound to your account." Thus it is said of Bucholster : (*Gratiam munerum, quam munera, et theologiæ fructum,*

* *Adoro Scripturæ plenitudinem.*

quam fortunam maluit,) “ He rather chose and accepted more cordially a kindness in the giving, than the greatness of the gift; being better pleased with the fruit of his ministry, than merely their bounty.

Mr. Angier was much conversant in the holy scriptures, they were daily his delight, and he had an excellent art in choosing and adapting texts to divine providences, so that the word of God might be a comment on his work. Seldom did any remarkable providence or sudden accident fall out, but he either made it the main subject of his discourse, or particularly applied to it something he had in hand. He had a singular skill in preaching funeral sermons; though he rarely made historical reflections on the dead, yet intelligent hearers might gather important instructions or admonitions from his doctrinal conclusions, and close application naturally resulting. He conducted himself with much reverence in God’s public ordinances, minding duly what was in hand. He constantly wrote sermons when he was at any time a hearer, for example to others, to prevent wanderings of mind, and for his own edification. He was also full of candour and ingenuousness; though men’s gifts were weak, yet if they were honest he would commend them. Never did any hear him despise or disparage others; but as he much desired to have young ministers preach with him, so if they missed in it, he would plainly and privately tell them of their slips, or encourage such as did well. What he spoke was from his heart; on what others spoke, he would put a candid construction, if it would admit of it. When the minister that preached for him came out of the pulpit, he usually met him with this salutation, “ Thanks be to God ” or “ blessed be the Lord ; ” never returning thanks to the minister, (so far as I know) but to God for his help to the minister.

He was very excellent and exemplary in his administration of the Lord’s supper, as it respected method, matter, and manner. That ordinance was celebrated every month, and he had many hundreds of communicants; especially in these late times, good people from all adjacent parts and counties came flocking thither, and there were feasted and refreshed. I have known many strangers come ten, some twenty miles, yea, some thirty miles, to attend on the ordinances at Denton; so that there were often more communicants than could sit on seats in the chapel, and officers went amongst them to see if there were no intruders; for either they were known by face to them, or had testimonials from approved ministers, or eminent Christians. His exactness, gravity, and enlargedness, were such, that the first time I partook there, a worthy gentleman bad me observe

him diligently, saying he is the exactest man in Lancashire in this work : and I thought young ministers might take notice of him as a pattern worthy of imitation. And O how many souls have been quickened, comforted, and nourished in that ordinance, in that place ! what gracious words proceeded out of his mouth, and what gracious impressions have been made on communicants' hearts !

He was very diligent and pains-taking in his private studies, and very much enjoyed his closet retirements. It is true, he was not able to read much in his latter days, but he had variety of employment, sometimes reading, sometimes praying, meditating, writing : he wrote many choice and excellent letters—pithy, pertinent, profitable, upon several occasions, some of which he copied out, and were they collected into one entire volume they would be valuable. He often complained of his memory, saying he had a memory for nothing but to remember his own sermons ; but indeed his memory was not to be slighted : however, his solid judgment, clear understanding in divine mysteries, and gracious, experienced heart, shone forth in all he did, and helped his invention, while continual exercise made his memory retentive, and strong affections especially carried him through all ; for a sanctified heart hath never a bad memory.

He was of a holy, heavenly frame of spirit to eye God in all, and to improve all occurrences for spiritual advantage : the like instance of an exact conversation hath seldom been found ; I was once riding along with him, and a minister of my acquaintance, whom I met, asked me who he was, being passed by I told him ; he said, if there could be an angel on horseback I would say that is he : and a servant who lived with him many years, and knew his manner of life, attests that, according to his judgment, he walked as near to the rule of the word, and pattern of our Saviour, as is possible for a man to do on this side glory, excelling in every grace, exemplary in every good work, elevated above the ordinary rank of Christians, as it was said of Bucholtzer, as to liveliness: *Vivida in eo omnia fuerunt, vivida vox, vidi oculi, vivida manus, gestus omnes vidi* : * Voice, eyes, hands, gesture, all full of vivacity. Thus this man of God, Mr. Angier, did act above his strength and years in God's work and worship, and was so full of warmth and energy, that it plainly appeared he was actuated and animated with a spirit beyond his own, for God was with him, and he was much with God.

He was affable to all, amiable in converse with his intimate

* Melch. Ad. Vit. Buchol. page 556.

friends, frank in discovering himself, without subtle reserves or peevishness of spirit; he was so far as any could discern, ἀοργητος και ἀχολος, without anger or choler; howbeit his natural constitution being sanguine, might incline him to passion, yet the large measure of grace wherewith God had endowed him, and continual mortification, had so sweetened and lenified his disposition, that to all who conversed with him, he seemed to be compounded of love and kindness.

Besides he was a person of much gravity, his mildness did not degenerate into fondness or levity, nor his gravity into moroseness or austerity; but a kindly mixture of mildness, majesty, and attractive sweetness, put such an awful reverence into his countenance, as did at once daunt impudent profaneness, and animate religious modesty; none were so audacious as to be found in any unhandsome act before him whose very looks gave check to licentiousness, and none that knew him were afraid to open their spiritual cases to him, finding him so tender and condescending to them upon all occasions: indeed he was fruitful in holy discourse to all. Upon a question or case of conscience, he had the faculty to enlarge suitably and edifyingly to the satisfaction of the proposers; if company were silent, himself usually proposed a profitable question, or a proof of some principle of religion, or the meaning of some scripture, as matter of discourse for mutual edification: sometimes in travelling with a minister, he would request him (when the road was free) to repeat the heads of the sermon he preached or heard last.

He was exceedingly liberal to the poor, both in giving and free-lending; it was strange to observe how much he gave out of so little; he had a liberal hand and an open heart, he devised liberal things, making frequent collections in public, improving his interest for the indigent, or in public affairs: his left hand knew not what his right hand did; one instance take, when the collection was made for Northampton, 1675, he was then indisposed, and went not out for fourteen weeks or thereabouts, and therefore desired his kinsman to preach on 2 Cor. viii. 7, which he did, preparing the people in the morning for the collection in the afternoon; at which, because he could not be present, he sent his charity by his servant, which was not inconsiderable, but afterwards gave privately three times as much as he had done in public by his servant. In cases of collection, he would oft put on both his children and servants to give: he also sent to poor widows, orphans, and others, considerable sums, with a charge not to tell from whence it came. He had not above £20.

a year from his hearers ; and though he had an estate of his own, yet all things considered, it may seem next to a miracle that he should so abundantly lay out, and possess any thing, when his layings in were so small : but God made good that promise, “ There is that scattereth and yet increaseth ; the liberal soul shall be made fat, and he that watereth shall be watered also himself,” Prov. xi. 24, 25.

He was also very free in lending, and as free in forgiving and passing by unkindnesses. One instance particularly was this : when a neighbour (an indifferent husband for worldly matters) had borrowed money of him and broken his word, not paying it in, many months after promise of payment ; instead of paying the old debt, he comes to beg a new favour, to borrow more money, which Mr. Angier lent him ; and being asked why he would lend money to a man so dishonest and unfaithful, replied, that he did it to make a knave an honest man.

He was a man of much faith and courage in God’s cause, and withal, of much prudence and discretion : his courage was the result of his faith, not so much of natural magnanimity. When the Act of Uniformity took place, and ministers generally concluded to give over, he kept his resolution to go on in his work, yet not censuring them that desisted, for he plainly saw that all ministers were not under the same circumstances : he continued in his public station without any considerable interruption, so that a discriminating Providence made little Denton a Goshen, and kept their fleece wet when others were dry in most places ; it was a little sanctuary to many. It is true, warrants were now and then issued out, to apprehend Mr. Angier, but the worst men had no heart to meddle with him : sometimes they searched, and professed they would not see him for a hundred pounds. Some of the bishops of Chèster would inquire of his son, how doth the good old man Mr. Angier ? Most of the Justices had a great respect for him : some were nearly related to his wife, her eldest brother was Mr. Moseley of Ancoats, whose mother and another sister did sojourn many years with Mr. Angier. He thought also that his confinement at home, travelling and preaching little or not at all abroad, was a furtherance of his liberty : they said he is an old man and cannot live long, let him alone while he lives.

He was exceedingly exact and punctual in all that he did. If in worldly matters, bargains, writings, bonds, sealings, even in the smallest concerns wherein there was any danger of litigious suits or controversies, though it was between nearest relations, he caused things to be firmly done and safely kept, which in after times proved of great use ; for he said, it doth no hurt to

have things done surely, and it may do good ; for nobody knows into whose hands such things may fall, for men are mortal. He carefully laid up acquittances, receipts, or any agreements in writing, which have put things into readiness since his death. He was also exact in his apparel, ever neat, though never splendid ; handsome, not gaudy ; if he saw any facing or finery in others' apparel, he would say, I keep my satin in my pocket : he used to wear a Master of Arts' gown both Lord's days and week days, at home : he loved to see persons neat, and would say, one may be cleanly in rags : he shamed some out of their slovenliness with friendly rebukes.

He was given to hospitality, a bishop indeed, a Gaius, who freely entertained God's servants, ministers and Christians, so that he seemed to be host to the church : it is incredible to relate what variety of strangers and friends came weekly, almost daily to his house, and were handsomely treated, though not with varieties, yet with sufficiency : he had a standing table of wholesome fresh meat, noon and night. Upon Lord's days, his table always was well furnished with guests, (besides numbers that had broth, &c.) so that Mrs. Hyde of Norbury, a religious gentlewoman and a dear friend of his, would say to him, Mr. Angier, I am ready to think God works miracles at your table, in multiplying your provisions ; for, said she, if I should set half as many people to more provision than you have, they would consume it all, but there is store taken off from your table : and himself hath oft said, that there is a blessing attendeth house-keeping, as if the supplies thereof were unaccountable. A worthy minister heard him once say, that he knew by experience, that little or much, it was all one, he had as much in his pocket, when he had not half so much means as he had then : as "riches increase, so they increase that eat."

His government and order of his family were admirable and imitable, I may truly say, unparalleled. His family was as a well disciplined army, where all know their proper stations, and carefully attend their post ; or as a well conducted academy, or an organized church ; it was usually numerous and regular. For a considerable season, he had several young scholars tabled with him, who were sent to him for education under his inspection, and God blessed his example, instructions, and prayers for the good of some yet living. Some that were capable, he put upon preaching one part of the day ; several assistants he had successively, and gave them most of the encouragement they had. When he was grown into years, and not able to preach twice a-day, his brother's son was with him eleven years before his death, and was a great comfort to him.

Lord's day was thus spent : After private devotions in their closets, in the family, near eight o'clock a chapter was read, a psalm sung, then he went to prayer ; and about nine o'clock they went to the chapel, which was but a few steps from his door, according to his wish and usual saying, "The priests went about the temple ;" and at noon, immediately after dinner, one repeated the forenoon sermon in his house, at the same time another was repeating in the chapel to many people that stayed there, singing psalms both before and after ; this continued till public ordinances began ; and at their return home shortly after, Mr. Angier sung a psalm and went to prayer ; then to supper, and a little season after supper, a psalm, and one repeated the afternoon sermon, and another psalm being sung, all was finished with a short prayer, and so the family were dismissed to their own apartments. For the rest of the week, servants so ordered their affairs as to be present at family prayer. On Monday night, the forenoon sermon of the preceding Lord's day, and on Saturday night, the afternoon sermon was repeated ordinarily in the family ; on Friday night, they said their catechism, some in the shorter, others in the larger catechism drawn up by the Westminster Assembly, some also repeated the proofs *memoriter*. He gave order that they should despatch their worldly concerns the last day of the week, that they might prepare for the Lord's day approaching, which they did, and were outwardly conformable, for he would suffer no disorders in his family, yea, most of his family proved truly gracious ; they were ordinarily kind and affectionate to one another, and lived many years in great peace, unity, and order ; the whole number was often sixteen, generally about fourteen, seldom under twelve, though he had but one daughter with him for several years before he died. His carriage was sweet and obliging to all, even to the meanest in the family, and he behaved himself with such a dignified, yet amiable deportment, that many have been ready to speak of him and of his family concerns in the words of the Queen of Sheba, accounting them "happy that conversed with such a holy man of God," and though they had heard of his ways, yet the one half was not told them.*

Mr. Angier had many worthy friends, of good rank, and great piety, who bore a very high respect for him ; and as David chose such as "feared God for his companions," so did this holy man take his delight in the saints, as "most excellent upon earth." Holy Mr. Henry Ashhurst sometimes visited him at his house, and was visited by him ; Mr. Crew, of Utkin-

* 1 Kings x. 4—8.

ton in Cheshire, was his dear and intimate friend, and had an entire love for him, as the writer hereof can testify ; for being at his house at Utkinton, and Mr. Crew shewing him and his wife some handsome pictures, hanging in a chamber, (in which he much delighted,) amongst the rest shewed him the picture of Dr. Wilkins, “who,” said he, “is to be our bishop of Cheshire;” but added, “Mr. Angier is my bishop,” and I have heard that Mr. Crew oft solicited Mr. Angier to sit while his picture was drawn, and he would be at the charge of it, but he put it off, saying, “a minister’s picture should be in the hearts and lives of his people;” so far was he from pride, or vain-glory, that he never had his picture drawn, though doubtless it would have been a lovely figure, if to the life, for he was an exceedingly handsome personage, he was low in stature, and of a clear complexion, red and white, of a cheerful countenance, and very graceful, of a venerable aspect, and pleasant ; but he judged the blessed fruits of a minister’s labours were more eligible than the most lively representation of his vanishing exterior engraven in durable brass or marble.

His heart was much set upon the good of souls, and therein God blessed him with abundant success ; and this was a considerable part of his reward. He sometimes related old Mr. Dod’s interpretation of the labourers in the vineyard, Matt xx ; “who,” he said, “were ministers : some bargain with our Lord for their penny, that is, preferment, good parsonages, rich livings, high honours, and a splendid appearance in the world ; God gives them these things, they are at present well pleased with them, and this is all that God designs for them, they have their bargain, it was all they asked, and our bountiful benefactor is not behindhand with them ; they have no reason to grumble at his kindness to the other, who made no such bargain with him, but thought themselves obliged to him for work, and said, ‘ Lord, if thou wilt account me faithful, and put me into the ministry, and own me with the success of my labours, I will refer to thee the business of maintenance ; I hope thou wilt not suffer me to want necessities, and if thou dost, though I be persecuted, imprisoned, impoverished, and be put to beg my bread, yet if thou wilt glorify thyself thereby, and edify thy church by my outward distresses, I have enough ;’ such self-denying ministers shall have present supplies, and a better penny, good things in this life, and eternal happiness in the other ; so *the last shall be first* in dignity, glory, and abundant reward, for he gives them more than they asked ; and *the first shall be last*, those mercenary spirits who undertook the ministry as a trade to get a livelihood, must be put off with the

poor pittance of this world ;” this exposition Mr. Angier mentioned as very interesting and significant, not however, determining whether it was the proper meaning of that scripture.

He much desired the propagation of religion, and for that purpose the education of young men for the ministry ; he had but one son and four grandsons, who were all trained up for God’s immediate service, some of them at his cost, and others on his counsel, and he followed them all with his incessant prayers, and thus indeed did his solicitous cares issue. And indeed if he had been without cares, he would not have prayed, as Melancthon * used to say ; and if he had not given vent to his cares and fears by believing prayer, they would have overwhelmed him. He was one of the seed of Jacob in pleading the covenant, and in nothing more a true Jacobite than in wrestling with God for covenant mercy for the posterity of the faithful. Oh the tears, sighs, and groans of that man of God, urging God with his promise under his own hand ; telling the Lord, he would not let him alone, for himself had encouraged his heart, by making and sealing that good covenant wherein stands our chief comfort ; and that as God will make it good to some, why not to the children of the covenant ? How often hath he told the Lord, even in our hearing, that he was resolved he would not let go that hold which God had given him ; but would adhere to him, by faith and prayer, as long as he had a day to live, and die in hopes that God would make his promise good to his seed, when he was dead and gone ?

His opinion was, that a young man intended for the ministry should be placed for some time with some able minister, and preach under his eye and ear, and that it was hazardous for beginners to live in great men’s houses. He was of excellent use in giving advice to young scholars, in public and private. In the times when the sectaries were at the height, at an ordination at Manchester he gave the exhortation : four were ordained, and he said it rejoiced his soul to see in those discouraging times so many desirous of the calling, *but*, said he, it may be it is but as a husbandman with his harvest towards night, when he sees a storm coming, he calls out all that can carry a sheaf to come to his help, he musters all his force, for it may be there is but a short time ; as coming in at the eleventh hour, leaves but one hour for work. He advised them to beware of two things : if, said he, as in the case of the prophet before Jeroboam, sometimes the hand of authority be lifted up against you, be not affrighted with it, that however may be dried up ; but then the seducer may slay you ; consent not to him.

* Si nil curarem, nil orarem.

He was wise and happy in his counsels, and usually, being a man of much observation, he had exceedingly appropriate instances to sanction his counsel, in this way : it is good for persons to submit to the Lord's hand, and to let him choose the rod for us. A woman in Manchester burying a daughter, for two years never looked up, but repined, came often to the grave to mourn over it, yet it was a child miserably infirm and scrophulous ; afterwards God took away the use of her limbs, and lying in torturing pain, she acknowledged that it was nothing to bury a child : she thus became sensible of her impatience under her former affliction, and felt that now God had dealt more severely with her. And upon this, Mr. Angier mentioned an aunt of his, who had great bodily weakness and pain, and she desired that God would take that affliction away, and lay on her what affliction he pleased except that ; the Lord did take that away, and laid affliction of spirit upon her, which was far more distressing, and she never recovered it while she lived. So to produce a persuasion that our affliction is best for us, be it ever so painful, he sometimes mentioned that Mr. Daniel Rogers' first wife was a very cross woman, and he bore a long time with her silently ; at last he made his complaint to his father, Mr. Richard Rogers, and he gave him this answer, Any thing, Daniel, to bring thee to heaven.

He was very faithful in admonishing as he saw reason : when an eminent minister said, he took such a thing ill or unkindly from such a one, Mr. Angier gravely and smilingly answered, Would I so little favour myself as to take unkindness from any one ? which, said that good man, I thought of since to my great advantage ; for this taking unkindness is accompanied with a fretting within one's own breast, and so it is leaving the offender and falling upon one's self.

Mr. Angier was much afflicted with that sad war which broke out between the Dutch and us, yet he comforted himself with this consideration, that God did not give us over to be corrected by Papists, but that Protestants are in the hands of Protestants, though upon a distressing account, and he hoped that the drops of the storm might begin with there formed churches, but that its fury might be spent elsewhere.

It pleased the Lord to lay upon Mr. Angier many grievous and piercing afflictions in his old age, according to his own observation on John xxi. 18, concerning Peter, when our Lord told him, " that when he was old, he should be carried whither he would not." Mr. A. remarked that God often exerciseth his choicest servants, who have been men of eminent activity and usefulness in his service, with great afflictions in the latter part

of life, such as bodily pain: so Asa, when old, was diseased in his feet.* Melchior Adam tells us of Mr. George Major, that he saw the funerals of six sons, whereof one, that is Leonard, died by the biting of a mad dog; several daughters also, and a nephew died; in all this and much more, saying, (*Si bona accipimus, annon mala sustineamus?*) Shall we receive good, and not bear evil? At last he died of painful diseases, having kept his bed near three years.† Thus Mr. Angier instanced in Mr. Rogers of Dedham, who experienced great agony produced by gravel: so had worthy Mr. Storer of Stockport, and Mr. Johnson, minister of the same place; old Mr. Bourn, Mr. Herle, and, at that time when he mentioned it, good Mr. Harrison of Ashton, his neighbour. It may seem a riddle and an unaccountable mystery in Providence, why God should think fit to lay the heaviest load on the weakest horse; old age is a burden to itself. Mr. Angier assigned this reason, that thereby God thinks it fit to wean his children from the world, prepare them for heaven, and render it more desirable: besides God will make his children perfect Christians, exercised every way in suffering, that they may be entire, lacking nothing, according to James i. 4.

In old age his afflictions were, 1. The death of his beloved, amiable daughter Elizabeth, who though she was married and lived with her husband in Yorkshire, yet being in a deep consumption, he sent his own easy-going horse to fetch her home, in hopes that a change of air might tend to her recovery; but there she grew worse, and languishing, died May 26, 1661, and was laid by her own mother in Denton chapel-yard. Though her death went near his heart, yet being abundantly satisfied that she had got safe to heaven, he bore it with great composedness and equanimity; for indeed she was the mirror of her age for accomplishments and piety: yet it could not but be an affliction to his spirit, since so hopeful a blossom of his family was so quickly nipped in the flower of her age.

2. This also presaged more crosses. It was a great affliction to him that things went so ill with the church of God, as to public liberty, with which he sympathized though he enjoyed his. But himself too must taste a few drops of that cup of which many of his brethren had a large draught. On the Oxford Act coming into operation, March 24, 1665, by which the ministers were banished five miles from the place where they had formerly preached, it was judged expedient that he also should for the present withdraw from his house; on that act taking effect, he began to travel, and his son-in-law with him, amongst his

* 2 Chron. xvi. 12.

† In Vit. Ger. Maj. page 470.

friends in Cheshire, and visited several persons of quality, lodging with them some weeks, being kindly treated and graciously entertained, being also very useful, and leaving his good counsels and blessing wherever he came; notwithstanding during that time he seemed to be out of his element, and longed to return home. He was compelled to return, for wearing his boots daily, a gouty humour seized on his foot; he then said, Come, son, let us trust God, and go home: so he returned to his own house, and continued there without further trouble.

3. He was very much afflicted with a disorder at his stomach, which sorely distressed him, and he could find no ease from it by any means he could employ: he was advised to use tobacco, but could never succeed.

4. His very dear wife's death about 2 years before his own, was a grievous and bitter affliction to him, with whom he had lived 32 years to his abundant satisfaction every way: and indeed she was an affectionate and desirable companion, very useful both in spiritual and temporal things, drawing evenly in the same yoke. She was of a truly christian temper: one thing I shall add of her, noted to my hand, as a peculiar privilege and rare amongst Christians, that God gave her early assurance of his love, and she said also, not long before her death, he had never withdrawn it from her all her time. This was very observable and far different from God's dealings with his former wife, of whom Mr. Angier said in some remarks left in writing on her life, that though God moved her heart to seek him from eight years of age, yet he never gave her settled assurance of his love while she lived. Behold the sovereign dealings of God with his own children! he, however, is infinitely wise in these cases.

5. But the great affliction, the very quintessence of his affliction, was the sin and miscarriage of some of his children: this, this cut him to the very heart, and lay as a constant load continually pressing on his spirit. His son, his only son, devoted to God, not only in christian profession, but ministerial function, miscarrying under such education, with such aggravations; this went so near to him, that such words dropped from Mr. Angier's lips, of bitter complaint to one related to him, as shewed his exquisite sensations under some burdens of that nature: though he had paid £400. for his son in a few years, to the injury of his own estate, yet he saw it did no good, and still that was all nothing in comparison of the dishonour to God by his extravagances. His friend said, Sir, God hath given you much grace, and he is resolved to exercise it. Ah, said he, but it is hard, very hard to bear: a strange word from such a man, but he could bear any thing better than sin, and especially in so near

a relation ; as the angel of the Ephesian church, to whom it is said, Rev. ii. 2, 3, "Thou canst not bear them which are evil, yet hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted." Oh sin, sin in dear relations against his dearest heavenly Father, cut him to the quick ; and souls cast in the mould of feeling know what this means. But God bore up this good man's heart, (as he did David's) with hopes and confidence in the blessed covenant, that sure and well ordered covenant. This he adhered to, this he pleaded and depended upon living and dying ; still he spoke well of God, and exercised himself in praising his name both in duties and discourses, owning in all crosses the hand of God, to whom he had devoted his all. These various experiences disposed him to compassionate others, and qualified him to encourage and counsel them ; for (as was said) he could speak a word in season to quiet and mollify others' spirits under pressing burdens ; he still said, hold up faith and patience, wait on God, and fear not, for he will overrule all for the best, to promote his own glory and your best good, the greatest spiritual advantage of his own people.

His usual practice was, on the evening before a fast day, to put his children and servants upon it, to direct them to set themselves seriously about the work of preparation ; to search out and confess their sins. He used such means as might, by God's help, prove effectual to reformation both of himself and his family : and upon all such occasions of fasting or thanksgiving, it was his way to inquire concerning the fatherless and widows, and such as were in necessity, that something might be sent to them, for whom nothing was provided, as he often said.

Not long before he fell sick, he said to one who was with him, that he slept very little at night, adding, when I lie waking in my bed, I sometimes run over the course of my whole life ; and if a penman were ready by me, I could relate many remarkable passages of God's providence about myself. His friend said, Sir, you would do well to write them down as they come into your thoughts : but he made no answer to that.

When money lent by him came in seasonably, though it was his own, yet he admired and thankfully owned God's providence in it, as if it had been a gift ; and said, it is all one, whether it was a debt or a gift, if God only send it in a needful time ; the paying of a debt is as great a mercy from God, as the sending of a gift.

I must now hasten to the last scene of this holy man's life. He longed to be with Christ, and our Lord had been long ripening him for glory. He loved his Master's work, and his

Master indulged him in his work : when others were taken off, he was wonderfully maintained in his lot. He did not of late years preach that day he administered the Lord's supper : the last Supper day was Aug. 12, 1677, and the next Lord's day after he preached one part of the day, Aug. 19, but when he came into his house, he laid his hand upon his breast, and said, Ah, this will not do, I must give over preaching ; which yet cut him to the heart to anticipate. He was very weary that night, as he usually was ; the next day but one after, he began to have some aguish fits, and had six or seven of those fits ; from that time he began to decline apace. When this his last sickness commenced, he ordered his kinsman in the house to write letters to Mr. Case, his brother-in-law Mr. Tuckney, his brother Bezaleel, and others, to acquaint them with his circumstances, hoping for and desiring their prayers. He daily expected his own son's coming out of Lincolnshire, but he came not while he was living. He ordered his son-in-law to be sent for ; a messenger was despatched to him, but though he hastened away towards him, yet he came not till this holy man of God had breathed his last. A few hours before, on the same day, his approaching dissolution came on apace, yet had he the free exercise of his understanding to the last, and as he had been a man of prayer all his days, so he died praying. The morning that he died, he prayed sensibly ; the last words which were intelligible, were his request for the king and council, but the particular words those who were about him could not distinctly hear.

The last day of the week, Sept. 1, 1677, was the last day of that worthy man's life ; he died about eleven o'clock, and entered into his rest near the Sabbath, a day of rest ; from henceforth to rest from all his weary labours, and to keep an eternal sabbath with his dearest Lord. It was his own observation, that God often takes home his ministers and people on or near his holy day, to perfect their graces, and give them rest.

Thus fell that bright star, thus set that shining sun in the firmament of the church, or rather was hidden from our eyes, to shine more gloriously in the upper region ; the wise (that is, wise virgins, members of Christ's mystical body,) or, as the word is, Dan. xii. 3, " Teachers of others shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever." Thus this pillar is taken down that bore up an incredible weight not discerned so well then, as felt daily by sad experience since his removal from under the fabric : thus is the plant of renown transferred into a better soil. This ancient tree of God's own planting, which had sheltered many with its shadowing foliage, and fed many

with its grateful fruit, is at last fallen by the stroke of death, yet bears both ripe and plentiful fruit in the heavenly paradise above. He that uttered words of life to others, is dead : he that by the grace of God quickened others, is himself struck dead. Dead, said I ? no, he is but asleep ; “the sting of death” was gone, the fear of death was vanished. He lived a holy life—he died a happy death : he lived desired, and died lamented ; he lived to a good old age. Himself would sometimes say, that he had lived two years beyond the age of man, for he died in the seventy-second year of his age, in the same month wherein he was born : he died in his own house, the house belonging to the chapel, to which he had been a great benefactor : he died amongst his own people, over whom he had been pastor forty-five years ; with whom he had been travelling, weeping, fasting, praying ; among whom he has left remarkable seals of his ministry. Some indeed are gone to heaven before him, and some in other places had benefited by his ministry, though but occasional ; one instance I had from a very eminent divine, in or near the city of London, that he being a young scholar newly come from Oxford, and being occasionally at Mr. Case’s house, when Mr. Angier was there, Mr. A. went to prayer ; but God so reached and warmed the young minister’s heart by that prayer, that he has cause to remember it while he has a day to live, and hopes he shall never forget it ; it had even influence upon others related, who from that time became as useful and successful instruments of God’s glory and the good of souls, as any I have heard of in these later times.

The whole nation and church of God seem much clouded by the obscuring of this bright star, but especially the congregation at Denton is sadly eclipsed ; their valley of vision, at least, is turned into a valley of division : oh, that it may not also prove a valley of treading down, and desolation ! Ah, what lamentation was there at his funeral ! among the rest, an aged Christian came from the grave into the house where the ministers were sat after the funeral, with a trembling frame, weeping eyes, and a doleful voice of sad complaints, saying : “Ah, sirs, what must we do ! what must we do ! our loving pastor is gone, our loving pastor is gone.” And now that good man himself is gone also, and many others ; thus as it is said, John iv. 36, “He that sowed, and they that reaped are rejoicing together.”

That Lord’s day when Mr. Angier’s corpse lay in his house, two ministers preached in his chapel two funeral sermons, the one seeming to be a funeral sermon for the people, the other had a reference to their minister. That which concerned the

people held out an ominous presage of the death of their gospel privileges, and the sun-setting of their glorious day, sadly predicted from Gen. vi. 3, "My spirit shall not always strive with man:" and oh, what a dreadful verification of that text hath providence made there! that being the last sabbath that an ejected minister enjoyed the liberty of ordinances in that place. The other minister discoursed agreeably and suitably on John xvii. 4, "I have glorified thee on earth, I have finished the work thou gavest me to do."

That sermon was a lively comment on the good man's holy life, and a fair copy set before his surviving people; the perfect precepts in the scriptures, and lively pattern set before them for their imitation, make it apparent that gospel rules are practicable, may be transcribed by some, and will be a sad testimony against others: and though Mr. Angier's mouth be now closed in the dust, and his voice shall no more be heard in his pulpit, yet, O that Almighty God who lives for ever would awaken carnal sinners by this astounding blow, and propagate religion in that place! O that by his blessed Spirit he would transfuse the doctrines, principles, and practice of that good man into all his hearers! for they shall one day know, that "there hath been a prophet among them."

The next day, being Sept. 3, 1677, the funeral solemnities were mournfully observed, on which occasion, multitudes of persons, gentlemen, ministers, relations, and christian friends, besides his hearers and sad neighbours, attended the dismal and sorrowful obsequies with agitated hearts and dejected countenances, lamenting not only the loss of such a worthy pastor and friend, but their own minds suggested strong grounds for presaging fears concerning the consequences which might result from that heavy blow. His corpse was decently interred in Denton chapel, in the alley before the pulpit, near the body of his last wife.

On his tombstone is the following inscription:—

Here lieth the Body
of
Mr. JOHN ANGIER,
the late most
pious and faithful Pastor,
of this
CONGREGATION,
who rested from all his Labours,
Sept. 1st, 1677,
in the
Year of his Age, 72.
Ministry, 49; at Denton, 46.

Mr. Angier had requested Mr. Robert Eaton (a learned, pious minister who had married his kinswoman,) to preach the funeral sermon, and had given him that text to insist upon, in Acts xx. 32, "And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among them which are sanctified." It was an excellent, seasonable, and pathetic discourse, and well worthy of being annexed to this Narrative, if the esteemed Author had judged it fit: however, the solemnities of that day will not soon be forgotten.

Thus the best must die; Zech. i. 5, *Your fathers, where are they? and the Prophets, do they live for ever?* The holiest men cannot plead for an exemption, or expect Enoch's privilege of a translation: only to the pious believer death's sting is plucked out, this swelling Jordan is driven back, the passage is rendered easy and safe to the heavenly pilgrim. God brought this faithful servant, through a long and boisterous sea, to a safe harbour in a seasonable time, and if we embark in the same vessel of the church, and have our Lord Jesus with us, as our faithful and skilful pilot, though in storms and tempests, he being as it were asleep, yet believing prayer will awake him, and he will rebuke the winds and sea, and there shall be a calm, and the ship shall presently be at land, and the passengers shall be safe.

After having finished the Narrative of Mr. Angier's Life, there are yet two things remaining, which shew something of the breathings of his gracious soul, living and dying.

1. There are some remarkable things collected out of his own diary, under his own hand.

2. His dying sayings and admonitions to those about him in his last sickness.

Both these indicate much of divine grace, and manifest the holy exactness of his serious and christian disposition.

The first is a considerable paper, respecting his frame of spirit in his younger days, and reviewed and revised in his advanced years; it runs thus: I do now seriously resolve, between God and my own soul, to read his word diligently, morning and evening, before private prayer thereto adjoined, and do design to be constant in respect of time to be allotted for the purpose; namely, in the morning before chapel time, if it may be with convenience, or otherwise without delay when I return

from the chapel ; at night, between five and six of the clock, if extraordinary occasions hinder me not, because then my spirits being fresher than after supper, I shall be the fitter to do God acceptable service. I do likewise resolve to be diligent in my study every day, for the space of six hours at least, no day to be over-slipped without the full completion of them. I likewise promise faithfully to God and my own soul, to refrain as from the common sins of the time, to wit, drunkenness, licentiousness, or the like, so to strive against those sins I am by nature most addicted to ; and for the prevention of the like faults, to shun all the occasions thereunto leading, enticing, or provoking ; as bad company, unchaste conversation, or sensual indulgence, the which that I may perform according to God's will and pleasure, I renounce all dependance on my own abilities, and fly to his infinite mercy, desiring his special help and assistance, his Spirit to instruct me, his Spirit to direct me, his Spirit to sanctify me, that I may be kept blameless, being without spot till the day of his appearance. My desire hath been, is, and shall be upon my bended knees for the furtherance of these intentions, begun and kindled by his holy Spirit, which I hope will cherish them till they flame into a holy fire of heavenly conversation, a life of virtue, the glory of grace.

Written with my own hand, April 6th, 1625.

JOHN ANGIER.

Perused with comfort, May 1st. 1655.

July 19th, 1657. I found a paper in my study, of May 9, 1626 ; a bill of physic, when I was in a fever at Cambridge, about thirty-one years since, so long hath God lengthened out my life.

My going to New England was very forward, Mr. Newman earnestly invited me ; I received letters from Bristol, April 2, 1630, to say, that I was expected there to take shipping for N. E. this April, and had much kindness offered me ; yet the Lord over-ruled it.

Upon the coming on of troubles, I had comfort from Zeph. ii. 3, " It may be, ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger." Josiah's mercy was, not to see the evil ; Jeremiah's mercy, to be secured in the midst of seeing it. My wife died Dec. 12 ; one night after her death, the children were in the parlour praying together ; and hearing a noise, I went to the door, and heard my son at prayer with his sister ; he acknowledged to God that they had disregarded father and mother, contrary to God's command, and therefore God had taken away

their mother ; he desired God that they might not provoke him by their sin to take away their father also ; which did much affect me.

Upon a recovery from a sickness unexpectedly, I was much affected with Isa. xxxiii. ult. and in prayer the Lord brought to my mind Matt. viii. 9 ; affliction is God's servant, if he bid it come, it comes ; if he bid it go, it goes.

At Bolton, I was sent for to visit a pious man who was ill at Great Leaver, found him in a comfortable frame ; he told me he received his first religious impressions by my ministry at Denton, preaching on 1 Cor. v. 7, " Christ, our passover is sacrificed for us," ten years ago. Blessed be God, who gave me this encouragement. He notes in the margin, " The fruits of my labours manifested ten years after."

Nov. 30, —47. A day of thanksgiving was kept with some friends for the recovery of a child that had been sick ; it should seem, they were on a journey, and had small hopes of recovery ; the very same day they prayed, the child revived at night, and gathered strength on the journey sensibly ; they were by the sickness of the child detained against their own minds, and the minds of the people ; but God had a special hand in it ; for he sent the pestilence into the family where they were to sojourn, and had they gone at the time proposed, they had gone into an infected house, and had been shut up there.

June 18, —71. God gave rest to our aged afflicted mother, about three in the afternoon, it being Lord's day. It is observable, that the day after God took away our mother, and our supply from her failed, God sent me notice of some supply out of my own estate, as he had formerly done, Phil. iv. 19.

Nov. 19, —72. Died good bishop Wilkins, a great loss ; he died comfortably, and rejoiced in his moderation whilst he was bishop. His death was much lamented in the city of Chester.

Aug. 22, —73. Upon hearing that Mr. Case going from home four or five days and returning, found himself robbed to a great amount, he subjoins, Psal. lxxiii. 26, " God a portion for ever."

Oct. 28, —75. Reviewing the circumstances of his wife's death, he states Oct. 25, she said, that in the beginning of her weakness, she was something troubled, because she was taken off her employment, and could do nothing ; she was concerned about the affairs of the family, and concerning me, that she should leave me in such a condition. But now God had subdued her will, and quieted her heart, she knew not what direction to give, but she had left all with God, and her heart was

tranquil, she had no trouble at all. She told me one night, that she thought God sent Hannah Angier into the family to teach her how to die. This was a grand-child of his that came from London, weak, and reached Denton with much difficulty, and soon died of a consumption.

About a year before Mr. Angier died, upon a day of thanksgiving for God's great mercy to his kinsman in an easy journey, his heart being much affected with providences of God, he took occasion to leave upon record in his diary, these observable circumstances to heighten God's praises, and quicken his own and others' hearts in them.

Mercies on a Journey, 1673.

1. Direction in the right way; want of this causeth wandering, and sorrow, Psal. cvii. 7.

2. Preservation of man and beast, of life and health, from falls and harm, from enemies, robbers, and murderers. Some have died in the way, as Rachel, others fallen sick by the way, as 1 Sam. xxx. 13. It is mercy when God enables a traveller to endure heat and cold; for a horse to die or be lame in the way, is a great affliction; so a daily supply of new strength is mercy.

3. Comfort in the way, and weather, when both are good, and company is suitable and agreeable.

4. Convenient places for rest, and good refreshment for noon and night.

5. Seasonable provision of necessary food, and cheerful entertainment.

6. Temporary ease from the burden of domestic affairs, cares and labours; the mind and body, both are relieved, others take the burden upon them for a time.

7. Variety of objects to delight the sense, fair buildings, fruitful fields, pleasant meadows.

8. Change of air, pleasantness and healthfulness there, from refreshing gales in the heat of the day.

9. The society of friends whom we visit, and the mutual comfort that ariseth from meeting after a time of absence, and from friendly and interesting conversation.

10. Opportunity of understanding more fully how God hath answered our prayers for them: opportunity of spiritual assistance, of doing and receiving good by social prayer, and conference, by relating experience, and stirring up one another to what is good.

Behold, what excellent use a gracious heart, and sanctified fancy can make of those common affairs which many of us

pass over without any particular attention. See what a notable sense he had of God's goodness in every thing, to raise up durable monuments of God's glory, with such pleasing inscriptions thereon, as may at once both glorify God, and edify men.

When he travelled himself (as he often did) to London, Essex, &c. he was wont to write down providential occurrences daily; and upon his return, to collect the sum of them, and to spread them before such neighbours as united with him in thanksgiving, partly to help them to special matter of praise, but chiefly that God might lose no part of the glory which was due to him.

A very reverend and worthy brother, who was intimately acquainted with Mr. Angier, hath contributed some notices of his own personal knowledge concerning Mr. Angier's excellency in giving counsel in difficult cases of conscience, wherein he had occasion to consult him. The following case is given as a specimen:—

In 1654, a worthy young minister, of excellent acquirements and piety, tabled in a house near the place where he was then minister, with a gentlewoman of serious piety, of good birth and education, at full years of discretion, being thirty-three years of age, having £800. to her portion, and so in her own hands that none could hinder her of it: these two, after a long acquaintance with each other, desired to marry, on principles of religion, wherein they agreed; but there was a mother in the case, of another temper, not religious; she had married a second husband and took no care at all of her daughter, but rather shewed her inclination for her daughter's marrying a rich man, though of little religion; indeed the less religion, they thought, the better it would please her; so they doubted much of obtaining her consent: the case proposed was, Whether her consent must be necessarily obtained, or no marriage, 1. When only a mother, and she married to another, who was diminishing the children's estates, and that with the mother's consent? 2. When the mother is before prejudiced against a good man, and most of all against a minister? 3. The daughter of such an age? 4. Hath her estate at her own disposal? &c. This case was sent to three reverend men, and to Mr. Angier; his answer I shall transcribe:—

Dear Sir,

It will not be troublesome to me but give me pleasure, if by the help of God I may reach forth any the least assistance to you, or any friend of yours that desires to guide his way right. I do pity your friends, fearing it may be an hour of

temptation to them, and a cause of great affliction, especially if their affections be much engaged, which their living together indicates; my advice in this case is, that the gentleman make use of some friend or friends to the mother, that have influence with her, to gain her consent; and if he have no temporal estate equal to hers, or cannot increase it; yet to signify that he seeks the party more than the portion, and to offer this evidence of it, to agree that the portion be laid out for her use, and the use of her children, if she should have issue. If friends cannot prevail, the daughter may do well (and it is a very hopeful way,) humbly to desire her mother's consent in her own person: if by neither of these likely and due means they can prevail, I desire they may be urged still to pray, and wait upon the Lord of spirits, who knows his own counsels, and can secretly incline all spirits to comply therewith. I cannot advise them to marry without the mother's consent obtained, unless she has formerly set her daughter at liberty, and delivered her into her own power. For, 1. The mother hath authority over the child as well as the father, an authority of her own, a joint-authority with the father given of God; "Honour thy father and mother;" an authority founded in nature; and though the father be dead, and the portion be in the child's hands, according to the last will, and his authority be ceased; that takes not away the authority of the mother, which was included in the father's, but always distinct; and therefore some wills, in bequeathing a portion to be paid at marriage, do make the reasonable consent of the mother a just condition. 2. It may be, the mother hath just reason to deny her consent; amongst others, the want of temporal means, (if that be wanting) which is a greater defect in ministers' circumstances than usually in others, because they having large spiritual grace, and living at the height thereof, or beyond, their wives at their death fall so much lower than others by how much they live higher; the mother may say, she will provide a match where piety and portion meet. 3. If the mother should unreasonably deny her consent; yet we must not run into what we have had so much experience of in later times, to right ourselves by force and violence, but seek a remedy in a regular way. 4. If the mother be carnal, and they religious, they must be afraid to lay a stumbling-block before her; and though the scandal will not be so great, being to live in another country; yet it will be too great if to any, especially if to a mother, whose soul's good the daughter is bound to seek in a special manner, and to seek by all good means.*

* The matter of scandal seems to create most difficulty, whether, if providence dispose of the minister in another country, this may not be some relief to that, is queried?

5. To marry without consent of the mother at best is not a clear case, but dark and doubtful, and will give an advantage to temptation assailing tender consciences : in consequence of which, if their expectations be crossed one in another, or God send afflictions, their burden will be much increased ; because this question will soon be moved, Whether they did well to marry without or against consent ? 6. If children be left to their own liberty ; yet the duty they owe to their parents' comfort, and the greater judgment and experience of their parents, do justly challenge their humble desires of their counsel, their serious deliberation thereupon, and great unwillingness to match without their reasonable consent. Advise your friends seriously to consider, whether they have not gone out of God's way in engaging their affections mutually, before consent sought ; if the Lord shall help them herein to repent, it will be a foundation for after mercy ; the truly pious are apt to miss it far on these occasions ; but grace will not allow it when God makes a discovery. Thus I have freely imparted my thoughts to you in this case, beseeching God to clear the paths of all his servants, especially his ministers, who are to carry the light before the people, I rest,

Yours in all brotherly offices,

Jan. 22, 1654.

JOHN ANGIER.

He received the opinion of others as well this, yet he was mightily taken up with Mr. Angier's counsel ; for he saith, " Upon the receipt of your letter, and Mr. Angier's advice in it, 'To pray, and wait upon the Lord of spirits, who could sweetly incline all spirits to comply with his counsels ;' though I had prayed daily for it, yet I was put on to a more earnest begging of that mercy, in much more faith and hope, that the Lord would so incline spirits." And about a week after, he received the news, that the gentlewoman had by an humble letter to her mother on this account, succeeded so far, that the mother yielded to leave her to her own disposal.

In a little time after, he was settled as a minister in London, and married, but soon fell into a fever, and into the small-pox, whereof he died ; and particular friends understood that he was seized with great melancholy and trouble, which it was thought hastened his death ; and it was judged it was occasioned by excessive travelling that had given him a surfeit ; but if this matter of consent had been doubtful, what work would it have made with him in such a condition ? According to the prudent suggestion of the fifth reason of Mr. Angier's answer.

His counsel was asked in many important cases, and his advice was kind, and usually safe, being grounded upon the word of God, having the advantage of a holy heart, a clear head, and long experience. A second instance may be subjoined. His advice to a minister, who consulted him about removing to another place, where there was more advantage in a pecuniary light, and greater probability of doing good. His answer by letter was in the negative, saying, "I bless God that such temptations do drive you and your people to God, the establisher of Zion. It was an expression of Dr. Tuckney's to me, 'It is ill transplanting a tree that thrives in the soil.' Think upon our Saviour's expression: 'When I sent you without scrip or staff, lacked you any thing? and they said nothing.' Be not solicitous about your means, or the certainty of it; but apply your soul to the work, and God's secret will be upon your tabernacle." The minister fixed his staff where he was, according to Mr. Angier's example and advice, and never repented of it.

Dying Sayings and Admonitions.

I hasten to the last scene of his life, and the gracious words that proceeded from him; for as he lived, so he died; his discourses were holy and heavenly, ministering grace to the hearers; "His mouth spoke wisdom, his tongue talked of judgment; for the law of his God was in his heart."* The nearer approaches he made to heaven, still the more he breathed of heaven; and though many things, most of what he then spoke escaped the memory of spectators or bystanders, yet the following gleanings have been committed to writing.

On Thursday, August 16, 1677; being in a shaking fit, he was more free in discourse than ordinarily he had been, and said, "I find myself weak and feeble, and now think as much on my dear wife, as at the very first; but God employed means to wean me by her long affliction." To a mother, he said, "Be not sharp or rash with your children, lest their affections be alienated; when they commit a fault, stay a while till your anger be over, and then counsel and admonish them, maintain affection in them, as well as your authority over them."

"If it please God, I should be glad to live to see the good of the church, and of my children; if not I shall die in the belief, that God will remember them when I am gone; it may be, then they will bethink themselves, when they have not me to depend upon. God can soon alter their temper if he please."

To a young woman that lived in his family, he said, "As

* Psalm xxxvii. 30, 31.

you have lived here many years, and by God's help have been of some use, I am glad you are going into so good a family, who are children of the covenant; for 'the mercy of the Lord is upon thousands of them that fear him;' and though you may meet with afflictions, yet I hope God will do you good, and help you to bear them." This was a true prediction, for God laid a heavy hand of affliction upon her husband, and then took him away by death, under some extraordinary and aggravating circumstances, known to the neighbourhood; yet, God supported her very graciously.

Concerning himself, he said, "God hath made my condition comfortable in the world: I have lived comfortably, and have kept that which my father left me; he left me a good portion, thinking, it may be, that I should never be likely to get much in the world. I have left it, or what is equivalent, to my children, and if they make it away, the will of the Lord be done. This is my comfort, I have left no means unused, that I thought might be for their good; and it may be, God may bring them into straits, when I am gone; and when he hath brought them into the wilderness, speak to their hearts."

"My good child Betty! God took away poor Betty! But why should I call her poor? she is rich, being with her best friend; I have had much grief for the loss of my dear wife, she was dear to me, but her happiness I could never yet envy."

"God hath in some measure given me an humble heart, and hath helped me to conduct myself humbly in my place, to children and to servants; let God have the glory, in whom alone I have comfort."

One said to him, "Sir, what do you apprehend of yourself?" he said, "I know not, but I have lived almost two years above the age of man; and if God have any further work for me to do, he will recover me; and if not, why should I desire to live? I have taken great pains all my life, and never desired to live an idle life, or a life of pleasure, 'But for me to be with Christ is far better; henceforth is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge will give me.'"

His next fit was on Saturday, Aug. 25. Being very restless, one asked him, where his pain lay? he said, "no great pain, but heat is pain enough; he asked, what time of the day it was? they said ten o'clock; he said, the day goes slowly on, when one is ill; but when well, we think time goes too fast."

At another time he said, "God hath set back the time, as in Hezekiah's days; but, said he, if I could go to chapel to-morrow, I should think all well; however, I have no hope of that, but if God hath a favour to me, he will bring me back,

and shew me both the ark, and his holy habitation ; if not let him do what seemeth him good."

His daughter coming into the room, he said, "Oh that I could see my children walking in God's ways and fear ! if I could see my son, his wife and children, minding the best things, and walking with God, I could die with comfort. I very much desire that I could live to see it ; I have prayed, and long waited for God's salvation. 'And thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart, and with a willing mind, for the Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts ; if thou seek him, he will be found of thee ; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever,' " 1 Chron. xxviii. 9.

Aug. 27. Early in the morning, after a restless night, and many weary tossings, being unable to lie still, he said, "my strength is spent, and added, I may say as Hezekiah, I am oppressed, Lord, undertake for me," Isa. xxxviii. 14.

To his cousin, he said, "we must not decline God's service for difficulty."

On Tuesday, Mr. Constantine, a worthy minister, coming to visit him, he desired him to pray with him ; and being asked, whether it was not fitter for him to pray for him in another room, because the physicians advised him to forbear company ; he said, "no, but let him pray with me ;" yet to prevent tediousness, he told them this anecdote of Mr. Horrocks, which he had often mentioned in his health. When Mr. Horrocks was sick, Mr. Angier came to visit him just as Mr. Pike, another honest minister, was gone out from him ; Mr. Horrocks said, Mr. Angier, you must pray with me ; but Mr. Pike has killed me with a long prayer. When Mr. Constantine was gone, Mr. Angier said, "in sickness we are willing to send for the physician of the body, and should not we send for the physician of the soul ? ministers are the soul's physicians ; we need their help."

That night he desired that James v. 13, to the end, might be read ; and when it was read, said, "Physicians of the body say, let not the minister pray with the sick ; but the apostle saith, 'is any sick among you ? let him send for the elders of the church.'"

When prayer was done, he said, "What a mercy it is ! my understanding is as good as ever in all my life ;" one said to him, Sir, I think you understand every thing well, but your own weakness ; he answered, "I am sensible of weakness and weariness, and burnings ; but what a mercy is it, that though my bones are vexed, my soul is not sore vexed also, as David's was ! I bless God, I am not afraid of death, yet what I may be I

know not ; Satan may tempt me when his chain is lengthened." One said, no doubt, you will not want peace ; he answered, " I know not that ; though Satan could find no sin in our Saviour, yet he may find matter enough in me ; and added, that he had not in his health been altogether free from Satan's temptations, he had met with his temptations both in a married and single condition.

The same night, while one rubbed his feet, he said, " what a wonderful mercy is it, that the great God should think upon, and bestow his love upon such a poor worm as I am ?" This he spoke weeping ; " then," said he, " I die, but God shall be with you, saying, I cannot leave you a greater comfort than the gracious presence of the great God : " he then added, " Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection, on such, the second death hath no power." His feet being cold and sweating, one rubbed them ; he said, " my body is weak and feeble, an old tree will soon wither, but it must be cherished, and be tenderly cared for, as well as the soul ; for it is ' the temple of the Holy Ghost,' and doth keep in it an immortal soul, for a while."

Although the fetters of death were on him ; yet he said, " blessed be the Lord, I feel no pain, but your cold hand ; I would wait on God for a little sleep. Lord, I wait on thee, remember thy covenant, and thy word to thy servant, which I have hoped for, and which hath been my support and strength in my affliction ; through thy strength I have been doing thy will, and endeavouring to keep thy commandments, although in much weakness ; now Lord, remember, thy own servant, do thy own work, make good thy own words ; I believe in thee, I hope and wait for thee, hear the prayers of thy servant, come, Lord Jesus." Then, said he, " I love Christ, and he loves me, and there is no love lost between us ; I am his, and he is mine, and my desire is towards him."

One being present with him from Manchester, he asked about all his friends and acquaintance there, and desired to be remembered to them, charging them to live in love and peace ; he said, " entreat them to pray to God for me, and that will do me more good than their presents ; " and being told that many of the people of God were praying for him, he said, " who am I, a poor creature, that God's people should be so concerned for me ! I fear, lest they should offend in being too earnest with God for my life, for who knows but the Lord may hear prayers, and may bring me back from the grave, as he is wont to do ?"

Afterward, he perceiving that others did suppose death near, he desired the forty-eighth chapter of Genesis to be read, " where,"

he said, "old Jacob blessed his sons, and the forty-ninth, where, after he had spoken to them by a spirit of prophecy, and commanded them, he gathered up his feet, and yielded up the ghost, and was gathered unto his people." And when they had done reading, he spake to them one by one, and prayed for a blessing for them; kissing the children, he took leave of them, and desired a psalm to be sung, and he said, sing it cheerfully, Psalm xlv. It contains Christ's love to the church, and the church's love to Christ.

Then he appointed his grandson to read a chapter, Jer. xxiii. "It concerns," saith he, "slothful shepherds: God's soul abhorred them, and he will curse their labours; they shall not profit the people; they are fit for no use;" adding, "God will make a besom, and sweep all such out of his house; no man," said he, "will keep a tenant who will not till his land, but let his house and ground go to ruin: God will take special care of his house."

Then he said, "John, take counsel at your best friends, they will give you good advice, and set you a good example; meddle not with wicked, light, vain persons; remember the words of your dying grandfather;" next he desired the 14th of John to be read, concerning sending the Spirit.

Then he prayed earnestly for the church, that God would hear the prayers of his people, and return to these nations, and set at liberty his ministers and people. "Oh," said he, "that God would magnify the riches of his grace, for his poor church, for the sake of Christ; we are indeed an unworthy people; but thy Son died to purchase the pardon of sin and reconciliation, and is seated at thy right hand, pleading our cause: Father, hear him for us, and be at peace with us. Remember what hath been done and suffered for reformation, and the precious blood of thy saints which hath been shed—this is the seed of the church: remember the prayers of such as are now with thee, and of such as are yet alive, in behalf of their seed and the seed of thy church, and fetch in such as are going astray from thee, and put a stop to them in their course of sin; rebuke that profane spirit which is gone out into the nation; revive the work of reformation, of tenderness of conscience, and brokenness of heart, that sometimes thy people have had; remove hardness of heart, and that lukewarm spirit which hath seized upon us: Return, O Lord, to the many thousands of those that are seeking thee in these nations: how long, Lord, wilt thou be angry with thy people in these nations, and deny an answer to their prayers? O Lord, thy poor people have many years been pleading with thee for the king's majesty; make him indeed a Josiah, a nursing

father to thy church ; make him a terror to evil doers, and an encouragement to them that do well. Father, thy people are waiting on thee, when wilt thou return to thy poor, broken, scattered flock ? Lord, humble them for sin which hath provoked thee to this great heat of thy wrath ; thou hast mercy in store, and waitest to be gracious, but we are not prepared for mercy : but, Lord, make thy people fit ; thou hast bid us ‘ask what we will in thy Son’s name, and thou wilt give it.’ Lord, increase our faith, and work for thy great name and thy own glory ; advance thy Son’s kingdom and bring down the kingdom of Satan ; purify the church, but destroy it not. Thou hast appeared for thy church many times when it hath been very low, and thy people have sinned grievously against thee, as we have done, and thereby brought themselves into straits, yet thou hast heard their cries, and wrought for thy name, that it should not be polluted. Zion lies in the dust, thy church is sore broken ; many of thy servants are gathered to thyself, they are not to be seen or heard any more in this world ; their prayers are ceased that stood in the gap to turn away thy wrath from us. Lord, revive conversion-work ; let not the womb of thy church be barren and unfruitful ; is thy work quite done ? O Lord, art thou resolved to leave this nation ? hast thou not many souls yet to be brought in ? Dear Father, hear thou the prayers of parents for their poor children ; do not cast off the seed of thy church ; let them not be as unfruitful branches that are fit for no use, but to burn. Lord, prevent popery and idolatry ; let us not leave our children worse than our parents left us ; let there be pure doctrine, worship, and discipline in thy house according to thy mind ; continue the privileges purchased with the blood of thy Son, for the use of thy church, of which thy people stand in so much need, that we and our posterity may praise thee, and future generations may place their hope in God, and declare what thou hast done.”

And for the congregation he said, “Thine they were, and thou hast committed them to me, thy poor servant ; for these forty-six years I have been labouring among them ; according to the poor ability thou hast bestowed on me, I have endeavoured to bring them over to thee ; now I am no more to be with them ; Father, I commit them to thee again, as I have done many a time ; take thou the charge of them, see to them, provide for them ; double thy Spirit on thy servant ; bless his labours among them ; let many souls be brought into thy kingdom of grace, and made fit for the kingdom of glory ; let thy word abide with them ; Lord, tarry with thy people here, send down thy Spirit so freely, so plainly, so fully :” these last words he often repeated.

These were the workings of his gracious heart, vented towards God in heavenly ejaculations, and uttered in such broken expressions. He was restless, and in several postures. One said, "Sir, are you not sore pained?" he said, "No, blessed be God, I feel no pain, but the flesh will stir."

On Wednesday night, about two o'clock, Aug. 29, 1677, he began to speak thus: "I commit myself into the hands of that God, who gave me my being, who has been a gracious God, and a kind Father to me, and into the hands of Jesus Christ my Saviour, who loved me and gave himself for me, who bare the burden of my sins, and sanctified me wholly in soul, body, and spirit. And for my children who have been a great grief of heart to me, who have been very sinful; good Lord, pardon their sins through the blood of Jesus. For my son that hath greatly played the prodigal, hedge up his way with thorns, and make a stone wall, bring him to such straits that he may begin to bethink himself, and say, 'In my father's house is bread enough,' that at last he may return. For my children's children, Lord, I commit them into thy hands, and all my dear friends and their children. And for my people, whom I received from thy hands, to take care of and instruct, to preach thy word unto, and to pray for; Lord, thou knowest that in some measure of uprightness of heart I have done it, and in some measure my life hath been according to my doctrine. Lord, forgive the sins of my life, the sins of my ministry, and the sins of my people. I desire to bless thee for what good thou hast done by my ministry among them, and for those souls thou hast already brought into heaven, I now, Lord, commit them into thy hands, who art the chief Shepherd; they are thy flock, help them to live in love and peace: O that strifes and contentions may cease! And thou who hast kept an open door for thy people in this place, when it hath been shut elsewhere for a long space; Lord, keep it open still, until thou shalt open the rest. Oh remember thy ministers, take care of them. Provide for this congregation; and if thou shalt incline the heart of my kinsman to stay amongst them, (who hath been trained up in my family these ten years, and they have known his manner of life, his doctrine, and abilities for the ministry,) if thou see it good, make way in the heart of thy servant H. and those that have power in this place, to use their endeavours, that he may continue here: this is my desire. Lord, remember thy people in these nations. Papists are striving, and some of the mere formalists care not what becomes of the Protestant interest. If popery comes in like a flood,—Lord, put a stop to it, yea, put an end to it. Stir up the heart of our king, and the king of

the Swedes against the harlot of Rome, that thinks she sits as a queen, and is no widow. O stir up the ten kings against her."

Then he added a request for accommodation of a difference between two persons whom he named, in his congregation, that he might see it healed before he died: and for some others that had made defection in practice, and were fallen off to looseness and vain company-keeping, who were children of pious parents, that at last God would bring them home by sound repentance. Concluding, he begged that the Lord would put down ill houses of iniquity, meaning alehouses.

He added that night—"Whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord; but when we are absent from the body, then we shall be present with the Lord, therefore we labour.—The just shall live by his faith."

"Read the 20th of Acts, where Paul sent for the elders of the church of Ephesus, and gave them a charge, and took his leave of them. Read 1 Thess. iv. 12. to the end;" adding, "It is a great privilege, 'that the dead in Christ shall rise first, and be with him,' before they that are alive at his coming shall be changed."

Thus his holy soul mounting upwards by gradual ascents, breathed out itself into the bosom of God, being mellowed and ripened for glory. In all these things we may notice, 1. His public-spiritedness, still his heart was carried out for the church, "no man like minded, who naturally cared for the spiritual state of souls, and of Zion." 2. His hatred of sin, love to holiness, righteousness, and peace, and earnest desires to promote the interest of Christ, living and dying, at home and abroad. 3. His sweet serenity and composedness of spirit, looking the grim sergeant death, the king of terrors, full in the face without amazement, meeting him as his friend giving him possession of his Father's house. 4. His endearing attachment to the word of God, delighting to have it read and sounding in his ears, and tipping his tongue with scripture language, because his heart was thoroughly imbued with it. Thus this holy man lived, and thus he died; thus he believed, thus he preached and professed his hopes of a life to come; and thus he entered into his rest, and possesseth a purchased and perfect inheritance. Who would not thus live? what atheist would not thus die? However, a carnal heart may possibly say as that wicked roister who with his companion visited dying Ambrose, and hearing his holy discourses and confident expectations, he turned himself to his swaggering associate, saying, "O that I might live with thee, and die with Ambrose!" and thus could Balaam, Numb. xxiii. 10, that diabolical wizard and avaricious conjurer,

say, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his," (*Heb.* let my soul or my life be with the righteous.) But they that would follow this blessed saint into the upper region, must enter in at the right door by sound conversion, and go forth, and go on in "the footsteps of the flock," travelling gradually in the paths of sanctity, till they advance to the mount of God: and though it be a rare thing to follow those worthies, (*passibus æquis*) with such steps and quick motion; yet sincerity in our setting out, diligence in pursuit, and perseverance in holding on to the end, may bring us to the goal and crown of glory: and though we cannot reach the exploits and honour of the three first of king David's worthies, yet may we be faithful soldiers in this noble army of the "followers of the Lamb," at last the diadem of glory may be by the grace of God set upon our triumphant heads: and if there be degrees of felicity, yet the least vessel shall be filled, and the humblest saint shall be blessed with an exceeding and eternal weight of glory; for such and so great is that joy, that it cannot enter into the most extensive and capacious minds as receivers, but they must enter "into their Master's joy;" as if millions of vessels of different sizes were cast into the vast ocean, they would be completely filled: so every saint will say with David, Ps. xvii. 15, "As for me I shall behold thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness."

Nor can it be difficult for a departing soul, set at liberty from the prison of flesh, to soar aloft with speed into those celestial regions, whatever may be the distance, especially when attendant angels form its escort. How quickly and safely can that blessed convoy conduct it into the presence-chamber of the glorious King? O how well did the gracious soul of Angier know the way thither, where he had been daily visiting the great God by faith and prayer! He was not a stranger to the laws of that country, nor unacquainted with the manner of the court above; but as he walked with his God, and was united to that heavenly society, so doubtless some correspondence was maintained with those blessed spirits above. Happy they that have faithfully improved their gifts and graces whilst conversant below; remember their dying expressions, and imitate their amiable, lively examples.