

such relations so long, and for the many mercies he made them instrumental of to you, in your tender years: that he vouchsafed to you the blessing of so excellent an education by their means: that you were thereby brought to know him and his Christ; that by their care you were so comfortably settled in the world, and in a station wherein he hath given you the opportunity of being so serviceable in building up a family for him, and of contributing to the planting and propagating religion in it; and that you see so much of a blessing from heaven upon the plantation. Your part is that of a mother, and you have had a great example before your eyes. That may still live, (and I doubt not will) in your mind and heart, while the person that gave it still lives in a higher region, whither following such steps, you also will be translated in the fittest season.

I pray for the welfare in all valuable respects, of your Ladyship, and all yours; being in great sincerity, your Ladyship's

Most respectful, and most faithful, humble servant,

Love Lane, Aldermanbury,
London, Sept. 5, 1695.

J. HOWE.

THE FOLLOWING WAS TO THE SAME, ON THE DEATH
OF A MOST PROMISING SON.

*Most worthily honoured Sir, with
My dearest and most honoured Lady,*

IT would be incomparably more grievous to me at this time to write to you, if I were under a necessity of writing nothing but were mournful and sad. The same thing if we turn it round, will be found to have a double aspect. That dispensation that represents you deprived of an earthly son, speaks you the parents of a glorified child, more highly dignified, than it was possible he could have been on earth. This post brings you greater news than if it had informed you, your son is created emperor of Germany, or king of France or Spain. Let us speak and think of things as we believe, and profess to believe. Indeed if our apprehensions of their state in the unseen world, who were true lovers of God, have nothing of solace and pleasure in them, it is mere useless empty profession they are all to be resolved into, and not faith.

My heart bleeds for you, and with you both, but it can do you no good to tell you so. I believe your lovely son unfeignedly loved God: and then read the rest, 1 Cor. 2, 9. James 1. 10, 12. Of how great use might he have been in this world! But are those glorious creatures above, to whom he is now joined, inactive or unemployed? And are not their employments more noble and sublime, according to the more enlarged capacity of their faculties, and the higher dignity of their state? He was

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