

born to very considerable things as your heir: but he was begotten again to a more glorious inheritance, and the lively hope of it, 1 Peter 1. 3. They that were about him, before it was possible for me to see him, told me he was insensible, as he was before I heard of his illness: but at my coming to him, he knew me at first sight, and seemed to have the use of his understanding for nothing but religion. He then spake not one misplaced word; said, He doubted not God was his Father, and that his present affliction was from the hand of that Father, not of an enemy. He desired me to pray with him, and seemed understandingly and affectionately to concur. This was on the Lord's-day, and the next was the day of his glorious translation, near noon, before I could reach him a second time.

Mr. C—came to me presently after, to advise with me about disposal of the body; who could give no advice but in the general, to have it prepared for interment, in a way that might be decent, and not profusely expensive: not doubting but that there might be more particular direction from yourself before actual interment, sent to Mr. C—. &c. who is willing to take the care upon him of seeing instructions fulfilled.

The Lord support you both, and abundantly bless the rest of yours.

I am, most honoured Sir and Madam, your most affectionately sympathizing servant in Christ our Lord,

St John's Street,
London, Jan. 14 1659.

JOHN HOWE.

The two following were written by Mr. HOWE, to his dear and intimate friend, Mr. SPILSBURY.

My Dear Brother,

HOW hard a matter is it to keep up converse at this rate? when all that is pleasant and gainful in it lies on one side only. I read thy lines with fruit and delight; but have nothing to return of any value. And if a conscience is to be exercised in this sort of traffic, or indeed but a tolerable ingenuity, it cannot but occasion some regret, to barter away things of no worth for good commodities. If I tell thee I live, what doth that signify? when life itself is so little worth, how despicable is the notice of it! If I tell thee I love thee, thou knowest it before as to the *quod sit*; but for the *quid sit*; no words can express it; therefore the offer at it is vain. When, when shall we meet above! That will make us pure good company, when dulness and sluggishness are shaken off and gone, and we shall be all spirit and life! yet we shall be doing our Lord some service here, or that he will accept as

such, if we be sincere. Thou wilt be visited by a worthy person ere long, that is gone first to Kidderminster, and means after he hath seen the son, to come to the father.

Cordial salutations from me and mine, to thee and thine. Farewell in our dear Lord: and still remember,

Thy entirely affectionate,

J. HOWE.

St. John Street
Jan. 25 1698.

May I once more hope to salute my dear brother in this world! whether I shall or not, I must leave to him to whom greater, and all things must be left. Thou mayest have taken thy flight before this reach thee, but the soul and spirit from whence it comes may in due time, through the infinite riches of freest grace, and the atoning blood of that sacrifice which once for all was offered up. We come to the general assembly, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, but as we come to Jesus the mediator of the new testament, and to the blood of sprinkling. By his own blood he is entered into the holy of holies, as the forerunner, and for us. Upon such terms may sinful unprofitable servants hope to enter, and be received under the notion of faithful, and as those that are graciously counted such, into the joy of their Lord. Thou art ready to enter, and wilt shortly be adoring before the throne: Oh with what complacency! receiving the end of thy faith, having fought the good fight of it! And must thy poor brethren left behind, sigh and groan still? amidst their drowsy hearers, and too drowsy fruitless labours? But I envy thee not: and those that are dearest and nearest to thee, owe thee so much as to rejoice in thy joy, while they cannot as yet in their own, John 14-28. Thou art upon my heart, if God saw it good, to live and die with thee. This day sen'night thy worthy brother B. and my brother F. dined with me, when thou wast most affectionately remembered; but art no day forgotten, by thy sincere lover, and of all thine, hoping and aiming (though faintly) to be thy follower,

J. HOWE.

If there be joy in heaven for a converted sinner, shall there not for a glorified saint! and the leader and teacher of many such! some that are in glory, and others that shortly shall be! O the triumph at thy abundant entrance!

Worthy Mr. Spilsbury, to whom this letter was written, died the 10th. of July following.