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Thomas F. Lounsbury

LETTERS

OF

SAMUEL RUTHERFORD.

PRINTED BY MURRAY AND GIBB,

FOR

W. P. KENNEDY, AND JOHN MACLAREN.

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LETTERS
OF
SAMUEL RUTHERFORD.

WITH
Biographical Sketches of His Correspondents.

EDITED BY
THE REV. ANDREW A. BONAR,
GLASGOW.

WITH SKETCH OF HIS LIFE.

VOL. I.

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1863.

“ He would fend me as a spy into this wilderness of suffering, to see the land,
and to try the ford ; and I cannot make a lie of Christ’s cross ; I can report
nothing but good both of Him and it.”—[LET. 118.]



P R E F A C E.

MOST justly does the old Preface to the earlier Editions begin by telling the Reader that “These Letters have no need of any man’s epistle commendatory, the great Master having given them one, written by His own hand on the hearts of all who favour the things of God.” Every one who knows these “Letters” at all, is aware of their most peculiar characteristic, namely, the discovery they present of the marvellous intercourse carried on between the writer’s soul and his God.

This Edition will be found to be the most complete that has hitherto appeared. Attending carefully to the chronological arrangement, the Editor has sought, by biographical, topographical, and historical notices, to put the Reader in possession of all that was needed to enable him to enter into the circumstances in which each Letter was written, so far as that could be done. The Explanatory Notes, the appended Glossary of Scottish words and expressions (many of them in reality old English), the Index of Places and Persons, the Index of Special Subjects, and the prefixed Contents of each Letter, will, it is confidently believed, be found both interesting and useful. The Sketch of Rutherford’s Life may be thought too brief; but the limits within which such a Sketch must

necessarily be confined, when occupying the place of a mere Introduction, rendered brevity inevitable.

Every Letter hitherto published is to be found in this Edition. The ten additional Letters of the Edition 1848, along with two more, added since that time, are all inserted in their chronological place. The publishers have taken great pains with the typography.

A. A. B.

GLASGOW, 27th November 1862.



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SKETCH
OF
SAMUEL RUTHERFORD.

“**W**HEREVER the palm-tree is, there is water,” says the Eastern proverb; and so, wherever the godly flourish, there, we are sure, must the Word of God be found.

In the history of the Reformation we read of Brother Martin, a poor monk at Basle, whose hope of salvation rested solely on the Lord Jesus, long before Luther sounded the silver trumpet that summoned sin-convinced souls to the One Sacrifice. Having written out his confession of faith, his statement of reliance on the righteousness of Christ alone, the monk placed the parchment in a wooden box, and shut up the wooden box in a hole of the wall of his cell. It was not till last century that this box, with its interesting contents, was discovered: it was brought to light only when the old wall of the monastery was taken down. The palm-tree speaks of the existence of water at its root; the pure Word of God taught this man his simple faith. And herein we learn how it was that Basle so early became a peculiar centre of light in that region: the prayer and the faith of that hidden one, and others like-minded, and the Word on which they fed, may explain it all.

There is a fact not unlike the above in the history of the district where Samuel Rutherford laboured so lovingly. The people of that shire tell that there was found, some generations ago, in the wall of the old castle of Earlston, in the Stewartry of Kirkcudbright, a copy of *Wickliffe's Bible*. It seems to have been deposited in that receptacle in order to be hid from the view of enemies ; but from time to time it was the lamp of light to a few souls, who, perhaps in the silence of night, found opportunity to draw it out of its ark, and peruse its pages. It seems that the Lollards of Kyle (the adjoining district) had brought it to Earlston. We know that there were friends and members of the family of Earlston who embraced the Gospel even in those days. In the sixteenth century, some of the ancestors of Viscount Kenmure are found holding the doctrines of Wickliffe, which had been handed down to them. May we not believe that the Gordons of Earlston, in after days, were not a little indebted to the faith and prayers of these ancient witnesses who hid the sacred treasure in the castle wall ? As in the case of the monk of Basle, their faith and patience were acknowledged in after days by the blessing sent down on that quarter, when the Lord, in remembrance of His hidden ones, both raised up the Gordons of Earlston, with many others of a like spirit, and also sent thither His servant Samuel Rutherford, to sound forth the word of life, and make the lamp of truth blaze, like a torch, over all that region.

SAMUEL RUTHERFORD was born about the year 1600. His father is understood to have been a respectable farmer. He had two brothers, James and George. But the place of his birth was not near the scene of his after labours. It is almost certain that Nisbet, a village of Roxburghshire, close to the Teviot, in the parish of Crailing, was his birth-place ; and not long ago, there were some old people in that parish who remembered the gable-end of the house in which he was born, and which, from respect to his memory, was permitted to stand as long as it could keep together. Some one may yet light upon the well where, when very young, Samuel nearly lost his life. He had been amusing himself with some companions, when he fell in, and was left there till they

ran and procured assistance; but on returning to the spot, they found him seated on a knoll, cold and dripping, yet uninjured. He told them that "A bonnie white man came and drew him out of the well!" Whether or not he really fancied that an angel had delivered him, we cannot tell; but it is plain that, at all events, his boyish thoughts were already wandering in the region of the sky.

He owed little to his native place. There was not so much of Christ known in that parish then as there is now; for in after days he writes, "My soul's desire is, that the place to which I owe my first birth;—in which, I fear, Christ was scarcely named, as touching any reality of the power of godliness;—may blossom as the rose."* We have no account of his revisiting these scenes of his early life, though he thus wrote to his friend, Mr Scott, minister of the adjoining parish of Oxnam. Like Donald Cargill, born in Perthshire, yet never known to preach there even once, Rutherford had his labours in other parts of the land, distant from his native place. In this arrangement we see the Master's sovereignty. The sphere is evidently one of God's choosing for the man, instead of being the result of the man's gratifying his natural predilections. It accords, too, with the Master's own example; He having never returned to Bethlehem, where He was born, to do any of His works.

Jedburgh is a town three or four miles distant from Nisbet, and thither Samuel went for his education; either walking to it and returning home at evening,—as a school-boy would scarcely grudge to do,—or residing in the town for a season. The school at that time met in a part of the ancient abbey, called, from this circumstance, the Latiners' Alley. In the year 1617 we find him farther from home,—removed to Edinburgh, which, forty years before, had become the seat of a College, though not as yet a University. There he obtained, in 1621, the degree of Master of Arts. Soon after, he was appointed Regent, or Professor, of Humanity, though there were three other competitors; for his talents had attracted the notice of many. But, on occasion of a rumour that

* Let. 334.

charged him with some irregularity,—whether with or without foundation, it is now difficult to ascertain,—he demitted his office in 1625, and led a private life, attending prelections on theology, and devoting himself to that study.

That there could not have been anything very serious in the rumour, may be inferred from the fact that no church court took any notice of the matter, though these were days when the reins of discipline were not held with a slack hand. But it is not unlikely that this may have been the time of which he says in a letter, “I knew a man who wondered to see any in this life laugh or sport.”* It may have been then that he was led by the Spirit to know the things that are freely given us of God.† We have no proof that he was converted at an earlier period, but rather the opposite. He writes, “Like a fool as I was, I suffered my fun to be high in the heaven, and near afternoon, before ever I took the gate by the end.”‡ And again, “I had stood sure, if in my youth I had borrowed Christ for my bottom.”§ The clouds returned after the rain; family trials, and other similar dealings of Providence, combined to form his character as a man of God and as a pastor.

In 1627 he was settled at Anwoth,|| a parish situated in the Stewartry of Kirkcudbright, on the river Fleet, near the Solway. The church stood in a wide hollow, or valley, at the foot of the Boreland Hill. Embosomed in wood, with neither the smoke nor the noise of a village near, it must always have been a romantic spot, the very ideal of a country church, set down to cherish rural godliness. Though at this period Episcopacy had been obtruded upon Scotland, and many faithful ministers were suffering on account of their resistance to its ceremonies and services, yet he appears to have been allowed to enter on his charge without any compliance being demanded, and “without giving any engagement to the bishop.” He began his ministry with the text, John ix. 39. The same Lord

* Let. 224.

† 1 Cor. ii. 12.

‡ Let. 177.

§ Let. 241.

|| See notice of the topography at Let. 199. It is a mile and a half from the modern Gatehouse of Fleet, a clean, English-looking village.

that would not let Paul and Timothy preach in Asia,* nor in Bithynia, and yet sent to the one region the beloved John,† and to the other the scarcely less beloved Peter,‡ in this instance prevented John Livingstone going to Anwoth, which the patron had designed, and sent Rutherford instead. This was the more remarkable, because Livingstone was sent to Ancrum, the parish that borders on Nisbet, while he who was by birth related to that place was despatched to another spot. This is the Lord's doing. Ministers must not choose according to the flesh.

During the first years of his labours here, the sore illness of his wife was a bitter grief to him. Her distress was very severe. He writes of it: "She is sore tormented night and day.—My life is bitter unto me.—She sleeps none, and cries as a woman travailing in birth; my life was never so wearisome."§ She continued in this state for no less than a year and a month, ere she died. Besides all this, his two children had been taken from him. Such was the discipline by which he was trained for the duties of a pastor, and by which a shepherd's heart of true sympathy was imparted to him.

The parish of Anwoth had no large village near the church. The people were scattered over a hilly district, and were quite a rural flock. But their shepherd knew that the Chief Shepherd counted them worth caring for; he was not one who thought that his learning and talents would be ill spent if laid out in seeking to save souls, obscure and unknown. See him setting out to visit! He has just laid aside one of his learned folios, to go forth among his flock. See him passing along yonder field, and climbing that hill on his way to some cottage, his "quick eyes" occasionally glancing on the objects around, but his "face upward" for the most part, as if he were gazing into heaven. He has time to visit, for he rises at three in the morning; and at that early hour meets his God in prayer and meditation, and has space for study besides. He takes occasional days for catechising. He never fails to be

* Acts xvi. 6, 7.

† Rev. i. 11.

‡ 1 Pet. i. 1.

§ Let. 18.

found at the sick-beds of his people. Men said of him, "He is *always* praying, *always* preaching, *always* visiting the sick, *always* catechising, *always* writing and studying." He was known to fall asleep at night talking of Christ, and even to speak of Him during his sleep. Indeed, himself speaks of his dreams being of Christ.*

His preaching could not but arrest attention. Though his elocution was not good, and his voice rather shrill, he was, nevertheless, "one of the most moving and affectionate preachers in his time, or perhaps in any age of the Church."† Especially when he came to dwell upon the subject he so delighted in, Jesus Christ, his manner grew so animated that it seemed as if he would have flown out of the pulpit. An English merchant said of him, even in days when controversy had sorely vexed him and distracted his spirit, "I went to St Andrews, where I heard a sweet, majestic-looking man (R. Blair), and he showed me the majesty of God. After him I heard a little, fair man (Rutherford), and he showed me *the loveliness of Christ*."‡

Anwoth was dear to him rather as the sphere appointed him by his Master, than because of the fruit he saw of his labours. Two years after being settled there, he writes, "I see exceedingly small fruit of my ministry. I would be glad of one soul, to be a crown of joy and rejoicing in the day of Christ." His people were "like hot iron, which cooleth when out of the fire." Still he laboured in hope, and laboured often almost beyond his strength. Once he says, "I have a grieved heart daily in my calling." He speaks of his pained breast, at another time, on the evening of the Lord's day, when his work was done.§ But he had seasons of refreshing to his own soul at least; especially when the Lord's Supper was dispensed. Of these seasons he frequently speaks. He asks his friend, Marion M'Naught, to help with her prayers on such an occasion, "that being one of the days wherein Christ was

* Let. 286.

‡ M'Crie's Sketches.

† Wodrow's Church Hist. i. 205.

§ Let. 185.

wont to make merry with His friends.”* It was then that with special earnestness he besought the Father to distribute “the great Loaf, Christ, to the children of His family.”

Anwoth church was filled, but not altogether by parishioners.† Many came from great distances; among others, several that were converted, seventeen years before, under John Welsh, at Ayr. These all helped him by their prayers, as did also a goodly number of godly people in the parish itself, who were the fruit of the ministry of his predecessor. Yet over the unfaved he yearned most tenderly. At one time we hear him say, “I would lay my dearest joys in the gap between you and eternal destruction.”‡ At another, “My witness is in heaven, your heaven would be two heavens to me, and your salvation two salvations.” He could appeal to his people, “My day-thoughts and my night-thoughts are of you;” and he could appeal to God, “O my Lord, judge if my ministry be not dear to me; but not so dear by many degrees as Christ my Lord.”§

All classes of people of Anwoth were objects of his care. He maintained a friendly intercourse with people of high rank, and very many of his Letters are addressed to such persons. He seems to have been remarkably blessed to the gentry in the neighbourhood—more far than to the common people. There was at that time some friend of Christ to be found in almost every gentleman’s seat many miles round Anwoth.

* Let. 14.

† The oak pulpit out of which he preached was preserved till a few years ago. The old church (60 feet by 18) is in the shape of a barn, and could hold only 250 sitters. The years 1631 and 1633 are carved on some of the seats,—perhaps the seats of the Gordons, or other heritors. We may add, while speaking of this old edifice, where “the swallows building their nest,” seemed to the exiled pastor “blessed birds,” that the rusty key of that kirk-door is now deposited in the New College, Edinburgh, sent to the museum there as a precious relic several years ago by a friend, through Dr Welsh. The church is now roofless, its walls overgrown with ivy, in which the sparrows build their nests at will.

‡ Let. 217.

§ Let. 217.

But the *herd boys* were not beneath his special attention. He writes of them when at Aberdeen, and exclaims, "Oh if I might but speak to thee, or your herd boys, of my worthy Master."* He had a heart for *the young* of all classes, so that he would say of two children of one of his friends, "I pray for them by name;"† and could thus take time to notice one, "Your daughter desires a Bible and a gown. I hope she shall use the Bible well, which, if she do, the gown is the better bestowed." He lamented over the few that cry "Hosanna" in their youth. "Christ is an *unknown* Christ to young ones; and therefore they seek Him not, because they know Him not."

He dealt with *individual parishioners* so closely and so personally as to be able to appeal to them regarding his faithfulness in this matter. He addresses one of them, Jean M'Millan: "I did what I could to put you within grips of Christ; I told you Christ's testament and latter-will plainly."‡ He so carried them on his heart (like the priest with the twelve tribes on his breastplate), that he could declare to Gordon of Cardoness, "Thoughts of your soul depart not from me in my sleep."§ "My soul was taken up when others were sleeping, how to have Christ betrothed with a bride in that part of the land," viz. Anwoth.|| He so prayed over them and for them, that he fears not to say, "*There* I wrestled with the angel and prevailed. Woods, trees, meadows, and hills, are my witnesses that I drew on a fair match betwixt Christ and Anwoth."¶ It is related that, on first coming to the parish, there was a piece of ground on Mossrobin farm, in the hollow of a hill, where on Sabbath afternoon the people used to play at foot-ball. On one occasion he repaired to that spot, and pointed out their sin, solemnly calling on the objects round to be witnesses against them, especially three large stones** jutting out from the face of the hill, two of which still remain, and are called "*Rutherford's Witnesses*," though the third was wantonly dislodged some years ago. This is the spot

* Let. 163.

† Let. 14.

‡ Let. 132.

§ Let. 180.

|| Let 186.

¶ Let. 277.

** Josh. xxiv. 27.

which is specially taken notice of by Dr Chalmers, in recording a visit to Anwoth and its neighbourhood (Life, vol. iii. 130) :—

“ *Wednesday, August 23, 1826.*—Started at five o’clock; ordered the gig forward on the public road, to meet us after a scramble of about two miles among the hills, in the line of *Rutherford’s Memorials*. Went first to his church; the identical fabric he preached in, and which is still preached in.* The floor is a causeway. There are dates of 1628† and 1633 on some old carved seats. The pulpit is the same, and I sat in it. It is smaller than Kilmany, and very rude and simple. The church-bell is said to have been given him by Lady Kenmure, one of his correspondents in his Letters. It is singularly small for a church, having been the Kenmure house-bell. We then passed to the new church that is building; but I am happy to say the old fabric and Rutherford’s pulpit are to be spared. It is a cruel circumstance that they pulled down (and that only three weeks ago) his dwelling-house, his old manse; which has not been used as a manse for a long time, but was recently occupied. It should have been spared. Some of the masons who were ordered to pull it down refused it, as they would an act of sacrilege, and have been dismissed from their employment. We went and mourned over the rubbish of the foundation. Then ascended a bank, still known by the name of *Rutherford’s Walk*.‡ Then went farther among the hills, to *Rutherford’s Wittenesses*,—so many stones which he called to witness against some of his parishioners who were amusing themselves at the place with some game on the Sunday, and whom he meant to reprove. The whole scene of our morning’s walk was wild, and primitive, and interesting.”

Once, while in Anwoth, his labours were interrupted by a tertian fever which laid him aside for thirteen weeks. Even when well recovered, he could for a long time only preach on the Sabbaths: visiting and catechising were at a stand. This was just before his wife’s death in 1630, and he writes in the midst of it, “Welcome, welcome, cross of Christ, if Christ be with it.” “An afflicted life looks very like the way that leads to the kingdom.” And some years thereafter, when his mother (who came from Nisbet, and resided with him six years after his first wife’s death) was in a dangerous illness, he touchingly informs one of his correspondents, to whom he writes from Anwoth, “*My mother* is weak, and I

* It has not been preached in since the year 1827.

† A mistake for 1631.

‡ It was a walk among trees, close to the manse.

think shall leave me alone ; but I am not alone, because *Christ's Father* is with me."*

And what was his recreation ? The manse of Anwoth had many visits of kind friends, who, in Rutherford's fellowship, felt that saying verified, "They that dwell under his shadow shall return ; they shall revive as the corn."† The righteous compassed him about, because the Lord had dealt bountifully with him. His Letters would be enough of themselves to show that his friendship and counsel were sought by the godly on all sides. One of his visitors was his own brother, George, at Kirkcudbright. This good man was a teacher in that town, who often repaired to Anwoth to take sweet counsel with Samuel ; and then together, they talked of and prayed for their only other brother James, an officer in the Dutch service, who had sympathy with their views, and, in after days, conveyed to Samuel the invitation to become Professor at Utrecht. Visits of those friends who resided near were not unfrequent, such as the Gordons, Viscount Kenmure and his lady, and Marion M'Naught. But at times Anwoth manse was lighted up by the glad visit of unexpected guests. There is a tradition that Archbishop Usher, passing through Galloway, turned aside on a Saturday to enjoy the congenial society of Rutherford. He came, however, in disguise ; and being welcomed as a guest, took his place with the rest of the family when they were catechised, as was usual, that evening. The stranger was asked, "How many commandments are there ?" His reply was "*Eleven.*" The pastor corrected him ; but the stranger maintained his position, quoting our Lord's words, "*A NEW COMMANDMENT I give unto you, that ye love one another.*" They retired to rest, all interested in the stranger. Sabbath morning dawned. Rutherford arose, and repaired, as was his custom, for meditation to a walk that bordered on a thicket,‡ but was startled by hearing the voice of prayer,—prayer too from

* Let. 49.

† Hos. xiv. 7.

‡ The place is still pointed out by tradition, as "Rutherford's Walk." It was close to the old manse, which was pulled down many years ago. It

the heart, and in behalf of the souls of the people that day to assemble. It was no other than the holy Archbishop Usher; and soon they came to an explanation, for Rutherford had begun to suspect he had "entertained angels unawares." With great mutual love they conversed together; and at the request of Rutherford, the Archbishop went up to the pulpit, conducted the usual service of the Presbyterian pastor, and preached on "the New Commandment."

Scarcely less interesting is the record of another unlooked-for meeting. Rutherford had one day left home to go to the neighbouring town of Kirkcudbright, the next day being a day of humiliation in that place. Having no doubt spent some time with his like-minded brother, he turned his steps to the house of another friend, Provost Fullerton, whose wife was Marion M'Naught. While sitting with them in friendly converse, a knock at the door was heard, and then a step on the threshold. It was worthy Mr Blair, who, on his way from London to Port Patrick, had fought out some of his godly friends, that with them he might be refreshed ere he returned to Ireland. He told them, when seated, that "he had a desire to visit both Mr Rutherford at Anwoth, and Marion M'Naught at Kirkcudbright; but not knowing how to accomplish both, had prayed for direction at the parting of the road, and laid the bridle on the horse's neck. The horse took the way to Kirkcudbright, and there he found both the friends he so longed to see." It was a joyful and refreshing meeting on all sides. Wodrow tells* another incident that, in part, bears some resemblance to this. Rutherford had been reasoning at Stirling with the Marquis of Argyle, and had set out homeward. But his horse was very troublesome, and he was feeling in his mind that he should have been more urgent and plain! He returned, and dealt freely this time. And now his horse went on pleasantly all the way.

stood about a quarter of a mile from the church, and bore the name, "*Bushy Bield*," or *Bush o' Bield*, i.e., the bush of shelter. A sketch of it, as it was, is given in *Murray's Life of Rutherford*.

* *Analecta*, vol. ii., p. 161.

In 1634 he attended the remarkable death-bed of Lord Kenmure, a narrative of which he published fifteen years after, in "The Last and Heavenly Speeches and Glorious Departure of John Viscount Kenmure." The inroads of Episcopacy were at this time threatening to disquiet Anwoth. His own domestic afflictions were still affecting him; for he writes that same year, in referring to his wife's death many years before, "which wound is not yet fully healed and cured." About that time, too, there was a proposal (never carried into effect) to call him to Cramond, near Edinburgh,* and another to get him settled at Kirkcudbright.

Meanwhile he persevered in study as well as in labours, and with no common success. He had a metaphysical turn, as well as great readiness in using the accumulated learning of other days. It might be instructive to inquire why it is that wherever godliness is healthy and progressive, we almost invariably find learning in the Church of Christ attendant on it; while, on the other hand, neglect of study is attended sooner or later by decay of vital godliness. Not that all are learned in such times; but there is always an element of the kind in the circle of those whom the Lord is using. The energy called forth by the knowledge of God in the soul leads on to the study of whatever is likely to be useful in the defence or propagation of the truth; whereas, on the other hand, when decay is at work and lifelessness prevailing, sloth and ease creep in, and theological learning is slighted as uninteresting and dry. With Samuel Rutherford and his contemporaries we find learning side by side with vital, and singularly deep, godliness. Gillespie, Henderson, Blair, Dickson, and others, are well-known examples. Nor less distinguished was Rutherford, who was led by circumstances in 1636 to publish his elaborate defence of grace against the Arminians, in Latin. Its title is, "*Exercitationes de Gratia*." So highly was it esteemed at Amsterdam, where it was published, that a second edition was printed that very year; and repeated invitations

* Let. 43. His friend and neighbour Mr Dalglish, minister of Kirkdale and Kirkmabreck, was translated to Cramond in 1639.

were address'd soon after to the author to come to Holland, and occupy one or other of their Divinity chairs. Soon after, the contest for *Christ's kingly office* became increasingly earnest and keen. To Rutherford it appeared no small matter. "I could wish many pounds added to my cross to know that by my suffering Christ was set forward in His *kingly office* in this land."* July 27, 1636, was a day that put his principles to the test. He was called before the High Commission Court, because of non-conformity to the acts of Episcopacy, and because of his work against the Arminians. The Court was presided over by Sydserff, Bishop of Galloway, and was held at Wigton, about ten miles from Anwoth, across the Bay. He appeared in person there, and defended himself. The issue could not be doubtful, though Lord Lorn made every exertion in his behalf. He was deprived of his ministerial office, which he had exercised at Anwoth for a period of nine years, and banished to Aberdeen. The next day (writing at evening on the subject), he tells of his sentence, and calls it, "The honour that I have prayed for these sixteen years." He made up his mind to leave Anwoth at once, observing, with a submissiveness which we might wonder at in the author of *Lex Rex*, "I purpose to obey the king, who has power over my body." His only alarm was lest this separation from his flock might be a chastisement on him from the Lord, "because I have not been so faithful in the end as I was in the two first years of my ministry, when sleep departed from mine eyes through care for Christ's lambs."†

On leaving Anwoth he directed his steps by Irvine, spending a night there with his beloved friend David Dickson. What a night that must have been ! To hear these two in solemn converse ! The one could not perhaps handle the harp so well as the other ; for David Dickson could express his soul's weary longings and its consoling hopes in such strains as that which has made his name familiar in Scotland, "*O mother dear Jerusalem ;*" but Rutherford, nevertheless, had so much of poetry and sublime enthusiasm in his

* Let. 115. See also Let. 54.

† Let. 109.

foul, that any poet could sympathise with him to the full. Many of his letters "from *Christ's palace* in Aberdeen" are really strains of true poetry. What else is such an effusion as this, when, rising on eagles' wings, he exclaims, "A land that has more than four summers in the year! What a singing life is there! There is not a dumb bird in all that large field, but all sing and breathe out heaven, joy, glory, dominion, to the High Prince of that new-found land. And verily the land is sweeter that He is the glory of that land."* "O how sweet to be wholly Christ's, and wholly in Christ; to dwell in Immanuel's high and blessed land, and live in that sweetest air, where no wind bloweth but the breathings of the Holy Ghost, no sea nor floods flow but the pure water of life that floweth from under the throne and from the Lamb, no planting, but the tree of life that yieldeth twelve manner of fruits every month! What do we here but sin and suffer? O when shall the night be gone, the shadows flee away, and the morning of the long, long day, without cloud or night, dawn? The Spirit and the bride say, 'Come!' O when shall the Lamb's wife be ready, and the Bridegroom say, Come?"† Whoever compares such breathings with David Dickson's hymn, will see how congenial were their feelings and their hopes, and even their mode of expressing what they felt and hoped, though the one used prose and the other tried more memorable verse.

We follow Rutherford to Aberdeen, the capital of the North, whither he was accompanied by a deputation of his affectionate parishioners from Anwoth, in whose company he would forget the length and tediousness of the way. He arrived here in September 1636. This town was at that time the stronghold of Episcopacy and Arminianism, and in it the state of religion was very low. "It consisted of Papists, and men of Gallio's naughty faith."‡ The

* Let. 323.

† Let. 334.

‡ Let. 76. Dr James Sibbald, said to have been a man of great learning, was minister in one of the churches of New Aberdeen. Rutherford attended his preaching, and finding that he taught Arminianism, testified against him.

clergy and doctors took the opportunity of Rutherford's arrival to commence a series of attacks on the special doctrines of grace which he held. But in disputation he foiled them; and when many began to feel drawn to him in consequence of his earnest dealings and private exhortations, there was a proposal made to remove him from the town. "So cold," writes he, "is northern love! But (added he) *Christ and I will bear it*;"* deeply feeling his union to Him who said to Saul, "Why persecutest thou *Me*?" Often, on the streets,† he was pointed out as "the *Banished Minister*;" and hearing of this, he remarked, "I am not ashamed of my garland." He had visitors from Orkney, and from Caithness, to the great annoyance of his persecutors.‡ Some blamed him for not being "*prudent enough*," as we have seen men ready to do in similar cases in our own day; but he replies, "*It is ordinary that that should be part of the cross of those who suffer for Him*." Still he enjoyed, in his solitude, occasional intercourse with some of the godly ones, among whom were Lady Pittligo, Lady Burnet of Largs, Andrew Cant, and James Martin. His deepest affliction was separation from his flock at Anwoth. Nothing can exceed his tender sorrow over this flock.§

It was a saying of his own, "Gold may be gold, and bear the king's stamp upon it, when it is trampled upon by men." And this was true of himself. But he came out of his trial not only unscorched, but, as his many letters from Aberdeen show, greatly advanced in every grace. The Latin lines prefixed to the early editions of these Letters scarcely exaggerate when they sing,—

"Quod Chebar et Patmos divinis vatibus olim;
Huic fuerant sancto claustra Abredæa viro."

He was, during part of two years, closely confined to that town, though not in prison; but in 1638 public events had taken

* Let. 117.

† The impression of some readers might be that he was *in prison*. But he never was so. He was *in exile*; but the whole town was his prison. He was, in this respect, like Shimei confined to Jerusalem.

‡ Let. 161.

§ Let. 181.

another turn. The Lord had stirred up the spirit of the people of Scotland, and the Covenant was again triumphant in the land. Rutherford hastened back to Anwoth. During his absence, "For six quarters of a year," say his parishioners, "no sound of the Word of God was heard in our kirk." The swallows had made their nests there undisturbed for two summers.

His Letters do not refer to the proceedings of the Glasgow Assembly of 1638. It is well known, however, that he was no mere indifferent spectator to what then took place, but was present, and was member of several committees which at that time sat on the affairs of the Church. Presbytery being fully restored by that Assembly, it was thought right that one so gifted should be removed to a more important sphere. He was sent by the Church to several districts to promote the cause of Reformation and the Covenant: and at length, in spite of his reluctance, arising chiefly from love to his flock,—his rural flock at Anwoth,—he was constrained to yield to the united opinion of his brethren, and removed to the Professor's Chair in St Andrews in 1639, and made Principal of the New College. He bargained to be allowed to preach regularly every Sabbath in his new sphere; for he could not endure silence when he might speak a word for his Lord. He seems to have preached also, as occasion offered, in the parishes around, especially at Scoonie, in which the village of Leven stands.*

His hands were necessarily filled with work in his new sphere;

* "1651, July 13.—The comm. was given at Scoonie. Mr Alex. Moncrieff, m. there, did preach the Preparation Sermon, and on Monday morning Mr Sa. Rutherford did preach; his text at both occasions was Luke vii. 36 till 39 v. At this time was present, besides Mr Sa. Rutherford, Mr Ja. Guthrie, and Mr David Bennet, Mr Ephraim Melvin, and Mr William Oliphant, m. in Dumfermlin. Thither did resort many strangers, so that the throng was great. Mr Ephraim, and Mr D. Bennet, both did sit within the pulpit while the minister had his sermon." "1654, Jan. 4.—Being Saturday, there was a Preparation Sermon for a Thanksgiving preached at Scoonie in Fyfe, for the continuance of the Gospel in the land, and for the spreading of it in some places of the Highlands in Scotland, where in some families two, and

yet still he relaxed nothing of his diligence in study. Nor did he lack anything of former blessing. It was here the English merchant heard him preach so affectingly on the loveliness of Christ; while such was his success as a Professor, that "the University became a Lebanon out of which were taken cedars for building the house of God throughout the land."

In the year 1640, he married his second wife, Jean M'Math, "a woman," says one, "of such worth, that I never knew any among men exceed him, nor any among women exceed her. He who heard either of them pray or speak, might have learnt to bemoan his own ignorance. Oh how many times I have been convinced, by observing them, of the evil of unseriousness unto God, and unfavourableness in discourse." They had seven children; but only one survived the father, a little daughter, Agnes, who does not seem to have been a comfort to her godly mother.

In July 1643, the Westminster Assembly began to sit; and to it he was sent up as one of the Commissioners from the Church of Scotland. A sketch of a "*Shorter Catechism*" exists in MS., in the library of the Edinburgh University, in *Rutherford's handwriting*, very much resembling the Catechism as it now stands, from which it has been inferred that he had the principal hand in drawing it up for the Assembly. He continued four years attending the sittings of this famous synod, and was of much use in their deliberations. So prominent a part did he take, that the great Milton has singled him out for attack in his lines, "On the new forcers of

in some families one, began to call on God by prayer. Mr Samuel Rutherford, m. in St Andrews, preached on Saturday; his text, *Isai. xlix. 9, 10, 11, 12.* On the Sabbath, Mr Alex. Moncrieff, m., then preached; his lecture, *1 Thess. i. ch.*; his text, *Coloss. i. 27.* In the afternoon of the Sabbath, Mr Samuel preached again upon his forementioned text. On Monday morning, Mr Samuel had a Lecture on *Psal. lxxxviii.* He did read the whole Psalm Observe, that on Saturday Mr Samuel had this expression in his prayer after sermon, desiring that the Lord would rebuke Presbyteries and others that had taken the keys and the power in their hands, and kepted out, and would suffer none to enter (meaning in the ministry) but such as said as they said."—*Lamont's Diary.*

conscience, under the Long Parliament." Milton knew him only as an opponent of his sectarian and Independent principles, and so could scorn measures proposed by "Mere A. S. and Rutherford." But had he known the soul of the man, would not even Milton have found a sublimity of thought and feeling in his adversary, that at times approached his own lofty poetry? How interesting, in any point of view, to find the devoted pastor of Anwoth, on the streets of London, crossing the path of England's greatest poet.

During his residence in London he was tried with many afflictions. Several of his family died; and his own health began to give way, so that he and his brother minister, Mr G. Gillespie, visited Epsom to drink the waters. Yet such was the amazing spirit of the man, under a sense of duty, that amid the trials and bustle of that time he wrote "*The Due Right of Presbyteries*," "*Lex Rex*," i.e. *The Law, the King*, and "*Trial and Triumph of Faith*." Nor was he soured by controversy. In the preface to one of his controversial works, he discovers his large-hearted charity and manly impartiality in regard to what he saw in these parts. He writes: "I judge that in England the Lord hath many names, and a fair company, that shall stand at the side of Christ when He shall render up the kingdom to the Father; and that in that renowned nation there be men of all ranks, wise, valorous, generous, noble, heroic, faithful, religious, gracious, learned."*

Returning home to St Andrews, he resumed his labours both in the college and in the pulpit with all his former zeal. He declined two invitations to the professorship in Holland; one from Harderwyck in 1648, the other from Utrecht in 1651; though the former offered the chair both of Divinity and of Hebrew. He joined the Protesters in determinedly opposing the proceedings of the Commission of Assembly, who had censured such as protested against the admission to power of persons in the class of malignants. His friend David Dickson keenly opposed him, and Mr Blair also,

* Preface to Survey of the Spiritual Antichrist.

though less violently.* It was this controversy that made John Livingstone say, in a letter to Blair, "Your and Mr D. Dickson's accession to these resolutions is the saddest thing I have seen in my time. My wife and I have had more bitterness in this respect, these several months, than ever we had since we knew what bitterness meant." Rutherford wrote too violently on this matter. Some say he was naturally hot and fiery; but at this time all parties were greatly excited. Still he did not lose his brotherly love,—the same brotherly love that led him so fervently to embrace Archbishop Usher as a fellow-believer. We may get a lesson for our times from his remarks on occasion of these bitter controversies. "It is hard when faints rejoice in the sufferings of faints, and redeemed ones hurt, and go nigh to hate, redeemed ones. For contempt of the communion of faints, we have need of new-born crosses, scarce ever heard of before.—Our star-light hideth us from ourselves, and hideth us from one another, and Christ from us all." And then he subjoins (and is he not borne out by the words of the Lord in John xvii. 22?): "A doubt it is if we shall have fully one heart till we shall enjoy one heaven." The state of things lay heavy on his mind: "I am broken and wafted by the wrath that is upon this land."

It was in 1651 that he published his work "*De Divinâ Providentiâ*," a work in which he assailed Jesuits, Socinians, and Arminians. Richard Baxter (tinged as he was with the Arminian theology), in referring to this treatise, remarked (says Wodrow), that "His *Letters* were the best piece, and this work the worst, he had ever read." Of course, this was the language of controversy, for the book is one of great ability. It was this work, indeed, that drew forth several invitations from foreign Universities. The ten years that followed were times of much distraction, being the times of Cromwell and the Commonwealth, as well as of the Protesters and Resolutioners.

* When the Lord's Supper was to be dispensed, Blair in vain used every argument to induce Rutherford to take part with himself and Mr Wood in serving tables; and being forced to do it alone, began thus: "We must have water in our wine while here. O to be above, where there will be no mistakes!" —(Wodrow's *Anal.*)

One incident, however, in 1651, is worthy of notice. "In that year the Scottish nation resolved to crown Charles II., as lawful king, at Scone; and when the young king was at St Andrews, in prospect of that event, he visited the colleges. It fell to Rutherford to deliver, on that occasion, an oration in Latin before His Majesty, on a subject which he could handle well, both as a patriot and a Christian, "*The Duty of Kings.*"

Milton sings,—

—————"God doth not need
Either man's work, or His own gifts; His state
Is kingly; thousands at His bidding speed,
And post o'er land and ocean without rest:
They also serve who only stand and wait."

The days were evil, and Rutherford was longing now for such quiet service. He sometimes refers to this desire; he wishes for a harbour in his latter days; only (adds he), "failing is serving"—and he did delight in serving his Lord to the last. His friend M'Ward, in an advertisement prefixed to the earlier editions of the "Letters," bitterly laments the loss of a Commentary on Isaiah, on which "this true Zechariah, who had understanding in the visions of God,"* employed his leisure time during the closing years of his life.† "His heart travailed more," says he, "in birth of this piece than ever I knew him of any; neither was there ever anything he put his hand to that would have so powerfully persuaded this panter after the enjoyment of his Master's company, to have had his heaven and the immediate fruition of God suspended for a season, as the eager desire he had to finish this work before he finished his course." But all these papers were carried off, and never recovered. So true is it, that of the seed we sow, we "know not whether shall prosper, either this or that" (Eccles. xi. 6).

When Charles II. was fully restored, and had begun to adopt arbitrary measures, Rutherford's work, "*Lex Rex*," was taken

* 2 Chron. xxvi. 5.

† He planned a Commentary on Hosea in 1637, but the design was not executed. Reference is made to this in Let. 110.

notice of by the Government ; for, reasonable as are its principles in defence of the liberty of subjects, its spirit of freedom was intolerable to rulers, who were, step by step, advancing to acts of cruelty and death. Indeed, it was so hateful to them, that they burnt it, in 1661, first at Edinburgh, by the hands of the hangman ; and then, some days after, by the hands of the infamous Sharpe, under the windows of its author's College in St Andrews. He was next deposed from all his offices ; and, last of all, was summoned to answer at next Parliament a charge of high treason. But the citation came too late. He was already on his death-bed, and on hearing of it, calmly remarked, that he had got another summons before a superior Judge and judicatory, and sent the message, "I behove to answer my first summons ; and ere your day arrive, I will be where few kings and great folks come."

We have no account of the nature of his last sickness, except that it was a disease that left him lingering some time. All that is told us of his death-bed is characteristic of the man. At one time he spoke much of the white stone and the new name. Some days before his death, after a fainting fit, he said, "Now I feel, I believe, I enjoy, I rejoice." And turning to Mr Blair, "I feed on manna : I have angels' food. My eyes shall see my Redeemer. I know that He shall stand on earth at the latter day, and I shall be caught up in the clouds to meet Him in the air."* When asked, "What think ye now of Christ?" he replied, "I shall live and adore Him. Glory, glory to my Creator and Redeemer for ever. Glory shineth in Immanuel's land." The same afternoon he said, "I shall sleep in Christ ; and when I awake, I shall be satisfied with His likeness. O for arms to embrace Him !" Then he cried aloud, "O for a well-tuned harp !" This last expression he used more than once, as if already stretching out his hand to get his golden harp, and join the redeemed in their new song. He also said on another occasion, "I hear Him saying to me, 'Come up hither.'" His little daughter Agnes, only eleven years of age, stood by his bed-side ;

* See Fleming's *Fulfilling of the Scripture*.

he looked on her, and said, "I have left her upon the Lord." Well might the man say so, who could so fully testify of his portion in the Lord, as a goodly heritage. To four of his brethren, who came to see him, he said, "My Lord and Master is chief of ten thousands of thousands. None is comparable to Him, in heaven or in earth. Dear brethren, do all for *Him*. Pray for *Christ*. Preach for *Christ*. Do all for *Christ*; beware of men-pleasing. The Chief Shepherd will shortly appear." He spoke as if he knew the hour of his departure; not perhaps as Paul (2 Tim. iv. 6) or Peter (2 Peter i. 14), yet still in a manner that seems to indicate that the Lord draws very near His servants in that hour, and gives glimpses of what He is doing. On the last day of his life, in the afternoon, he said, "This night will close the door, and fasten my anchor within the veil, and I shall go away in a sleep by five o'clock in the morning." And so it was. He entered Immanuel's land at that very hour, and is now (as himself would have said) "sleeping in the bosom of the Almighty," till the Lord come.

We may add his latest words. "There is nothing now between me and the Resurrection but 'This day thou shalt be with Me in paradise.'" He interrupted one speaking in praise of his painfulness in the ministry, "I disclaim all. The port I would be in at is redemption and forgiveness of sin through His blood." Two of his biographers record that his last words were, "Glory, glory dwelleth in Immanuel's land!" as if he had caught a glimpse of its mountain-tops.

It was at St Andrews he died, on 20th March 1661, and there he was buried. Had he lived a few weeks, his might have been the cruel death endured by his friend James Guthrie, whom he had encouraged, by his letters, in steadfastness to the end. The sentence which the Parliament passed, when told that he was dying, did him no dishonour. When they had voted that he should not die in the College, Lord Burleigh rose and said, "Ye cannot vote him out of heaven."

His death was lamented throughout the land; and to this day few names are so well known and honoured. So great was the reverence which some of the godly had for this man of God, that they requested to be buried where his body was laid. This was

Thomas Halyburton's dying request. An old man in the parish of Crailing (in which Nisbet, his birth-place, is situated) remembers the veneration entertained for him by the great-grandfather of the present Marquis of Lothian. This good Marquis used to lift his hat, as often as he passed the spot where stood the cottage in which Samuel Rutherford was born.

If ever there was any portrait of him, it is not now known. We are most familiar with the likeness of his soul. There is one expressive line in the epitaph on his tombstone, in the churchyard of the Chapel of St Regulus :—

“What tongue, what pen, or skill of men,
Can famous Rutherford commend !
His learning justly raised his fame,
True greatness did adorn his name.
He did converse with things above,
Acquainted with Immanuel's love.”

A monument to his memory was erected in 1842, by subscription, on the Boreland Hill, in the parish of Anwoth. It is 60 feet in height, and thus, seen all around, it seems to remind the inhabitants of that region how God once visited His people there.

His “LETTERS” have long been famous among the godly. The present edition of them has several things to recommend it. 1. The letters are chronologically arranged. 2. They have biographical notices prefixed to a large number of them. Most of these are from the pen of the Rev. James Anderson. The present editor has added, here and there, topographical notes that seemed to have some interest, most of them gleaned on the spot. The explanatory notes in the edition by the Rev. C. Thomson, 1836, have often been consulted, with much advantage. 3. There are contents prefixed to each letter, describing generally what are the main subjects of each. 4. *There are some new letters inserted in this collection ; and there is a fac-simile of an unpublished letter directed to the Provost of Edinburgh*, at the time when there was an attempt made to call Rutherford to that city. The letter, which is preserved in the

Records of the Edinburgh Town Council, entreats them to drop the matter. It is written in a very small hand, as was usual with him; and the seal on it has the armorial bearing of the Rutherford family.

If it be asked how it came about that these letters should have been at first printed in an order entirely unchronological, the explanation is simple: The first edition appeared in 1664, and in it there were only two hundred and eighty-four of his letters gathered and published; but many being edified thereby, an edition soon appeared with sixty-eight more letters appended. All these seem to have been printed very much in the order in which they came to hand, and the additional sixty-eight, more especially, disturbed all arrangement. The collector was Mr M'Ward, who, as a student, being much beloved by Rutherford, went to the Westminster Assembly with him as his amanuensis or secretary. He was afterwards successor to Andrew Gray in Glasgow, and finally minister in Rotterdam. He gave them to the public with an enthusiastic recommendation, under the title; "*Joshua Redivivus*"; published for the use of all the people of God, but more particularly for those who are now, or afterwards may be, put to suffering for Christ and His cause; by a well-wisher to the work and people of God. John xvi. 2; 2 Thessal. i. 6." The edition was in duodecimo, and was printed at *Rotterdam*. And we may here notice, that the Letters were not only first published in Holland, but also, in 1674, they appeared in a Dutch translation at Flushing.

It will be noticed, in reading the letters as they stand chronologically, that at times the pen of the ready writer ran on with amazing rapidity. He has written many in one day, when his heart was overflowing. It was easy to write when the Lord was pouring on him the unction that teacheth all things. He would have written still more, but he had heard that people looked up to him and overpraised his letters. During his confinement at Aberdeen, he wrote about 220 of these letters.

There are a few distasteful expressions in these epistolary effusions, the sparks of a fancy that sought to appropriate everything to spiritual purposes; but as to extravagance in the thoughts conveyed, there is

none. Dr Love says, "The haughty contempt of that book which is in the heart of many, will be ground for condemnation when the Lord cometh to make inquisition after such things" (Let. xiv.). The extravagance in sentiment alleged against them by some, is just that of Paul, when he spoke of knowing "the height and depth, length and breadth," of the love of Christ; or that of Solomon, when the Holy Ghost inspired him to write "The Song of Songs." Rather would we say of these letters, what Livingstone in a letter says of John Welsh's dying words, "O for a sweet fill of this fanatic humour!" In modern days, Richard Cecil has said of Rutherford, "He is one of my classics; he is a real original;" and in older times, Richard Baxter, some of whose theological leanings might have prejudiced him, if anything could, said of his letters, "Hold off the Bible, such a book the world never saw." They were long ago translated into Dutch, and of late years they have been translated into German. Both in these, and in his other writings, we see sufficient proof that had he cultivated literature as a pursuit, he might have stood high in the admiration of men.*

His correspondents were chiefly persons residing either in *Galloway*, where Anwoth was, or in *Ayrshire*; for these two counties at that time were rich in godly men of some standing.

His pen suggests often, by a few strokes, very much that is profound and impressive. There is something not easily forgotten in the words used to express the Church's indestructibleness when he says, "The bush has been burning these five thousand years, and *no man yet saw the ashes of that fire.*" How much

* Even in his controversial works, sparks of the same poetic fire fly out when opportunity occurs. In his Treatise, "De Divina Providentia," the following paragraph occurs, extolling the glory of Godhead wisdom. "Comparentur cum illa increata sapientia Dei Patris umbratiles scintillulæ creatæ gloriolæ quotquot nominis celebritate inclaruerunt. Delirat *Plato*. Mentitur *Aristoteles*. Cicero balbutit, hæsitat, nescit Latine loqui. *Demosthenes* mutus et elinguis obtupescit; virtutis viam ignorat *Seneca*; nihil canit *Homerus*; male canit *Virgilius*! Accedant ad Christum qui virtutis gloria fulgent! *Aristides* virtutem mentitur. *Fabius* cespitat, a via iustitiæ deviat. *Socrates* ne hoc quidem scit, se nihil scire. *Cato* levis et futilis est; *Solon* est mundi et vo-

truth is conveyed in that saying, "Losses for Christ are but goods given out in bank in Christ's hand." There is an ingenious use of Scripture that often delights the reader; as when he speaks of "The corn on the house-tops that never got the husbandman's prayer," or of "Him that counteth the basons and knives of His house (Ezra i. 9, 10), and bringeth them back safe to His second temple." But the more general topics of his letters are worthy of attentive consideration.

These Letters will ever be precious to—

1. *All who are sensible of their own, and the Church's, decay and corruptions.* The wound and the cure are therein so fully opened out: self is exposed, even *spiritual self*. He will tell you, "There is as much need to watch over grace, as to watch over sin." He will show you God in Christ, to fill up the place usurped by self. The subtleties of sin, idols, snares, temptations, self-deceptions, are dragged into view from time to time. And what is better still, the cords of Christ are twined round the roots of these bitter plants, that they may be plucked up.

Nor is it otherwise in regard to corruption in public, and in the Church. We do not mean merely the open corruption of error, but also the secret "grey hairs" of decay. Hear him cry, "*There is universal deadness on all that fear God. O where are the sometime quickening breathings and influences from heaven that have refreshed His hidden ones!*" And then he laments, in the name of the faints, "We are

luptatum servus et mancipium, non legislator. *Pythagoras* nec sophos, nec philosophus est. *Bias* nec mundi nec inanis gloriæ contemptor. *Alexander Macedo* ignavus est," &c. Another work bears this title: "*Exercitationes Apologeticæ pro Divinâ Gratiâ*," studio et industria Samuelis Rutherfordis, Anawetensis, in Gallovidiâ, Scotiæ provinciâ, Pastoris." The preface, or dedication, to *Gordon of Kenmure*, is very characteristic, ending thus: "Non enim ignoras in hac valle miseriarum minime sistendum, neque tentorium figendum; ad æternitatem ipsam (quod vere magnum nomen est & ineffabile) te vocari; crescere iter, decrescere diem, omnia alia aliena, tempus tantum nostrum esse, si modo nostrum est." In this preface he calls himself "*Pastor Anawetensis*," the old spelling of Anwoth being *Anaweth*.

half-satisfied with our witheredness; nor have we as much of his strain who doth eight times breathe out that fruit (Psa. cxix.), *Quicken me!* “We live far from the well, and complain but dryly of our dryness.”

2. *All who delight in the Surety's imputed righteousness.* If thoroughly aware of the body of sin in ourselves, we cannot but feel that we need a *person* in our stead,—the person of the God-man in the room of our guilty person. “To us a Son is given;” not salvation only, but a Saviour. “He gave *Himself* for us.”

These Letters are ever leading us to the Surety and His righteousness. The eye never gets time to rest long on anything apart from Him and His righteousness. We are shown the deluge-waters undried up, in order to lead us into the ark again: “I had fainted, had not want and penury chased me to the storehouse of all.”

3. *All who rejoice in the Gospel of free grace.* Lord Kenmure having said to him, “Sin causeth me to be jealous of His love to such a man as I have been;” he replied, “Be jealous of yourself, my lord, but not of Jesus Christ.” In his “Trial and Triumph of Faith,” he remarks, “As holy walking is a duty coming from us, it is no ground of true peace. Believers often seek in themselves what they should seek in Christ.” It is to the like effect he says in one of his letters, “Your heart is not the compass that Christ faileth by,”—turning away his friend from looking inward, to look upon the heart of Jesus. And this is his meaning, when he thus lays the whole burden of salvation on the Lord, and leaves nothing for us but acceptance; “Take ease to thyself, and let Him bear all.”* Then, pointing us to the risen Saviour as our pledge of complete redemption, “Faith may dance, because Christ singeth;”† “Faith *apprehendeth pardon*, but never payeth a penny for it.”‡ On his death-bed he said to his friends, “I disclaim all that ever God made me will or do, and I look upon it as defiled and imperfect.” And so in his letters he will admit of no addition, or intermixture

* Let. 182.

† Let. 183.

‡ Let. 182.

of other things; "The Gospel is like a small hair that hath no breadth, and will not cleave in two."* He exhorts to assurance as being the way to be humbled very low before God: "Complaining is but a humble backbiting and traducing of Christ's new work in the soul." "Make meikle of assurance, for it keepeth your anchor fixed."† He warns us, in his "Trial and Triumph of Faith," "not to be too desirous of keen awakenings to chase us to Christ. Let Christ tutor me as He thinketh good. He has seven eyes: I have but one, and that too dim." In a similar strain he writes:—"The law shall never be my doomster, by Christ's grace; I shall find a sure enough doom in the Gospel to humble and cast me down. *There cannot be a more humble soul than a believer. It is no pride in a drowning man to catch hold of a rock.*"‡ How much truth there is here! Naaman never was humble in any degree, until he felt himself *completely healed* of his scaly leprosy; but truly he was humbled and humble then. And what one word is there that suggests so many humbling thoughts as that word "*grace?*"

4. *All who seek to grow in holiness.* The Holy Ghost delights to show us the glorious Godhead, in the face of Jesus. And this is a very frequent theme in these letters. "Take Christ for sanctification, as well as justification," is often his theme. And in him we see a man who seems to have sought for *holiness* as unceasingly and as eagerly as other men seek for *pardon and peace*. In him "*Holiness to the Lord*" seems written on every affection of the heart, and on every fresh-springing thought.

Fellowship with the living God is a distinguishing feature in the holiness given by the Holy Ghost; we get "access by one Spirit to the Father through Him."§ Rutherford could sometimes say, "I have been so near Him that I have said, 'I take instruments that this is the Lord.'"|| And he could from experience declare, "I dare avouch, the saints know not the length and largeness of the sweet Earnest, and of the sweet green sheaves before the harvest,

* Let. 279. † Let. 288. ‡ Let. 230. § Ephes. ii. 18. || Let. 99.

that might be had on this side of the water, *if we would take more pains.*”* “I am every way in your case, as hard-hearted and dead as any man, but yet I speak to Christ through my sleep.”† All this is from the pen of a man who was a metaphysician, a controversialist, a leader in the Church, and learned in ancient and scholastic lore. Why are there not such gracious, as well as great men now?

5. *All afflicted persons.* Here he had the very “tongue of the learned, to speak a word in season to him that was weary.” And with what tender sympathy does he speak, leading the mourner so gently to the heart of Jesus! He knew the heart of a stranger, for he had been a stranger. “Let no man after me slander Christ for his cross.”‡ Yes, says he, His most loved are often His most tried: “The lintel-stone and pillars of His New Jerusalem suffer more knocks of God’s hammer and tools than the common side-wall stones.”§ Even as to reproach and calumny, he declares, “I love Christ’s worst reproaches.”

It was to Hugh M’Kail, uncle of the youthful martyr, that he penned the words, “Some have written me that I am possibly too joyful of the cross; but my joy overleapeth the cross,—it is bounded and terminated on Christ.”§ And there it was he found a well of comfort never dry.

6. *All who love the Person of Christ.* We have too often been satisfied with speculative truth and abstract doctrine. On the one hand, the orthodox have too often rested in the statements of our Catechisms and Confessions; and, on the other, the “election-doubters” (as Bunyan would have called them) have pressed their favourite dogma, that Christ died for all men, as if mere assent to a proposition could save the soul. Rutherford places the truth before us in a more accurate, and also more savoury way, full of life and warmth. The Person of Him who gave Himself for His Church is held up in all its attractiveness. With him, it is ever the Person as

* Let. 202. † Let. 286. ‡ Let. 107. § Let. 102. || Let. 206.

much as the work done; or rather, never the one apart from the other. Like Paul, he would fain know *Him*, as well as the power of His resurrection.*

Once, when Lord Kenmure asked him, "What will Christ be like when He cometh?" his reply was, "*All lovely.*" And this is everywhere the favourite theme with him. At times he tells of His love. "His love furroundeth and furchargeth me."† "If His love was not in heaven, I should be unwilling to go thither."‡ Often he checks his pen to tell of *Christ Himself*: "Welcome, welcome, fweet, fweet crofs of Christ;"—then correcting his language,— "Welcome, fair, lovely, *royal King, with Thine own crofs.*"§ "Oh if I could doat as much upon *Himself* as I do upon His love."|| "I fear I make more of His love than of *Himself.*"¶ How startling, yet how true, is this remark, "I see that in communion with Christ we may make more gods than one,"**—meaning, that we may be tempted to make the enjoyment itself our god. It was his habitual aim to pass through privileges, joys, even fellowship, to God Himself: "I have casten this work upon Christ, to get me *Himself.*"†† "I would be farther in upon Christ than at His joys; in, where love and mercy lodgeth; beside His heart."‡‡ "He who sitteth on the throne is His lone a sufficient heaven."§§ "Sure I am He is the far best half of heaven."|||

In a word, such was his soul's view of the living Person, that he writes, "Holiness is not *Christ*, nor the blossoms and flowers of the tree of life, nor the tree itself."¶¶ He had found out the true fountain-head, and would direct all Zion's travellers thither. And let a man try this;—let the Holy Spirit lead a man to this *Person*;—and surely his experience will be, "None ever came up dry from David's well."

7. *All who love that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God our Saviour.* The more we love the Person of Christ, the

* Phil. iii. 10.

|| Let. 160.

‡‡ Let. 286.

† Let. 104.

¶¶ Let. 179.

§§ Let. 352.

‡ Let. 104.

** Let. 168.

||| Let. 279.

§ Let. 61.

†† Let. 187.

¶¶ Let. 336.

more ought we to love His appearing; and the more we cherish both feelings, the holier shall we become. Rutherford abounds in aspirations for that day; he is one who “looks for and hastens unto the coming of the Day of God!” While in exile at Aberdeen in 1637, he writes, “O when will we meet! O how long is it to the dawning of the marriage day! O sweet Jesus, take wide steps! O my Lord, come over mountains at one stride! O my Beloved, flee as a roe or young hart upon the mountains of separation.” Now and then he utters the expression of an intense desire for the restoration of Israel to their Lord, and the fulness of the Gentiles; but far oftener his desires go forth to his Lord Himself. “O fairest among the sons of men, why stayest Thou so long away? O heavens, move fast! O time, run, run, and hasten the marriage day!” To Lady Kenmure his words are, “The Lord hath told you what you should be doing till He come. ‘Wait and hasten,’ saith Peter, ‘for the coming of the Lord.’ Sigh and long for the dawning of that morning, and the breaking of that day, of the coming of the Son of Man, when the shadows shall flee away. Wait with the wearied night-watch for the breaking of the eastern sky.” Those saints who feel most keenly the world’s enmity, and the Church’s imperfection, are those who will most fervently love their Lord’s appearing. It was thus with Daniel on the banks of Ulai, and with John in Patmos; and Samuel Rutherford’s most intense aspirations for that day are breathed out in Aberdeen.

His description of himself on one occasion is,—“A man often borne down and hungry, and waiting for the marriage supper of the Lamb.”* He is now gone to the “mountain of myrrh and the hill of frankincense;” and there he no doubt still wonders at the still unopened, unsearchable treasures of Christ. But O for his insatiable desires Christward! O for ten such men in Scotland to stand in the gap!—men who all day long find nothing but Christ to rest in, whose very sleep is a pursuing after Christ in dreams, and who intensely desire to “awake with His likeness.”

* Let. 63.

LIST OF HIS WORKS.

1. *Exercitationes Apologeticæ pro Divina Gratia.* Amstelodami, 12mo, 1636.
Franekeræ, 1651.
2. *A Peaceable and Temperate Plea for Paul's Presbytery in Scotland.* London, 4to, 1642.
3. *A Sermon before the House of Commons, on Daniel vi. 26.* London, 4to, 1644.
4. *A Sermon before the House of Lords, on Luke vii. 22; Mark iv. 38; Matt. viii. 26.* London, 4to, 1645.
5. "*Lex Rex:*" *The Law and the Prince.* London, 4to, 1644.
6. *The Due Right of Presbyteries.* London, 4to, 1644.
7. *The Trial and Triumph of Faith.* London, 4to, 1645.
8. *The Divine Right of Church Government and Excommunication.* London, 4to, 1646. Appended to this is *A Dispute touching Scandal and Christian Liberty.*
9. *Christ Dying and Drawing Sinners to Himself.* London, 4to, 1647.
10. *A Survey of the Spiritual Antichrist.* London, 1648. To which is appended, *A Modest Survey of the Secrets of Antinomianism.*
11. *A Free Disputation against Pretended Liberty of Conscience.* London, 4to, 1649.
12. *The Last and Heavenly Speeches of John Gordon, Viscount Kenmure.* Edinburgh, 4to, 1649.
13. *Disputatio Scholastica de Divina Providentia.* Edinburgh, 4to, 1651.
14. *The Covenant of Life Opened.* Edinburgh, 4to, 1655.
15. *A Survey of Mr Hooker's Church Discipline; or, A Survey of the Survey of that Summe of Discipline penned by Mr Thomas Hooker.* London, 4to, 1658.
16. *Influences of the Life of Grace.* The last work published in his lifetime. London, 4to, 1659. The original title page adds:—"A Practical Treatise concerning the way, manner, and means of having and improving spiritual dispositions and quickening influences from Christ, the Resurrection and the Life."

POSTHUMOUS.

17. *Joshua Redivivus*; or, *Mr Rutherford's Letters*. First Edition, 12mo, 1664. No printer's name and no place mentioned.
18. *Examen Arminianismi*. Ultrajecti (Utrecht), 12mo, 1668.
19. *A Testimony left by Mr S. Rutherford to the Work of Reformation in Great Britain and Ireland before his death*. Date uncertain.
20. *Sacramental Sermons*: taken by a hearer. This includes "Christ's Napkin; Christ and the Dove's heavenly Salutation," &c. These have internal evidence in their favour, viz., the language and general strain of thought.
21. *The Cruel Watchman*. *The Door of Salvation Opened*, 1735. *Exhortation at a Communion to a Scots Congregation in London*, 1730. (These three are doubtful; at all events, very imperfect.)

There is a separate *Treatise on Prayer* ascribed to him in Watts' *Bibliotheca* and Thomson's edition of the *Letters*.

An old *Catalogue of the most Vendible Books*, in 1658, gives as one of his works, *A Rationale on the Book of Common Prayer*, 8vo.





LETTERS.

I.—*For* MARION M'NAUGHT, *on the return home of her daughter.*

[In the early editions the date stands "1624," by a mistake for "1627;" for Rutherford was not settled in Anwoth in 1624.

For a full notice of *Marion M'Naught*, see what is prefixed to Letter VI.]

(CHILDREN TO BE DEDICATED TO GOD.)



WELL-BELOVED AND DEAR SISTER,—My love in Christ remembered. I have sent to you your daughter Grizel with Robert Gordon, who came to fetch her. I am in good hopes that the seed of God is in her, as in one born of God; and God's seed will come to God's harvest. I have her promise she shall be Christ's. For I have told her she may promise much in His worthy name; for He becomes caution* to His Father for all such as resolve and promise to serve Him. I will remember her to God. I trust you will acquaint her with good company, and be diligent to know with whom she loveth to haunt. Remember Zion, and our necessities. I bless your daughter from our Lord, and pray the Lord to give you joy and comfort of her. Remember my love to your husband, to William and Samuel your sons. The Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.

Yours at all power† in the Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ANWOTH, June 6, 1627.

* Security.

† To the utmost of my power.

II.—*To a Christian Gentlewoman on the death of her daughter.*

(CHRIST'S SYMPATHY WITH, AND PROPERTY IN US—REASONS
FOR RESIGNATION.)

MISTRESS,—My love in Christ remembered to you. I was indeed sorrowful at my departure from you, especially since ye were in such heaviness after your daughter's death. Yet I do persuade myself, ye know that the weightiest end of the cross of Christ that is laid upon you lieth upon your strong Saviour; for Isaiah saith,* “In all your afflictions He is afflicted.” O blessed Second† who suffereth with you! and glad may your soul be even to walk in the fiery furnace with one like unto the Son of Man, who is also the Son of God. Courage! up your heart! When ye do tire, He will bear both you and your burden.‡ Yet a little while and ye shall see the salvation of God. Remember of what age your daughter was, and that just so long was your lease of her. If she was eighteen, nineteen, or twenty years old, I know not; but sure I am, seeing her term was come, and your lease run out, ye can no more justly quarrel your great Superior for taking His own at His just term day, than a poor farmer can complain that his master taketh a portion of his own land to himself when his lease is expired. Good mistress, if ye would not be content that Christ would hold from you the heavenly inheritance which is made yours by His death, shall not that same Christ think hardly of you if ye refuse to give Him your daughter willingly, who is a part of His inheritance and conquest?§ I pray the Lord to give you all your own, and to grace you with patience to give God His also. He is an ill debtor who payeth that which he hath borrowed, with a grudge. Indeed, that long

* Isa. lxiii. 9.

† Supporter.

‡ Psalm lv. 22.

§ Acquired by purchase and pains, not *inherited*. “The young heir knows not how hard the *conquest* was to his poor father” (Sermon at Anwoth, 1634, on Zech. xi. 9).

loan of ſuch a good daughter, an heir of grace, a member of Chriſt (as I believe), deſerveth more thanks at your Creditor's hand, than that ye ſhould gloom* and murmur when He craveth but His own. I believe you would judge them to be but thankleſs neighbours who would pay you a ſum of money after this manner. But what? Do you think her loſt, when ſhe is but ſleeping in the boſom of the Almighty? Think her not abſent who is in ſuch a Friend's houſe. Is ſhe loſt to you who is found to Chriſt? If ſhe were with a dear friend, although you ſhould never ſee her again, your care for her would be but ſmall. Oh, now, is ſhe not with a dear Friend? and gone higher, upon a certain hope that ye ſhall, in the reſurrection, ſee her again, when (be ye ſure) ſhe ſhall neither be heſtic nor conſumed in body? You would be ſorry either to be, or to be eſteemed, an atheiſt; and yet, not I, but the Apoſtle, thinketh thoſe to be hopeleſs atheiſts† who mourn exceſſively for the dead. But this is not a challenge‡ on my part. I do ſpeak this only fearing your weakneſs; for your daughter was a part of yourſelf; and, therefore, nature in you being as it were cut and halved, will indeed be grieved. But ye have to rejoice, that when a part of you is on earth, a great part of you is glorified in heaven. Follow her, but envy her not; for indeed it is ſelf-love in us that maketh us mourn for them that die in the Lord. Why? Becauſe for them we cannot mourn, ſince they are never happy till they be dead; therefore we mourn for our own private reſpect. Take heed, then, that in ſhowing your affection in mourning for your daughter, ye be not, out of ſelf-affection, mourning for yourſelf. Conſider what the Lord is doing in it. Your daughter is plucked out of the fire, and ſhe reſteth from her labours; and your Lord, in that, is trying you, and caſting you in the fire. Go through all fires to your reſt; and now remember that the eye of God is upon the buſh burning and not conſumed; and He is gladly content that ſuch a weak woman as you ſhould ſend Satan away,

* Put on a ſullen look.

† 1 Theſs. iv. 13 and Eph. ii. 12.

‡ A rebuke, or upbraiding accuſation.

frustrate of his design. Now honour God, and shame the strong roaring lion, when ye seem weakest. Should such an one as ye faint in the day of adversity? Call to mind the days of old. The Lord yet liveth. Trust in Him, although He should slay you. Faith is exceeding charitable, and believeth no evil of God. Now is the Lord laying, in the one scale of the balance, your making conscience of submission to His gracious will, and in the other, your affection and love to your daughter. Which of the two will ye then choose to satisfy? Be wise, then; and as I trust ye love Christ better than a sinful woman, pass by your daughter, and kiss the Lord's rod. Men do lop the branches off their trees round about, to the end they may grow up high and tall. The Lord hath this way lopped your branch in taking from you many children, to the end you should grow upward, like one of the Lord's cedars, setting your heart above, where Christ is, at the right hand of the Father. What is next, but that your Lord cut down the stock after He hath cut the branches? Prepare yourself; you are nearer your daughter, this day than you were yesterday. While ye prodigally spend time in mourning for her, ye are speedily posting after her. Run your race with patience. Let God have His own; and ask of Him, instead of your daughter which He hath taken from you, the daughter of faith, which is patience; and in patience possess your soul. Lift up your head: ye do not know how near your redemption doth draw. Thus recommending you to the Lord, who is able to establish you, I rest, your loving and affectionate friend in the Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ANWOTH, April 23, 1628.



III.—*To the VISCOUNTESS OF KENMURE, on occasion of illness and spiritual depression.*

[LADY JANE CAMPBELL, Viscountess of Kenmure, was the third daughter of Archibald Campbell, seventh Earl of Argyle, and sister to the Marquis of Argyle who was beheaded in 1661. She was a woman distinguished, in her day, for the depth of her piety, and her warm attachment to the Presbyterian interest in Scotland. Nor was she less distinguished for generosity and munificence, than for piety. Her bounty was in a particular manner extended to those whom suffering for conscience' sake had reduced to poverty or exile. In the year 1628, she was married to Sir John Gordon of Lochinvar, afterwards Viscount Kenmure and Lord Gordon of Lochinvar. This union did not last many years. In 1634, she became a widow, his Lordship having died at Kenmure Castle, on the 12th of September that year, in the 35th year of his age. But her sorrow on this occasion was alleviated by the Christian resignation and faith, which he was enabled to exercise under his last illness. To this nobleman she had two daughters, who died in infancy, one about the beginning of the year 1629, and the other in 1634, as may be gathered from allusions to these bereavements, contained in two consolatory letters written to her by Rutherford in these years. She had also, by the same marriage, a son, John, second Viscount of Kenmure, who, however, died under age and unmarried, in August 1649. This event forms the subject of a letter written to her by Rutherford the 1st of October that year. She married for her second husband, on the 21st of September 1640, the Hon. Sir Henry Montgomery of Giffen, second son of Alexander, sixth Earl of Eglinton; but this marriage was without issue. Sir Henry's religious views were congenial to her own; and he is described as an "active and faithful friend of the Lord's kirk." She was soon left a widow a second time, in which state she lived till a very venerable age, having survived the Restoration a number of years, as appears from the fact that Livingstone, at the time of his death (which took place at Rotterdam in 1672), speaks of her as the oldest acquaintance he then had alive in Scotland. She was a regular correspondent of Rutherford, the last of whose letters to her is dated July the 24th, 1661, after the execution of her brother, above mentioned. Nor after Mr Rutherford's death was she unmindful of his widow. "Madam," says Mr M'Ward, in a letter to her, "Mrs Rutherford gives me often an account of the singular testimony which she met with of your Ladyship's affection to her and her daughter."

Kenmure Castle is well seen from the road that leads along the banks of the Ken. The loch, the river, and the old baronial house, combine to attract notice. It is built on an insulated knoll, well wooded all around.]

(ACQUIESCENCE IN GOD'S PURPOSE—FAITH IN EXERCISE—
ENCOURAGEMENT IN VIEW OF SICKNESS AND DEATH—
PUBLIC AFFAIRS.)



ADAM,—All dutiful obedience in the Lord remembered.

I have heard of your Ladyship's infirmity and sickness with grief; yet I trust ye have learned to say, "It is the Lord, let Him do whatsoever seemeth good in His eyes." It is now many years since the apostate angels made a question, whether their will or the will of their Creator should be done; and since that time, froward mankind hath always in that same suit of law compeared* to plead with them against God, in daily repining against His will. But the Lord being both party and judge, hath obtained a decreet,† and faith, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."‡ It is then best for us, in the obedience of faith, and in an holy submission, to give that to God which the law of His almighty and just power will have of us. Therefore, Madam, your Lord willeth you, in all states of life, to say, "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven:" and herein shall ye have comfort, that He, who seeth perfectly through all your evils, and knoweth the frame and constitution of your nature, and what is most healthful for your soul, holdeth every cup of affliction to your head, with His own gracious hand. Never believe that your tender-hearted Saviour, who knoweth the strength of your stomach, will mix that cup with one drachm-weight of poison. Drink then with the patience of the saints, and the God of patience bless your physic.

I have heard your Ladyship complain of deadness, and want of the bestirring power of the life of God. But, courage! He who walked in the garden, and made a noise that made Adam hear His voice, will also at some times walk in your soul, and make you hear a more sweet word. Yet, ye will not always hear the noise and the din of His feet, when He walketh. Ye are, at such a time, like Jacob mourning at the supposed death of Joseph, when Joseph was

* Appeared.

† Judicial sentence.

‡ Isa. xlvi. 10.

living. The new creature, the image of the second Adam, is living in you; and yet ye are mourning at the supposed death of the life of Christ in you. Ephraim is bemoaning and mourning,* when he thinketh God is far off and heareth not; and yet God is like the bridegroom,† standing only behind a thin wall, and laying to His ear; for He saith Himself, “I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning Himself.”‡ I have good confidence, Madam, that Christ Jesus, whom your soul through forests and mountains is seeking, is within you. And yet I speak not this to lay a pillow under your head, or to dissuade you from a holy fear of the loss of your Christ, or of provoking and “stirring up the Beloved before He please,” by sin. I know, in spiritual confidence, the devil will come in, as in all other good works, and cry “Half mine;” and so endeavour to bring you under a fearful sleep, till He whom your soul loveth be departed from the door, and have left off knocking. And, therefore, here the Spirit of God must hold your soul’s feet in the golden mid-line, betwixt confident resting in the arms of Christ, and presumptuous and drowsy sleeping in the bed of fleshly security. Therefore, worthy lady, so count little of yourself, because of your own wretchedness and sinful drowsiness, that ye count not also little of God, in the course of His unchangeable mercy. For there be many Christians most like unto young sailors, who think the shore and the whole land doth move, when the ship and they themselves are moved; just so, not a few do imagine that God moveth and faileth§ and changeth places, because their giddy souls are under sail, and subject to alteration, to ebbing and flowing. But “the foundation of the Lord abideth sure.” God knoweth that ye are His own. Wrestle, fight, go forward, watch, fear, believe, pray; and then ye have all the infallible symptoms of one of the elect of Christ within you.

Ye have now, Madam, a sickness before you; and also after that a death. Gather then now food for the journey. God give you eyes to see through sickness and death, and to see something

* Jer. xxxi. 18.

† Cant. ii. 9.

‡ Jer. xxxi. 18.

§ So it is in the earlier editions; not “faileth.”

beyond death. I doubt not but that, if hell were betwixt you and Christ, as a river which ye behoved to crosse ere you could come at Him, but ye would willingly put in your foot, and make through to be at Him, upon hope that He would come in Himself, in the deepest of the river, and lend you His hand. Now, I believe your hell is dried up, and ye have only these two shallow brooks, sickness and death, to pass through; and ye have also a promise that Christ shall do more than meet you, even that He shall come Himself, and go with you foot for foot, yea and bear you in His arms. O then! O then! for the joy that is set before you; for the love of the Man (who is also "God over all, blessed for ever"), that is standing upon the shore to welcome you, run your race with patience. The Lord go with you. Your Lord will not have you, nor any of His servants, to exchange for the worse. Death in itself includeth both the death of the soul and the death of the body; but to God's children the bounds and the limits of death are abridged and drawn into a more narrow compass. So that when ye die, a piece of death shall only seize upon you, or the least part of you shall die, and that is the dissolution of the body; for in Christ ye are delivered from the second death; and, therefore, as one born of God, commit not sin (although ye cannot live and not sin), and that serpent shall but eat your earthly part. As for your soul, it is above the law of death. But it is fearful and dangerous to be a debtor and servant to sin; for the count of sin ye will not be able to make good before God, except Christ both count and pay for you.

I trust also, Madam, that ye will be careful to present to the Lord the present estate of this decaying Kirk. For what shall be concluded in Parliament anent* her, the Lord knoweth. Sure I

* "In reference to her,"—alluding to the known design of Charles I. to enforce conformity to Episcopacy. About the close of July, Charles I. resolved to come to Scotland to be crowned, and he wrote to that effect to the Privy Council, and indicted a Parliament to sit down at Edinburgh the 15th of September following. It is to that intended meeting of Parliament that Rutherford here refers. But it was not held.

am, the decree of a most fearful parliament in heaven is at the very point of coming forth, because of the sins of the land. For “we have cast away the law of the Lord, and despised the words of the Holy One of Israel.”* “Judgment is turned away backward, and justice standeth afar off; truth is fallen in the streets, and equity cannot enter.”† Lo! the prophet, as if he had seen us and our kirk, resembleth ‡ *Justice* to be handled as an enemy holden out at the ports of our city [so is she banished!], and *Truth* to a person sickly and diseased, fallen down in a deadly swooning fit in the streets, before he can come to an house. “The priests have caused many to stumble at the law, and have corrupted the covenant of Levi.”§ “But what will they do in the end?”|| Therefore give the Lord no rest for Zion. Stir up your husband, your brother, and all with whom ye are in favour and credit, to stand upon the Lord’s side against Baal. I have good hope that your husband loveth the peace and prosperity of Zion. The peace of God be upon him, for his intended courses anent the establishment of a powerful ministry in this land. Thus, not willing to weary your Ladyship further, I commend you now, and always, to the grace and mercy of that God who is able to keep you, that ye fall not. The Lord Jesus be with your spirit.

Your Ladyship’s servant at all dutiful obedience in Christ.

S. R.

ANWOTH, *July 27, 1628.*

* Isa. v. 24.

† Isa. lix. 14.

‡ Representeth.

§ Mal. ii. 8.

|| Jer. v. 31.



IV.—*To the Elect and Noble Lady, my LADY KENMURE, on occasion of the death of her infant daughter.*

(TRIBULATION THE PORTION OF GOD'S PEOPLE, AND INTENDED TO WEAN THEM FROM THE WORLD.)



ADAM,—Saluting your Ladyship with grace and mercy from God our Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ, —I was sorry, at my departure, leaving your Ladyship in grief, and would still be grieved at it, if I were not assured that ye have One with you in the furnace, whose visage is like unto the Son of God. I am glad that ye have been acquainted from your youth with the wrestlings of God, and that ye get scarce liberty to swallow down your spittle, being casten* from furnace to furnace, knowing if ye were not dear to God, and if your health did not require so much of Him, He would not spend so much physic upon you. All the brethren and sisters of Christ must be conform to His image and copy in suffering.† And some do more vividly‡ resemble the copy than others. Think, Madam, that it is a part of your glory to be enrolled among those whom one of the elders pointed out to John, “These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.”§ Behold your Forerunner going out of the world all in a lake of blood, and it is not ill to die as He did. Fulfil with joy the remnant of the grounds and remainders of the afflictions of Christ in your body. Ye have lost a child: nay, she is not lost to you who is found to Christ. She is not sent away, but only sent before, like unto a star, which going out of our sight doth not die and vanish, but shineth in another hemisphere. Ye see her not, yet she doth shine in another country. If her glass was but a short hour, what she wanteth of time that she hath gotten of

* Cast.

† Rom. viii. 29.

‡ To the life, livingly, vividly.

§ Rev. vii. 14.

eternity; and ye have to rejoice that ye have now some plenishing* up in heaven. Build your nest upon no tree here; for ye see God hath sold the forest to death; and every tree whereupon we would rest is ready to be cut down, to the end we may fly† and mount up, and build upon the Rock, and dwell in the holes of the Rock. What ye love besides Jesus, your husband, is an adulterous lover. Now it is God's special blessing to Judah, that He will not let her find her paths in following her strange lovers. "Therefore, behold I will hedge up her way with thorns, and make a wall that she shall not find her paths. And she shall follow after her lovers, but she shall not overtake them."‡ O thrice happy Judah, when God buildeth a double stone wall betwixt her and the fire of hell! The world, and the things of the world, Madam, is the lover ye naturally affect,§ beside your own husband Christ. The hedge of thorns and the wall which God buildeth in your way, to hinder you from this lover, is the thorny hedge of daily grief, loss of children, weakness of body, iniquity of the time, uncertainty of estate, lack of worldly comfort, fear of God's anger for old unrepented-of sins. What loss ye, if God twist and plait the hedge daily thicker? God be blessed, the Lord will not let you find your paths. Return to your first husband. Do not weary, neither think that death walketh towards you with a slow pace. Ye must be riper ere ye be shaken. Your days are no longer than Job's, that were "swifter than a post, and passed away as the ships of desire, and as the eagle that hasteth for the prey."|| There is less sand in your glass now than there was yesternight. This span-length of ever-posting time will soon be ended. But the greater is the mercy of God, the more years ye get to advise, upon what terms, and upon what conditions, ye cast your soul in the huge gulf of never-ending eternity. The Lord hath told you what ye should be doing till He come. "Wait and hasten," saith Peter, "for the coming of our Lord." All is

* Property, or furniture.

† In the earlier editions it is given "*fly*" throughout; not "*flee*."

‡ Hos. ii. 6, 7. § Love, have affection to. || Job ix. 25, 26, margin.

night that is here, in respect of ignorance and daily ensuing troubles, one always making way to another, as the ninth wave of the sea to the tenth; therefore sigh and long for the dawning of that morning, and the breaking of that day of the coming of the Son of Man, when the shadows shall flee away. Persuade yourself the King is coming; read His letter sent before Him, “Behold, I come quickly.”* Wait with the wearied night-watch for the breaking of the eastern sky, and think that ye have not a morrow. As the wise father said, who, being invited against to-morrow to dine with his friend, answered, “Those many days I have had no morrow at all.” I am loth to weary you. Show yourself a Christian, by suffering without murmuring, for which sin fourteen thousand and seven hundred were slain.† In patience possess your soul. They lose nothing who gain Christ. Thus remembering my brother’s and my wife’s humble service to your Ladyship, I commend you to the mercy and grace of our Lord Jesus, assuring you that your day is coming, and that God’s mercy is abiding you. The Lord Jesus be with your spirit.


Yours in the Lord Jesus at all dutiful obedience,

S. R.

ANWOTH, Jan. 15, 1629.

V.—*To my LADY KENMURE, upon her removal with her husband from the parish of Anwoth.*

(CHANGES AND LOSS OF FRIENDS—THIS WORLD NO ABIDING-PLACE.)

 ADAM,—Saluting you in Jesus Christ,—to my grief I must bid you, it may be, for ever farewell, in paper, having small assurance ever to see your face again till the last general assembly, where the whole Church universal shall

* Rev. iii. 11.

† Num. xvi. 49.

meet; yet promising, by His grace, to present your Ladyship and your burdens to Him who is able to save you, and give you an inheritance with the faints, after a more special manner than ever I have done before.*

Ye are going to a country where the Sun of righteousness, in the Gospel, shineth not so clearly as in this kingdom; but if ye would know where He whom your soul loveth doth rest, and where He feedeth at the noontide of the day, wherever ye be, get you forth by the footsteps of the flock, and feed yourself beside the shepherds' tents;† that is, ask for some of the watchmen of the Lord's city, who will tell you truly, and will not lie, where ye shall find Him whom your soul loveth. I trust ye are so betrothed in marriage to the true Christ, that ye will not give your love to any false Christ. Ye know not how soon your marriage-day will come; nay, is not eternity hard upon you? It were time, then, that ye had your wedding garment in readiness. Be not sleeping at your Lord's coming. I pray God you may be upon your feet standing when He knocketh. Be not discouraged to go from this country to another part of the Lord's earth: "The earth is His, and the fulness thereof."‡ This is the Lord's lower house; while we are lodged here, we have no assurance to lie ever in one chamber, but must be content to remove from one corner of our Lord's nether house to another, resting in hope that, when we come up to the Lord's upper city, "Jerusalem that is above," we shall remove no more, because then we shall be at home. And go wheresoever ye will, if your Lord go with you, ye are at home; and your lodging is ever taken before night, so long as He who is Israel's dwelling-house is your home.§ Believe me, Madam, my mind is that ye are well lodged, and that in your house there are fair ease-rooms|| and pleasant lights, if ye can in faith lean down your head upon the breast of Jesus

* Lord Kenmure and his lady resided at Rusco, in the parish of Anwoth, during the first two years of Rutherford's ministry there; but they were now about to leave it. See a notice of this, *Let.* 147.

† Cant. i. 7, 8. ‡ Psalm xxiv. 1. § Psalm xc. 1. || Rooms for repose.

Christ: and till this be, ye shall never get a sound sleep. Jesus, Jesus, be your shadow and your covering. It is a sweet soul-sleep to lie in the arms of Christ, for His breath is very sweet.

Pray for poor friendless Zion. Alas! no man will speak for her now, although at home in her own country she hath good friends, her husband Christ, and His Father her Father-in-law. Beseech your husband to be a friend to Zion, and pray for her.

I have received many and divers dashes and heavy strokes, since the Lord called me to the ministry; but indeed I esteem your departure from us amongst the weightiest: but I perceive God will have us to be deprived of whatsoever we idolize, that He may have His own room. I see exceeding small fruit of my ministry, and would be glad to know of one soul to be my crown and rejoicing in the day of Christ. Though I spend my strength in vain, yet my labour is with my God.* I wish and pray that the Lord would harden my face against all, and make me to learn to go with my face against a storm. Again I commend you, body and spirit, to Him who hath loved us, and washed us from our sin in His own blood. Grace, grace, grace for ever be with you. Pray, pray continually.

Your Ladyship's at all dutiful obedience in Christ,

S. R.

ANWOTH, Sept. 14, 1629.

VI.—*For MARION M'NAUGHT, on occasion of the illness of his (Mr Rutherford's) wife.*

[MARION M'NAUGHT was daughter to the Laird of Kilquhanatie, in Kirkpatrick Durham (see Let. 252), the representative of an ancient family, now extinct, and connected also with the house of Kenmure, through her mother, Margaret Gordon, sister to Lord Kenmure. She became the wife of William Fullerton, Provost of Kirkcudbright, and was a woman extensively known and held in honour by the most eminent Christians and ministers of

* Isa. xlix. 4.

her day, on account of her rare godliness and public spirit. We find in *The Last and Heavenly Speeches of Viscount Kenmure*, that by the special desire of that nobleman (who was her relative), she was in continual attendance on him as he lay on his deathbed. Her name is sometimes spelt "M'Knight," or "M'Knaichte," the modern "Macknight." She had three children—one daughter, Grizzel, and two sons, Samuel and William,—who are often affectionately remembered in Rutherford's letters to her. The following epitaph was inscribed on her tomb, in the churchyard of Kirkcudbright:—

"Marion M'Naught, sister to John M'Naught of Kilquhanatie, an ancient and honourable baron, and spouse to William Fullerton, Provost of Kirkcudbright, died April 1643, age 58.

*Sexum animis, pietate genus, genorosa, locumque
Virtute exsuperans, conditur hoc tumulo."*

The tombstone has since been removed. It was only in 1860 that her house (in which the meeting with Blair and Rutherford took place) was pulled down. It stood at the foot of the High Street, which was then the principal street of the town.

A relative of this lady's husband, Fullerton of Carlton (see Let. 157), wrote on her the following acrostic:—

M More happy than imagined can be,
A And blest, are such as with heart sincere
R Resolve to cleave to Christ, to live and die
I In Him, with Him, and for Him to appear.
O O what transcendent glory grows from grace!
N None but—no, not—the foul refined shall
M' Make to appear; that life, that light, that peace,
K Known only to the pure possessors all.
N Now, *THOU*, by grace, art into glory gone,
A And gained the garland of eternal bliss,
I In seeing Him who, on that glorious throne,
C Created, uncreated, glory is.
H Heaven's quire did sing at thy conversion sweet,
T Time posts thy final comforts to complete.

(*Append. to "Minute-Book of Committee of Covenanters."*)

(INWARD CONFLICT ARISING FROM OUTWARD TRIAL.)



LOVING AND DEAR SISTER,—If ever you would pleasure me, entreat the Lord for me, now when I am so comfortless, and so full of heaviness, that I am not able to stand under the burthen any longer. The Almighty hath

doubled His stripes upon me, for my wife is so sore tormented night and day, that I have wondered why the Lord tarrieth so long. My life is bitter unto me, and I fear the Lord be my contrair* party. It is (as I now know by experience) hard to keep sight of God in a storm, especially when He hides Himself, for the trial of His children. If He would be pleased to remove His hand, I have a purpose to seek Him more than I have done. Happy are they that can win away† with their soul. I am afraid of His judgments. I bless my God that there is a death, and a heaven. I would weary to begin again to be a Christian, so bitter is it to drink of the cup that Christ drank of, if I knew not that there is no poison in it. God give us not of it till we vomit again, for we have sick souls when God's physic works not. Pray that God would not lead my wife into temptation. Woe is my heart, that I have done so little against the kingdom of Satan in my calling; for he would fain attempt to make me blaspheme God in His face. I believe, I believe, in the strength of Him who hath put me in His work, he shall fail in that which he seeks. I have comfort in this, that my Captain, Christ, hath said, I must fight and overcome the world,‡ and with a weak, spoiled, weaponless devil, "the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me."§ Desire Mr Robert|| to remember me, if he love me. Grace, grace be with you, and all yours.

Remember Zion. There is a letter procured from the King by Mr John Maxwell to urge conformity, to give the communion at Christmas in Edinburgh.¶ Hold fast that which you have, that no

* Contrary, *i.e.*, my adversary. † Escape, get away from the world.

‡ John xvi. 33.

§ John xiv. 30.

|| Mr Robert Glendinning, minister of Kirkcudbright.

¶ Mr J. Maxwell here mentioned was at this time a minister in Edinburgh, and afterwards became Bishop of Ross,—a man of talent, but devoid of principle, whose aim was to secure the favour of the notorious Laud, and forward his designs for forcing Episcopacy upon the Scottish people. The letter above referred to was from the King, urging the adoption of the English service.

man take the crown from you. The Lord Jefus be with your fpirit.


Yours in the Lord,

S. R.

ANWOTH, Nov. 17, 1629.

VII.—*To my LADY KENMURE.*

(*THE EARNEST OF THE SPIRIT—COMMUNION WITH CHRIST—FAITH IN THE PROMISES.*)

 ADAM,—I have longed exceedingly to hear of your life and health, and growth in the grace of God. I lacked the opportunity of a bearer, in respect I did not understand of the hasty departure of the last, by whom I might have saluted your Ladyship, and therefore I could not write before this time. I entreat you, Madam, let me have two lines from you concerning your present condition. I know ye are in grief and heaviness; and if it were not so, ye might be afraid, because then your way should not be so like the way that (our Lord faith) leadeth to the New Jerusalem. Sure I am, if ye knew what were before you, or if ye saw but some glances of it, ye would with gladness swim through the present floods of sorrow, spreading forth your arms out of desire to be at land. If God have given you the earnest of the Spirit, as part of payment of God's principal sum, ye have to rejoice; for our Lord will not lose His earnest, neither will He go back or repent Him of the bargain. If ye find at some time a longing to see God, joy in the assurance of that sight, howbeit that feast be but like the Passover, that cometh about only once a-year. Peace of conscience, liberty of prayer, the doors of God's treasure cast up to the soul, and a clear sight of Himself looking out, and saying, with a smiling countenance, "*Welcome to Me, afflicted soul;*" this is the earnest that He giveth sometimes, and which maketh glad the heart, and is an evidence that the bargain will hold. But to the end ye may get this

earnest, it were good to come oft into terms of speech with God, both in prayer and hearing of the word. For this is the house of wine, where ye meet with your Well-Beloved. Here it is where He kisseth you with the kisses of His mouth, and where ye feel the smell of His garments; and they have indeed a most fragrant and glorious smell. Ye must, I say, wait upon Him, and be often communing with Him, whose lips are as lilies, dropping sweet-smelling myrrh, and by the moving thereof He will assuage your grief; for the Christ that saveth you is a speaking Christ; the Church knoweth Him* by His voice, and can discern His tongue amongst a thousand. I say this to the end ye should not love those dumb masks of antichristian ceremonies, that the Church,† where ye are for a time, hath cast over the Christ whom your soul loveth. This is to set before you a dumb Christ. But when our Lord cometh, He speaketh to the heart in the simplicity of the Gospel.

I have neither tongue nor pen to express to you the happiness of such as are in Christ. When ye have sold all that ye have, and bought the field wherein this pearl is, ye will think it no bad market; for if ye be in Him, all His is yours, and ye are in Him; therefore, “because He liveth, ye shall live also.”‡ And what is that else, but as if the Son had said, “I will not have heaven except My redeemed ones be with Me: they and I cannot live asunder. Abide in Me, and I in you.”§ O sweet communion, when Christ and we are through other,|| and are no longer two! “Father, I will that those whom Thou hast given Me be with Me where I am, to behold My glory that Thou hast given Me.”¶ Amen, dear Jesus, let it be according to that word. I wonder that ever your heart should be cast down, if ye believe this truth. I and they are not worthy of Jesus Christ, who will not suffer forty years’ trouble for Him, since they have such glorious promises. But we fools believe those promises as the man that read Plato’s writings concerning the

* Cant. ii. 8.

† Episcopal.

‡ John xiv. 19.

§ John xv. 4

|| Mixed up with each other.

¶ John xvii. 24.

immortality of the soul: so long as the book was in his hand he believed all was true, and that the soul could not die; but so soon as he laid by the book, he began to imagine that the soul is but a smoke or airy vapour, that perisheth with the expiring of the breath. So we at starts* do assent to the sweet and precious promises; but laying aside God's book, we begin to call all in question. It is faith indeed, to believe without a pledge, and to hold the heart constant at this work; and when we doubt, to run to the law and to the testimony, and stay there. Madam, hold you here: here is your Father's testament,—read it; in it He hath left to you remission of sins and life everlasting. If all that ye have here be crosses and troubles, down-castings, frequent desertions, and departure of the Lord, who is suiting† you in marriage, courage! He who is wooer and suitor should not be an household man with you till ye and He come up to His Father's house together. He purposeth to do you good at your latter end,‡ and to give you rest from the days of adversity.§ “It is good to bear the yoke of God in your youth.”|| “Turn in to your stronghold as a prisoner of hope.”¶ “For the vision is for an appointed time; but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it, because it will surely come, it will not tarry.”** Hear Himself saying, “Come, My people” (rejoice, He calleth on you!), “enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee; hide thyself, as it were for a little moment, till the indignation be past.†† Believe, then, believe and be saved; think not hard if ye get not your will, nor your delights in this life; God will have you to rejoice in nothing but Himself. God forbid that ye should rejoice in anything but in the cross of Christ.‡‡

Our Church, Madam, is decaying,—she is like Ephraim's cake; “and grey hairs are here and there upon her, and she knoweth it not.”§§ She is old and grey-haired, near the grave, and no man taketh it to heart. Her wine is four and is corrupted. Now if

* On occasions, fitfully.

§ Ps. xciv. 13.

** Hab. ii. 3.

§§ Hos. vii. 9.

† Wooing.

|| Lam. iii. 27.

†† Isa. xxvi. 20.

‡ Deut. viii. 16.

¶ Zech. ix. 12.

‡‡ Gal. vi. 14.

Phinehas's wife did live, she might travail in birth and die, to see the ark of God taken, and the glory depart from our Israel. The power and life of religion is away. "Woe be to us! for the day goeth away, for the shadows of the evening are stretched out."* Madam, Zion is the ship wherein ye are carried to Canaan; if she suffer shipwreck, ye will be cast overboard upon death and life, to swim to land upon broken boards. It were time for us, by prayer, to put upon† our master-pilot, Jesus, and to cry, "Master, save us; we perish." Grace, grace be with you. We would think it a blessing to our kirk to see you here; but our sins withhold good things from us. The great Messenger of the Covenant preserve you in body and spirit.

Yours in the Lord,

S. R.

ANWOTH, Feb. 1, 1630.

VIII.—For MARION M'NAUGHT, *on occasion of his (Mr Rutherford's) wife's illness.*

(WRESTLINGS WITH GOD.)



ISTRESS,—My love in Jesus Christ remembered. I am in good health; honour to my Lord; but my wife's disease increaseth daily, to her great torment and pain night and day. She has not been in God's house since our communion, neither out of her bed. I have hired a man to Edinburgh to Doctor Jeally and to John Hamilton.‡ I can hardly believe her disease is ordinary, for her life is bitter to her; she sleeps none, but cries as a woman travailling in birth. What will be the event, He that hath the keys of the grave knoweth. I have been many times, since I saw you, that I have besought the Lord to loose her out of

* Jer. vi. 4.

† Importune.

‡ Probably a relative of his wife, whose name was Eupham Hamilton.

body, and to take her to her rest. I believe the Lord's tide of afflictions will ebb again; but at present I am exercised with the wrappings of God, being afraid of nothing more than this, that God has let loose the tempter upon my house. "God rebuke him and his instruments." Because Satan is not cast out but by fasting and prayer, I entreat you remember our estate to our Lord, and entreat all good Christians whom ye know, but especially your pastor,* to do the same. It becomes us still to knock, and to lie at the Lord's door, until we die knocking. If He will not open, it is more than He has said in His word. But He is faithful. I look not to win away to my home without wounds and blood. Welcome, welcome cross of Christ, if Christ be with it. I have not a calm spirit in the work of my calling here, being daily chastised; yet God hath not put out my candle, as He does to the wicked. Grace, grace be with you and all yours.

Yours in the Lord,

S. R.

ANWOTH.

IX.—*For MARION M'NAUGHT, recommending a friend to her love.*

(PRAYERS ASKED.)

MISTRESS,—My love in Christ remembered. At the desire of this bearer, whom I love, I thought to request you if ye can help his wife with your advice, for she is in a most dangerous and deadly-like condition. For I have thought she was changed in her carriage and life, this sometime bypast, and had hope that God would have brought her home; and now, by appearance, she will depart this life, and leave a number of children behind her. If ye can be entreated to help her, it is a work of mercy. My own wife is still in exceeding great torment night and

* The Rev. Mr Robert Glendinning, then minister of Kirkcudbright. His grave-stone may be seen in the churchyard.

day. Pray for us, for my life was never so wearisome to me. God hath filled me with gall and wormwood; but I believe (which holds up my head above the water), "It is good for a man," saith the Spirit of God, "that he bear the yoke in his youth."*

I do remember you. I pray you be humble and believe; and I entreat you in Jesus Christ, pray for John Stuart and his wife, and desire your husband to do the same. Remember me heartily to Jean Brown. Desire her to pray for me and my wife: I do remember her. Forget not Zion. Grace, grace upon them, and peace, that pray for Zion. She is the ship we sail in to Canaan. If she be broken on a rock, we will be cast overboard, to swim to land betwixt death and life. The grace of Jesus be with your husband and children.

Yours in Christ,

S. R.

ANWOTH.

X.—*For* MARION M'NAUGHT.

(*SUBMISSION, PERSEVERANCE, AND ZEAL RECOMMENDED.*)



WELL-BELOVED AND DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST,
—I could not get an answer written to your letter till now, in respect of my wife's disease; and she is yet mightily pained. I hope that all shall end in God's mercy. I know that an afflicted life looks very like the way that leads to the kingdom; for the Apostle† hath drawn the line and the King's market-way, "through much tribulation, to the kingdom." The Lord grant us the whole armour of God.

Ye write to me concerning your people's disposition, how that their hearts are inclined toward the man ye know, and whom ye desire most earnestly yourself. He would most gladly have the

* Lam. iii. 27.

† Acts xiv. 22; 1 Thefs. iii. 4.

Lord's call for transplantation; for he knows that all God's plants, set by His own hand, thrive well; and if the work be of God, He can make a stepping-stone of the devil himself for setting forward the work. For yourself, I would advise you to ask of God a submissive heart. Your reward shall be with the Lord, although the people be not gathered (as the prophet speaks); and suppose the word* do not prosper, God shall account you "a repairer of the breaches." And take Christ caution,† ye shall not lose your reward. Hold your grip‡ fast. If ye knew the mind of the glorified in heaven, they think heaven come to their hand at an easy market, when they have got it for three-score or four-score years wrestling with God. When ye are come thither, ye shall think, "All I did, in respect of my rich reward, now enjoyed of free grace, was too little." Now then, for the love of the Prince of your salvation, who is standing at the end of your way, holding up in His hand the prize and the garland to the race-runners, Forward, forward, faint not. Take as many to heaven with you as ye are able to draw. The more ye draw with you, ye shall be the welcomer yourself. Be no niggard or sparing churl of the grace of God; and employ all your endeavours for establishing an honest ministry in your town, now when ye have so few to speak a good word for you. I have many a grieved heart daily in my calling. I would be undone, if I had not access to the King's chamber of presence, to show Him all the businesses. The devil rages, and is mad to see the water drawn from his own mill; but would to God we could be the Lord's instruments to build the Son of God's house.

Pray for me. If the Lord furnish not new timber from Lebanon to build the house, the work will cease. I look to Him, who hath begun well with me. I have His handwrite, He will not change. Your daughter is well, and longs for a Bible. The Lord establish you in peace. The Lord Jesus be with your spirit.

Yours at all power in Christ,

S. R.

ANWOTH.

* Work?

† Security.

‡ Firm hold.

XI.—To My LADY KENMURE.

(GOD'S INEXPLICABLE DEALINGS WITH HIS PEOPLE WELL ORDERED—WANT OF ORDINANCES—CONFORMITY TO CHRIST—TROUBLES OF THE CHURCH—DEATH OF MR RUTHERFORD'S WIFE.)



ADAM,—Grace, mercy, and peace be multiplied upon you. I received your Ladyship's letter, in the which I perceive your case in this world smelleth of a fellowship and communion with the Son of God in His sufferings. Ye cannot, ye must not, have a more pleasant or more easy condition here, than He had, who "through afflictions was made perfect." * We may indeed think, Cannot God bring us to heaven with ease and prosperity? Who doubteth but He can? But His infinite wisdom thinketh and decreeth the contrary; and we cannot see a reason of it, yet He hath a most just reason. We never with our eyes saw our own soul; yet we have a soul. We see many rivers, but we know not their first spring and original fountain; yet they have a beginning. Madam, when ye are come to the other side of the water, and have set down your foot on the shore of glorious eternity, and look back again to the waters and to your wearisome journey, and shall see, in that clear glass of endless glory, nearer to the bottom of God's wisdom, ye shall then be forced to say, "If God had done otherwise with me than He hath done, I had never come to the enjoying of this crown of glory." It is your part now to believe, and suffer, and hope, and wait on; for I protest, in the presence of that all-discerning eye, who knoweth what I write and what I think, that I would not want the sweet experience of the consolations of God for all the bitterness of affliction. Nay, whether God come to His children with a rod or a crown, if He come Himself with it, it is well. Welcome, welcome, Jesus, what way soever Thou come, if we can get a sight of Thee. And sure I am,

* Heb. ii. 10.

it is better to be sick, providing Christ come to the bed-side and draw by* the curtains, and say, "Courage, I am Thy salvation," than to enjoy health, being lusty and strong, and never to be visited of God.

Worthy and dear lady, in the strength of Christ, fight and overcome. Ye are now yourself alone, but ye may have, for the seeking, three always in your company, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. I trust they are near you. Ye are now deprived of the comfort of a lively ministry; so was Israel in their captivity; yet hear God's promise to them: "Therefore say, Thus saith the Lord God, although I have cast them far off among the heathen, and although I have scattered them among the countries, yet will I be to them as a little sanctuary in the countries where they shall come."† Behold a sanctuary! for a sanctuary, God Himself in the place and room of the temple of Jerusalem! I trust in God, that, carrying this temple about with you, ye shall see Jehovah's beauty in His house.

We are in great fears of a great and fearful trial to come upon the kirk of God; for these, who would build their houses and nests upon the ashes of mourning Jerusalem, have drawn our King upon hard and dangerous conclusions against such as are termed Puritans, for the rooting of them out. Our prelates (the Lord take the keys of His house from these bastard porters!) assure us that, for such as will not conform,‡ there is nothing but imprisonment and deprivation.¶ The spouse of Jesus will ever be in the fire; but I trust in my God she shall not consume, because of the good-will of

* Aside. † Ezek. xi. 16. ‡ To the English form of religious worship.

¶ The prelates, when the Courts of High Commission were erected in 1610, were invested with the powers of imprisoning and depriving Nonconformists. Nor had the bishops failed, previous to the date of this letter, to exercise the exorbitant power thus granted them over the bodies and goods of loyal subjects, not a few ministers having been deprived, imprisoned, and banished by the Courts of High Commission simply for their nonconformity. In a paper entitled "The Grievances of the Ministers and other Professors given in by some in their name to his Majesty, or to the Estates," soon after Charles I. ascended the throne, it is complained, "That the bishops, not being

Him who dwelleth in the Bush ; for He dwelleth in it with goodwill. All sorts of crying sins without controlment abound in our land. The glory of the Lord is departing from Israel, and the Lord is looking back over His shoulder, to see if any one will say, " Lord, tarry," and no man requesteth Him to stay. Corrupt and false doctrine is openly preached by the idol-shepherds of the land. For myself, I have daily griefs, through the disobedience unto, and contempt of, the word of God. I was summoned before the High Commission by a profligate person in this parish, convicted of incest. In the business, Mr Alexander Colvill* (for respect to your Ladyship) was my great friend, and wrote a most kind letter to me. The Lord give him mercy in that day. Upon the day of my compearance, the sea and winds refused to give passage to the Bishop of St Andrews.† I entreat your Ladyship, thank Mr Alexander Colvill with two lines of a letter.

My wife now, after long disease and torment, for the space of a year and a month, is departed this life. The Lord hath done it ; blessed be His name. I have been diseased of a fever tertian for the space of thirteen weeks, and am yet in the sickness, so that I preach but once on the Sabbath with great difficulty. I am not able either to visit or examine the congregation. The Lord Jesus be with your spirit.

Your Ladyship at all obedience,

S. R.

ANWOTH, 26th June, 1630.

content with the titles and benefices of bishopricks, encroached, against their own protestations and promise, upon the jurisdiction ecclesiastical, in accepting, or rather procuring, power and commission from his Majesty to fine, confine, decern upon suspension, deposition, deprivation of ministers, and excommunication of whatsoever subjects ; and that they have removed worthy men of the ministry from their calling for no other cause but refusal of conformity to some ceremonies unknown till of late to our Kirk.—*Scots Apologet. Narrative*, pp. 322, 324.

* One of the judges.

† Archbishop Spottiswoode.

XII.—*For* MARION M'NAUGHT.

(*GOD MIXETH THE CUP—THE WICKED HAVE THEIR REWARD
—FAITHFULNESS—FORBEARANCE—TRIALS.*)



WELL-BELOVED AND DEAR SISTER,—My love in the Lord Jesus remembered. I understand that you are still under the Lord's visitation, in your former business with your enemies, which is God's dealing. For, till He take His children out of the furnace that knoweth how long they should be tried, there is no deliverance; but after God's highest and fullest tide, that the sea of trouble is gone over the souls of His children, then comes the gracious, long-hoped-for ebbing and drying up of the waters. Dear sister, do not faint; the wicked may hold the bitter cup to your head, but God mixeth it, and there is no poison in it. They strike, but God moves the rod; Shimei curseth, but it is because the Lord bids Him. I tell you, and I have it from Him before whom I stand for God's people, that there is a decreet* given out, in the great court of the highest heavens, that your present troubles shall be dispersed as the morning cloud, and God shall bring forth your righteousness, as the light of the noon-tide of the day. Let me intreat you, in Christ's name, to keep a good conscience in your proceedings in that matter, and beware of yourself: yourself is a more dangerous enemy than I, or any without you. Innocence and an upright cause is a good advocate before God, and shall plead for you, and win your cause. And count much of your Master's approbation and His smiling. He is now as the king that is gone to a far country. God seems to be from home (if I may say so), yet He sees the ill servants, who say, "Our Master deferreth His coming," and so strike their fellow-servants. But patience, my beloved; Christ the King is coming home; the evening is at hand, and He will ask an account of His

* Sentence.

fervants. Make a fair, clear count to Him. So carry yourself, as at night you may say, Master, I have wronged none ; behold, you have your own with advantage. O ! your soul then will esteem much of one of God's kisses and embracements, in the testimony of a good conscience. The wicked, howbeit they be casting many evil thoughts, bitter words, and sinful deeds behind their back, yet they are, in so doing, clerks to their own process, and doing nothing all their life but gathering dittayes* against themselves ; for God is angry at the wicked every day. And I hope your present process shall be sighted† one day by Him, who knoweth your just cause ; and the bloody tongues, crafty foxes, double ingrained hypocrites, shall appear as they are before His majesty, when He shall take the mask off their faces. And O, thrice happy shall your soul be then, when God finds you covered with nothing but the white robe of the faints' innocence, and the righteoufness of Jesus Christ.

You have been of late in the King's wine-cellar, where you were welcomed by the Lord of the inn, upon condition that you would walk in love. Put on love, and brotherly kindness, and long-suffering ; wait as long upon the favour and turned hearts of your enemies as your Christ waited upon you, and as dear Jesus stood at your soul's door, with dewy and rainy locks, the long cold night. Be angry, but sin not. I persuade myself, that holy unction within you, which teacheth you all things, is also saying, " Overcome evil with good." If that had not spoken in your soul, at the tears of your aged pastor, you would not have agreed, and forgiven his foolish son, who wronged you ; but my Master bade me tell you, God's blessing shall be upon you for it ; and from Him I say, Grace, grace, grace, and everlasting peace be upon you. It is my prayer for you, that your carriage may grace and adorn the Gospel of that Lord who hath graced you. I heard your husband also was sick ; but I beseech you in the bowels of Jesus, welcome every rod of God, for I find not in the whole book of God a greater note of the child of God, than to fall down and kiss the feet of an angry

* Indictments.

† Narrowly inspected.

God ; and when He ſeems to put you away from Him, and looſe your hands that grip* Him, to look up in faith, and ſay, “ I ſhall not, I will not, be put away from Thee. Howbeit Thy Maſteſty draw to free Thyſelf of me, yet, Lord, give me leave to hold, and cleave unto Thyſelf.” I will pray, that your huſband may return in peace. Your decreet comes from heaven ; look up thither, for many (ſays Solomon) ſeek the face of the ruler, but every man’s judgment cometh of the Lord. And be glad that it is ſo, for Chriſt is the clerk of your proceſs, and will ſee that all go right ; and I perſuade myſelf He is ſaying, “ Yonder ſervants of Mine are wronged ; for My blood, Father, give them juſtice.” Think you not, dear ſiſter, but our High Prieſt, our Jeſus, the Maſter of requeſts, preſents our bills of complaint to the great Lord Juſtice ? Yea, I believe it, ſince He is our Advocate, and Daniel calls Him the Spokeſman, whoſe hand preſents all to the Father.

For other buſineſs, I ſay nothing, while† the Lord give me to ſee your face. I am credibly informed, that multitudes of England, and eſpecially worthy preachers, and ſilenced preachers of London, are gone to New England ; and I know one learned holy preacher, who hath written againſt the Arminians, who is gone thither.‡ Our bleſſed Lord Jeſus, who cannot get leave to ſleep with His

* Graſp, hold firm.

† Till.

‡ The emigration of theſe preachers and of multitudes of the people to New England was the conſequence of the perſecuting meaſures purſued by Archbiſhop Laud for enforcing conformity, in the proſecution of his favourite ſcheme of bringing the Church of England as near to that of Rome as could comfort with his own ſupremacy and that of his ſovereign. Affected with the conſtant perſecution of their party, and the reduction of their families to beggary, without any proſpect of deliverance, Meſſrs Higginſon and Skelton, with about three hundred and fifty private perſons, retired to America, and ſettled in the Maſſachuſetts Bay, as their friends had formerly done at Plymouth. After landing, they entered into a ſolemn covenant to walk together in the fear of the Lord and in church-fellowſhip with one another. About ſeventy miniſters and four thouſand planters are ſaid to have retired to that continent from the tyrannical rage of Laud and his agents.—*Brown’s Britiſh Churches*, vol. i., pp. 215-217.

spouſe in this land, is going to ſeek an inn where He will be better entertained. And what marvel? Wearied Jeſus, after He had travelled from Geneva, by the miniſtry of worthy Mr Knox, and was laid down in His bed, and reformation begun, and the curtains drawn, had not gotten His dear eyes well together, when irreverent biſhops came in, and with the din and noiſe of ceremonies, holy days, and other Romiſh corruptions, they awake our Beloved Others came to His bed-ſide, and drew the curtains, and put hands on His ſervants, baniſhed, deprived, and confined them; and for the pulpit they got a ſtool and a cold fire in the Blacknefs;* and the nobility drew the covering off Him, and have made Him a poor naked Chriſt, in ſpoiling His ſervant of the tithes and kirk-rents. And now there is ſuch a noiſe of crying ſins in the land, as the want of the knowledge of God, of mercy, and truth; ſuch ſwearing, whoring, lying, and blood touching blood; that Chriſt is putting on His clothes, and making Him,† like an ill-handled ſtranger, to go to other lands. Pray Him, ſiſter, to lie down again with His beloved.

Remember my deareſt love to John Gordon, to whom I will write when I am ſtrong, and to John Brown, Griffel, Samuel, and William; grace be upon them. As you love Chriſt, keep Chriſt's favour, and put not upon Him when He ſleeps, to awake Him before He pleaſe. The Lord Jeſus be with your ſpirit.

Your brother in Chriſt,

S. R.

ANWOTH, *July 21, 1630.*

* Blacknefs Caſtle, on the Forth, was uſed as a priſon.

† In the ſenſe of appearing as if He would go; Luke xxiv. 28.



XIII.—For MARION M'NAUGHT, *when exposed to reproach for her principles.*

(JESUS A PATTERN OF PATIENCE UNDER SUFFERING.)



WELL-BELOVED SISTER,—I have been thinking, since my departure from you, of the pride and malice of your adversaries; and ye may not (since ye have had the Book of Pſalms ſo often) take hardly with this; for David's enemies ſnuffed at him, and through the pride of their heart ſaid, “The Lord will not require it.”* I beſeech you, therefore, in the bowels of Jeſus, ſet before your eyes the patience of your forerunner Jeſus, who, when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He ſuffered, He threatened not, but committed Himſelf to Him who judgeth righteouſly.† And ſince your Lord and Redeemer with patience received many a black ſtroke on His glorious back, and many a buffet of the unbelieving world, and ſays of Himſelf, “I gave My back to the ſmiters, and My cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; I hid not My face from ſhame and ſpitting;”‡ follow Him, and think it not hard that you receive a blow with your Lord. Take part with Jeſus of His ſufferings, and glory in the marks of Chriſt. If this ſtorm were over, you muſt prepare yourſelf for a new wound; for, five thouſand years ago, our Lord proclaimed deadly war betwixt the Seed of the Woman and the ſeed of the ſerpent. And marvel not that one town cannot keep the children of God and the children of the devil, for one belly could not keep Jacob and Eſau;§ one houſe could not keep peaceably together Iſaac, the ſon of the promiſe, and Iſhmael,|| the ſon of the handmaid. Be you upon Chriſt's ſide of it, and care not what fleſh can do. Hold yourſelf faſt by your Saviour, howbeit you be buffeted, and thoſe that follow Him. Yet a little while and the wicked ſhall not be. “We

* Ps. x. 13.

† 1 Pet. ii. 23.

‡ Iſa. l. 6.

§ Gen. xxv. 22.

|| Gen. xxi. 10.

are troubled on every side, yet not distressed ; we are perplexed, but not in despair ; persecuted, but not forsaken ; cast down, but not destroyed.”* If you can possess your soul in patience, their day is coming. Worthy and dear sister, know to carry yourself in trouble ; and when you are hated and reproached, the Lord shows it to you—“ All this is come upon us, yet have we not forgotten Thee, neither have we dealt falsely in Thy covenant.”† “ Unless Thy law had been my delight, I had perished in mine affliction.”‡ Keep God’s covenant in your trials. Hold you by His blessed word, and sin not. Flee anger, wrath, grudging, envying, fretting. Forgive an hundred pence to your fellow-servant, because your Lord hath forgiven you ten thousand talents. For I assure you by the Lord, your adversaries shall get no advantage against you, except you sin, and offend your Lord in your sufferings. But the way to overcome is by patience, forgiving and praying for your enemies, in doing whereof you heap coals upon their heads, and your Lord shall open a door to you in your troubles. Wait upon Him, as the night watch waiteth for the morning. He will not tarry. Go up to your watch-tower, and come not down ; but by prayer, and faith, and hope, wait on. When the sea is full, it will ebb again ; and so soon as the wicked are come to the top of their pride, and are waxed high and mighty, then is their change approaching. They that believe make not haste.

Remember Zion, forget her not, for her enemies are many ; for the nations are gathered together against her. “ But they know not the thoughts of the Lord, neither understand they His counsel : for He shall gather them as the sheaves into the floor. Arise and thresh, O daughter of Zion.”§ Behold, God hath gathered His enemies together, as sheaves to the threshing. Let us stay and rest upon these promises. Now, again, I trust in our Lord you shall by faith sustain yourself, and comfort yourself in your Lord, and be strong in His power ; for you are in the beaten and common way to heaven

* 2 Cor. iv. 8, 9.

† Ps. cxix. 92.

‡ Ps. xlv. 17.

§ Micah iv. 12, 13.

when you are under our Lord's crosses. You have reason to rejoice in it, more than in a crown of gold ; and rejoice, and be glad to bear the reproaches of Christ. I rest, recommending you and yours for ever to the grace and mercy of God.

Yours in Christ,

S. R.

ANWOTH, Feb. 11, 1631.

XIV.—*For MARION M'NAUGHT, in the prospect of a Communion season.*

(ABUNDANCE IN JESUS—THE RESTORATION OF THE JEWS—
ENEMIES OF GOD.)



WELL-BELOVED IN THE LORD,—You are not unacquainted with the day of our Communion.* I entreat, therefore, the aid of your prayers for that great work, which is one of our feast-days, wherein our Well-beloved Jesus rejoiceth, and is merry with His friends.

Good cause have we to wonder at His love, since the day of His death was such a sorrowful day to Him, even the day when His mother, the kirk, crowned Him with thorns, and He had many against Him, and compared His lone† in the fields against them all ; yet He delights with us to remember that day. Let us love Him, and be glad and rejoice in His salvation. I am confident that you shall see the Son of God that day, and I dare in His name invite you to His banquet. Many a time you have been well entertained in His house ; and He changes not upon His friends, nor chides them for too great kindness. Yet I speak not this to make you leave off to pray for me, who have nothing of myself, but in so far as daily I receive from Him, who is made of His Father a running-over fountain, at which I and others may come with thirsty souls, and

* The dispensation of the Lord's Supper.

† Alone, no one with Him. Sometimes written, "His alone."

fill our vessels. Long hath this well been standing open to us. Lord Jesus, lock it not up again upon us. I am forry for our desolate kirk; yet I dare not but trust, so long as there be any of God's lost money here He shall not blow out the candle. The Lord make fair candlesticks in His house, and remove the blind lights.

I have been this time bypast* thinking much of the incoming of the kirk of the Jews. Pray for them. When they were in their Lord's house, at their Father's elbow, they were longing for the incoming of their little sister, the kirk of the Gentiles. They said to their Lord, "We have a little sister, and she hath no breasts: what shall we do for our sister in the day when she shall be spoken for?"† Let us give them a meeting. What shall we do for our elder sister, the Jews? Lord Jesus, give them breasts. That were a glad day to see us and them both sit down to one table, and Christ at the head of the table. Then would our Lord come shortly with his fair guard to hold His great court.

Dear sister, be patient, for the Lord's sake, under the wrongs that you suffer of the wicked. Your Lord shall make you see your desire on your enemies. Some of them shall be cut off; "they shall shake off their unripe grapes as the vine, and cast off their flower as the olive:"‡ God shall make them like unripe four grapes, shaken off the tree with the blast of God's wrath; and therefore pity them, and pray for them. Others of them must remain to exercise you. God hath said of them, Let the tares grow up until harvest.§ It proves you to be your Lord's wheat. Be patient; Christ went to heaven with many a wrong. His visage and countenance was all marred more than the sons of men. You may not be above your Master; many a black stroke received innocent Jesus, and He received no mends,|| but referred them all to the great court-day, when all things shall be righted. I desire to hear from you within a day or two, if Mr Robert remain in his purpose to come and help us. God shall give you joy of your children. I pray

* For some time of late.

§ Matt. xiii. 30.

† Cant. viii. 8.

|| Reparation.

‡ Job xv. 33.

for them by their names. I blefs you from our Lord, your husband and children. Grace, grace, and mercy be multiplied upon you.

Yours in the Lord for ever,

S. R.

ANWOTH, *May 7, 1631.*

XV.—*For MARION M'NAUGHT, on occasion of the threatened introduction of the Episcopalian Service-Book.*

(TROUBLES OF THE CHURCH—PRIVATE WRONGS.)



WELL-BELOVED SISTER,—My love in Christ remembered. I have received a letter from Edinburgh, certainly informing me that the English service, and the organs, and King James' Psalms, are to be imposed upon our kirk ; and that the bishops are dealing for a General Assembly. A. R. hath confirmed the news also, and says he spoke with Sir William Alexander,* who is to come down with his prince's warrant for that effect. I am desired in the received letter to acquaint the best-affected about me with that storm : therefore I intreat you, and charge you in the Lord's name, pray ; but do not communicate this to any till I see you. My heart is broken at the remembrance of it, and it was my fear, and answereth to my last letter except one, that I wrote unto you. Dearly beloved, be not casten down, but let us, as our Lord's doves, take us to our wings (for other armour we have none), and flee into the hole of the rock. It is true A. R. says, the worthiest men in England are banished, and silenced, about the number of sixteen or seventeen choice Gospel preachers, and the persecution is already begun. Howbeit I do not write this unto you with a dry face, yet I am confident in the Lord's strength, Christ and His side shall overcome ; and you shall be assured ; the kirk were not a kirk, if it were not so. As our dear Husband, in wooing His kirk, received many a black stroke, so His bride, in wooing Him,

* Sir W. Alexander of Menstrie, afterwards Earl of Stirling.

gets many blows, and in this wooing there are strokes upon both sides. Let it be so. The devil will not make the marriage go back, neither can he tear the contract; the end shall be mercy. Yet notwithstanding of all this, we have no warrant of God to leave off all lawful means. I have been writing unto you the counsels and draughts* of men against the kirk; but they know not, as Micah says, the counsel of Jehovah. The great men of the world may make ready the fiery furnace for Zion; but trow ye that they can cause the fire to burn? No. He that made the fire, I trust, shall not say amen to their decreets. I trust in my Lord, that God hath not subscribed their bill, and their conclusions have not yet passed our great King's seal. Therefore, if ye think good, address yourself first to the Lord, and then to A. R., anent the business that you know.

I am most unkindly handled by the presbytery; and (as if I had been a stranger, and not a member of that seat, to sit in judgment with them) I was summoned by their order as a witness against B. A. But they have got no advantage in that matter. Other particulars you shall hear, God willing, at meeting.

Anent the matter betwixt you and I. E., I remember it to God. I intreat you in the Lord, be submissive to His will; for the higher that their pride mounts up, they are the nearer to a fall. The Lord will more and more discover that man. Let your husband, in all matters of judgment, take Christ's part, for the defence of the poor and needy, and the oppressed, for the maintenance of equity and justice in the town. And take you no fear. He shall take your part, and then you are strong enough. What? Howbeit you receive indignities for your Lord's sake, let it be so. When He shall put His holy hand up to your face in heaven, and dry your face, and wipe the tears from your eyes, judge ye if you will not have cause then to rejoice. Anent other particulars, if you would speak with me, appoint any of the first three days of the next week in Carleton,†

* What men draw up in forming plans.

† Carleton, in Galloway (see note at Let. 157), not far from Anwoth, where Mr Fullerton, a true friend, resided.

when Carletoun is at home, and acquaint me with your desires. And remember me to God, and my dearest affection to your husband ; and for Zion's sake hold not your peace. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you, and your husband and children.

Yours in the Lord,

S. R.

ANWOTH, June 2, 1631.

XVI.—*For MARION M'NAUGHT, on occasion of a proposal to remove him from Anwoth.*

(BABYLON'S DESTRUCTION AND CHRIST'S COMING—THE YOUNG INVITED.)



WORTHY AND DEAR MISTRESS,—My dearest love in Christ remembered. As to the business which I know you would so fain have taken effect,* my earnest desire is, that you stand still. Hasten not, and you shall see the salvation of God. The great Master Gardener, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, in a wonderful providence, with His own hand (I dare, if it were for edification, swear it), planted me here,† where, by His grace, in this part of His vineyard, I grow.—I dare not say but Satan and the world (one of his pages whom he sends his errands) have said otherwise. And here I will abide till the great Master of the Vineyard think fit to transplant me. But when He sees meet to loose me at the root, and to plant me where I may be more useful, both as to fruit and shadow, and when He who planted pulleth up that He may transplant, who dare put to their hand and hinder? If they do, God shall break their arm at the shoulder blade, and do His turn. When our Lord is going west, the devil and world go east ; and do you not know that it hath been ever this way betwixt God and the world—God drawing, and they

* So desire to see accomplished.

† At Anwoth.

holding, God “yea,” and the world “nay?” But they fall on their back and are frustrate, and our Lord holdeth His grip.*

Wherefore doth the word say, that our Christ, the Goodman of this house, His dear kirk, hath feet like fine bras, as if they burned in a furnace?† For no other cause but because where our Lord setteth down His brazen feet, He will forward; and whithersoever He looketh, He will follow His look; and His feet burn all under them, like as fire doth stubble and thorns. I think He hath now given the world a proof of His exceeding great power, when He is doing such great things, wherein Zion is concerned, by the sword of the Swedish king,‡ as of a Gideon. As you love the glory of God, pray instantly § (yea engage all your praying acquaintance, and take their faithful promise to do the like) for this king, and every one that Zion’s King armeth, to execute the written vengeance on Babylon. Our Lord hath begun to loose some of Babylon’s cornerstones. Pray to Him to hold on, for that city must fall, and the birds of the air and the beasts of the earth must make a banquet of Babylon; for He hath invited them to eat the flesh of that whore, and to drink her blood. And the cup of the Lord’s right hand shall be turned unto her, and shameful spewing shall be upon her glory. He whose word must stand hath said, “Take this cup at the hand of the Lord, and drink and be drunken, and spew, and fall, and rise no more.” || Our Jesus is setting up Himself, as His Father’s ensign, ¶ as God’s fair white colours, that His soldiers may all flock about Him. Long, long may these colours stand. It is long since He displayed a banner against Babylon in the sight of men and angels. Let us rejoice and triumph in our God. The victory is certain; for when Christ and Babel wrestle, then angels and saints may prepare themselves to sing, “Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen.” Howbeit that Prince of renown, precious Jesus, be now weeping and bleeding in His members, yet Christ will laugh again; and it is time enough for us to laugh, when our Lord Christ

* Firm grasp.

§ Earnestly.

† Rev. i. 15.

|| Jer. xxv. 27.

‡ Gustavus Adolphus.

¶ Isa. xi. 10.

laugheth,—and that will be shortly. For when we hear of wars and rumours of wars, the Judge's feet are then before the door, and He must be in heaven giving order to the angels to make themselves ready, and prepare their hooks* and sickles for that great harvest. Christ will be upon us in haste; watch but a little, and ere long the skies will rive,† and that fair lovely person, Jesus, shall come in the clouds, freighted and loaded with glory. And then all these knaves and foxes that destroyed the vines shall call to the hills, and cry to the mountains to cover them, and hide them from the face of Him who sitteth upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb.

Remember me to your husband, and desire him from me to help Christ, and to take His part, and in judgment sit ever beside Him, and receive a blow patiently for His sake; for He is worthy to be suffered for, not only to blows, but also to blood. He shall find that innocency and uprightness in judgment shall hold its feet and make him happy, when jouking‡ will not do it. I speak this because a person said to me, “I pray God the country be not in worse case now, when the provost and bailies are agreed, than formerly,”—to whom I replied, “I trust the provost is agreed with the man's person, but not with his faults.” I pray for you, with my whole soul and desire, that your children may walk in the truth, and that the Lord may shine upon them, and make their faces to shine, when the faces of others shall blush. I dare promise them, in His name, whose truth I preach, if they will but try God's service, that they shall find Him the sweetest Master that ever they served. And desire them from me but to try for a while the service of this blessed Master, and then, if His service be not sweet, if it afford not what is pleasant to the soul's taste, change Him upon trial, and seek a better. Christ is an unknown Christ to young ones; and therefore they seek Him not, because they know Him not. Bid them come and see, and seek a kiss of His mouth; and then they will find His mouth is so sweet, that they will be ever-

* Reaping-hooks.

† Rend.

‡ Dissembling; properly, inclining the body forward to avoid a blow.

lastingly chained unto Him by their own consent. If I have any credit with your children, I entreat them in Christ's name to try what truth and reality is in what I say, and leave not His service till they have found me a liar. I give you, your husband, and them, to His keeping, to whom I have,* and dare venture myself and soul, even to our dear Friend Jesus Christ, in whom I am,

Yours,

ANWOTH.

S. R.

XVII.—*For MARION M'NAUGHT, when in distress as to prospects of the Church.*

(ARMINIANISM—CALL TO PRAYER—NO HELP BUT IN CHRIST.)



WELL-BELOVED SISTER,—My dearest love in Christ remembered to you. Know that I am in great heaviness for the pitiful case of our Lord's kirk. I hear the cause why Dr Burton† is committed to prison is his writing and preaching against the Arminians. I therefore entreat the aid of your prayers for myself, and the Lord's captives of hope, and for Zion. The Lord hath let and daily lets me see clearly, how deep furrows Arminianism and the followers of it shall draw upon the back of God's Israel (but our Lord cut the cords of the wicked!); "Zion said, 'The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me.'‡ " "Zion weepeth sore in the night, and her tears are upon her cheeks; amongst all her lovers she hath none to comfort her: all her friends have dealt treacherously with her; they are become her enemies."§ "Our silver is become dross, our wine mixed with water."|| "How is the gold become dim! how is the most fine gold changed! the stones of the sanctuary are poured out

* To whom I have given, and dare venture to give.

† He refers to the case of Henry Burton, an able divine of the Church of England, who wrote several vigorous pieces against Popery, and against Montagu's "Appello Cæsarem." See Brook's "Lives of the Puritans."

‡ Isa. xlix. 14.

§ Lam. i. 2.

|| Isa. i. 22.

in the top of every street. The precious sons of Zion, comparable to fine gold, how are they esteemed as earthen pitchers, the work of the hands of the potter !”* It is time now for the Lord’s secret ones, who favour the dust of Zion, to cry, “How long, Lord ?” and to go up to their watch-tower, and to stay there, and not to come down until the vision speak ; for it shall speak.† In the mean time, the just shall live by faith. Let us wait on and not weary. I have not a thread to hang upon and rest, but this one, “Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb ? Yea, she may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of My hands ; Thy walls are continually before Me.”‡ For all outward helps do fail ; it is time therefore for us to hang ourselves, as our Lord’s vessels, upon the nail that is fastened in a sure place. We would make stakes of our own fastening, but they will break. Our Lord will have Zion on His own nail. Edom is busy within us, and Babel without us, against the handful of Jacob’s seed. It were best that we were upon Christ’s side of it, for His enemies will get *the stalks to keep*, § as the proverb is. Our greatest difficulty will be to win upon the rock now, when the wind and waves of persecution are so lofty and proud. Let sweet Jesus take us by the hand. Neither must we think that it will be otherwise ; for it is told to the souls under the altar, “That their fellow-servants must be killed as they were.”|| Surely, it cannot be long to the day. Nay, hear Him say, “Behold, I come, My dear bride ; think not long. ¶ I shall be at you at once. I hear you, and am coming.” Amen ; even so come, Lord Jesus, come quickly ; for the prisoners of hope are looking out at the prison windows, to see if they can behold the King’s ambassador coming with the King’s warrant and the keys. I write not to you by guess now, because I have a warrant to say unto you, the garments of Christ’s spouse must be once again dyed

* Lam. iv. 1, 2.

† Hab. ii. 3.

‡ Isa. xlix. 15, 16.

§ Nothing but the stalks ; none of the grain or fruit.

|| Rev. vi. 11.

¶ To think long, is to long wearily for.

in blood, as long ago her Husband's were. But our Father sees His bleeding Son. What I write unto you, show it to I. G. Grace, grace, grace and mercy be with you, your husband, and children.

Yours in the Lord,

ANWOTH.

S. R.

XVIII.—*For MARION M'NAUGHT, in the prospect of a Communion season.*

(PRAYER SOLICITED—THE CHURCH'S PROSPECTS.)



ISTRESS,—My love in Christ as remembered. Our Communion is on Sabbath come* eight days. I will entreat you to recommend it to God, and to pray for me in that work. I have more sins upon me now than the last time. Therefore I will beseech you in Christ, seek this petition to me from God, that the Lord would give me grace to vow and perform new obedience. I have cause to suite† this of you; and show it to Thomas Carson, Fergus and Jean Brown, for I have been and am exceedingly cast down, and am fighting against a malicious devil, of whom I can win little ground. I would think a spoil plucked from him, and his trusty servant sin, a lawful and just conquest. And it were no sin to take from him, in the name of the Goodman of our house, our King Jesus. I invite you to the banquet. He saith, ye shall be dearly welcome to Him. And I desire to believe (howbeit not without great fear) He shall be as hearty in His own house as He has been before. For me, it is but small reckoning; but I would fain have our Father and Lord to break the great fair loaf, Christ, and to distribute His slain Son amongst the bairns‡ of His house. And that if any were a step-bairn, in respect of comfort and sense, it were rather myself than His poor bairns.‡ Therefore bid our Well-beloved come to His garden and feed among the lilies.

* Sabbath that comes eight days after this.

† Urge this request.

‡ Children.

And as concerning Zion, I hope our Lord, who sent His angel* with a measuring line in his hand to measure the length and breadth of Jerusalem, in token He would not want a foot length or inch of His own free heritage, shall take order† with those who have taken away many acres of His own land from Him. And God will build Jerusalem in the old sted‡ and place where it was before. In this hope rejoice and be glad. Christ's garment was not dipt in blood for nothing, but for His bride, whom He bought with strokes. I will desire you to remember my old suits to God, God's glory and the increase of light, that I dry not up. For your town, hope and believe that the Lord will gather in His loose sheaves among you to His barn, and send one with a well-toothed, sharp hook, and strong gardies,§ to reap His harvest. And the Lord Jesus be Husbandman, and oversee the growing. Remember my love to your husband and to Samuel. Grace upon you and your children. Lord, make them corner-stones in Jerusalem, and give them grace in their youth to take band|| with the fair Chief Corner-stone, who was hewed out of the mountain without hands, and got many a knock with His Father's forehammer, and endured them all, and the stone did neither cleave nor break. Upon that stone make your soul to lie. King Jesus be with your spirit.

Your friend in his well-beloved Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ANWOTH.

XIX.—*To my* LADY KENMURE.

(*ENCOURAGEMENT TO ABOUND IN FAITH FROM THE PROSPECT OF GLORY—CHRIST'S UNCHANGEABLENESS.*)



ADAM,—Having saluted you in the Lord Jesus, I thought it my duty, having the occasion of this bearer, to write again unto your Ladyship, though I have no new pur-

* Zech. ii. 1, 2.

† Take measures,—an old English phrase.

‡ Situation, or site.

§ Arms; from the Gaelic "*gairdean*," an arm.

|| To unite themselves to; *q.d.*, bind together.

pose but what I wrote of before. Yet ye cannot be too often awakened to go forward towards your city, since your way is long, and (for anything ye know) your day is short. And your Lord requireth of you, as ye advance in years and steal forward insensibly towards eternity, that your faith may grow and ripen for the Lord's harvest. For the great Husbandman giveth a season to His fruits that they may come to maturity, and having gotten their fill of the tree, they may then be shaken and gathered in for use; whereas the wicked rot upon the tree, and their branch shall not be green, "He shall shake off his unripe grape as the vine, and shall cast off his flower as the olive."* It is God's mercy to you, Madam, that He giveth you your fill, even to loathing, of this bitter world, that ye may willingly leave it, and, like a full and satisfied banqueter, long for the drawing of the table. And at last, having trampled under your feet all the rotten pleasures that are under sun and moon, and having rejoiced as though ye rejoiced not, and having bought as though ye possessed not,† ye may, like an old crazy ship, arrive at our Lord's harbour, and be made welcome, as one of those who have ever had one foot loose from the earth, longing for that place where your soul shall feast and banquet for ever and ever upon a glorious sight of the incomprehensible Trinity, and where ye shall see the fair face of the man Christ, even the beautiful face that was once for your cause more marred than any of the visages of the sons of men,‡ and was all covered with spitting and blood. Be content to wade through the waters betwixt you and glory with Him, holding His hand fast, for He knoweth all the fords. Howbeit ye may be ducked, but ye cannot drown, being in His company; and ye may all the way to glory see the way bedewed with His blood who is the Forerunner. Be not afraid, therefore, when ye come even to the black and swelling river of death, to put in your foot and wade after Him. The current, how strong soever, cannot carry you down the water to hell: the Son of God, His death and resurrection, are stepping-stones and a stay to you; set

* Job xv. 33.

† 1 Cor. vii. 30.

‡ Isa. lii. 14.

down your feet by faith upon these stones, and go through as on dry land. If ye knew what He is preparing for you, ye would be too glad. He will not (it may be) give you a full draught till you come up to the well-head and drink, yea, drink abundantly, of the pure river of the water of life, that proceedeth out from the throne of God and of the Lamb.* Madam, tire not, weary not; I dare find you the Son of God caution,† when ye are got up thither, and have cast your eyes to view the golden city, and the fair and never-withering Tree of Life, that beareth twelve manner of fruits every month, ye shall then say, “Four-and-twenty hours’ abode in this place is worth threecore and ten years’ sorrow upon earth.” If ye can but say, that ye long earnestly to be carried up thither (as I hope you cannot for shame deny Him the honour of having wrought that desire in your soul), then hath your Lord given you an earnest. And, Madam, do ye believe that our Lord will lose His earnest, and rue of the bargain, and change His mind, as if He were a man that can lie, or the son of man that can repent? Nay, He is unchangeable, and the same this year that He was the former year. And His Son Jesus, who upon earth ate and drank with publicans and sinners, and spake and conferred with whores and harlots, and put up His holy hand and touched the leper’s filthy skin, and came evermore nigh sinners, even now in glory, is yet that same Lord. His honour, and His great court in heaven, hath not made Him forget His poor friends on earth. In Him honours change not manners, and He doth yet desire your company. Take Him for the old Christ, and claim still kindness to Him, and say, “O it is so; He is not changed, but I am changed.” Nay, it is a part of His unchangeable love, and an article of the new covenant, to keep you that ye cannot dispoſe‡ Him, nor sell Him. He hath not played fast and loose with us in the covenant of grace, so that we may run from Him at our pleasure. His love hath made the bargain surer than so; for Jesus, as the cautioner, is bound for us.§ And it can-

* Rev. xxii. 1.

† Security.

‡ Dispoſe of, make over.

§ Heb. vii. 22.

not stand with His honour to die in the borrows* (as we use to say), and lose thee, whom He must render again to the Father when He shall give up the kingdom to Him. Consent and say "Amen" to the promises, and ye have sealed that God is true, and Christ is yours. This is an easy market. Ye but look on with faith; for Christ suffered all, and paid all.

Madam, fearing I be tedious to your Ladyship, I must stop here, desiring always to hear that your Ladyship is well, and that ye have still your face up the mountain. Pray for us, Madam, and for Zion, whereof ye are a part. We expect a trial. God's wheat in this land must go through Satan's sieve, but their faith shall not fail. I am still wrestling in our Lord's work, and have been tried and tempted with brethren who look awry to the Gospel. Now He that is able to keep you unto that day preserve your soul, body, and spirit, and present you before His face with His own Bride, spotless and blameless.

Your Ladyship to be commanded always in the Lord Jesus.

S. R.

ANWOTH, Nov. 26, 1631.

XX.—*To my LADY KENMURE.*

(*ASSURANCE OF CHRIST'S LOVE UNDER TRIALS—FULNESS OF CHRIST—HOPE OF GLORY.*)

MADAM,—I am grieved exceedingly that your Ladyship should think, or have cause to think, that such as love you in God, in this country, are forgetful of you. For myself, Madam, I owe to your Ladyship all evidences of my high respect (in the sight of my Lord, whose truth I preach, I am bold to say it) for His rich grace in you.

My Communion, put off till the end of a longsome and rainy

* Fail, when He has become security. *Borrow* is "pledge."

harvest, and the presbyterial exercise (as the bearer can inform your Ladyship), hindered me to see you. And for my people's sake (finding them like hot iron, that cooleth being out of the fire, and that is pliable to no work), I do not stir abroad ; neither have I left them at all, since your Ladyship was in this country, save at one time only, about two years ago. Yet I dare not say but it is a fault, howbeit no defect in my affection ; and I trust to make it up again, so soon as possibly I am able to wait upon you.

Madam, I have no new purpose to write unto you, but of that which I think (nay, which our Lord thinketh) needful, that one thing, Mary's good part, which ye have chosen.* Madam, all that God hath, both Himself and the creatures, He is dealing and parting amongst the sons of Adam. There are none so poor as that they can say in His face, " He hath given them nothing." But there is no small odds betwixt the gifts given to lawful bairns,† and to bastards ; and the more greedy ye are in suiting,‡ the more willing He is to give, delighting to be called open-handed. I hope your Ladyship laboureth to get assurance of the surest patrimony, even God Himself. Ye will find in Christianity, that God aimeth, in all His dealings with His children, to bring them to a high contempt of, and deadly feud with the world, and to set an high price upon Christ, and to think Him One who cannot be bought for gold, and well worthy the fighting for. And for no other cause, Madam, doth the Lord withdraw from you the childish toys and the earthly delights that He giveth unto others, but that He may have you wholly to Himself. Think therefore of the Lord, as of one who cometh to woo you in marriage, when ye are in the furnace. He seeketh His answer of you in affliction, to see if ye will say, Even so I take Him. Madam, give Him this answer pleasantly, and in your mind do not secretly grudge nor murmur. When He is striking you in love, beware to strike again : that is dangerous ; for those who strike again shall get the last blow.

If I hit not upon the right string, it is because I am not ac-

* Luke x. 42.

† Children.

‡ Soliciting.

quainted with your Ladyship's present condition ; but I believe your Ladyship goeth on foot, laughing, and putting on a good countenance before the world, and yet ye carry heaviness about with you. Ye do well, Madam, not to make them witnesses of your grief, who cannot be curers of it. But be exceedingly charitable of your dear Lord. As there be some friends worldly of whom ye will not entertain an ill thought, far more ought ye to believe good evermore of your dear friend, that lovely fair person, Jesus Christ. The thorn is one of the most cursed, and angry, and crabbed weeds that the earth yieldeth, and yet out of it springeth the rose, one of the sweetest-smelled flowers, and most delightful to the eye, that the earth hath. Your Lord shall make joy and gladness out of your afflictions ; for all His roses have a fragrant smell. Wait for the time when His own holy hand shall hold them to your nose ; and if ye would have present comfort under the cross, be much in prayer, for at that time your faith kisseth Christ, and He kisseth the soul. And oh ! if the breath of His holy mouth be sweet, I dare be caution,* out of some small experience, that ye shall not be beguiled ; for the world (yea, not a few number of God's children) know not well what that is which they call a Godhead. But, Madam, come near to the Godhead, and look down to the bottom of the well ; there is much in Him, and sweet were that death to drown in such a well. Your grief taketh liberty to work upon your mind, when ye are not busied in the meditation of the ever-delighting and all-blessed Godhead. If ye would lay the price ye give out (which is but some few years pain and trouble) beside the commodities ye are to receive, ye would see they are not worthy to be laid in the balance together : but it is nature that maketh you look what ye give out, and weakness of faith that hindereth you to see what ye shall take in. Amend your hope, and frist† your faithful Lord awhile. He maketh Himself your debtor in the new covenant. He is honest ; take His word : “ Affliction shall not spring up the second time.”‡ “ He that overcometh shall inherit all things.”§

* Security. † Put off your demand. ‡ Nahum i. 9. § Rev. xxi. 7.

Of all things, then, which ye want in this life, Madam, I am able to say nothing, if that be not believed which ye have in Rev. iii. 5, 21 : "The overcomer shall be clothed in white raiment. To the overcomer I will give to sit with Me in My throne, as I overcame, and am set down with My Father in His throne." Consider, Madam, if ye are not high up now, and far ben* in the palace of our Lord, when ye are upon a throne in white raiment, at lovely Christ's elbow. O thrice fools are we, who, like new-born princes weeping in the cradle, know not that there is a kingdom before them ! Then let our Lord's sweet hand square us and hammer us, and strike off the knots of pride, self-love, and world-worship, and infidelity, that He may make us stones and pillars in His Father's house.† Madam, what think ye to take binding‡ with the fair corner-stone Jesus ? The Lord give you wisdom to believe and hope your day is coming. I hope to be witness of your joy, as I have been a hearer and beholder of your grief. Think ye much to follow the heir of the crown, who had experience of sorrows, and was acquainted with grief ?§ It were pride to aim to be above the King's Son : it is more than we deserve, that we are equals in glory, in a manner. Now commending you to the dearest grace and mercy of God, I rest Your Ladyship's at all obedience in Christ,

S. R.

ANWOTH, Jan. 4, 1632.

XXI.—*To my LADY KENMURE.*

(SELF-DENIAL—HOPE OF CHRIST'S COMING—LOVING GOD FOR HIMSELF.)



ADAM,—Understanding (a little after the writing of my last letter) of the going of this bearer, I would not omit the opportunity of remembering your Ladyship,

* Got far into. "Ben" is the inner chamber.

† Rev. iii. 12.

‡ To be united to ; like "take band" in Let. 18.

§ Isa. liii. 3.

still harping upon that string, which in our whole lifetime is never too often touched upon, nor is our lesson well enough learned, that there is a necessity of advancing in the way to the kingdom of God, of the contempt of the world, of denying ourself and bearing of our Lord's cross, which is no less needful for us than daily food. And among many marks that we are on this journey, and under sail toward heaven, this is one, when the love of God so filleth our hearts, that we forget to love, and care not much for the having, or wanting of, other things; as one extreme heat burneth out another. By this, Madam, ye know, ye have betrothed your soul in marriage to Christ, when ye do make but small reckoning of all other suitors or wooers; and when ye can (having little in hand, but much in hope) live as a young heir, during the time of his non-age and minority, being content to be as hardly handled, and under as precise a reckoning, as servants, because his hope is upon the inheritance. For this cause God's bairns* take well with spoiling of their goods, knowing in themselves that they have in heaven a better and an enduring substance.† That day that the earth and the works therein shall be burned with fire,‡ your hidden hope and your life shall appear. And therefore, since ye have not now many years to your endless eternity, and know not how soon the sky above your head will rive, and the Son of man will be seen in the clouds of heaven, what better and wiser course can ye take, than to think that your one foot is here, and your other foot in the life to come, and to leave off loving, desiring, or grieving for the wants that shall be made up when your Lord and ye shall meet, and when ye shall give in your bill, that day, of all your wants here? If your losses be not made up, ye have place to challenge the Almighty; but it shall not be so. Ye shall then rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory, and your joy shall none take from you.§ It is enough, that the Lord hath promised you great things, only let the time of bestowing them be in His own carving. It is not for us to set an hour-

* Children.

† 2 Pet. iii. 10.

‡ Heb. x. 34.

§ 1 Pet i. 8; John xvi. 22.

glafs to the Creator of time. Since He and we differ only in the term of payment ; ſince He hath promiſed payment, and we believe it, it is no great matter. We will put that in His own will, as the frank buyer, who cometh near to what the ſeller ſeeketh, uſeth at laſt to refer the difference to his own will, and ſo cutteth off the courſe of mutual prigg^{ing}.^{*} Madam, do not prigg with your frank-hearted and gracious Lord about the time of the fulfilling of your joys. It will be ; God hath ſaid it ; bide His harveſt, wait upon His whitſunday.[†] His day is better than your day ; He putteth not the hook[‡] in the corn till it be ripe and full-eared. The great Angel of the covenant bear you company, till the trumpet ſhall ſound, and the voice of the Archangel awaken the dead. Ye ſhall find it your only happineſs, under whatever thing diſturbeth and croſſeth the peace of your mind, in this life, to love nothing for itſelf, but only God for Himſelf. It is the crooked love of ſome harlots, that they love bracelets, ear-rings, and rings better than the lover that ſendeth them. God will not ſo be loved ; for that were to behave as harlots, and not as the chaſte ſpouſe, to abate from our love when theſe things are pulled away. Our love to Him ſhould begin on earth, as it ſhall be in heaven ; for the bride taketh not, by a thouſand degrees, ſo much delight in her wedding garment as ſhe doth in her bridegroom ; ſo we, in the life to come, howbeit clothed with glory as with a robe, ſhall not be ſo much affected with the glory that goeth about us, as with the bridegroom's joyful face and preſence. Madam, if ye can win^ſ to this here, the field is won ; and your mind, for anything ye want, or for anything your Lord can take from you, ſhall ſoon be calmed and quieted. Get Himſelf as a pawn, and keep Him, till your dear Lord come and looſe the pawn, and rue^{||} upon you, and give you all again that He took from you, even a thouſand talents for one penny. It is not ill to lend God willingly, who otherwiſe both will and may take from you againſt your will.

^{*} Higgl^{ing}, chaff^{ing}.

[†] His term-day.

[‡] His ſickle. In a ſermon preached at Kirkmabreck, 1630, he ſpeaks of
“ Mowers with the ſcythe and hook.”

[§] Get to.

^{||} Take pity upon.

It is good to play the usurer with Him, and take in, instead of ten of the hundred, an hundred of ten, often an hundred of one.

Madam, fearing to be tedious to you, I break off here, commending you (as I trust to do while I live), your person, ways, burdens, and all that concerneth you, to that Almighty who is able to bear you and your burdens. I still remember you to Him, who will cause you one day to laugh. I expect that, whatever ye can do, by word or deed, for the Lord's friendless Sion, ye will do it. She is your mother; forget her not; for the Lord intendeth to melt and try this land, and it is high time we were all upon our feet, and falling* about to try what claim we have to Christ. It is like the bridegroom will be taken from us, and then we shall mourn. Dear Jesus, remove not, else take us with Thee. Grace, grace be with you for ever. Your Ladyship at all dutiful obedience,

S. R.

ANWOTH, 14th Jan. 1632.

XXII.—To JOHN KENNEDY.†

(DELIVERANCE FROM SHIPWRECK—RECOVERY FROM THREATENED DEATH—USE OF TRIALS—REMEMBRANCE OF FRIENDS.)



MY LOVING AND MOST AFFECTIONATE BROTHER IN CHRIST,—I salute you with grace, mercy, and peace, from God our Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ.

I promised to write to you, and although late enough, yet I now make it good. I heard with grief of your great danger of perishing by the sea, and of your merciful deliverance, with joy. Sure I am, brother, that Satan will leave no stone unrolled, as the proverb is, to roll you off your Rock, or at least to shake and unsettle you: for at that same time the mouths of wicked men were opened in hard speeches against you, by land, and the prince of the

* Searching about.

† See Let. 75.

power of the air was angry with you by sea. See then how much ye are obliged to that malicious murderer, who would beat you with two rods at one time ; but, blessed be God, his arm is short ; if the sea and wind would have obeyed him, ye had never come to land. Thank your God, who saith, “ I have the keys of hell and of death ;” * “ I kill, and I make alive ;” † “ The Lord bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up.” ‡ If Satan were jailor, and had the keys of death and of the grave, they should be stored with more prisoners. Ye were knocking at these black gates, and ye found the doors shut ; and we do all welcome you back again.

I trust that ye know that it is not for nothing that ye are sent to us again. The Lord knew that ye had forgotten something that was necessary for your journey ; that your armour was not as yet thick enough against the stroke of death. Now, in the strength of Jesus despatch your business ; that debt is not forgiven, but fristed : § death hath not bidden you farewell, but hath only left you for a short season. End your journey ere the night come upon you. Have all in readiness against the time that ye must sail through that black and impetuous Jordan ; and Jesus, Jesus, who knoweth both those depths and the rocks, and all the coasts, be your pilot. The last tide will not wait you for one moment. If ye forget anything, when your sea is full, and your foot in that ship, there is no returning again to fetch it. What ye do amiss in your life to-day, ye may amend it to-morrow ; for as many suns as God maketh to arise upon you, ye have as many new lives ; but ye can die but once, and if ye mar, or spill ¶ that business, ye cannot come back to mend that piece of work again. No man sinneth twice in dying ill ; as we die but once, so we die but ill or well once. You see how the number of your months is written in God’s book ; and as one of the Lord’s hirelings, ye must work till the shadow of the evening come upon you, and ye shall run out your glass even to the last pickle ¶ of sand. Fulfil your course with joy, for we take nothing

* Rev. i. 18.

† Deut. xxxii. 39.

‡ 1 Sam. ii. 6.

§ The payment put off.

¶ Spoil or destroy.

¶ Grain.

to the grave with us, but a good or evil conscience. And, although the sky clear after this storm, yet clouds will engender another.

Ye contracted with Christ, I hope, when first ye began to follow Him, that ye would bear His cross. Fulfil your part of the contract with patience, and break not to Jesus Christ. Be honest, brother, in your bargaining with Him; for who knoweth better how to bring up children than our God? For (to lay aside His knowledge, of the which there is no finding out) He hath been practised in bringing up His heirs these five thousand years; and His bairns are all well brought up, and many of them are honest men now at home, up in their own house in heaven, and are entered heirs to their Father's inheritance. Now, the form of His bringing up was by chastisements, scourging, correcting, nurturing; and see if He maketh exception of any of His bairns: * no, His eldest Son and His Heir, Jesus, is not excepted.† Suffer we must; ere we were born, God decreed it; and it is easier to complain of His decree than to change it. It is true, terrors of conscience cast us down; and yet without terrors of conscience we cannot be raised up again: fears and doubtings shake us; and yet without fears and doubtings we would soon sleep, and lose our grips‡ of Christ. Tribulation and temptations will almost loosen us to the root; and yet, without tribulations and temptations, we can now no more grow than herbs or corn without rain. Sin, and Satan, and the world will say, and cry in our ear, that we have a hard reckoning to make in judgment; and yet none of these three, except they lie, dare say in our face that our sin can change the tenor of the new covenant. Forward, then, dear brother, and lose not your grips. Hold fast the truth: for the world, sell not one dram-weight of God's truth, especially now, when most men measure truth by time, like young seamen setting their compass by a cloud; for now time is father and mother to truth, in the thoughts and practices of our evil time. The God of truth establish us; for, alas! now there are none to comfort the prisoners of hope, and the mourners in

* Rev. iii. 19; Heb. xii. 7, 8. † Heb. ii. 10. ‡ Grasp, firm hold.

Zion. We can do little, except pray and mourn for Joseph in the stocks. And let their tongue cleave to the roof of their mouth who forget Jerufalem now in her day; and the Lord remember Edom, and render to him as he hath done to us.

Now, brother, I shall not weary you; but I entreat you to remember my dearest love to Mr David Dickson, with whom I have small acquaintance; yet, I bless the Lord, I know that he both prayeth and doeth for our dying kirk. Remember my dearest love to John Stuart, whom I love in Christ; and show him from me, that I do always remember him, and hope for a meeting. The Lord Jesus establish him more and more, though he be already a strong man in Christ. Remember my heartiest affection in Christ to William Rodger,* whom I also remember to God. I wish that the first news I hear of him and you, and all that love our common Saviour in those bounds, may be, that they are so knit and linked, and kindly fastened in love with the Son of God, that ye may say, "Now if ye would ever so fain escape out of Christ's hands, yet love hath so bound us, that we cannot get our hands free again; He hath so ravished our hearts, that there is no loosening of His grips; the chains of His soul-ravishing love are so strong, that neither the grave nor death will break them." I hope, brother, yea, I doubt not of it, that ye lay me, and my first entry to the Lord's vineyard, and my flock, before Him who hath put me into His work. As the Lord knoweth, since first I saw you, I have been mindful of you. Marion M'Naught doth remember most heartily her love to you, and to John Stuart.† Blessed be the Lord! that in God's mercy I found in this country such a woman, to whom Jesus is dearer than her own heart, when there be so many that cast Christ over their shoulder. Good brother, call to mind the memory of your worthy father, now asleep in Christ; and, as his custom was, pray continually, and wrestle, for the life of a

* Livingstone in his "Memor. Characteristics" inserts, this godly man, a merchant in Ayr, after being for a time at Coleraine, in Ireland.

† See Let. 161, addressed to him.

dying, breathless kirk. And desire John Stuart not to forget poor Zion; she hath few friends, and few to speak one good word for her.

Now I commend you, your whole soul, and body, and spirit, to Jesus Christ and His keeping, hoping that ye will live and die, stand and fall, with the cause of our Master, Jesus. The Lord Jesus Himself be with your spirit.

Your loving brother in our Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ANWOTH, Feb. 2, 1632.

XXIII.—*To my* LADY KENMURE.

(EXHORTING TO REMEMBER HER ESPOUSAL TO CHRIST—TRIBULATION A PREPARATION FOR THE KINGDOM—GLORY IN THE END.)



ADAM,—Your Ladyship will not (I know) weary nor offend, though I trouble you with many letters. The memory of what obligations I am under to your Ladyship, is the cause of it.

I am possibly impertinent in what I write, because of my ignorance of your present estate; but for all that is said, I have learned of Mr W. D.* that ye have not changed upon, nor wearied of your sweet Master, Christ, and His service; neither were it your part to change upon Him who “resteth in His love.” Ye are among honourable company, and such as affect grandeur and court. But, Madam, thinking upon your estate, I think I see an improvident wooer coming too late to seek a bride, because she is contracted already, and promised away to another; and so the wooer’s busking† and bravery (who cometh to you‡ as “who but he?”) are in vain. The outward pomp of this busy wooer, a beguiling world, is now coming in to suit§ your soul too late, when ye have pro-

* Mr William Dalgleish, minister at Kirkmabreck.

† Decking, adorning. ‡ A proverbial expression, as in Herkat’s Poem, 84.

“Then came brave Glory passing by,

With filks that whistled, Who but he.”

§ To woo.

mised away your soul to Christ many years ago. And I know, Madam, what answer ye may now justly make to the late suitor ; even this : “ Ye are too long of coming ; my soul, the bride, is away already, and the contract with Christ subscribed, and I cannot choose, but I must be honest and faithful to Him.” Honourable lady, keep your first love, and hold the first match with that soul-delighting, lovely Bridegroom, our sweet, sweet Jesus, fairer than all the children of men, “ the Rose of Sharon,” and the fairest and sweetest-smelled rose in all His Father’s garden. There is none like Him ; I would not exchange one smile of His lovely face with kingdoms. Madam, let others take their silly, feckless* heaven in this life. Envy them not ; but let your soul, like a tarrowing† and mislearned child, take the dorts‡ (as we use to speak), or cast at§ all things and disdain them, except one only : either Christ or nothing. Your well-beloved, Jesus, will be content that ye be here devoutly proud, and ill to please, as one that contemneth all husbands but Himself. Either the King’s Son, or no husband at all ; this is humble, and worthy ambition. What have ye to do to dally with a whorish and foolish world ? Your jealous Husband will not be content that ye look by || Him to another : He will be jealous indeed, and offended, if ye kiss another but Himself. What weights do burden you, Madam, I know not ; but think it great mercy that your Lord from your youth hath been hedging in your outfraying affections, that they may not go a-whoring from Himself. If ye were His bastard, He would not nurture you so. If ye were for the slaughter, ye would be fattened. But be content ; ye are His wheat, growing in our Lord’s field ; ¶ and if wheat, ye must go under our Lord’s threshing-instrument, in His barn-floor, and through His sieve,** and through His mill to be bruised (as the Prince of your salvation, Jesus, was††), that ye may be found good bread in your Lord’s house. Lord Jesus, bless the spiritual

* Pithless, worthless.

§ Quarrel with, object to.

** Amos ix. 9.

† Pettish.

|| Past.

†† Isa. liii. 10.

‡ Get sulky.

¶ Matt. xiii. 25, 38.

husbandry, and separate you from the chaff, that dōw not bide* the wind. I am persuaded your glaſs is ſpending itſelf by little and little; and if ye knew who is before you, ye would rejoice in your tribulations. Think ye it a ſmall honour to ſtand before the throne of God and the Lamb? and to be clothed in white, and to be called to the marriage ſupper of the Lamb? and to be led to the fountain of living waters, and to come to the Well-head, even God Himſelf, and get your fill of the clear, cold, ſweet, refreshing water of life, the King's own well? and to put up your own ſinful hand to the tree of life, and take down and eat the ſweeteſt apple in all God's heavenly paradise, Jeſus Chriſt, your life and your Lord? Up your heart! ſhout for joy! Your King is coming to fetch you to His Father's houſe.

Madam, I am in exceeding great heavineſs, God thinking it beſt for my own ſoul thus to exerciſe me, thereby, it may be, to fit me to be His mouth to others. I ſee and hear, at home and abroad, nothing but matter of grief and diſcouragement, which indeed maketh my life bitter. And I hope in God never to get my will in this world. And I expect ere long a fiery trial upon the Church; for as many men almoſt in England and Scotland, as many falſe friends to Chriſt, and as many pulling and drawing to pull the crown off His holy head! and for fear that our Beloved ſtay amongſt us (as if His room were more deſirable than Himſelf), men are bidding Him go ſeek His lodging. Madam, if ye have a part in ſilly, friendleſs Zion (as I know ye have), ſpeak a word on her behalf to God and man. If ye can do nothing elſe, ſpeak for Jeſus, and ye ſhall thereby be a witneſs againſt this declining age. Now, from my very ſoul, laying and leaving you on the Lord, and deſiring a part in your prayers (as, my Lord knoweth, I remember you), I deliver over your body, ſpirit, and all your neceſſities, to the hands of our Lord, and remain for ever

Your Ladyſhip's in your ſweet Lord Jeſus and mine,

S. R.

ANWOTH, *Feb.* 13, 1632.

* Cannot ſtand.

XXIV.—*For* MARION M'NAUGHT.(CHRIST AND HIS GARDEN—PROVISION OF ORDINANCES IN
THE CHURCH—OUR CHILDREN.)

BELOVED MISTRESS,—My dearest love in Christ remembered to you. Know that Mr Abraham* showed me there is to be a meeting of the bishops at Edinburgh shortly. The causes are known to themselves. It is our part to hold up our hands for Zion. Howbeit, it is reported, they came sad from court. It is our Lord's wisdom, that His kirk should ever hang by a thread; and yet the thread breaketh not, being hanged upon Him who is the sure Nail in David's house,† upon whom all the vessels, great and small, do hang; and the Nail (God be thanked) neither crooketh nor can be broken. Jesus, that Flower of Jesse set without hands, getteth many a blast, and yet withers not, because He is His Father's noble Rose, casting a sweet smell through heaven and earth, and must grow; and in the same garden grow the saints, God's fair and beautiful lilies, under wind and rain, and all sun-burned, and yet life remaineth at the root. Keep within His garden, and you shall grow with them, till the Great Husbandman, our dear Master Gardener, come and transplant you from the lower part of His vineyard up to the higher, to the very heart of His garden, above the wrongs of the rain, sun, or wind. And then, wait upon the times of the blowing of the sweet south and north wind of His gracious Spirit, that may make you cast a sweet smell in your Beloved's nostrils; and bid your Beloved come down to His garden, and eat of His pleasant fruits.‡ And He will come. You will get no more but this until you come up to the Well-head,

* Possibly, this is Mr Abraham Henderfon, a staunch defender of Presbytery, who in 1605, persisted, along with eight of his brethren, in convening at Aberdeen, in face of prohibition, in order to maintain a protest in behalf of the Church's inherent right to meet in General Assembly. (See Forbes' Apolog. Narration,) p. 136.

† Isa. xxii. 23.

‡ Cant. iv. 16.

where you shall put up your hand and take down the apples of the tree of life, and eat under the shadow of that tree. These apples are sweeter up beside the tree than they are down here in this piece of a clay prison-house. I have no joy but in the thoughts of these times. Doubt not of your Lord's part and the spouse's part; she shall be in good case. That word shall stand, "I shall be as the dew to Israel: he shall grow up as the lily, and cast out his roots as Lebanon. His branches shall spread, his beauty shall be as the olive-tree, and his smell as Lebanon."* Christ shall set up His colours, and His ensign for the nations, and shall gather together the outcasts of Israel.† "Then the Lord said to me, Son of man, these dead bones are the whole house of Israel: behold, they say, Our bones are dried, our hope is lost; we are cut off for our parts. Therefore prophecy unto them, and say, Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, O My people, I will open your graves, and cause you come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel."‡ These promises are not wind, but the breast of our beloved Christ, which we must suck and draw comfort out of. Ye have cause to pity those poor creatures that stand out against Christ, and the building of His house. Silly men! they have but a feckless§ and silly heaven, nothing but meat and cloth, and laugh a day or two in the world, and then in a moment go down to the grave; and they shall not be able to hinder Christ's building. He that is Master of work will lead stones|| to the wall over their belly.

And for that present tumult that the children of this world raise anent the planting of your town with a pastor, believe and stay upon God, as you still shame us all in believing. Go forward in the strength of the Lord; and I say from my Lord, before whom I stand, have your eyes upon none but the Lord of armies, and the Lord shall either let you see what you long to see, or then else fulfil your joy more abundantly another way. You and yours, and the

* Hos. xiv. 5, 6.

† Isa. xi. 12.

‡ Ezek. xxxvii. 11, 12.

§ No substance, or pith, in it, worthless.

|| Carry (or cause to be carried) the stones for building His house.

children of God whom you care for in this town, shall have as much of the Son of God's supper cut and laid upon your trenchers, be who he will that carveth, as shall feed you to eternal life. And be not cast down for all that is done : your reward is laid up with God. I hope to see you laugh and leap for joy. Will the temple be built without din and tumult ? No ; God's stones in His house in Germany are laid with blood ; and the Son of God no sooner begins to chop and hew stones with His hammer, but as soon the sword is drawn. If the work were of men, the world would set their shoulders to yours ; but, in Christ's work, two or three must fight against a Presbytery (though His own court) and a city. This proveth that it is Christ's errand, and therefore that it shall thrive. Let them lay iron chains cross over the door,—stay, and believe, and wait, whill* the Lion of the tribe of Judah come. And He that comes from heaven clothed with the rainbow, and hath the little book in His hand, when He taketh a grip† of their chains, He will lay the door on the broadside,‡ and come in, and go up to the pulpit, and take the man with Him whom He hath chosen for His work. Therefore, let me hear from you, whether you be in heaviness, or rejoicing under hope, that I may take part of your grief, and bear it with you, and get part of your joy, which is to me also as my own joy.

And as to what are your fears anent the health or life of your dear children, lay it upon Christ's shoulders : let Him bear all. Loose your grips† of them all ; and when your dear Lord pulleth, let them go with faith and joy. It is a tried faith to kiss a Lord that is taking from you. Let them be careful, during the short time that they are here, to run and get a grip of the prize. Christ is standing in the end of their way, holding up the garland of endless glory to their eyes, and is crying, " Run fast, and come and receive." Happy are they (if their breath serve them) to run and not to weary, whill* their Lord, with His own dear hand, puts the crown upon their head. It is not long days, but good days, that make life glo-

* Till.

† A firm hold.

‡ Lay it flat.

rious and happy; and our dear Lord is gracious to us, who shorteneth and hath made the way to glory shorter than it was, so that the crown that Noah did fight for five hundred years, children may now obtain it in fifteen years. And heaven is in some sort better for us now than it was to Noah, for the man Christ is there now, who was not come in the flesh in Noah's days. You shall show this to your children, whom my soul in Christ blesteth, and entreat them by the mercies of God, and the bowels of Jesus Christ, to covenant with Jesus Christ to be His, and to make up the bond of friendship betwixt their souls and their Christ, that they may have acquaintance in heaven, and a friend at God's right hand. Such a friend at court is much worth.

Now I take my leave of you, praying my Christ and your Christ to fulfil your joy; and more graces and blessings from our sweet Lord Jesus to your soul, your husband's and children, than ever I wrote of the letters of A, B, C, to you. Grace, grace be with you.

Yours in my sweet Master, Jesus Christ,

S. R.

ANWOTH, *March 9, 1632.*

XXV.—*To a Gentlewoman at Kirkcudbright, excusing himself from visiting.*

MISTRESS,—I beseech you to have me excused if the daily employments of my calling shall hinder me to see you according as I would wish; for I dare not go abroad, since many of my people are sick, and the time of our Communion* draweth near. But frequent the company of your worthy and honest-hearted pastor, Mr Robert (Glendinning), to whom the Lord hath given the tongue of the learned, to minister a word in season to the weary. Remember me to him and to your husband. The Lord Jesus be with your spirit.

Your affectionate friend,

S. R.

* The dispensing of the Lord's Supper.

XXVI.—*For* MARION M'NAUGHT, *after her dangerous illness.*

(USE OF SICKNESS—REPROACHES—CHRIST OUR ETERNAL
FEAST—FASTING.)



EARLY BELOVED MISTRESS,—My love in Christ remembered. You are not ignorant what our Lord in His love-visitation hath been doing with your soul, even letting you see a little sight of that dark trance* you must go through ere you come to glory. Your life hath been near the grave, and you were at the door, and you found the door shut and fast: your dear Christ thinking it not time to open these gates to you till you have fought some longer in His camp. And therefore He willeth you to put on your armour again, and to take no truce with the devil or this present world. You are little obliged to any of the two; but I rejoice in this, that when any of the two comes to suit† your soul in marriage, you have an answer in readiness to tell them,—“You are too long a-coming; I have many a year since promised my soul to another, even to my dearest Lord Jesus, to whom I must be true.” And therefore you are come back to us again to help us to pray for Christ’s fair bride, a marrow‡ dear to Him.

Be not cast down in heart to hear that the world barketh at Christ’s strangers, both in Ireland and in this land; they do it because their Lord hath chosen them out of this world. And this is one of our Lord’s reproaches, to be hated and ill-entreated by men. The silly stranger, in an uncouth§ country, must take with a smoky inn and coarse cheer, a hard bed, and a barking, ill-tongued host. It is not long to the day, and he will to his journey upon the morrow, and leave them all. Indeed, our fair morning is at hand, the day-star is near the rising, and we are not many miles from home. What matters ill entertainment in the smoky inns of this

* Passage.

† Woo in marriage.

‡ Companion.

§ *Unco*, in other editions; *i.e.*, strange. In his sermons, it is generally written “uncouth.” Thus, “strange and uncouth to see!” (On Zech. xi. 9.)

miserable life? We are not to stay here, and we will be dearly welcome to Him whom we go to. And I hope, when I shall see you clothed in white raiment, washed in the blood of the Lamb, and shall see you even at the elbow of your dearest Lord and Redeemer, and a crown upon your head, and following our Lamb and lovely Lord whithersoever He goeth,—you will think nothing of all these days; and you shall then rejoice, and no man shall take your joy from you. It is certain there is not much sand to run in your Lord's sand-glass, and that day is at hand; and till then your Lord in this life is giving you some little feasts.

It is true, you see Him not now as you shall see Him then. Your well-beloved standeth now behind the wall looking out at the window,* and you see but a little of His face. Then, you shall see all His face and all the Saviour,—a long, and high, and broad Lord Jesus, the loveliest person among the children of men. O joy of joys, that our souls know there is such a great supper preparing for us even! Howbeit we be but half-hungered† of Christ here, and many a time dine behind noon,‡ yet the supper of the Lamb will come in time, and will be set before us before we famish and lose our stomachs. You have cause to hold up your heart in remembrance and hope of that fair, long summer day; for in this night of your life, wherein you are in the body absent from the Lord, Christ's fair moonlight in His word and sacraments, in prayer, feeling, and holy conference, hath shined upon you, to let you see the way to the city. I confess our diet here is but sparing; we get but tastings of our Lord's comforts; but the cause of that is not because our Steward, Jesus, is a niggard, and narrow-hearted, but because our stomachs are weak, and we are narrow-hearted. But the great feast is coming, and the chambers of them made fair and wide to take in the great Lord Jesus. Come in, then, Lord Jesus, to hungry souls gaping for thee! In this journey take the Bridegroom as you may have Him, and be greedy of His smallest crumbs; but, dear

* Cant. ii. 9.

† Only half fed with.

‡ Noon, or a little before it, was then the usual hour for dinner.

Mistress, buy none of Christ's delicates-spiritual with sin, or fasting against your weak body. Remember you are in the body, and it is the lodging-house; and you may not, without offending the Lord, suffer the old walls of that house to fall down through want of necessary food. Your body is the dwelling-house of the Spirit; and therefore, for the love you carry to the sweet Guest, give a due regard to His house of clay. When He looseth the wall, why not? Welcome Lord Jesus! But it is a fearful sin in us, by hurting the body by fasting, to loose one stone or the least piece of timber in it; for the house is not our own. The Bridegroom is with you yet; so fast as that also you may feast and rejoice in Him. I think upon your magistrates; but He that is clothed in linen, and hath the writer's inkhorn by His side, hath written up their names in heaven already. Pray and be content with His will; God hath a council-house in heaven, and the end will be mercy unto you. For the planting of your town with a godly minister, have your eye upon the Lord of the harvest. I dare promise you, God in this life shall fill your soul with the fatness of His house, for your care to see Christ's bairns fed. And your posterity shall know it, to whom I pray for mercy, and that they may get a name amongst the living in Jerusalem; and if God portion them with His bairns, their rent is fair, and I hope it shall be so. The Lord Jesus be with your spirit.

Yours ever in Christ,

S. R.

ANWOTH, *Sept.* 19, 1632.

XXVII.—*To my* LADY KENMURE.

(*LOVE TO CHRIST AND SUBMISSION TO HIS CROSS—BELIEVERS
KEPT—THE HEAVENLY PARADISE.*)



ADAM,—Having saluted you with grace and mercy from God our Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ, I long both to see your Ladyship, and to hear how it goeth with you.

I do remember you, and present you and your necessities to Him who is able to keep you, and present you blameless before His face with joy; and my prayer to our Lord is, that ye may be sick of love for Him, who died of love for you,—I mean your Saviour Jesus. And O sweet were that sickness to be soul-sick for Him! And a living death it were, to die in the fire of the love of that soul-lover, Jesus! And, Madam, if ye love Him, ye will keep His commandments; and this is not one of the least, to lay your neck cheerfully and willingly under the yoke of Jesus Christ. For I trust your Ladyship did first contract and bargain with the Son of God to follow Him upon these terms, that by His grace ye should endure hardship, and suffer affliction, as the soldier of Christ. They are not worthy of Jesus who will not take a blow for their Master's sake. As for our glorious Peace-maker, when He came to make up the friendship betwixt God and us, God bruised Him, and struck Him; the sinful world also did beat Him, and crucify Him; yet He took buffets of both parties, and (honour to our Lord Jesus!) He would not leave the field for all that, till He had made peace betwixt the parties. I persuade myself your sufferings are but like your Saviour's (yea, incomparably less and lighter), which are called but a bruising of His heel;* a wound far from the heart. Your life is hid with Christ in God,† and therefore ye cannot be robbed of it. Our Lord handleth us, as fathers do their young children; they lay up jewels in a place, above the reach of the short arm of bairns, else bairns would put up their hands and take them down, and lose them soon: so hath our Lord done with our spiritual life. Jesus Christ is the high coffer in the which our Lord hath hid our life; we children are not able to reach up our arm so high as to take down that life and lose it; it is in our Christ's hand. O long, long may Jesus be Lord Keeper of our life! and happy are they that can, with the Apostle,‡ lay their soul in pawn in the hand of Jesus, for He is able to keep that which is committed in pawn to Him against that day. Then, Madam, so long as this life

* Gen. iii. 13.

† Col. iii. 3.

‡ 2 Tim. i. 12.

is not hurt, all other troubles are but touches in the heel. I trust ye will soon be cured. Ye know, Madam, kings have some servants in their court that receive not present wages in their hand, but live upon their hopes: the King of kings also hath servants in His court that for the present get little or nothing but the heavy cross of Christ, troubles without and terrors within; but they live upon hope; and when it cometh to the parting of the inheritance, they remain in the house as heirs. It is better to be so than to get present payment, and a portion in this life, an inheritance in this world (God forgive me, that I should honour it with the name of an inheritance, it is rather a farm-room!*), and then in the end to be casten out of God's house, with this word, "Ye have received your consolation, ye will get no more." Alas! what get they? The rich glutton's heaven.† O but our Lord maketh it a silly‡ heaven! "He fared well," saith our Lord, "and delicately every day." O no more? a silly heaven! Truly no more, except that he was clothed in purple, and that is all. I persuade myself, Madam, ye have joy when ye think that your Lord hath dealt more graciously with your soul. Ye have gotten little in this life, it is true indeed: ye have then the more to crave, yea, ye have all to crave; for, except some tastings of the first fruits, and some kisses of His mouth whom your soul loveth, ye get no more. But I cannot tell you what is to come. Yet I may speak as our Lord doth of it. The foundation of the city is pure gold, clear as crystal; the twelve ports§ are set with precious stones; if orchards and rivers commend a soil upon earth, there is a paradise there, wherein groweth the tree of life, that beareth twelve manner of fruits every month, which is seven score and four harvests in the year; and there is there a pure river of water of life, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb; and the city hath no need of the light of the sun or moon, or of a candle, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb is the light thereof. Madam, believe and hope for this, till ye see and enjoy. Jesus is saying in the Gospel, Come and see;

* Rented room, like a tenant's farm. † Luke xvi. 25. ‡ Poor. § Gates.

and He is come down in the chariot of truth, wherein He rideth through the world, to conquer men's souls,* and is now in the world saying, "Who will go with Me? will ye go? My Father will make you welcome, and give you house-room; for in My Father's house are many dwelling-places." Madam, consent to go with Him. Thus I rest, commending you to God's dearest mercy.

Yours in the Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ANWOTH.

XXVIII.—*To my LADY KENMURE, after the death of a child.*

(THE STATE OF THE CHURCH, CAUSE FOR GOD'S DISPLEASURE—
HIS CARE OF HIS CHURCH—THE JEWS—AFFLICTED SAINTS.)



ADAM,—I am afraid now (as many others are) that, at the sitting down of our Parliament,† our Lord Jesus and His spouse shall be roughly handled. And it must be so, since false and declining Scotland, whom our Lord took off the dunghill and out of hell, and made a fair bride to Himself, hath broken her faith to her sweet Husband, and hath put on the forehead of a whore. And therefore He saith He will remove. Would God we could stir up ourselves to lay hold upon Him, who, being highly provoked with the handling He hath met with, is ready to depart! Alas! we do not importune Him by prayer and supplication to abide amongst us! If we could but weep upon Him, and in the holy pertinacity of faith wrestle with Him, and say, "We will not let Thee go," it may be that then, He, who is easy to be intreated, would yet, notwithstanding of our high provocations, condescend to stay and feed among the lilies, till that fair and desirable day break, and the shadows flee away. Ah! what cause of mourning is there, when our gold is become dim, and the visage of our

* Ps. xlv. 4.

† The Parliament to be held at Edinburgh on 25th June of this year.

Nazarites, sometime* whiter than snow, is now become blacker than a coal, and Levi's house, once comparable to fine gold, is now changed, and become like vessels in whom He hath no pleasure! Madam, think upon this, that when our Lord, who hath His handkerchief to wipe the face of the mourners in Zion, shall come to wipe away all tears from their eyes, He may wipe yours also, in the passing, amongst others. I am confident, Madam, that our Lord will yet build a new house to Himself, of our rejected and scattered stones, for our Bridegroom cannot want a wife. Can He live a widower? Nay, He will embrace both us, the little young sister, and the elder sister, the Church of the Jews; and there will yet be a day of it. And therefore we have cause to rejoice, yea, to sing and shout for joy. The Church hath been, since the world began, ever hanging by a small thread, and all the hands of hell and of the wicked have been drawing at the thread. But, God be thanked, they only break their arms by pulling, but the thread is not broken; for the sweet fingers of Christ our Lord have spun and twisted it. Lord, hold the thread whole!

Madam, stir up your husband to lay hold upon the covenant, and to do good. What hath he to do with the world? It is not his inheritance. Desire him to make home† over, and put to his hand to lay one stone or two upon the wall of God's house before he go hence. I have heard also, Madam, that your child is removed; but to have or want is best, as He pleaseth. Whether she be with you, or in God's keeping, think it all one; nay, think it the better of the two by far that she is with Him. I trust in our Lord that there is something laid up and kept for you; for our kind Lord, who hath wounded you, will not be so cruel as not to allay the pain of your green wound; and, therefore, claim Christ still as your own, and own Him as your One thing. So resting, I recommend your Ladyship, your soul and spirit, in pawn to Him who keepeth His Father's pawns, and will make an account of them faithfully, even to that fairest amongst the sons of men, our sweet Lord

* Once on a time.

† Homewards.

Jefus, the faireft, the fweeteft, the moft delicious Roſe of all His Father's great field. The ſmell of that Roſe perfume your ſoul!

Your Ladyſhip, in his fweeteft Lord Jefus,

ANWOTH, April 1, 1633.

S. R.

XXIX.—*For* MARION M'NAUGHT.

(CHRIST WITH HIS PEOPLE IN THE FURNACE OF AFFLICTION—
PRAYER.)

DEAR SISTER,—I longed much to have conferred with you at this time. I am grieved at anything in your houſe that grieveth you; and ſhall, by my Lord's grace, ſuit* my Lord to help you to bear your burden, and to come in behind you, and give you and your burdens a put† up the mountain. Know you not that Chriſt wooeth His wife in the furnace? “Behold, I have refined thee, but not with ſilver; I have choſen thee in the furnace of affliction.”‡ He caſteth His love on you when you are in the furnace of affliction. You might indeed be caſten down if He brought you in and left you there; but when He leadeth you through the waters, think ye not that He has a ſweet, ſoft hand? You know His love-grip§ already; you ſhall be delivered, wait on. Jefus will make a road, and come and fetch home the captive. You ſhall not die in priſon; but your ſtrokes are ſuch as were your Huſband's, who was wounded in the houſe of His friends. Strokes were not newings|| to Him, and neither are they to you. But your winter night is near ſpent; it is near-hand¶ the dawning. I will ſee you leap for joy. The kirk ſhall be delivered. This wilderneſs ſhall bud and grow up like a roſe. Chriſt got a charter of Scotland from His Father; and who will bereave Him of His heritage, or put our Redeemer out of His mailing,* until His

* Entreat.

† Puſh.

‡ Iſa. xlviii. 10.

§ Graſp, or firm hold.

|| News, or new things.

¶ Nigh.

** *Mailing*, a farm; ſo called from *mail*, rent.

tack be run out? I must have you praying for me: I am black flamed for evermore now with Christ's goodness; and in private, on the 17th and 18th of August, I got a full answer of my Lord to be a graced minister, and a chosen arrow hidden in His own quiver. But know this, assurance is not kepted but by watching and prayer; and, therefore, dear mistress, help me. I have gotten now (honour to my Lord!) the gate* to open the flote,† and shut‡ the bar of His door; and I think it easy to get anything from the King by prayer, and to use holy violence with Him. Christ was in Carsphairne§ kirk, and opened the people's hearts wonderfully. Jesus is looking up that water;|| and minting¶ to dwell amongst them. I would we could give Him His welcome home to the moors. Now peace and grace be upon you and all yours.


Yours in Christ,

ANWOTH, Aug. 20, 1633.

S. R.

XXX.—*To my LADY KENMURE.*

(*RANK AND PROSPERITY HINDER PROGRESS—WATCHFULNESS
—CASE OF RELATIVES.*)

 ADAM,—I determined, and was desirous also, to have seen your ladyship, but because of a pain in my arm I could not. I know ye will not impute it to any unfuitable forgetfulness of your Ladyship, from whom, at my first entry to my calling in this country (and since also), I received such comfort in my affliction as I trust in God never to forget, and shall

* Way.

† Bolt.

‡ Shut, or shute, or shoot. Here it is to push back the bar so as to open the door.

§ The village and church of *Carsphairn* stood not far from Kenmure Castle, and very near Earlston and Knockgray. If one travels to it from the side of Dalmellington, the road is solitary, dreary, bare, with steep, rocky hills on either side of the glen.

|| That river,—the Ken (?).

¶ Making as if He would, trying.

labour by His grace to recompense in the only way possible to me ; and that is, by presenting your soul, person, house, and all your necessities, in prayer to Him, whose I hope you are, and who is able to keep you till that Day of Appearance, and to present you before His face with joy.

I am confident your Ladyship is going forward in the begun journey to your Lord and Father's home and kingdom. Howbeit ye want not temptations within and without. And who among the faints hath ever taken that castle without stroke of sword? the Chief of the house, our Elder Brother, our Lord Jesus, not being excepted, who won His own house and home, due to Him by birth, with much blood and many blows. Your Ladyship hath the more need to look to yourself, because our Lord hath placed you higher than the rest, and your way to heaven lieth through a more wild and waste wilderness than the way of many of your fellow-travellers,—not only through the midst of this wood of thorns, the cumbersome world, but also through these dangerous paths, the vain-glory of it ; the consideration whereof hath often moved me to pity your soul, and the soul of your worthy and noble husband. And it is more to you to win* heaven, being ships of greater burden, and in the main sea, than for little vessels, that are not so much in the mercy and reverence† of the storms, because they may come quietly to their port by launching alongst the coast. For the which cause ye do much, if in the midst of such a tumult of business, and crowd of temptations, ye shall give Christ Jesus His own court and His own due place in your soul. I know and am persuaded, that that lovely One, Jesus, is dearer to you than many kingdoms; and that ye esteem Him your Well-beloved, and the Standard-bearer among ten thousand.‡ And it becometh Him full well to take the place

* Reach.

† “*Reverence*” occurs in Lets. 233 and 298 in the sense of “power,” and is there so explained by Jamieson. It would be *q.d.*, “giving homage to the storms.” A person used to say, “I will not be in your reverence;” *i.e.*, not submit to your dictation.

‡ Cant. v. 10.

and the board-head* in your soul before all the world. I knew and saw Him with you in the furnace of affliction; for there he wooed you to Himself, and chose you to be His; and now He craveth no other hire of you but your love, and that He get no cause to be jealous of you. And, therefore, dear and worthy lady, be like to the fresh river, that keepeth its own fresh taste in the salt sea. This world is not worthy of your soul. Give it not a good-day when Christ cometh in competition with it. Be like one of another country. Home! and stay not; for the sun is fallen low, and nigh the tops of the mountains, and the shadows are stretched out in great length. Linger not by the way. The world and sin would train† you on, and make you turn aside. Leave not the way for them; and the Lord Jesus be at the voyage!

Madam, many eyes are upon you, and many would be glad your Ladyship should spill‡ a Christian, and mar a good professor. Lord Jesus, mar their godless desires, and keep the conscience whole without a crack! If there be a hole in it, so that it take in water at a leak,§ it will with difficulty mend again. It is a dainty, delicate creature, and a rare piece of the workmanship of your Maker; and therefore deal gently with it, and keep it entire, that amidst this world's glory your Ladyship may learn to entertain Christ. And whatsoever creature your Ladyship findeth not to smell of Him, may it have no better relish to you than the white of an egg.

Madam, it is a part of the truth of your profession to drop words in the ears of your noble husband continually, of eternity, judgment, death, hell, heaven, the honourable profession, the sins of his father's house. He must reckon with God for his father's debt: forgetting of accounts payeth no debt. Nay, the interest of a forgotten bond runneth up with God to interest upon interest. I knoweth he looketh homeward, and loveth the truth; but I pity him with my soul because of his many temptations. Satan layeth

* Head of the dinner-table. † Draw, entice; the French "trainer."

‡ Spoil.

§ Spelt "leek" in old editions.

upon men a burden of cares above a load,* and maketh a pack-horse of men's souls when they are wholly set upon this world. We owe the devil no such service. It were wisdom to throw off that load into a mire, and cast all our cares over upon God.

Madam, think ye have no child. Subscribe a bond to your Lord that she shall be His if He take her; and thanks, and praise, and glory to His holy name shall be the interest for a year's loan of her. Look for crosses, and while it is fair weather mend the sails of the ship.

Now, hoping your Ladyship will pardon my tediousness, I commend your soul and person to the grace and mercy of our sweet Lord Jesus, in whom I am,

Your Ladyship, at all dutiful obedience in Christ,

S. R.

ANWOTH, Nov. 15, 1633.

XXXI.—*To my LADY KENMURE.*

(*A UNION FOR PRAYER RECOMMENDED.*)



ADAM,—Having received a letter from some of the worthiest of the ministry in this kingdom, the contents whereof I am desired to communicate to such professors in these parts as I know love the beauty of Zion, and are afflicted to see the Lord's vineyard trodden under foot by the wild boars out of the wood, who lay it waste, I could not but also desire your Ladyship's help to join with the rest, desiring you to impart it to my Lord your husband, and if ye think it needful, I shall write to his Lordship, as Mr. G. G.† shall advertise me.

Know, therefore, that the best affected of the ministry have

* A burden above a load, or a load above a burden, is a phrase for a very heavy weight.

† Mr George Gillespie; see Let. 144.

thought it convenient and necessary, at such a time as this, that all who love the truth should join their prayers together, and cry to God with humiliation and fasting. The times, which are agreed upon, are the two first Sabbaths of February next, and the six days intervening betwixt these Sabbaths, as they may conveniently be had, and the first Sabbath of every quarter. And the causes, as they are written to me, are these :

1. Besides the distresses of the Reformed churches abroad, the many reigning sins of uncleanness, ungodliness, and unrighteousness in this land, the present judgments on the land, and many more hanging over us, whereof few are sensible, or yet know the right and true cause of them.

2. The lamentable and pitiful estate of a glorious church (in so short a time, against so many bonds), in doctrine, sacrament, and discipline, so sore persecuted, in the persons of faithful pastors and professors, and the door of God's house kept so strait by bastard porters, in so much that worthy instruments, able for the work, are held at the door, the rulers having turned over religion into policy, and the multitude ready to receive any religion that shall be enjoined by authority.

3. In our humiliation, besides that we are under a necessity of deprecating God's wrath, and vowing to God sincerely new obedience, the weakness, coldness, silence, and lukewarmness of some of the best of the ministry, and the deadness of professors, who have suffered the truth both secretly to be stolen away, and openly to be plucked from us, would be confessed.

4. Atheism, idolatry, profanity, and vanity, should be confessed ; our king's heart recommended to God ; and God intreated, that He would stir up the nobles and the people to turn from their evil ways.

Thus, Madam, hoping that your Ladyship will join with others, that such a work be not slighted, at such a necessary time, when our kirk is at the overturning, I will promise to myself your help, as the Lord in secrecy and prudence shall enable you, that your Ladyship may rejoice with the Lord's people, when deliverance shall come ; for true and sincere humiliation come always speed with God. And

when authority, king, court, and churchmen oppose the truth, what other armour have we but prayer and faith? whereby, if we wrestle with Him, there is ground to hope that those who would remove the burdensome stone* out of its place, shall but hurt their back, and the stone shall not be moved, at least not removed.

Grace, grace be with you, from Him who hath called you to the inheritance of the saints in light.

Your Ladyship's at all submissive obedience in his sweet Lord Jesus.

S. R.

ANWOTH, Jan. 23, 1634.

XXXII.—*For* MARION M'NAUGHT.

(STATE AND PROSPECTS OF THE CHURCH—SATAN.)



MISSRESS,—My love in Christ remembered. I am in care and fear for this work of our Lord's, now near approaching, because of the danger of the time; and I dare not for my soul be silent, to see my Lord's house burning, and not cry, "Fire, fire!" Therefore, seek from our Lord wisdom spiritual, and not black policy, to speak with liberty our Lord's truth.—I am cast down, and would fain have access and presence to The King that day, even howbeit I should break up iron doors. I believe you will not forget me; and you will desire Jean Brown, Thomas Carlon, and Marion Carlon, to help me. Pray for well-cooked meat and an heartsome† Saviour, with joy crying, "Welcome in My Father's name."

I am confident Zion shall be well; the Bush shall burn and not consume, for the good will of Him that dwelt in the bush. But the Lord is making on‡ a fire in Jerusalem, and purposeth to blow the bellows, and to melt the tin and brass, and bring out a

* Zech. xii. 3.

† Cheerful.

‡ Making on; putting the fuel in order.

fair beautiful bride out of the furnace, that will be married over again upon the new Husband, and sing as in the days of her youth, when the contract of marriage is written over again. But I fear the bride be hidden for a time from the dragon that pursueth the woman with child. But what, howbeit we go and lurk in the wilderness for a time? for the Lord will take His kirk to the wilderness, and speak to her heart.

Nothing casteth me down, but only I fear the Lord will cast down the shepherd's tents, and feed His own in a secret place. But let us, however matters frame,* cast over the affairs of the bride upon the Bridegroom; the government is upon His shoulders, and He dow† bear us all well enough. That fallen star, the prince of the bottomless pit, knoweth it is near the time when he shall be tormented; and now in his evening he has gathered his armies, to win one battle or two, in the edge of the evening, at the sun going down. And when our Lord has been watering His vineyards in France, and Germany, and Bohemia, how can we think ourselves Christ's sister, if we be not like Him, and our other great sisters? I cannot but think, seeing the ends of the earth are given to Christ‡ (and Scotland is the end of the earth, and so we are in Christ's charter-tailzie§), but our Lord will keep His possession. We fall by promise and law to Christ. He won us with the sweat of His brow, if I may say so; His Father promised Him His liferent of Scotland. Glory, glory to our King! long may He wear His crown. O Lord, let us never see another King! O let Him come down like rain upon the new-mown grafs!

I had you in remembrance on Saturday in the morning last, in a great measure, and was brought, thrice on end,|| in remembrance of you in my prayer to God. Grace, grace be your portion.

Yours in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ANWOTH, *March 2, 1634.*

* Turn out; succeed.

§ Charter of entail.

† Is able to.

|| In succession.

‡ Ps. ii. 8.

XXXIII.—*For* MARION M'NAUGHT.

(IN PROSPECT OF A COMMUNION SEASON.)



ISTRESS,—My love in Christ remembered. Please you understand, to my grief, our Communion is delayed till Sabbath come eight days; for the laird and lady hath earnestly desired me to delay it, because the laird is sick, and he fears he be not able to travel, because he has lately taken physick. The Lord bless that work. Commend it to God as you love me, for I love not Satan's thorns cast in the Lord's way. The Lord rebuke him. I trust in God's mercy, Satan has gotten but a delay, but no free discharge that his kingdom shall not be hurt. Commend the laird to your God. I pray you advertise your people, that they be not disappointed in coming here. Show such of them as you love in Christ, from me, that Jesus Christ will be welcome, when He comes, in that He has sharpened their desires for eight days' space. Your daughter is well, I hope, every way. Forget not God's kirk; they are but bastards, and not sons and daughters, that mourn not for Zion. Lord hear us! No further. Jesus Christ be with your spirit. I shall remember you and your new house. Lord Jesus go from the one house to the other.

Yours at all power in the Lord,

S. R.

ANWOTH.

XXXIV.—*For* MARION M'NAUGHT.

(PROSPECTS OF THE CHURCH—CHRIST'S CARE FOR THE CHILDREN OF BELIEVERS.)



ELL-BELOVED SISTER,—My old and dearest love in Christ remembered. Know that I have been visiting my Lady Kenmure. Her child is with the Lord. I

entreat you, visit her, and desire the good-wife* of Barcapple to visit her, and Knockbrecks (Mr Gordon), if you see him in the town. My Lord her husband is absent, and I think she will be heavy. You know what Mr W. Dalgleish and I desired you to deal for, at my Lord Kirkcudbright's hand. Send me word if you obtained anything at my Lord's hands, anent the giving up of our names to the High Commission; for I hear it is not for nothing that the Bishop hath taken that course. Our Lord knows best what is good for an old kirk that is fallen from her first love, and hath forgotten her Husband days without number. A trial is like to come on; but I am sure our Husbandman Christ shall lose chaff, but no corn at all. Yet there is a dry wind coming, but neither to fan nor to purge. Happy are they who are not blown away with the chaff, for we will but suffer temptation for ten days; but those who are faithful to the death shall receive the crown of life. I hear daily what hath been spoken of myself, most unjustly and falsely; and no marvel,—the dragon, with the fving of his tail, hath made the third part of the stars to fall from heaven, and the fallen stars would have many to fall with them. If ever Satan was busy, now, when he knoweth his time is short, he is busy. “Yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry.” I know, ere it be long, the Lord shall come and redd† all pleas betwixt us and our enemies. Now welcome, Lord Jesus, go fast.

Send me word about Grizel, your daughter, whom I remember in Christ; and desire her to cast herself in His arms who was born of a woman, and, being the Ancient of days, was made a young weeping child. It was not for nothing that our brother Jesus was an infant. It was that He might pity infants of believers, who were to come out of the womb into the world. I believe our Lord Jesus shall be waiting on, with mercy, mercy, mercy, to the end of that battle, and bring her through with life and peace, and

* Like “the good-man of the house,” Luke xii. 39; one of the independent yeomanry of the day. *Barcapple* is in the stewartry of Kirkcudbright, in the parish of Tongueland.

† Settle, clear up.

a sign of God's favour. I will expect advertisement from you, and especially if you fear her. Mistrefs, you remember that I said to you anent your love to me and my brother, begun in Christ; you know we are here but strangers, and you have not yet found us a dry well, as others have been. Be not overcome of any suspicion. I trust in God that the Lord, who knit us together, shall keep us together. It is time now that the lambs of Jesus should all run together, when the wolf is barking at them; yet I know, ere God's bairns want a cross, their love amongst themselves shall be a cross; but our Lord giveth love for another end. I know you will, with love, cover infirmities; and our Lord give you wisdom in all things. I think love hath broad shoulders, and will bear many things, and yet neither faint nor sweat, nor fall under the burden.

Commend me to your husband and dear Grizel. I think on her. Lord Jesus be in the furnace with her, and then she will but smoke and not burn. Desire Mr Robert* to excuse my not seeing of him at his house. I have my own reasons therefor.† Grace, mercy, and peace be with you.

Yours in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ANWOTH, April 25, 1634.

XXXV.—*To my LADY KENMURE, on the death of a child.*

(GOD MEASURES OUR DAYS—BEREAVEMENTS RIPEN US FOR THE HARVEST.)



ADAM,—All submissive and dutiful obedience in our Lord Jesus remembered. I trust I need not much entreat your Ladyship to look to Him who hath stricken you at this time; but my duty, in the memory of that comfort I found in your Ladyship's kindness, when I was no less heavy (in a case not unlike that), speaketh to me to say something now. And I

* Mr Robert Glendinning, the minister.

† For this; as in our metre version, Ps. cvi. 40, etc.

with I could ease your Ladyship, at least with words. I am persuaded your Physician will not slay you, but purge you, seeing He calleth Himself the Chirurgion, who maketh the wound and bindeth it up again ; for to lance a wound is not to kill, but to cure the patient.* I believe faith will teach you to kiss a striking Lord ; and so acknowledge the sovereignty of God (in the death of a child) to be above the power of us mortal men, who may pluck up a flower in the bud, and not be blamed for it. If our dear Lord pluck up one of His roses, and pull down four and green fruit before harvest, who can challenge Him ? For He sendeth us to His world, as men to a market, wherein some stay many hours, and eat and drink, and buy and sell, and pass through the fair, till they be weary ; and such are those who live long and get a heavy fill of this life. And others again come slipping in to the morning market, and do neither sit nor stand, nor buy nor sell, but look about them a little, and pass presently home again ; and these are infants and young ones, who end their short market in the morning, and get but a short view of the fair. Our Lord, who hath numbered man's months, and set him bounds that he cannot pass,† hath written the length of our market, and it is easier to complain of the decree than to change it.

I verily believe, when I write this, your Lord hath taught your Ladyship to lay your hand on your mouth. But I shall be far from desiring your Ladyship, or any others, to cast by a cross, like an old useless bill that is only for the fire ; but rather would wish each cross were looked in the face seven times, and were read over and over again. It is the messenger of the Lord, and speaks something ; and the man of understanding will hear the rod, and Him that hath appointed it. Try what is the taste of the Lord's cup, and drink with God's blessing, that ye may grow thereby. I trust in God, whatever speech it utter to your soul, this is one word in it,—“ Behold, blessed is the man whom God correcteth ;”‡ and that it saith to you, “ Ye are from home while here ; ye are not of this world,

* Deut. xxxii. 39 ; 1 Sam. ii. 6 ; Job v. 18 ; Hos. vi. 1.

† Job xiv. 5.

‡ Job v. 17.

as your Redeemer, Christ, was not of this world." There is something keeping for you, which is worth the having. All that is here is condemned to die, to pass away like a snow-ball before a summer sun; and since death took first possession of something of yours, it hath been and daily is creeping nearer and nearer to yourself, howbeit with no noise of feet. Your Husbandman and Lord hath lopped off some branches already; the tree itself is to be transplanted to the high garden. In a good time be it. Our Lord ripen your Ladyship. All these crosses (and indeed, when I remember them, they are heavy and many,—peace, peace be the end of them!) are to make you white and ripe for the Lord's harvest-hook. I have seen the Lord weaning you from the breasts of this world. It was never His mind it should be your patrimony; and God be thanked for that. Ye look the liker one of the heirs. Let the moveables go; why not? They are not yours. Fasten your grips* upon the heritage; and our Lord Jesus make the charters sure, and give your Ladyship to grow as a palm-tree on God's mount Zion; howbeit shaken with winds, yet the root is fast. This is all I can do, to recommend your case to your Lord, who hath you written upon the palms of His hand. If I were able to do more, your Ladyship may believe me that gladly I would. I trust shortly to see your Ladyship. Now He who hath called you, confirm and stablish your heart in grace unto the Day of the Liberty of the Sons of God.

Your Ladyship at all submissive obedience in his sweet Lord Jesus,
 ANWOTH, *April 29, 1634.* S. R.

XXXVI.—*For* MARION M'NAUGHT.

(CHOICE OF A COMMISSIONER FOR PARLIAMENT.)



WELL-BELOVED MISTRESS,—My love in Christ remembered. I hear this day your town is to choose a commissioner for the Parliament; and I was written to

* Firm grasp.

from Edinburgh, to see that good men should be chosen in your bounds. And I have heard this day that Robert Glendoning or John Ewart look to be chosen. I beseech you see this be not. The Lord's cause craveth other witnesses to speak for Him than such men; and, therefore, let it not be said that Kirkcudbright, which is spoken of in this kingdom for their religion, hath sent a man to be their mouth that will speak against Christ. Such a time as this will not fall out once in half an age. I would intreat your husband to take it upon him. It is an honourable and necessary service for Christ; and shew him that I wrote unto you for that effect. I fear William Glendoning hath not skill and authority. I am in great heaviness. Pray for me, for we must take our life in our hand in this ill time. Let us stir up ourselves, to lay our Lord's bride and her wrongs before our Husband and Lord. Lord Jesus be with your spirit.

Yours in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ANWOTH, May 20.

XXXVII.—*To my LADY KENMURE.*

(ON THE DEATH OF LORD KENMURE—DESIGNS OF AND
DUTIES OF AFFLICTION.)

MY VERY NOBLE AND WORTHY LADY,—So oft as I call to mind the comforts that I myself, a poor friendless stranger, received from your Ladyship here in a strange part of the country, when my Lord took from me the delight of mine eyes,* as the Word speaketh (which wound is not yet fully healed and cured), I trust your Lord shall remember that, and give you comfort now at such a time as this, wherein your dearest Lord hath made you a widow, that ye may be a free

* Ezek. xxiv. 16.

woman for Christ, who is now suiting for marriage-love of you. And therefore, since you lie alone in your bed, let Christ be as a bundle of myrrh, to sleep and lie all the night betwixt your breasts,* and then your bed is better filled than before. And seeing, amongst all crosses spoken of in our Lord's Word, this giveth you a particular right to make God your Husband (which was not so yours while your husband was alive), read God's mercy out of this visitation. And albeit I must out of some experience say, the mourning for the husband of your youth be, by God's own mouth, the heaviest worldly sorrow;† and though this be the weightiest burden that ever lay upon your back; yet ye know (when the fields are emptied and your husband now asleep in the Lord), if ye shall wait upon Him who hideth His face for a while, that it lieth upon God's honour and truth to fill the field, and to be a Husband to the widow. See and consider then what ye have lost, and how little it is. Therefore, Madam, let me intreat you, in the bowels of Christ Jesus, and by the comforts of His Spirit, and your appearance before Him, let God, and men, and angels now see what is in you. The Lord hath pierced the vessel; it will be known whether there be in it wine or water. Let your faith and patience be seen, that it may be known your only beloved first and last hath been Christ. And, therefore, now ware‡ your whole love upon Him; He alone is a suitable object for your love and all the affections of your soul. God hath dried up one channel of your love by the removal of your husband. Let now that speat§ run upon Christ. Your Lord and lover hath graciously taken out your husband's name and your name out of the summonses that are raised at the instance of the terrible sin-revenging Judge of the world against the house of the Kenmure. And I dare say that God's hammering of you from your youth is only to make you a fair carved stone in the high upper temple of the New Jerusalem. Your Lord never thought this world's vain painted glory a gift worthy of you; and

* Cant. i. 13.

† Joel i. 8.

‡ To *ware*, is to expend.§ Flood; often written *spait*. It is the Celtic *speid*, a great river-flood.

therefore would not bestow it on you, because He is to propine* you with a better portion. Let the moveables go; the inheritance is yours. Ye are a child of the house, and joy is laid up for you; it is long in coming, but not the worse for that. I am now expecting to see, and that with joy and comfort, that which I hoped of you since I knew you fully, even that ye have laid such strength upon the Holy One of Israel, that ye defy troubles, and that your soul is a castle that may be besieged, but cannot be taken. What have ye to do here? This world never looked like a friend upon you. Ye owe it little love. It looked ever sour-like upon you. Howbeit ye should woo it, it will not match with you; and therefore never seek warm fire under cold ice. This is not a field where your happiness groweth; it is up above, where there are a great multitude, which no man can number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands.† What ye could never get here ye shall find there. And withall consider how in all these trials (and truly they have been many) your Lord hath been loosing you at the root from perishing things, and hunting after you to grip‡ your soul. Madam, for the Son of God's sake, let Him not miss His grip,‡ but stay and abide in the love of God, as Jude faith.§

Now, Madam, I hope your Ladyship will take these lines in good part; and wherein I have fallen short and failed to your Ladyship, in not evidencing what I was obliged to you more-than-undeserved love and respect, I request for a full pardon for it. Again, my dear and noble lady, let me beseech you to lift up your head, for the day of your redemption draweth near. And remember, that star that shined in Galloway is now shining in another world. Now I pray that God may answer, in His own style, to your soul, and that He may be to you the God of all consolations. Thus I remain,

Your Ladyship's at all dutiful obedience in the Lord,

ANWOTH, *Sept.* 14, 1634.

S. R.

* Present.

† Rev. vii. 9.

‡ Take firm hold of.

§ Jude ver. 21.

XXXVIII.—To MARION M'NAUGHT.

(CHRIST'S CARE OF HIS CHURCH, AND HIS JUDGMENTS ON
HER ENEMIES.)



ISTRESS,—My dearest love in Christ remembered. I entreat you charge your soul to return to rest, and to glorify your dearest Lord in believing; and know that for the good-will of Him that dwelleth in the bush, the burning kirk shall not be consumed to ashes; but “Blessing shall come on the head of Joseph, and upon the top of the head of him that was separate from his brethren.”* And are not the saints separate from their brethren, and sold and hated? “For the archers have sorely grieved Joseph, and shot at him and hated him; but his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob.”† From Him is the Shepherd and the Stone of Israel. The Stone of Israel shall not be broken in pieces; it is hammered upon by the children of this world, and we shall live and not die. Our Lord hath done all this, to see if we will believe, and not give over; and I am persuaded you must of necessity stick by your work. The eye of Christ hath been upon all this business; and He taketh good heed to who is for Him, and who is against Him. Let us do our part, as we would be approved of Christ. The Son of God is near to His enemies. If they were not deaf, they may hear the din of His feet; and He will come with a start upon His weeping bairns, and take them on His knee, and lay their head in His bosom, and dry their watery eyes. And this day is fast coming. “Yet a little time, and the vision will speak, it will not tarry.”‡ These questions betwixt us and our adversaries will all be decided in yonder day, when the Son of God shall come, and redd all pleas;§ and it will be seen whether we or they have

* Deut. xxxiii. 16.

† Gen. xlix. 23, 24.

‡ Hab. ii. 3.

§ Settle all disputed cases.

been for Christ, and who have been pleading for Baal. It is not known what we are now ; but when our Life shall appear in glory, then we shall see who laughs fastest that day. Therefore, we must possess our souls in patience, and go into our chamber and rest, whill* the indignation be past. We shall not weep long when our Lord shall take us up, in the day that He gathereth His jewels. "They that feared the Lord spoke often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him, for them that feared the Lord, and thought upon His name."† I shall never be of another faith, but that our Lord is heating a furnace for the enemies of His kirk in Scotland. It is true the spouse of Christ hath played the harlot, and hath left her first Husband, and the enemies think they offend not, for we have sinned against the Lord ; but they shall get the devil to their thanks. The rod shall be cast into the fire, that we may sing as in the days of our youth. My dear friend, therefore, lay down your head upon Christ's breast. Weep not ; the Lion of the tribe of Judah will arise. The sun is gone down upon the prophets, and our gold is become dim, and the Lord feedeth His people with waters of gall and wormwood ; yet Christ standeth but behind the wall, His bowels are moved for Scotland. He waiteth, as Isaiah saith, that He may show mercy. If we could go home, and take our brethren with us, weeping with our face towards Zion, asking the way thitherward, He would bring back our captivity. We may not think that God has no care of His honour, while men tread it under their feet ; He will cloth Himself with vengeance, as with a cloak, and appear against our enemies for our deliverance. Ye were never yet beguiled, and God will not now begin with you. Wrestle still with the angel of the covenant, and you shall get the blessing. Fight ! He delighteth to be overcome by wrestling.

Commend me to Grizel. Desire her to learn to know the adversaries of the Lord, and to take them as her adversaries, and to learn to know the right gate‡ into the Son of God. O but acquaint-

* Till.

† Mal. iii. 16.

‡ Way to go to.

ance with the Son of God, to say, “My Well-beloved is mine, and I am His,” is a sweet and glorious course of life, that none know but those who are sealed and marked in the forehead with Christ’s mark, and the new name, that Christ writeth upon His own. Grace, grace, and mercy be with you.

Yours in Christ,

S. R.

ANWOTH, *Sept.* 25, 1634.

XXXIX.—*To my* LADY KENMURE.

(*PREPARATION FOR DEATH AND ETERNITY*).



ADAM,—All dutiful obedience in our Lord remembered. I know ye are now near one of those straits in which ye have been before. But because your outward comforts are fewer, I pray Him, whose ye are, to supply what ye want another way. For howbeit we cannot win* to the bottom of His wife providence, who ruleth all; yet it is certain this is not only good which the Almighty hath done, but it is best. He hath reckoned all your steps to heaven; and if your Ladyship were through this water, there are the fewer behind; and if this were the last, I hope your Ladyship hath learned by on-waiting to make your acquaintance with death, which being to the Lord, the woman’s seed, Jesus, only a bloody heel and not a broken head,† cannot be ill to His friends, who get far less of death than Himself. Therefore, Madam, seeing ye know not but the journey is ended, and ye are come to the water-side, in God’s wisdom look all your papers and your counts, and whether ye be ready to receive the kingdom of heaven as a little child, in whom there is little haughtiness and much humility. I would be far from discouraging your Ladyship; but there is an absolute necessity that, near eternity, we look ere we leap, seeing no

* Get at.

† Gen. iii. 15.

man winneth back again to mend his leap. I am confident your Ladyship thinketh often upon it, and that your old Guide shall go before you and take your hand. His love to you will not grow four, nor wear out of date, as the love of men, which groweth old and gray-haired often before themselves. Ye have so much the more reason to love a better life than this, because this world hath been to you a cold fire, with little heat to the body, and as little light, and much smoke to hurt the eyes. But, Madam, your Lord would have you thinking it but dry breasts, full of wind and empty of food. In this late visitation that hath befallen your Ladyship, ye have seen God's love and care, in such a measure that I thought our Lord brake the sharp point off the cross, and made us and your Ladyship see Christ take possession and infestment upon earth, of him who is now reigning and triumphing with the hundred forty and four thousand who stand with the Lamb on Mount Zion. I know the sweetest of it is bitter to you; but your Lord will not give you painted crosses. He pareth not all the bitterness from the cross, neither taketh He the sharp edge quite from it; then* it should be of your wailing† and not of His, which should have as little reason in it as it should have profit for us. Only, Madam, God commandeth you now to believe and cast anchor in the dark night, and climb up the mountain. He who hath called you, establish you and confirm you to the end.

I had a purpose to have visited your Ladyship; but when I thought better upon it, the truth is, I cannot see what my company would profit you; and this hath broken off my purpose, and no other thing. I know many honourable friends and worthy professors will see your Ladyship, and that the Son of God is with you, to whose love and mercy, from my soul, I recommend your Ladyship, and remain,

Your Ladyship's at all dutiful obedience in his sweet Lord Jesus,
S. R.

ANWOTH, Nov. 29, 1634.

* In that case.

† Choofing, selecting.

XL.—*To my* LADY KENMURE.

(WHEN MR RUTHERFORD HAD THE PROSPECT OF BEING
REMOVED FROM ANWOTH.)



ADAM,—My humble obedience in the Lord remembered. Know it hath pleased the Lord to let me see, by all appearance, that my labours in God's house here are at an end; and I must now learn to suffer, in the which I am a dull scholar. By a strange providence, some of my papers, anent the corruptions of this time, are come to the King's hand. I know, by the wise and well-affected I shall be censured as not wise nor circum-spect enough; but it is ordinary, that that should be a part of the cross of those who suffer for Him. Yet I love and pardon the instrument; I would commit my life to him, howbeit by him this hath befallen me. But I look higher than to him. I make no question of your Ladyship's love and care to do what ye can for my help, and am persuaded that, in my adversities, your Ladyship will wish me well. I seek no other thing but that my Lord may be honoured by me in giving a testimony. I was willing to do Him more service; but seeing He will have no more of my labours, and this land will thrust me out, I pray for grace to learn to be acquaint with misery, if I may give so rough a name to such a mark of those who shall be crowned with Christ. And howbeit I will possibly prove a faint-hearted, unwise man in that, yet I dare say I intend otherwise; and I desire not to go on the lee-side or funny side of religion, or to put truth betwixt me and a storm: my Saviour did not so for me, who in His suffering took the windy side of the hill. No farther; but the Son of God be with you.

Your Ladyship's in the Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ANWOTH, Dec. 5, 1634.

XLI.—*For* MARION M'NAUGHT.

(*THE CHURCH'S TRIALS—COMFORT UNDER TEMPTATIONS—
DELIVERANCE—A MESSAGE TO THE YOUNG.*)



WELL-BELOVED SISTER,—My love in Christ remembered. I hear of good news anent our kirk ; but I fear that our King will not be resisted, and therefore let us not be secure and careless. I do wonder if this kirk come not through our Lord's fan, since there is so much chaff in it ; howbeit I persuade myself, the Son of God's wheat will not be blown away. Let us be putting on God's armour, and be strong in the Lord. If the devil and Zion's enemies strike a hole in that armour, let our Lord see to that ;—let us put it on, and stand. We have Jesus on our side ; and they are not worthy such a Captain, who would not take a blow, at His back. We are in fight of His colours ; His banner over us is love ; look up to that white banner, and stand, I persuade you, in the Lord of victory.

My brother writeth to me of your heaviness, and of temptations that press you sore. I am content it be so : you bear about with you the mark of the Lord Jesus. So it was with the Lord's apostle, when he was to come with the Gospel to Macedonia : * his flesh had no rest ; he was troubled on every side, and knew not what side to turn him unto ; without were fightings, and within were fears. In the great work of our redemption, your lovely, beautiful, and glorious Friend and Well-beloved Jesus, was brought to tears and strong cries ; so as His face was wet with tears and blood, arising from a holy fear and the weight of the curse. Take a drink of the Son of God's cup, and love it the better that He drank of it before you. There is no poison in it. I wonder many times that ever a child of God should have a sad heart, considering what their Lord is preparing for them.

* 2 Cor. vii. 5.

Is your mind troubled anent that business that we have now in hand in Edinburgh? * I trust in my Lord, the Lord shall in the end give to you your heart's desire; even howbeit the business frame † not, the Lord shall feed your soul, and all the hungry souls in that town. Therefore I request you in the Lord, pray for a submissive will, and pray as your Lord Jesus bids you, "Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven." And let it be that your faith be brangled ‡ with temptations, believe ye that there is a tree in our Lord's garden that is not often shaken with wind from all the four airts? § Surely there is none. Rebuke your soul, as the Lord's prophet doth: "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? why art thou disquieted within me?" || That was the word of a man who was at the very overgoing of the brae ¶ and mountain; but God held a grip of him. Swim through your temptations and troubles to be at that lovely, amiable person, Jesus, to whom your soul is dear. In your temptations run to the promises: they be our Lord's branches hanging over the water, that our Lord's silly, half-drowned children may take a grip of them; if you let that grip go, you will fall to the ground. Are you troubled with the case of God's kirk? Our Lord will evermore have her betwixt the sinking and the swimming. He will have her going through a thousand deaths, and through hell, as a cripple woman, halting, and wanting the power of her one side, ** that God may be her staff. That broken ship will come to land, because Jesus is the pilot. Faint not; you shall see the salvation of God,—else say, that God never spake His word by my mouth; and I had rather never have been born, ere it were so with me. But my Lord hath sealed me. I dare not deny I have also been in heaviness since I came from you, fearing for my unthankfulness that I be deserted. But the Lord will be kind to me, whether I will or not. I repose that †† much in His rich grace,

* Referring to the efforts then making by several eminent Presbyterian ministers, to obtain redress from grievances inflicted by the prelatist party.

† Yet even if it turn out not so (as in Let. 187); succeed.

‡ Shaken.

§ Quarters of the heavens.

|| Ps. xlii. 11.

¶ Hill-side.

** Micah iv. 6, 7.

†† So much.

that He will be loath to change upon me. As you love me, pray for me in this particular.

After advising with Carletoun, I have written to Mr David Dickson anent Mr Hugh M'Kail,* and desired him to write his mind to Carletoun, and Carletoun to Edinburgh, that they may particularly remember Mr Hugh to the Lord ; and I happened upon a convenient trusty bearer by God's wonderful providence. No further. I recommend you to the Lord's grace, and your husband and children. The Lord Jesus be with your spirit.

Yours in the Lord,

S. R.

EDINBURGH, 1634.

P.S.—MISTRESS,—I had not time to give my advice to your daughter Grizel ; you shall carry my words therefore to her. Show her now, that in respect of her tender age, she is in a manner as clean paper, ready to receive either good or ill ; and that it were a sweet and glorious thing for her to give herself up to Christ, that He may write upon her His Father's name, and His own new name. And desire her to acquaint herself with the book of God ; the promises that our Lord writes upon His own, and performeth in them and for them, are contained there. I persuade you, when I think that she is in the company of such parents, and hath occasion to learn Christ, I think Christ is wooing her soul ; and I pray God she may not refuse such a husband. And therefore I charge her, and beseech her by the mercies of God, by the wounds and blood of Him who died for her, by the word of truth, which she heareth, and can read, by the coming of the Son of God to judge the world, that she would fulfil your joy, and learn Christ, and walk in Christ. She shall think this the truth of God many years after this ; and I will promise to myself, in respect of the beginnings that I have seen, that she shall give herself to Him that gave Himself for her. Let her begin at prayer ; for if she remember her Creator in the days

* See Let. 71.

of her youth, He will claim kindness to her in her old age. It shall be a part of my prayers, that this may be effectual in her, by Him who is able to do exceeding abundantly, to whose grace again I recommend you, and her, and all yours.

XLII.—*To my LADY KENMURE.*

(*THE WORLD PASSETH AWAY—SPECIAL PORTIONS OF THE
WORD FOR THE AFFLICTED—CALL TO KIRKCUDBRIGHT.*)



ADAM,—The cause of my not writing to your Ladyship was not my forgetfulness of you, but the want of the opportunity of a convenient bearer; for I am under more than a simple obligation to be kind (on paper, at least) to your Ladyship. I bless our Lord, through Christ, who hath brought you home again to your own country from that place,* where ye have seen with your eyes that which our Lord's truth taught you before, to wit, that worldly glory is nothing but a vapour, a shadow, the foam of the water, or something less and lighter, even nothing; and that our Lord hath not without cause said in His Word, "The countenance," or fashion, "of this world passeth away,"†—in which place our Lord compareth it to an image in a looking-glass, for it is the looking-glass of Adam's sons. Some come to the glass, and see in it the picture of *honour*,—and but a picture indeed, for true honour is to be great in the sight of God; and others see in it the shadow of *riches*,—and but a shadow indeed, for durable riches stand as one of the maids of Wisdom upon her left hand;‡ and a third sort see in it the face of painted *pleasures*, and the beholders will not believe but the image they see in this glass is a living man, till the Lord come and break the glass in pieces and remove the face, and then, like Pharaoh awakened, they say, "And behold it was a dream." I know your Ladyship thinketh

* Edinburgh.

† 1 Cor. vii. 31.

‡ Prov. iii. 16.

yourself little in the common* of this world, for the favourable aspect of any of these three painted faces ; and blessed be our Lord that it is so. The better for you, Madam ; they are not worthy to be wooers, to suit† in marriage your soul, that look to no higher match than to be married upon painted clay. Know, therefore, Madam, the place whither our Lord Jesus cometh to woo a bride, it is even in the furnace : for if ye be one of Zion's daughters (which I ever put beyond all question, since I first had occasion to see in your Ladyship such pregnant evidences of the grace of God), the Lord, who hath His fire in Zion, and His furnace in Jerusalem,‡ is purifying you in the furnace. And therefore be content to live in it, and every day to be adding and sewing-to a pament§ to your wedding garment, that ye may be at last decored|| and trimmed as a bride for Christ, a bride of His own busking, beautified in the hidden man of the heart. “ Forgetting your father's house, so shall the King greatly desire your beauty.”¶ If your Ladyship be not changed (as I hope ye are not), I believe ye esteem yourself to be of those whom God hath tried these many years, and refined as silver. But, Madam, I will shew your Ladyship a privilege that others want, and ye have, in this case. Such as are in prosperity, and are fatted with earthly joys, and increased with children and friends, though the Word of God is indeed written to such for their instruction, yet to you, who are in trouble (spare me, Madam, to say this), from whom the Lord hath taken many children, and whom He hath exercised otherwise, there are some chapters, some particular promises in the Word of God, made in a most special manner, which should never have been yours, so as they now are, if you had your portion in this life, as others. And, therefore, all the comforts, promises, and mercies God offereth to the afflicted, they are as so many love-letters written to you. Take them to you, Madam, and claim your right, and be not robbed. It is no small

* Under obligation to ; a phrase derived from dining at a common table in a college,—a privilege enjoyed by special favour.

† Woo.

‡ Isa. xxxi. 9.

§ Ornament, piece of lace.

|| Adorned.

¶ Ps. xlv. 11.

comfort, that God hath written some scriptures to you, which He hath not written to others. Ye seem rather in this to be envied than pitied; and ye are indeed in this, like people of another world, and those that are above the ordinary rank of mankind, whom our King and Lord, our Bridegroom Jesus, in His love-letter to His well-beloved spouse, hath named beside all the rest. He hath written comforts and His hearty commendations, in the 56th of Isaiah, vers. 4, 5; Psalm cxlviii. 2, 3, to you. Read these and the like, and think your God is like a friend that sendeth a letter to a whole house and family, but speaketh in His letter to some by name, that are dearest to Him in the house. Ye are, then, Madam, of the dearest friends of the Bridegroom. If it were lawful, I would envy you, that God honoured you so above many of His dear children. Therefore, Madam, your part is, in this case (seeing God taketh nothing from you but that which He is to supply with His own presence), to desire your Lord to know His own room, and take it even upon Him to come in, in the room of dead children. “Jehovah, know Thy own place, and take it to Thee,” is all ye have to say.

Madam, I persuade myself that this world is to you an unco* inn; and that ye are like a traveller, who hath his bundle upon his back, and his staff in his hand, and his feet upon the door-threshold. Go forward, honourable and elect lady, in the strength of your Lord (let the world bide at home and keep the house), with your face toward Him, who longeth more for a sight of you than ye can do for Him. Ere it be long, He will see us. I hope to see you laugh as cheerfully after noon, as ye have mourned before noon. The hand of the Lord, the hand of the Lord be with you in your journey. What have ye to do here? This is not your mountain of rest. Arise, then, and set your foot up the mountain; go up out of the wilderness, leaning upon the shoulder of your Beloved.† If ye knew the welcome that abideth you when ye come home, ye would hasten your pace; for ye shall see your

* Strange.

† Cant. viii. 5.

Lord put up His own holy hand to your face, and wipe all tears from your eyes ; and I trow, then ye shall have some joy of heart.

Madam, paper willeth me to end before affection. Remember the estate of Zion ; pray that Jerufalem may be as Zechariah prophesied, “ a burdensome stone for all,”* that whosoever boweth down to roll the stone out of the way, may hurt and break the joints of their back, and strain their arms, and disjoin their shoulder-blades. And pray Jehovah that the stone may lie still in its own place, and keep band† with the corner-stone. I hope it shall be so ; He is a skilled Master-builder who laid it.

I would, Madam, under great heaviness be refreshed with two lines from your Ladyship, which I refer to your own wisdom. Madam, I would seem undutiful not to show you, that great solicitation is made by the town of Kirkcudbright for to have the use of my poor labours amongst them. If the Lord shall call, and His people cry, who am I to resist ? But without His seen calling, and till the flock whom I now oversee be planted with one to whom I dare intrust Christ’s spouse, gold nor silver nor favour of men, I hope, shall not loose me. I leave your Ladyship, praying more earnestly for grace and mercy to be with you, and multiplied upon you, here and hereafter, than my pen can express. The Lord Jesus be with your spirit.

Your Ladyship’s at all obedience in the Lord.

KIRKCUDBRIGHT.

XLIII.—*For* MARION M’NAUGHT.

(WHEN MR RUTHERFORD WAS IN DIFFICULTY AS TO ACCEPTING A CALL TO KIRKCUDBRIGHT, AND CRAMOND.)



MUCH HONOURED AND DEAR MISTRESS,—My love in Christ remembered. I am grieved at the heart to write anything to you to breed heaviness to you ;

* Zech. xii. 3.

† Keep united with.

and what I have written, I wrote with much heaviness. But I entreat you in Christ's name, when my soul is under wrestlings, and seeking direction from our Lord (to whom His vineyard belongeth) whither I shall go, give me liberty to advise, and try all airts* and paths, to see whether He goeth before me and leadeth me. For if I were assured of God's call to your town, let my arm fall from my shoulder-blade and lose power, and my right eye be dried up, (which is the judgment of the idol shepherd, †) if I would not swim through the water without a boat ere I sat His bidding. ‡ But if ye knew my doubtings and fears in that, ye would suffer with me. Whether they be temptations or impediments cast in by my God, I know not. But you have now cause to thank God; for seeing the Bishop § hath given you such a promise, he will give you an honest man more willingly than he will permit me to come to you. And, as I ever entreated you, put the business out of your hand in the Lord's reverence; || and try of Him, if ye have warrant of Him to seek no man in the world but one only, when there are choice of good men to be had. Howbeit they be too scarce, yet they are. And what God faith to me in the business, I resolve by His grace to do; for I know not what He will do with me. But God shall fill you with joy ere this business be ended; for I persuade myself our Lord Jesus hath stirred you up already to do good in the business, and ye shall not lose your reward.

I have heard your husband and Samuel have been sick. The man who is called *the Branch* and *God's fellow*, who standeth before His Father, will be your stay and help. ¶ I would I were able to comfort your soul. But have patience, and stand still; he that believeth maketh not haste. This matter of Cramond, cast in at this time, is either a temptation, having fallen out at this time; or then**

* All points of the compass.

† Zech. xi. 17.

‡ Failed promptly to obey Him, or do His bidding.

§ Referring to a promise made to the people of Kirkcudbright by the Bishop of Galloway, to give them a man according to their own mind, provided they would not choose Mr Rutherford.

|| Power, disposal. See Note, Lett. 30. ¶ Zech. xiii. 7.

** Or else.

it will clear all my doubts, and let you see the Lord's will. But I never knew my own part in the business till now. I thought I was more willing to have embraced the charge in your town, than I am, or am able to win to. I know ye pray that God would resolve me what to do; and will interpret me, as love biddeth you, which "thinketh not ill, and believeth all things, and hopeth all things." Would ye have more than the Son of God? and ye have Him already. And ye shall be fed by the carver of the meat, be he who he will; and those who are hungry look more to the meat than to the carver.

I cannot see you the next week. If my lady come home, I must visit her. The week thereafter will be a Presbytery at Girthon. God will dispose of the meeting. Grace upon you, and your seed, and husband. The Lord Jesus be with your spirit.

Yours in Christ,

S. R.

ANWOTH.

XLIV.—*For* MARION M'NAUGHT.

(TROUBLES THREATENING THE CHURCH.)



WELL-BELOVED SISTER,—My love in Jesus Christ remembered. Your daughter is well, thanks be to God. I trust in Him ye shall have joy of her; the Lord bless her. I am now presently going about catechising. The bearer is in haste. Forget not poor Zion; and the Lord remember you, for we shall be shortly winnowed. Jesus, pray for us, that our faith fail not! I would wish to see you a Sabbath with us, and we shall stir up one another, God willing, to seek the Lord; for it may be He hide Himself from us ere it be long. Keep that which you have: ye will get more in heaven. The Lord send us to the shore out of all the storms, with our silly souls sound and whole with us; for if liberty of conscience come, as is rumoured, the best of us will be put to our wits to seek how to be freed. But we shall be like those who have their chamber to go in unto, spoken of in

Isaiah.* Read the place yourself, and keep you within your house whill† the storm be passed. If you can learn a ditty‡ against C., try, and cause try, that ye may see the Lord's righteous judgment upon the devil's instruments. We are not much obliged to his kindness. I wish all such wicked doers were cut off.

These in haste. I bless you in God's name, and all yours. Your daughter desires a Bible and a gown. I hope she shall use the Bible well, which if she do, the gown is the better bestowed. The Lord Jesus be with your spirit.

Yours for ever in Christ,

S. R.

ANWOTH.

XLV.—*For* MARION M'NAUGHT.

(IN THE PROSPECT OF THE COMMUNION, AND OF TRIALS TO THE CHURCH.)



WELL-BELOVED SISTER IN CHRIST,—You shall understand I have received a letter from Edinburgh, that it is suspected that there will be a General Assembly, or then § some meeting of the bishops; and that at this synod there will be some commissioners chosen by the Bishop; which news have so taken up my mind that I am not so settled for studies as I have been before, and therefore was never in such fear for the work. But because it is written to me as a secret, I dare not reveal it to any but to yourself, whom I know. And therefore, I entreat you, not for any comfort of mine, who am but one man, but for the glory and honour of Jesus Christ, the Master of the banquet, be more earnest with God; and, in general, show others of your Christian acquaintance my fears for myself. I can be content of shame in that work, if my Lord and Master be honoured; and therefore petition our Lord especially to see to His own glory,

* Isa. xxvi. 20.

† Till.

‡ Ground of charge.

§ Or if not that.

and to give bread to His hungry bairns, howbeit I go hungry away from the feast. Request Mr Robert* from me, if he come not, to remember us to our Lord.

I have neither time, nor a free disposed mind, to write to you anent your own case. Send me word if all your children and your husband be well. Seeing they are not yours, but your dear Lord's, esteem them but as borrowed, and lay them down at God's feet. Your Christ to you is better than they all. You will pardon my unaccustomed short letter; and remember me and that honourable feast to our Lord Jesus. He was with us before. I hope He will not change upon us; but I fear I have changed upon Him. But, Lord, let old kindness stand. Jesus Christ be with your spirit.

Yours in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ANWOTH.

XLVI.—*To* MARION M'NAUGHT.

(TOSSINGS OF SPIRIT—HER CHILDREN AND HUSBAND.)



WELL-BELOVED AND DEAR SISTER,—My tender affection in Christ remembered. I left you in as great heaviness as I was in since I came to this country; but I know you doubt not but that (as the truth is in Christ), my soul is knit to your soul, and to the soul of all yours; and I would, if I could, send you the largest part of my heart inclosed in this letter. But by fervent calling upon my Lord, I have attained some victory over my heart, which runneth often not knowing whither, and over my beguiling hopes, which I know now better than I did. I trust in my Lord to hold aloof from the enticings of a seducing heart, by which I am daily cosened; and I mind not (by His grace who hath called me according to His eternal purpose) to come so far within the grips† of my foolish mind, gripping‡ about any folly coming its way, as the woodbine or ivy goeth about the tree.

* Mr Robert Glendinning.

† Grasp.

‡ Grasping.

I adore and kifs the providence of my Lord, who knoweth well what is moſt expedient for me, and for you and your children ; and I think of you as of myſelf, that the Lord, who in His deep wiſdom turneth about all the wheels and turning of ſuch changes, ſhall alſo diſpoſe of that for the beſt to you and yours. In the preſence of my Lord, I am not able, howbeit I would, to conceive amiſs of you in that matter. Grace, grace for ever be upon you and your ſeed , and it ſhall be your portion, in deſpite of all the powers of darkneſs. Do not make more queſtion of this. But the Lord ſaw a nail in my heart looſe, and He hath now faſtened it. Honour be to His Majeſty.

I hear your ſon is entered to the ſchool. If I had known of the day, I would have begged from our Lord that He would have put the book in his hand with His own hand. I truſt in my Lord it is ſo; and I conceive a hope to ſee him a ſtar, to give light in ſome room of our Lord's houſe; and purpoſe, by the Lord's grace, as I am able (if our Lord call you to reſt before me), when you are at your home, to do to the uttermoſt of my power to help him every way in grace and learning, and his brothers, and all your children. And I hope you would expect that of me.

Further, you ſhall know that Mr W. D.* is come home, who faith it is a miracle that your huſband, in this proceſs before the Council, eſcaped both diſcredit and damage. Let it not be forgotten he was, in our apprehenſion, to our grief, caſt down and humbled in the Lord's work, in that matter betwixt him and the bailie: now the Lord hath honoured him, and made him famous for virtue, honeſty, and integrity, two ſeveral times, before the nobles of this kingdom. Your Lord liveth. We will go to His throne of grace again : His arm is not ſhortened.

The King is certainly expected. Ill is feared; we have cauſe for our ſins to fear that the Bridegroom ſhall be taken from us. By our ſins we have rent His fair garments, and we have ſtirred up

* William Dalgleiſh, miniſter of Kirkdale and Kirkmabreck, adjoining the pariſh of Anwoth.

and awakened our Beloved. Pray Him to tarry, or then* to take us with Him. It were good that we should knock and rap at our Lord's door. We may not tire to knock oftener than twice or thrice. He knoweth the knock of His friends.

I am still what I was ever to your dear children, tendering their soul's happiness, and praying that grace, grace, grace, mercy, and peace from God, even God our Father, and from our Lord Jesus, may be their portion; and that now, while they are green and young, their hearts may take band† with Jesus, the Corner-stone: and win once in, in our Lord and Saviour's house, and then they will not get leave to flit. Pray for me, and especially for humility and thankfulness. I have always remembrance of you, and your husband, and dear children. The Lord Jesus be with your spirit.


Yours evermore in my dear Lord Jesus and yours,

S. R.

ANWOTH.

XLVII.—*For* MARION M'NAUGHT.

(*SUBMISSION TO GOD'S ARRANGEMENTS.*)

ORTHY AND BELOVED MISTRESS,—My love in Christ remembered. I have sent you a letter from Mr David Dick‡ concerning the placing of Mr Hugh M'Kail with themselves; therefore I write to you now only to entreat you in Christ not to be discouraged thereat. Be submissive to the will of your dear Lord, who knoweth best what is good for your soul and your town both; for God can come over greater mountains than these, we believe; for He worketh His greatest works contrary to carnal reason and means. "My ways are not," faith our Lord, "as your ways; neither are My thoughts as your thoughts."§ I am no whit put from my belief for all that. Be-

* Or else.

† Unite with.

‡ Or Dickson.

§ Isa. lv. 8.

lieve, pray, and use means. We shall cause Mr John Kerr, who conveyed myself to Lochinvar, to use means to seek a man, if Mr Hugh fail us. Our Lord has a little bride among you, and I trust He will send one to woo her to our sweet Lord Jesus. He will not want His wife for the suiting,* and He has means in abundance in His hand to open all the slots† and bars that Satan draws over the door. He cometh to His bride leaping over the mountains, and skipping over the hills. His way to His spouse is full of stones, mountains, and waters, yet He putteth in His foot and wadeth through. He will not want her; and therefore refresh me with two words concerning your confidence and courage in our Lord, both about that, and about His own Zion; for He wooeth His wife in the Burning Bush; and for the good-will of Him that dwelleth in the bush, the bush is not consumed. It is better to weep with Jerusalem in the forenoon, than to weep with Babel after noon, in the end of the day. Our day of laughter and rejoicing is coming. Yet a little while, and ye shall see the salvation of God. I long to see you, and to hear how your children are, especially Samuel. Grace be their heritage and portion from the Lord, and the Lord be their lot, and then their inheritance shall please them well. Remember my love to your husband. The Lord Jesus be with your spirit.

Yours in his sweetest Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ANWOTH.

XLVIII.—*For* MARION M'NAUGHT.

(TROUBLES FROM FALSE BRETHREN—OCCURRENCES—
CHRIST'S COMING—INTERCESSION.)



WELL-BELOVED SISTER,—I know you have heard of the success of our business in Edinburgh. I do every Presbytery day see the faces of my brethren smiling

* Urging His request, wooing.

† Moveable bolts.

upon me, but their tongues convey reproaches and lies of me a hundred miles off, and have made me odious to the Bishop of St Andrews, who said to Mr W. Dalgleish that ministers in Galloway were his informers. Whereupon no letter of favour could be procured from him for effectuating of our business; only I am brought in the mouths of men, who otherwise knew me not, and have power (if God shall permit) to harm me. Yet I entreat you, in the bowels of Christ Jesus, be not cast down. I fear your sorrow exceed because of this; and I am not so careful for myself in the matter as for you. Take courage;—your dearest Lord will light your candle, which the wicked would fain blow out; and, as sure as our Lord liveth, your soul shall find joy and comfort in this business. Howbeit you see all the hounds in hell let loose to mar it, their iron chains to our dear and mighty Lord are but straws, which He can easily break. Let not this temptation stick in your throat; swallow it, and let it go down; our Lord give you a drink of the consolations of His Spirit, that it may digest. You never knew one in God's book who put to their hand to the Lord's work for His kirk, but the world and Satan did bark against them, and bite also where they had power. You will not lay one stone on Zion's walls, but they will labour to cast it down again.

For myself, the Lord letteth me see now greater evidence of a calling to Kirkcudbright than ever He did before; and therefore pray, and possess your soul in patience. Those that were doers in the business have good hopes that it will yet go forward and prosper. As for the death of the King of Sweden (which is thought to be too true), we can do nothing else but reverence our Lord, who doth not ordinarily hold Zion on her rock by the sword, and arm of flesh and blood, but by His own mighty and outstretched arm. Her King that reigneth in Zion yet liveth, and they are plucking Him round about to pull Him off His throne; but His Father hath crowned Him, and who dare say, "It is ill done"? The Lord's bride will be up and down, above the water swimming and under the water sinking, until her lovely and mighty Redeemer and Husband set His head through the skies, and come with His fair

court to red* all their pleas, and give them the hoped-for inheritance : and then we shall lay down our swords and triumph, and fight no more. But do not think, for all this, that our Lord and Chief Shepherd will want one weak sheep, or the filliest dying lamb, that He hath redeemed. He will tell His flock and gather them all together, and make a faithful account of them to the Father who gave them to Him. Let us learn to turn our eyes off men, that our whorish hearts doat not on them, and woo our old Husband, and make Him our darling. For, “thus saith the Lord to the enemies of Zion, Drink ye, and be drunk, and spue, and fall, and rise no more, because of the sword that I send amongst you. And it shall be, if they refuse to take the cup at thine hand to drink, then shalt thou say to them, Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, Ye shall certainly drink.”† You see our Lord brewing a cup of poison for His enemies, which they must drink, and because of this have fore bowels and sick stomachs, yea, burst. But when Zion’s captivity is at an end, “the children of Israel shall come, they and the children of Judah together, going and weeping : they shall go, and seek the Lord their God. They shall ask the way to Zion, with their faces thitherward, saying, Come, and let us join ourselves to the Lord in an everlasting covenant that shall not be forgotten.”‡ This is spoken to us, and for us, who with woe§ hearts ask, “What is the way to Zion?” It is our part who know how to go to our Lord’s door, and to knock by prayer, and how to lift Christ’s flot,|| and shut the bar of His chamber door, to complain and tell Him how the Lord handleth us, and how our King’s business goeth, that He may get up and lend them a blow, who are tiggig¶ and playing with Christ and His spouse. You have also, dear Mistress, house troubles, in sickness of your husband and bairns, and in spoiling of your house by thieves ; take these rods in patience from your Lord. He must still move you from vessel to vessel, and grind you as our Lord’s wheat, to be bread in His house. But

* Settle all disputes.

§ Sorrowful.

† Jer. xxv. 27, 28.

|| Moveable bolt.

‡ Jer. l. 4, 5.

¶ Dallying, toying.

when all these strokes are over your head,* what will ye say to see your well-beloved Christ's white and ruddy face, even His face who is worthy to bear the colours among ten thousand?† Hope and believe to the end. Grace for ever be multiplied upon you, your husband, and children.

Your own in his dearest Lord Jesus,

S. R.

EDINBURGH, Dec. 1634.

XLIX.—*To* MARION M'NAUGHT.

(SPOILING OF GOODS—CALL TO KIRKCUDBRIGHT—THE LORD REIGNETH.)



WELL-BELOVED AND DEAR SISTER,—My love in Christ remembered. God hath brought me home from a place where I have been exercised with great heaviness, and I have found at home new matter of great heaviness, yet dare not but in all things give thanks.

In my business in Edinburgh,‡ I have not sinned nor wronged my party,—by his own confession, and by the confession of his friends, I have given of my goods for peace and the saving of my Lord's truth from reproaches, which is dearer to me than all I have. My mother is weak, and I think shall leave me alone; but I am not alone, because Christ's Father is with me.

For your business anent your town I see great evidence; but Satan and his instruments are against it, and few set their shoulders to Christ's shoulder to help Him. But He will do all His lone; and I dare not but exhort you to believe, and persuade you, that the hungry in your city shall be fed; and as for the rest that want a stomach, the parings of God's loaf will suffice them; and, therefore, believe it shall be well. I may not leave my mother to come and confer with you of all particulars. I have given such directions

* Past and gone.

† Cant. v. 10

‡ See note, Let. 12.

to our dear friend as I can ; but the event is in our dear Lord's hands.

God's Zion abroad flourisheth, and His arm is not shortened with us, if we could believe. There is scarcity and a famine of the word of God in Edinburgh. Your sister Jane laboureth mightily in our business ; but hath not as yet gotten an answer from I. P. Mr A. C.* will work what he can. My Lady faith she can do little, and that it suiteth not her nor her husband well to speak in such an affair. I told her my mind plainly.

I long to know of your estate. Remember me heartily to your dear husband. Grace be the portion of your bairns. I know you are mindful of the green wound of our sister kirk in Ireland. Bid our Lord lay a plaister to it (He hath good skill to do so), and set others to work. Grace, grace upon your soul, and body, and all yours.

Yours in Christ,

S. R.

ANWOTH.

[The following brief note, addressed to Marion M'Naught, may be read as a sort of postscript to the foregoing, though generally printed as a separate Letter.]



DEAR MISTRESS,—I have not time this day to write to you ; but God, knowing my present state and necessities of my calling, will, I hope, spare my mother's life for a time, for the which I have cause to thank the Lord. I entreat you, be not cast down for that which I wrote before to you anent the planting of a minister in your town. Believe, and you shall see the salvation of God. I write this, because when you suffer, my heart suffereth with you. I do believe your soul shall have joy in your labours and holy desires for that work. Grace upon you, and your husband, and children.

Yours ever in Christ.

ANWOTH.

* Probably Mr Alexander Colville, mentioned Let. II.

L.—*For* MARION M'NAUGHT.

(CHRIST COMING AS CAPTAIN OF SALVATION—HIS CHURCH'S
CONFLICT AND COVENANT—THE JEWS—LAST DAYS'
APOSTASY.)



WELL-BELOVED AND DEAR SISTER,—I know your heart is cast down for the desolation like to come upon this kirk, and the appearance that an hireling shall be thrust in upon Christ's flock in that town ; but send a heavy heart up to Christ, it shall be welcome. Those who are with the beast and the dragon, must make war with the Lamb ; “ but the Lamb shall overcome them : for He is Lord of lords, and King of kings ; and they who are with Him are called, and chosen, and faithful.”* Our ten days shall have an end ; all the former things shall be forgotten when we shall be up before the throne. Christ hath been ever thus in the world ; He hath always the defender's part, and hath been still in the camp, fighting the Church's battles. The enemies of the Son of God will be fed with their own flesh, and shall drink their own blood ; and therefore, their part of it shall at last be found hard enough : so that we may look forward and pity them. Until the number of the elect be fulfilled, Christ garments must be rolled in blood. He cometh from Edom, from the slaughter of His enemies, “ clothed with dyed garments, glorious in His apparel, traveling in the greatness of His strength.” Who is this (saith he) that appears in this glorious posture ? Our great He ! that He who is mighty to save, whose glory shineth while He sprinkleth the blood of His adversaries, and staineth all His raiment. The glory of His righteous revenges shineth forth in these stains.† But seeing our world is not here-away,‡ we poor children, far from home, must steal through many waters, weeping as we go, and withal believing that we do the Lord's faithfulness no wrong, seeing He hath said,

* Rev. xvii. 14.

† Isa. lxiii. 1.

‡ In this quarter, in this present life's enjoyments.

“I, even I, am He that comforteth you : who art thou, that shouldest be afraid of a man that shall die, and of the son of man that shall be made as grafs ?”* “When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee ; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee. When thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burnt ; neither shall the flames kindle upon thee.”†

There is a cloud gathering and a storm coming. This land shall be turned upside down ; and if ever the Lord spake to me (think on it), Christ’s bride will be glad of a hole to hide her head in, and the dragon may so prevail as to chafe the woman and her man-child over sea. But there shall be a gleanng, two or three berries left in the top of the olive-tree, of whom God shall say, “Destroy them not, for there is a blessing in them.” Thereafter there shall be a fair sun-blink‡ on Christ’s old spouse, and a clear sky, and she shall sing as in the days of her youth. The Antichrist and the great red dragon will lop Christ’s branches, and bring His vine to a low stump, under the feet of those who carry the mark of the beast ; but the Plant of Renown, the Man whose name is the Branch, will bud forth again and blossom as the rose, and there shall be fair white flourishes§ again, with most pleasant fruits, upon that tree of life. A fair season may He have ! Grace, grace be upon that blessed and beautiful tree ! under whose shadow we shall sit, and his fruit shall be sweet to our taste. But Christ shall woo His handful in the fire, and choose His own in the furnace of affliction. But be it so ; He dow|| not, He will not slay His children. Love will not let Him make a full end. The covenant will cause Him hold His hand. Fear not, then, faith the First and the Last, He who was dead and is alive. We see not Christ sharpening and furbishing His sword for His enemies ; and therefore our faithless hearts say, as Zion did, “The Lord hath forsaken me.” But God reproveth her, and faith, “Well, well, Zion, is that well said ? Think again on it, you are in the wrong to Me. Can a

* Isa. li. 12.

§ Blossoms.

† Isa. xliii. 2.

|| Can.

‡ Gleam of sunshine.

woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the fruit of her womb? Yea, she may; yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have engraven thee upon the palms of My hands.”* You break your heart and grow heavy, and forget that Christ hath your name engraven on the palms of His hand in great letters. In the name of the Son of God, believe that buried Scotland, dead and buried with her dear Bridegroom, shall rise the third day again, and there shall be a new growth after the old timber is cut down. I recommend you, and your burdens and heavy heart, to the supporting of His grace and good-will who dwelt in the Bush, to Him who was separated from His brethren. Try your husband afar off, to see if He can be induced to think upon going to America.

O to see the sight, next to Christ's Coming in the clouds, the most joyful! our elder brethren the Jews and Christ fall upon one another's necks and kiss each other! They have been long asunder; they will be kind to one another when they meet. O day! O longed-for and lovely day-dawn! O sweet Jesus, let me see that sight which will be as life from the dead, Thee and Thy ancient people in mutual embraces.

Desire your daughter to close with Christ upon terms of suffering for Him; for the cross is an old mealing† and plot of ground that lyeth to Christ's house. Our dear Chief had aye that rent lying to His inheritance. But tell her the day is near the dawning, the sky is riving;‡ our Beloved will be on us, ere ever we be aware. The Antichrist, and death and hell, and Christ's enemies and ours, will be bound and cast into the bottomless pit. The Lord Jesus be with your spirit.

Yours in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ANWOTH, April 22, 1635.

* Isa. xlix. 15, 16. † Farm. It is written also “*mailing*.” See Let. 29.

‡ Breaking, rending.

LI.—*To* MARION M'NAUGHT.

(PUBLIC TEMPTATIONS—THE SECURITY OF EVERY SAINT—
OCCURRENCES IN THE COUNTRY-SIDE.)



LOVING AND DEAR SISTER,—For Zion's sake hold not your peace, neither be discouraged, for the ongoing of this persecution. Jehovah is in this burning Bush. The floods may swell and roar, but our ark shall swim above the waters ; it cannot sink, because a Saviour is in it. Because our Beloved was not let in by His spouse when He stood at the door, with His wet and frozen head, therefore He will have us to seek Him awhile ; and while we are seeking, the watchmen who go about the walls have stricken the poor woman, and have taken away her veil from her. But yet a little while and our Lord will come again. Scotland's sky will clear again ; her moment must go over. I dare in faith say and write, I am not dreaming ; Christ is but seeking (what He will have and make) a clean glittering* bride out of the fire. God send Him His errand, but He cannot want what He seeks. In the meantime, one way or other, He shall find, or make a nest for His mourning dove. What is this we are doing, breaking the neck of our faith ? We are not come as yet to the mouth of the Red Sea ; and howbeit we were, for His honour's sake, He must dry it up. It is our part to die gripping† and holding fast His faithful promise. If the Beast should get leave to ride through the land, to seal such as are his, he will not get one lamb with him, for these are secured and sealed as the servants of God. In God's name, let Christ take His barn-floor, and all that is in it, to a hill, and winnow it. Let Him sift His corn, and sweep His house, and seek His lost gold. The Lord shall cog‡ the rumbling wheels, or turn them ; for

* Glittering, shining.

† Grasping, or clasping.

‡ Put a drag on ; it is to put a piece of wood edgewise between it and the ground, to prevent it moving.

the remainder of wrath doth He restrain. He can loofe the belt of kings ; to God, their belt, wherewith they are girt, is knit with a fingle draw-knot.*

As for a paſtor to your town, your conſcience can bear you witneſs you have done your part. Let the Maſter of the vineyard now ſee to His garden, ſeeing you have gone on, till He hath ſaid, “ Stand ſtill.” The will of the Lord be done. But a trial is not, to give up with God and believe no more. I thank my God in Chriſt, I find the force of my temptation abated, and its edge blunted, ſince I ſpoke to you laſt. I know not if the tempter be hovering, until he find the dam gather again, and me more ſecure ; but it hath been my burden, and I am yet more confident the Lord will ſuccour and deliver.

I intend, God willing, that our Communion ſhall be celebrated the firſt Sabbath after Paſch.† Our Lord, that great Maſter of the feaſt, ſend us one hearty and heartſome‡ ſupper, for I look it ſhall be the laſt. But we expect, when the ſhadows ſhall flee away, and our Lord ſhall come to His garden, that He ſhall feed us in green paſtures without fear. The dogs ſhall not then be hounded out amongſt the ſheep. I earneſtly deſire your prayers for aſſiſtance at our work, and put others with you to do the ſame. Remember me to your huſband, and deſire your daughter to be kind to Chriſt, and ſeek to win§ near Him ; He will give her a welcome into His houſe of wine, and bring her into the King’s chamber. O how will the ſight of His face, and the ſmell of His garments, allure and raviſh the heart ! Now, the love of the lovely Son of God be with you.

Yours in his ſweet Jeſus,

S. R.

ANWOTH, 1635.

* Slip-knot, eaſily looſened.

† Cheerful, cheering.

‡ Eaſter, *πασχα*, Acts xii. 4.

§ Get in.

LII.—*For* MARION M'NAUGHT.

(IN THE PROSPECT OF HER HUSBAND BEING COMPELLED TO
RECEIVE THE COMMAND OF THE PRELATES—SAINTS ARE
YET TO JUDGE.)



WELL-BELOVED MISTRESS,—I charge you in the name of the Son of God, to rest upon your Rock, that is higher than yourself. Be not afraid of a man, who is a worm, nor of the son of man, who shall die. God be your fear. Encourage your husband. I would counsel you to write to Edinburgh to some advised lawyers, to understand what your husband, as the head magistrate, may do in opposing any intruded minister, and in his carriage toward the new prelate,* if he command him to imprison or lay hands upon any, and, in a word, how far he may in his office disobey a prelate, without danger of law. For if the Bishop come to your town, and find not obedience to his heart, it is like he will command the Provost to assist him against God and the truth. Ye will have more courage under the persecution. Fear not; take Christ caution,† who said, “There shall not one hair of your head perish.”‡ Christ will not be in your common § to have you giving out anything for Him, and not give you all incomes with advantage. It is His honour His servants should not be herried|| and undone in His service. You were never honoured till now. And if your husband be the first magistrate who shall suffer for Christ's name in this persecution, he may rejoice that Christ hath put the first garland on his head and upon yours. Truth will yet

* An attempt had been made by the Bishop of Sydserrf to force a minister upon the people of Kirkcudbright, in room of Mr Glendinning, who had been suspended, and ordered to be imprisoned, because he would not conform to Episcopacy. Provost Fullarton (husband of M. M'Naught), along with other magistrates, would not imprison Mr Glendinning, and this was the occasion of the above letter. See note at beginning of Let. 67.

† Surety. ‡ Luke xxi. 18. § Under obligation to. || Pillaged cruelly.

keep the crown of the caufey* in Scotland. Chrift and truth are ftrong enough. They judge us now; we fhall one day judge them, and fit on twelve thrones and judge the twelve tribes. Believe, believe; for they dare not pray; they dare not look Chrift in the face. They have been falfe to Chrift, and He will not fit with† the wrong. Ye know it is not our caufe; for if we would quit our Lord, we might fleep for the prefent in a found fkin, and keep our place, means, and honour, and be dear to them alfo; but let us once put all we have over in Chrift's hand. Fear not for my papers; I fhall defpatch them, but ye will be examined for them. The Spirit of Jefus give you inward peace. Defire your husband from me to prove honeft to Chrift; he fhall not be a lofer at Chrift's hand.

Yours ever in his fweet Lord Jefus,

S. R.

ANWOTH, July 8, 1635.

LIII.—*For* MARION M'NAUGHT.

(*ENCOURAGEMENT UNDER TRIAL BY PROSPECT OF BRIGHTER DAYS.*)

MISTRESS,—My love in Chrift remembered. Having appointed a meeting with Mr David Dickfon, and knowing that B. will not keep the Prefbytery, I cannot fee you now. Commend my journey to God. My foul bleffeth you for your laft letter. Be not difcouraged; Chrift will not want the Ifles-men. The Ifles fhall wait for His law. We are His inheritance, and He will fell no part of His inheritance. For the fins of this land, and our breach of the covenant, contempt of the Gofpel, and our defection from the truth, He hath fet up a burning furnace in our Mount Zion; but I fay it, and will bide by it, the grafs fhall yet grow green on our Mount Zion. There fhall be dew all the night upon the lilies, amongft which Chrift feedeth, until the day break, and the fhadows flee away. And the moth fhall eat up

* Appear openly with credit on the public ftreet.

† Bear in f Silence.

the enemies of Christ. Let them make a fire of their own, and walk in the light thereof, it shall not let them see to go to their bed ; but they shall lie down in sorrow.* Therefore, rejoice and believe. This in haste. Grace, grace be with you and yours.

Yours in Christ,

S. R.

ANWOTH.

LIV.—*For* MARION M'NAUGHT.

(PUBLIC WRONGS—WORDS OF COMFORT.)



MOVING AND DEAR SISTER,—I fear that you be moved and cast down, because of the late wrong that your husband received in your Town Council. But I pray you comfort yourself in the Lord ; for a just cause bides under the water only as long as wicked men hold their hand above it ; their arm will weary, and then the just cause shall swim above, and the light that is sown for the righteous shall spring and grow up. If ye were not strangers here, the dogs of the world would not bark at you. You shall see all windings and turnings that are in your way to heaven out of God's Word ; for He will not lead you to the kingdom at the nearest, but you must go through "honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report ; as deceivers, and yet true ; as unknown, and yet well known ; as dying, and, behold, we live ; as chastened, and not killed ; as sorrowful, and yet always rejoicing."† The world is one of the enemies that we have to fight with, but a vanquished and overcome enemy, and like a beaten and forlorn soldier ; for our Jesus hath taken the armour from it. Let me then speak to you in His words : "Be of good courage," saith the Captain of our salvation, "for I have overcome the world." You shall neither be free of the scourge of the tongue, nor of disgraces (even if it were buffetings and spittings upon the face, as was our Saviour's case), if you follow Jesus Christ. I beseech you in the bowels of our Lord Jesus, keep a good con-

* Hā. l. 11.

† 2 Cor. vi. 8, 10.

science, as I trust you do. You live not upon men's opinion ; gold may be gold, and have the king's stamp upon it, when it is trampled upon by men. Happy are you, if, when the world trampleth upon you in your credit and good name, yet you are the Lord's gold, stamped with the King of heaven's image, and sealed by the Spirit unto the day of your redemption. Pray for the spirit of love ; for "love beareth all things ; it believeth all things, hopeth all things, and endureth all things."*

And I pray you and your husband, yea, I charge you before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, pray for these your adversaries, and read this to your husband from me, and let both of you put on, as the elect of God, bowels of mercies. And, sister, remember how many thousands of talents of sins your Master hath forgiven you. Forgive ye therefore your fellow-servants one talent. Follow God's command in this, and "seek not after your own heart, and after your own eyes," in this matter, as the Spirit speaks.† Ask never the counsel of your own heart here ; the world will blow up your heart now, and cause it swell, except the grace of God cause it fall. Jesus, even Jesus, the Eternal Wisdom of the Father, give you wisdom. I trust God shall be glorified in you. And a door shall be opened unto you, as to the Lord's prisoners of hope, as Zechariah speaks. It is a benefit to you, that the wicked are God's fan to purge you. And I hope they shall blow away no corn, or spiritual graces, but only your chaff. I pray you in your pursuit, have so recourse to the law of men, that you wander not from the law of God. Be not cast down : if you saw Him who, standing on the shore, holding out His arms to welcome you on land, you would not only wade through a sea of wrongs, but through hell itself to be at Him. And I trust in God you see Him sometimes. The Lord Jesus be with your spirit, and all yours.

Your brother in the Lord,

S. R.

ANWOTH.

* 1 Cor. xiii. 7.

† Num. xv. 39.

LV.—To MARION M'NAUGHT.

(WHEN HE HAD BEEN THREATENED WITH PERSECUTION FOR
PREACHING THE GOSPEL—THE SAINTS SHALL YET WIN
THE DAY.)



WORTHY AND WELL-BELOVED MISTRESS,—My love in Christ remembered. I know ye have heard of the purpose of my adversaries, to try what they can do against me at this Synod for the work of God in your town when I was at your Communion. They intend to call me in question at the Synod for treasonable doctrine. Therefore help me with your prayers, and desire your acquaintance to help me also. Your ears heard how Christ was there. If He suffer His servant to get a broken head in His own kingly service, and not either help or revenge the wrong, I never saw the like of it. There is not a night drunkard, time-serving, idle, idol shepherd to be spoken against : I am the only man ; and because it is so, and I know God will not help them lest they be proud, I am confident their process shall fall afunder. Only be ye earnest with God for hearing, for an open ear, and reading of the bill, that He may in heaven hear both parties, and judge accordingly. And doubt not, fear not ; they shall not, who now ride highest, put Christ out of His kingly possession in Scotland. The pride of man and his rage shall turn to the praise of our Lord. It is an old feud, that the rulers of the earth, the dragon and his angels, have carried to the Lamb and His followers ; but the followers of the Lamb shall overcome by the Word of God. And believe this, and wait on a little, till they have got their womb full of clay and gravel, and they shall know (howbeit stolen waters be sweet) Esau's portion is not worth his hunting. Commend me to your husband, and send me word how Grizel is. The Son of God lead her through the water. The Lord Jesus be with your spirit.

Yours in his only, only Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ANWOTH.

LVI.—*To My Lady KENMURE.**(REASONS FOR RESIGNATION—SECURITY OF SAINTS—THE
END OF TIME.)*

ADAM,—I received your Ladyship's letter from J. G.* I thank our Lord ye are as well at least as one may be who is not come home. It is a mercy in this stormy sea to get a second wind ; for none of the saints get a first, but they must take the winds as the Lord of the seas causeth them to blow, and the inn as the Lord and Master of the inns hath ordered it. If contentment were here, heaven were not heaven. Whoever seek the world to be their bed, shall at best find it short and ill-made, and a stone under their side to hold them waking, rather than a soft pillow to sleep upon. Ye ought to bless your Lord that it is not worse. We live in a sea where many have suffered shipwreck, and have need that Christ sit at the helm of the ship. It is a mercy to win to heaven, though with much hard toil and heavy labour, and to take it by violence ill and well as it may be. Better go swimming and wet through our waters than drown by the way ; especially now when truth suffereth, and great men bid Christ sit lower and contract Himself in less bounds, as if He took too much room.

I expect our new prelate† shall try my sitting. I hang by a thread, but it is (if I may speak so) of Christ's spinning. There is no quarrel more honest or honourable than to suffer for truth. But the worst is, that this kirk is like to sink, and all her lovers and friends stand afar off ; none mourn with her, and none mourn for her. But the Lord Jesus will not be put out of His conquest‡ so soon in Scotland. It will be seen that the kirk and truth will rise again within three days, and Christ again shall ride upon His white horse ; howbeit His horse seem now to stumble, yet he cannot fall. The fulness of Christ's harvest in the end of the earth is not yet come in. I speak not this because I would have it so, but upon

* J. Gordon.

† Sydsersff.

‡ Inheritance.

better grounds than my naked liking. But enough of this sad subject.

I long to be fully assured of your Ladyship's welfare, and that your soul prospereth, especially now in your solitary life, when your comforts outward are few, and when Christ hath you for the very uptaking. I know His love to you is still running over, and His love hath not so bad a memory as to forget you and your dear child, who hath two fathers in heaven, the one the Ancient of Days. I trust in His mercy He hath something laid up for him above, however it may go with him here. I know it is long since your Ladyship saw this world turned your stepmother and did forsake you. Madam, ye have reason to take in good part a lean dinner and spare diet in this life, seeing your large supper of the Lamb's preparing will recompense all. Let it go, which was never yours but only in sight, not in property. The time of your loan will wear shorter and shorter, and time is measured to you by ounce weights; and then I know your hope shall be a full ear of corn and not blasted with wind. It may be your joy that your anchor is up within the vail, and that the ground it is cast upon is not false but firm. God hath done His part: I hope ye will not deny to fish and fetch home all your love to Himself; and it is but too narrow and short for Him if it were more. If ye were before pouring all your love (if it had been many gallons more) in upon your Lord, if drops fell by in the in-pouring, He forgiveth you. He hath done now all that can be done to win beyond it all, and hath left little to woo your love from Himself, except one only child. What is His purpose herein He knoweth best, who hath taken your soul in tutoring. Your faith may be boldly charitable of Christ, that however matters go, the worst shall be a tired traveller, and a joyful and sweet welcome home. The back of your winter night is broken. Look to the east, the day sky is breaking. Think not that Christ loseth time, or lingereth unsuitably. O fair, fair, and sweet morning! We are but as sea passengers. If we look right, we are upon our country coast: our Redeemer is fast coming, to take this old worm-eaten world, like an old moth-eaten

garment, in His two hands, and to roll it up and lay it by Him. These are the last days, and an oath is given, by God Himself, that time shall be no more ;* and when time itself is old and grey-haired, it were good we were away. Thus, Madam, ye see I am, as my custom is, tedious in my lines. Your Ladyship will pardon it. The Lord Jesus be with your spirit.

Your Ladyship at all obedience in Christ,

S. R.

ANWOTH, *Jan. 18, 1636.*

LVII.—*For* MARION M'NAUGHT.

(IN THE PROSPECT OF REMOVAL TO ABERDEEN.)



HONOURED AND DEAREST IN THE LORD,—
 Grace, mercy, and peace be to you. I am well, and my soul prospereth. I find Christ with me. I burden no man; I want nothing; no face looketh on me but it laugheth on me. Sweet, sweet is the Lord's cross. I overcome my heaviness. My Bridegroom's love-blinks† fatten my weary soul. I soon go to my King's palace at Aberdeen. Tongue, and pen, and wit cannot express my joy.

Remember my love to Jean Gordon, to my sister, Jean Brown, to Grizel, to your husband. Thus in haste. Grace be with you.

Yours in his only, only Lord Jesus,

S. R.

EDINBURGH, *April 5, 1636.*

P.S.—My charge is to you to believe, rejoice, sing, and triumph. Christ has said to me, Mercy, mercy, grace and peace for Marion M'Naught.

* Rev. x. 6.

† Love-glances.

LVIII.—*To my* LADY KENMURE.

(ON OCCASION OF EFFORTS TO INTRODUCE EPISCOPACY.)



RIGHT HONOURABLE,—I cannot find a time for writing some things I intended on Job, I have been so taken up with the broils that we are encumbered with in our calling. For our prelate will have us either to swallow our light over, and digest it contrary to our stomachs (howbeit we should vomit our conscience and all, in this troublesome conformity), or then * he will try if deprivation can convert us to the ceremonial faith.†

I write to your Ladyship, Madam, not as distrusting your affection or willingness to help me, as your Ladyship is able by yourself or others, but to advertise you that I hang by a small thread. For our learned prelate, because we cannot see with his eyes so far in a mill-stone as his light doeth, will not follow his Master, meek Jesus, who waited upon the wearied and short-breathed in the way to heaven; and, where all see not alike, and some are weaker, He carrieth the lambs in His bosom, and leadeth gently those that are with young. But we must either see all the evil of ceremonies to be but as indifferent straws, or suffer no less than to be casten out of the Lord's inheritance! Madam, if I had time I would write more at length, but your Ladyship will pardon me till a fitter occasion. Grace be with you and your child, and bear you company to your best home.

Your Ladyship in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ANWOTH, *June 8, 1636.*

* Or else.

† Referring to the attempts then made by the prelates to compel conformity to episcopal forms.

LIX.—To EARLSTON, *Elder*.

[ALEXANDER GORDON of Earlston was descended from the house of Gordon of Lochinvar, and the designation of his family at first was Gordon of Airds; but his great-grandfather, Alexander Gordon of Airds, having married Margaret, eldest daughter of John Sinclair of Earlston, the issue of that union came to possess the lands of Earlston.—(*Nisbet's Heraldry*.) His ancestors were at an early period brought to the knowledge of divine truth by some of those disciples of Wickliff who itinerated in Scotland, preaching the pure doctrines of the Gospel; and they nobly vindicated the sincerity of their profession by the protection which they afforded to these devoted missionaries, as well as by the zeal with which they laboured to propagate the faith. It is a tradition, that old Gordon of Airds imbibed Wickliffite views, when he was on a sort of embassy to the English Borderers, and that he propagated the truth by bringing home an English Wickliffite to be tutor to his eldest son. Having obtained a New Testament in the vulgar tongue, he read it at meetings which were held in the woods of Airds, in a secluded spot, at the junction of the Ken and the Dee, where the loch begins. So abundantly blessed were such means, that the truth circulated rapidly through the whole province of Galloway. And at the very time when Patrick Hamilton suffered martyrdom, on the last day of February 1528, that province may be said to have abjured Popery, and adopted the doctrines of the Reformation.

Earlston, or Erlifston, or Earleston (*Minute-book of Comm. of Covenanters*), is not far from Carisphairn. As you come from Dalry, you see the roof of the ancient residence among trees that surround it, and that grow up the sloping ridge at the foot of which it stands. In front of the grim old tower, there is a fine lawn, a remnant of better days, and a linn not far off. It is not to be confounded with the *Earlston* near Anwoth, in the parish of Borgue, which is quite modern, having been built by a descendant of this ancient family, and called after the name of the original property.

The grace of God, which had early chosen this family, continued to favour it for many generations. *Alexander Gordon*, Rutherford's friend, was worthy of his ancestors. *Livingstone*, in his *Characteristics*, speaks of him as "a man of great spirit, but much subdued by inward exercise, and who attained the most rare experience of downcasting and upholding;" and adds, "For wisdom, courage, and righteousness, he might have been a magistrate in any part of the earth." In the struggle against the attempts of the Court to introduce Prelacy into the Church of Scotland, he warmly espoused the side of the Presbyterians. In the end of July 1635, he was summoned by the Bishop of Glasgow to appear before the High Commission, for preventing the intrusion

of an unpopular nominee of the Bishop into a vacant parish. But Lord Lorn, afterwards the martyred Marquis of Argyle, having appeared with him before that court, and affirmed that what Earlston had done was by his direction as patron of the parish, the matter was deferred to a future day. This letter of Rutherford to Earlston, it is highly probable, refers to the vexatious proceedings instituted against him in regard to this matter. He was afterwards summoned by Syderff, Bishop of Galloway, to appear before a High Commission Court to be held at Wigtown. He did not make his appearance; but the Bishop proceeded in his case, fined him five hundred merks, and banished him to Montrose. Earlston, by the advice of Lord Lorn, gave in a representation of his case to the Privy Council, who dispensed with his banishment upon the payment of his fine. Earlston was a member of the Assembly which met at Glasgow in 1638, having been a commissioner from the Presbytery of Kirkcudbright. His name appears among the last of the members of Parliament in 1641, as member for the shire of Galloway. He was married to Elizabeth, daughter of John Gordon of Muirfad, by whom he had several children. His eldest son, William, who succeeded him, is retoured heir of his father on the 23d of January 1655. (*Inq. Retor. Abbrev.*, No. 264.) In the avenue leading to Earlston, there is a very large old oak, still shown as that in the thick foliage of which this William Gordon hid, and so escaped his pursuers, in the days of the persecution.

(NO SUFFERING FOR CHRIST UNREWARDED—LOSS OF CHILDREN—CHRIST IN PROVIDENCE.)



MUCH HONOURED SIR,—I have heard of the mind and malice of your adversaries against you. It is like they will extend the law they have, in length and breadth, answerable to their heat of mind. But it is a great part of your glory that the cause is not yours, but your Lord's whom you serve. And I doubt not but Christ will count it His honour to back His weak servant; and it were a shame for Him (with reverence to His holy name) that He should suffer Himself to be in the common* of such a poor man as ye are, and that ye should give out for Him and not get in again. Write up your depurments† for your Master Christ, and keep the account of what ye give out, whether name, credit, goods, or life, and suspend your reckoning till nigh the evening; and remember that a poor weak servant of Christ

Under obligation to.

† Disbursements.

wrote it to you, that ye shall have Christ, a King, caution* for your incomes and all your losses. Reckon not from the forenoon. Take the Word of God for your warrant; and for Christ's act of cautionary, howbeit body, life, and goods go for Christ your Lord, and though ye should lose the head for Him, yet "there shall not one hair of your head perish; in patience, therefore, possess your soul."† And because ye are the first man in Galloway called out and questioned for the name of Jesus, His eye hath been upon you, as upon one whom He designed to be among His witnesses. Christ hath said, "Alexander Gordon shall lead the ring in witnessing a good confession," and therefore He hath put the garland of suffering for Himself first upon your head. Think yourself so much the more obliged to Him, and fear not; for He layeth His right hand on your head. He who was dead and is alive will plead your cause, and will look attentively upon the process from the beginning to the end, and the Spirit of glory shall rest upon you. "Fear none of these things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."‡ This lovely One, Jesus, who also became the Son of man, that He might take strokes for you, write the cross-sweetening and soul-supporting sense of these words in your heart!

These rumbling wheels of Scotland's ten days' tribulation are under His look who hath seven eyes. Take a house on your head, and slip yourself by faith in under Christ's wings till the storm be over. And remember, when they have drunken us down, Jerusalem will be a cup of trembling and of poison.§ They shall be fain to vomit out the saints; for Judah "shall be a hearth of fire in a sheaf, and they shall devour all the people round about, on the right hand and on the left." Woe to Zion's enemies! they have the worst of it; for we have writ || for the victory. Sir, ye were never

* Security.

† Luke xxi. 18, 19.

‡ Rev. ii. 10.

§ Zech. xii. 2, 6.

|| A writing under His hand.

honourable till now. This is your glory, that Christ hath put you in the roll with Himself and with the rest of the witnesses who are come out of great tribulation, and have washed their garments and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Be not cast down for what the servants of Antichrist cast in your teeth, that ye are a head to and favourer of the Puritans, and leader to that sect. If your conscience say, "Alas ! here is much din and little done" (as the proverb is), because ye have not done so much service to Christ that way as ye might and should, take courage from that same temptation. For your Lord Christ looketh upon that very challenge* as an hungering desire in you to have done more than ye did ; and that filleth up the blank, and He will accept of what ye have done in that kind. If great men be kind to you, I pray you overlook them ; if they smile on you, Christ but borroweth their face to smile through them upon His afflicted servant. Know the well-head ; and for all that, learn the way to the well itself. Thank God that Christ came to your house in your absence and took with Him some of your children. He presumed that† much on your love, that ye would not offend ; and howbeit He should take the rest, He cannot come upon your wrong side. I question not, if they were children of gold, but ye think them well bestowed upon Him.

Expound well these two rods on you, one in your house at home, another on your own person abroad. Love thinketh no evil. If ye were not Christ's wheat, appointed to be bread in His house, He would not grind you. But keep the middle line, neither despise nor faint.‡ Ye see your Father is homely§ with you. Strokes of a father evidence kindness and care ; take them so. I hope your Lord hath manifested Himself to you, and suggested these, or more choice thoughts about His dealing with you. We are using our weak moyen|| and credit for you up at our own court, as we dow.¶ We pray the King to hear us, and the Son of Man to go side for side with you, and hand in hand in the fiery oven, and to quicken and

* Rebuke, accusation.

§ Familiar.

† So much, to that degree.

|| Means, interest.

‡ Heb. xii. 5.

¶ As we are able.

encourage your unbelieving heart when ye droop and despond. Sir, to the honour of Christ be it said, my faith goeth with my pen now. I am presently believing Christ shall bring you out. Truth in Scotland shall keep the crown of the causeway* yet. The saints shall see religion go naked at noon-day, free from shame and fear of men. We shall divide Shechem, and ride upon the high places of Jacob. Remember my obliged respects and love to Lady Kenmure and her sweet child.

Yours ever in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ANWOTH, July 6, 1636.

LX.—To MARION M'NAUGHT.

(WHEN HE WAS UNDER TRIAL BY THE HIGH COMMISSION.)



MY DEAR AND WELL-BELOVED IN CHRIST,—
I am yet under trial, and have appeared before Christ's forbidden lords,† for a testimony against them. The Chancellor and the rest tempted me with questions, nothing belonging to my summons, which I wholly declined, notwithstanding of his threats. My newly printed book against Arminians‡ was one challenge; not lording the prelates§ was another. The most part of the bishops, when I came in, looked more astonished than I, and heard me with silence. Some spoke for me; but my Lord ruled it so as I am filled with joy in my sufferings, and I find Christ's cross sweet. What they intend against the next day I know not. Be not secure, but pray. Our Bishop of Galloway said, If the Commission should not give him his will of me (with an oath he said), he would write to the King. The Chancellor summoned me in judgment to appear

* Appear in public with triumph and honour.

† The Prelates, alluding to 1 Pet. v. 3.

‡ *Exercitatio Apol. pro Divinâ Gratiâ*, published this year (1636) at Amsterdam.

§ Calling them "Lords."

that day eight days. My Lord has brought me a friend from the Highlands of Argyle, my Lord of Lorn,* who hath done as much as was within the compass of his power. God gave me favour in his eyes. Mr Robert Glendinning is silenced, till he accepts a colleague. We hope to deal yet for him. Christ is worthy to be entrusted. Your husband will get an easy and good way of his business. Ye and I both shall see the salvation of God upon Joseph separate from his brethren. Grace be with you.

S. R.

EDINBURGH, 1636.

LXI.—*To the truly Noble and Elect Lady, my LADY VISCOUNTESS OF KENMURE, on the evening of his banishment to Aberdeen.*

(*HIS ONLY REGRETS—THE CROSS UNSPEAKABLY SWEET—
RETROSPECT OF HIS MINISTRY.*)



NOBLE AND ELECT LADY,—That honour that I have prayed for these sixteen years, with submission to my Lord's will, my kind Lord hath now bestowed upon me, even to suffer for my royal and princely King Jesus, and for His kingly crown, and the freedom of His kingdom that His Father hath given Him. The forbidden lords† have sentenced me with deprivation, and confinement within the town of Aberdeen. I am charged in the King's name to enter against the 20th day of August next, and there to remain during the King's pleasure, as they have given it out. Howbeit Christ's green cross, newly laid upon me, be somewhat heavy, while I call to mind the many fair days sweet and comfortable to my soul and to the souls of many others, and how young ones in Christ are plucked from the breast, and the inheritance of God laid waste; yet that sweet smelled and perfumed cross

* Brother to Lady Kenmure, afterwards the celebrated Marquis of Argyle. See Let. 61.

† Let. 60.

of Christ is accompanied with sweet refreshments, with the kisses of a King, with the joy of the Holy Ghost, with faith that the Lord hears the sighing of a prisoner, with undoubted hope (as sure as my Lord liveth) after this night to see daylight, and Christ's sky to clear up again upon me, and His poor kirk; and that in a strange land, among strange faces, He will give favour in the eyes of men to His poor oppressed servant, who dow* not but love that lovely One, that princely One, Jesus, the Comforter of his soul. All would be well, if I were free of old challenges† for guiltiness, and for neglect in my calling, and for speaking too little for my Well-beloved's crown, honour, and kingdom. O for a day in the assembly of the saints to advocate for King Jesus! If my Lord go on now to quarrels also, I die, I cannot endure it. But I look for peace from Him, because He knoweth I dow* bear men's feud, but I dow* not bear His feud. This is my only exercise, that I fear I have done little good in my ministry; but I dare not but say, I loved the bairns of the wedding-chamber, and prayed for and desired the thriving of the marriage, and coming of His kingdom.

I apprehend no less than a judgment upon Galloway, and that the Lord shall visit this whole nation for the quarrel of the Covenant. But what can be laid upon me, or any the like of me, is too light for Christ. Christ dow* bear more, and would bear death and burning quick, in His quick servants, even for this honourable cause that I now suffer for. Yet for all my complaints (and He knoweth that I dare not now dissemble), He was never sweeter and kinder than He is now. One kiss now is sweeter than ten long since; sweet, sweet is His cross; light, light and easy is His yoke. O what a sweet step were it up to my Father's house through ten deaths, for the truth and cause of that unknown, and so not half well loved, Plant of Renown, the Man called the Branch, the Chief among ten thousands, the fairest among the sons of men! O what unseen joys, how many hidden heart-burnings of love, are in the

* Can.

† Rebukes.

remnants of the sufferings of Christ ! My dear worthy Lady, I give it to your Ladyship, under my own hand, my heart writing as well as my hand,—welcome, welcome, sweet, sweet and glorious crosses of Christ ; welcome, sweet Jesus, with Thy light crosses. Thou hast now gained and gotten all my love from me ; keep what Thou hast gotten ! Only woe, woe is me, for my bereft flock, for the lambs of Jesus, that I fear shall be fed with dry breasts. But I spare now. Madam, I dare not promise to see your Ladyship, because of the little time I have allotted me ; and I purpose to obey the King, who hath power of my body ; and rebellion to kings is unbecoming Christ's ministers. Be pleased to acquaint my Lady Mar* with my case. I will look that your Ladyship and that good lady will be mindful to God of the Lord's prisoner, not for my cause, but for the Gospel's sake. Madam, bind me more, if more can be, to your Ladyship, and write thanks to your brother, my Lord of Lorn, for what he hath done for me, a poor unknown stranger to his Lordship. I shall pray for him and his house, while I live. It is his honour to open his mouth in the streets, for his wronged and oppressed Master Christ Jesus. Now, Madam, commending your Ladyship and the sweet child to the tender mercies of mine own Lord Jesus, and His good-will who dwelt in the Bush,

I am yours in his own sweetest Lord Jesus,

S. R.

EDINBURGH, *July 28, 1636.*

LXII.—*To the LADY CULROSS, on occasion of his banishment to Aberdeen.*

[ELIZABETH MELVILLE, wife of James Colvill, the eldest son of Alexander, Commendator of Culross, was the daughter of Sir James Melville of Halhill, in Fife. Her father, an accomplished statesman, was ambassador from Queen Mary to Queen Elizabeth, and a privy councillor to King James VI. He was also a man of piety, and, as Livingstone informs us, “ professed he had got assurance from the Lord, that himself, wife, and all his children,

* See Let. to her, 140, and notice prefixed.

should meet in heaven." He died on the 13th of November 1617. Her mother was Christian, the seventh daughter of David Boswell of Balmuto. (*Douglas's Peerage*, vol. ii.) Lady Culrofs held a high place among the eminent Christians of her day. Livingstone says: "She was famous for her piety, and for her dream concerning her spiritual condition, which she put in verse, and was by others published. Of all that ever I saw, she was most unwearied in religious exercises; and the more she enjoyed access to God therein she hungered the more." She was present at the Communion at Shotts in June 1636, when the sermon preached by Livingstone, on the Monday after the sacrament, was the means, it is believed, of the conversion of not less than five hundred individuals. The night before had been spent in prayer by a great number of Christians in a large room where she slept; and the minister who should have preached on Monday having fallen sick, it was at her suggestion that the other ministers assisting on that occasion, to whom Livingstone was a stranger, laid upon him the work of addressing the people on Monday. There is a poem written by her entitled, "Ane Godlie Dream;" and there is still preserved a sonnet of her composition, which she sent to Mr John Welsh when he was imprisoned in Blacknes, 1605:—

" My dear brother, with courage bear the cross,
Joy shall be joined with all thy sorrow here.
High is thy hope, disdain this earthly dross,
Once shall you see the wished day appear.

" Now it is dark, thy sky cannot be clear,
After the clouds it shall be calm anon;
Wait on His will whose blood hath bought thee dear:
Extol His name, though outward joys be gone.

" Look to the Lord, thou art not left alone,
Since He is thine, what pleasure canst thou take!
He is at hand, and hears thy every groan:
End out thy fight, and suffer for His sake.

" A fight most bright thy soul shall shortly see,
When store of glory thy rich reward shall be."

—*Wodroou MSS. Adv. Lib. Edin. vol. xxix.*

(CHALLENGES OF CONSCIENCE—THE CROSS NO BURDEN.)



ADAM,—Your letter came in due time to me, now a prisoner of Christ, and in bonds for the Gospel. I am sentenced with deprivation and confinement within the town of Aberdeen. But O my guiltiness, the follies of my youth, the neglects in my calling, and especially in not speaking more for

the kingdom, crown, and sceptre of my royal and princely King Jesus, do so stare me in the face, that I apprehend anger in that which is a crown of rejoicing to the dear saints of God. This, before my compearance,* which was three several days, did trouble me, and burdeneth me more now; howbeit Christ, and in Him God reconciled, met me with open arms, and trysted† me precisely at the entry of the door of the Chancellor's hall, and assisted me to answer, so as the advantage that is is not theirs but Christ's. Alas! that is no cause of wondering that I am thus borne down with challenges;‡ for the world hath mistaken me, and no man knoweth what guiltiness is in me so well as these two, who keep my eyes now waking and my heart heavy, I mean, my heart and conscience, and my Lord, who is greater than my heart.

Shew your brother that I desire him, while he is on the watch-tower, to plead with his mother, and to plead with this land, and spare not to cry for my sweet Lord Jesus His fair crown, that the interdicted and forbidden lords§ are plucking off His royal head. If I were free of challenges‡ and a High Commission within my soul, I would not give a straw to go to my Father's house through ten deaths, for the truth and cause of my lovely, lovely One, Jesus. But I walk in heaviness now. If ye love me, and Christ in me, my dear Lady, pray, pray for this only, that bygones betwixt my Lord and me may be bygones,|| and that He would pass from the summons of His High Commission, and seek nothing from me, but what He will do for me and work in me. If your Ladyship knew me as I do myself, ye would say, "Poor soul, no marvel." It is not my apprehension that createth this cross to me; it is too real, and hath sad and certain grounds. But I will not believe that God will take this advantage of me, when my back is at the wall. He who forbiddeth to add affliction to affliction, will He do it Himself? Why should He pursue a dry leaf and stubble? Desire Him to spare me

* Appearance at Court in obedience to a citation.

† Appointed a meeting with.

‡ Rebukes that I give myself.

§ The Prelates.

|| All past offences forgiven and forgotten.

now. Also the memory of the fair feast-days that Christ and I had in His banqueting-house of wine, and of the scattered flock once committed to me, and now taken off my hand by Himself, because I was not so faithful in the end as I was in the two first years of my entry, when sleep departed from my eyes, because my soul was taken up with a care for Christ's lambs,—even these add sorrow to my sorrow. Now my Lord hath only given me this to say, and I write it under mine own hand (be ye the Lord's servant's witnesses), welcome, welcome, sweet, sweet cross of Christ; welcome fair, fair, lovely, royal King with Thine own cross. Let us all three go to heaven together. Neither care I much to go from the south of Scotland to the north, and to be Christ's prisoner amongst unco* faces, in a place of this kingdom, which I have little reason to be in love with. I know Christ shall make Aberdeen my garden of delights. I am fully persuaded that Scotland shall eat Ezekiel's book, that is written within and without, "lamentation, and mourning, and woe."† But the saints shall get a drink of the well that goeth through the streets of the New Jerusalem, to put it down.‡ Thus hoping that ye will think upon the poor prisoner of Christ, I pray, grace, grace be with you.

Your Ladyship's in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

EDINBURGH, *July 30, 1636.*

LXIII.—*To MR ROBERT CUNNINGHAM, Minister of the Gospel at Holywood, in Ireland.*

[MR ROBERT CUNNINGHAM was at first for some time employed as chaplain to the Earl of Buccleuch's regiment in Holland. On the return of the troops to Scotland, he removed to the north of Ireland, where he was admitted minister of Holywood on the 9th of November 1615. "He was the one man to my discerning," says Livingstone, "of all that ever I saw, who

* Strange.

† Ezek. ii. 10.

‡ Make it more pleasant to swallow.

resembled most the meekness of Jesus Christ in his whole carriage, and was so far revered by all, even the most wicked, that he was oft troubled with that Scripture, ‘Woe to you when all men speak well of you.’” He continued to labour in his charge, and in the surrounding district, with great success, until, on the appointment of the Earl of Wentworth to be Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, the Presbyterian ministers began to be molested for their non-conformity. Owing to the singular gentleness of Cunningham’s disposition, he was for some time subjected to less trouble than his brethren; but at length, on the 12th of August 1636, he and four other ministers, among whom was Mr Hamilton mentioned in the close of this letter, were formally deposed for refusing to subscribe certain canons, one of which was one enjoining kneeling at the Lord’s Supper. Not long after, he and some of his deposed brethren came over to Scotland; but he did not long survive his arrival, having been attacked with sickness at Irvine, where he died on the 29th of March 1637, scarcely eight months after this letter was written. A little before he expired, while his wife was sitting on the front of his bed with her hand clasped in his, after committing to God by prayer his flock at Holywood, his friends and children, he said, “And last of all, I recommend to Thee this gentlewoman, who is no more my wife.” His affectionate wife bursting into tears, he endeavoured by comfortable words to allay her grief; and while in the act of so doing, fell asleep in Jesus.]

(CONSOLATION TO A BROTHER IN TRIBULATION—HIS OWN
DEPRIVATION OF MINISTRY—CHRIST WORTH SUFFERING
FOR.)



WELL-BELOVED AND REVEREND BROTHER,—

Grace, mercy, and peace be to you. Upon acquaintance in Christ, I thought good to take the opportunity of writing to you. Seeing it hath seemed good to the Lord of the harvest to take the hooks* out of our hands for a time, and to lay upon us a more honourable service, even to suffer for His name, it were good to comfort one another in writing. I have had a desire to see you in the face; yet now being the prisoner of Christ, it is taken away. I am greatly comforted to hear of your soldier’s stately spirit, for your princely and royal Captain Jesus our Lord, and for the grace of God in the rest of our dear brethren with you.

* The sickles for reaping.

You have heard of my trouble, I suppose. It hath pleased our sweet Lord Jesus to let loose the malice of these interdicted lords in His house to deprive me of my ministry at Anwoth, and to confine me, eight score miles from thence, to Aberdeen; and also (which was not done to any before) to inhibit* me to speak at all in Jesus' name, within this kingdom, under the pain of rebellion. The cause that ripened their hatred was my book against the Arminians, whereof they accused me, on these three days I appeared before them. But, let our crowned King in Zion reign! By His grace the loss is theirs, the advantage is Christ's and truth's. Albeit this honest cross gained some ground on me, and my heaviness and my inward challenges of conscience for a time were sharp, yet now, for the encouragement of you all, I dare say it, and write it under my hand, "Welcome, welcome, sweet, sweet cross of Christ." I verily think the chains of my Lord Jesus are all overlaid with pure gold, and that His cross is perfumed, and that it smelleth of Christ, and that the victory shall be by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of His truth, and that Christ, lying on His back, in His weak servants, and oppressed truth, shall ride over His enemies' bellies, and shall "strike through kings in the day of His wrath."† It is time we laugh when He laugheth; and seeing He is now pleased to sit with‡ wrongs for a time, it becometh us to be silent until the Lord hath let the enemies enjoy their hungry, lean, and feckless§ paradise. Blessed are they who are content to take strokes with weeping Christ. Faith will trust the Lord, and is not hasty, nor headstrong; neither is faith so timorous as to flatter a temptation, or to bud|| and bribe the cross. It is little up or little down¶ that the Lamb and His followers can get no law-surety, nor truce with crosses; it must be so, till we be up in our Father's house. My heart is woe** indeed for my mother Church, that hath played the harlot with many lovers. Her Husband hath a mind to sell her for her horrible transgressions;

* Forbid.

† Ps. cx. 5.

‡ To bear with in silence.

§ Worthless, no substance in it.

|| Try to gain by gift.

¶ Of little moment.

** Sorrowful.

and heavy will the hand of the Lord be upon this backsliding nation. The ways of our Zion mourn ; her gold is become dim, her white Nazarites are black like a coal. How shall not the children weep, when the Husband and the mother cannot agree ! Yet I believe Scotland's sky shall clear again ; that Christ shall build again the old waste places of Jacob ; that our dead and dry bones shall become one army of living men, and that our Well-beloved may yet feed among the lilies, until the day break and the shadows flee away.* My dear brother, let us help one another with our prayers. Our King shall mow down His enemies, and shall come from Bozrah with His garments all dyed in blood. And for our consolation shall He appear, and call His wife Hephzibah, and His land Beulah ;† for He will rejoice over us and marry us, and Scotland shall say, "What have I to do any more with idols ?" Only let us be faithful to Him that can ride through hell and death upon a windlestrae,‡ and His horse never stumble ; and let Him make of me a bridge over a water, so that His high and holy name may be glorified in me. Strokes with the sweet Mediator's hand are very sweet. He was always sweet to my soul ; but since I suffered for Him, His breath hath a sweeter smell than before. Oh that every hair of my head, and every member and every bone in my body, were a man to witness a fair confession for Him ! I would think all too little for Him. When I look over beyond the line, and beyond death, to the laughing side of the world, I triumph, and ride upon the high places of Jacob ; howbeit otherwise I am a faint, dead-hearted, cowardly man, oft borne down, and hungry in waiting for the marriage supper of the Lamb. Nevertheless, I think it the Lord's wife love that feeds us with hunger, and makes us fat with wants and desertions.

I know not, my dear brother, if our worthy brethren be gone to sea or not. They are on my heart and in my prayers. If they be yet with you, salute my dear friend, John Stuart, my well-beloved brethren in the Lord, Mr Blair, Mr Hamilton, Mr Livingston, and

* Song iv. 5, 6.

† Isa. lxii. 4.

‡ A straw of dogs'-tail grass.

Mr M'Clelland,* and acquaint them with my troubles, and entreat them to pray for the poor afflicted prisoner of Christ. They are dear to my soul. I seek your prayers and theirs for my flock : their remembrance breaketh my heart. I desire to love that people, and others my dear acquaintance in Christ, with love in God, and as God loveth them. I know that He who sent me to the west and south, sends me also to the north. I will charge my soul to believe and to wait for Him, and will follow His providence, and not go before it, nor stay behind it. Now, my dear brother, taking farewell in paper, I commend you all to the word of His grace, and to the work of His Spirit, to Him who holdeth the seven stars in His right hand, that you may be kept spotless till the day of Jesus our Lord.

I am your brother in affliction in our sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

From IRVINE, being on my journey to Christ's
Palace in Aberdeen, *August 4, 1636.*

LXIV.—*To* ALEXANDER GORDON *of Earlston.*

(*HIS FEELINGS UPON LEAVING ANWOTH.*)



MUCH HONOURED SIR,—I find small hopes of Q.'s business. I intend, after the council-day, to go on to Aberdeen. The Lord is with me : I care not what man can do. I burden no man, and I want nothing. No king is better provided than I am. Sweet, sweet, and easy is the cross of my Lord. All men I look in the face (of whatsoever denomination, nobles and poor, acquaintance and strangers) are friendly to

* Correspondents to whom there are letters inserted in this volume, who having been obliged to remove from Scotland by the oppressive measures of the prelates, intended to proceed to New England. But the voyage proving disastrous, they ultimately returned to Ireland. There was a M'Lelland of Balmagachan, near Robertson, in the parish of Borgue; but this is not he. This was John M'Lelland, sometime minister of Kirkcudbright, a friend of R. Blair's.

me. My Well-beloved is some* kinder and more warmly than ordinary, and cometh and visiteth my soul. My chains are overgilded with gold. Only the remembrance of my fair days with Christ in Anwoth, and of my dear flock (whose case is my heart's sorrow), is vinegar to my fugged wine. Yet both sweet and four feed my soul. No pen, no words, no ingine† can exprefs to you the loveliness of my only, only Lord Jesus. Thus, in haste, making for my palace at Aberdeen, I blefs you, your wife, your eldest son, and other children. Grace, grace be with you.

Yours in his only, only Lord Jesus,

S. R.

EDINBURGH, Sept. 5, 1636.

LXV.—To ROBERT GORDON of Knockbreck, on his way to Aberdeen.

[ROBERT GORDON of Knockbrex, in the parish of Borge, which adjoins Anwoth, is, by Livingstone in his *Characteristicks*, described as “a single-hearted and painful Christian, much employed at parliaments and public meetings after the year 1638.” He was a member of the famous Assembly which met at Glasgow in 1638, as commissioner from the Presbytery of Kirkcudbright. The precise date of his death is uncertain. But, on the 28th of July 1657, John Gordon, son to John Gordon, who was son to Alexander Gordon in Garloch, is returned “heir of Robert Gordon of Knockbreck, his granduncle,” in the lands of Knockbreck, &c. (*Inq. Retor. Abbrev. Kirkcudbright*, No. 274.) This return enables us to correct some mistakes which have been fallen into in reference to Knockbreck and his family. Stevenson, in his edition of Livingstone's *Characteristicks*, 1773, has added to Livingstone's account of Robert Gordon of Knockbreck the following sentence:—“They all three suffered for religion. The two younger brothers were executed on one gibbet, and embracing each other in their arms, did so expire.” The two brothers to whom Stevenson refers, John Gordon of Knockbreck, and Robert, who were executed at Edinburgh on the 7th of December 1666, for having been engaged in the rising at Pentland (see Let. 218), were the grandchildren of Alexander Gordon of Garloch, the brother of Robert Gordon of Knockbreck, to whom Rutherford addresses this letter, and to whom one of them, John, in the above return, was served heir. Others have made the same

* Somewhat. † Power of mind. It is also written engine or ingyne. It is the Latin *ingenium*.

mistake. *Robert Gordon of Knockbreck* was evidently only *their* granduncle. Their father's name was John, and he died many years before the martyrdom of his sons.

Knockbrex stands over near the sea-shore, amid thick woods, looking down on the opening of *Wigtown Bay*. But a modern mansion has taken the place of Gordon's residence.]

(HOW UPHELD ON THE WAY.)



MY DEAREST BROTHER,—I see Christ thinketh shame (if I may speak so) to be in such a poor man's common* as mine. I burden no man; I want nothing; no face hath gloomed upon me since I left you. God's sun and fair weather conveyeth me to my time-paradise in Aberdeen. Christ hath so handsomely fitted for my shoulders this rough tree of the cross, as that it hurteth me no ways. My treasure is up in Christ's coffers; my comforts are greater than ye can believe; my pen shall lie for penury of words to write of them. God knoweth I am filled with the joy of the Holy Ghost. Only the memory of you, my dearest in the Lord, my flock and others, keepeth me under, and from being exalted above measure. Christ's sweet sauce hath this four mixed with it; but O such a sweet and pleasant taste! I find small hopes of Q.'s matter. Thus in haste. Remember me to your wife, and to William Gordon. Grace be with you.

Yours in his only, only Lord Jesus,

S. R.

EDINBURGH, *Sept. 5, 1636.*

LXVI.—To ROBERT GORDON of *Knockbrex*, after arriving at Aberdeen.

(CHALLENGES OF CONSCIENCE—EASE IN ZION.)



DEAR BROTHER,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you. I am, by God's mercy, come now to Aberdeen, the place of my confinement, and settled in an honest man's house. I find the town's-men cold, general, and dry in their

* Under obligation to.

kindness; yet I find a lodging in the heart of many strangers. My challenges are revived again, and I find old sores bleeding of new; dangerous and painful is an undercotted* conscience; yet I have an eye to the blood that is physic for such sores. But, verily, I see Christianity is conceived to be more easy and lighter than it is; so that I sometimes think I never knew anything but the letters of that name; for our nature contenteth itself with little in godliness. Our "Lord, Lord" seemeth to us ten "Lord, Lords." Little holiness in our balance is much, because it is our own holiness; and we love to lay small burdens upon our soft natures, and to make a fair court-way to heaven. And I know it were necessary to take more pains than we do, and not to make heaven a city more easily taken than God hath made it. I persuade myself that many runners shall come short, and get a disappointment. Oh! how easy is it to deceive ourselves, and to sleep, and wish that heaven may fall down in our laps! Yet for all my Lord's glooms,† I find Him sweet, gracious, loving, kind; and I want both pen and words to set forth the fairness, beauty, and sweetness of Christ's love, and the honour of this cross of Christ, which is glorious to me, though the world thinketh shame thereof. I verily think that the cross of Christ would blush and think shame of these thin-skinned worldlings, who are so married to their credit that they are ashamed of the sufferings of Christ. O the honour to be scourged and stoned with Christ, and to go through a furious-faced death to life eternal! But men would have law-borrows‡ against Christ's cross.

Now, my dear brother, forget not the prisoner of Christ, for I see very few here who kindly fear God. Grace be with you. Let my love in Christ and hearty affection be remembered to your kind wife, to your brother John, and to all friends. The Lord Jesus be with your spirit.

Yours in his only, only Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, Sept. 20, 1636.

* Festering under the skin. Calderwood's Hist. v. 658.

† Frowns.

‡ Surety from injury; giving a pledge to the law not to injure.

LXVII.—*For WILLIAM FULLARTON, Provost of Kirkcudbright.*

[WILLIAM FULLARTON, as has been formerly noticed, was the husband of Marion M'Naught. His religious principles were the same with those of his excellent wife, and he was a man of virtue, integrity, and piety. He proved himself the patron of the oppressed in the case of Mr Robert Glendinning, the aged minister of Kirkcudbright; to which case there is evident allusion in this letter. Mr Glendinning having refused to conform to Prelacy, and to receive, as his assistant and successor, a man whom Bishop Sydserff intruded upon him and the people of Kirkcudbright, the Bishop suspended him from his office, and sentenced him to be imprisoned. Provost Fullarton, and the other magistrates of the burgh (one of whom was Mr William Glendinning, son of the minister), indignant at such tyrannical proceedings, refused to incarcerate their own pastor, then nearly 80 years of age, and were determined, with the great body of the inhabitants of the town, to attend upon his ministry. Sydserff, too proud and violent to allow his authority to be thus despised, caused Bailie Glendinning to be imprisoned in Kirkcudbright, and the other magistrates to be confined within the town of Wigtown, while he sentenced the aged minister to remain within the bounds of his parish, and forbade him to exercise any part of his ministerial functions. But he found it impossible, by all the means he could employ, to reduce these refractory magistrates to obedience. The firmness which Fullarton manifested on this occasion is warmly commended by Rutherford.]

(ENCOURAGEMENT TO SUFFER FOR CHRIST.)



MUCH HONOURED AND VERY DEAR FRIEND,
—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you.—I am in good case, blessed be the Lord, remaining here in this unco* town, a prisoner for Christ and His truth. And I am not ashamed of His cross. My soul is comforted with the consolations of His sweet presence, for whom I suffer.

I earnestly entreat you to give your honour and authority to Christ, and for Christ; and be not dismayed for flesh and blood, while you are for the Lord, and for His truth and cause. And howbeit we see truth put to the worse for the time, yet Christ will

* Strange.

be a friend to truth, and will do* for those who dare hazard all that they have for Him and for His glory. Sir, our fair day is coming, and the court will change, and wicked men will weep after noon, and forer than the sons of God, who weep in the morning. Let us believe and hope for God's salvation.

Sir, I hope I need not write to you for your kindness and love to my brother,† who is now to be distressed for the truth of God as well as I am. I think myself obliged to pray for you, and your worthy and kind bed-fellow and children, for your love to him and me also. I hope your pains for us in Christ shall not be lost. Thus recommending you to the tender mercy and loving-kindness of God, I rest,

Your very loving and affectionate brother,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, *Sept.* 21, 1636.

LXVIII.—To JOHN FLEMING, *Bailiffe of Leith.*‡

[Of Mr Fleming nothing can be ascertained, unless it is he who is mentioned by Livingston as being a merchant in Edinburgh, a man of note among the godly.]

(THE SWEETNESS AND FAITHFULNESS OF CHRIST'S LOVE.)



MY VERY WORTHY FRIEND,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you. I received your letter. I bless the Lord through Jesus Christ, I find His word good, “I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction.”§—“I will be with

* Act so as to undo them.

† His brother was a teacher in Kirkcudbright, and between him and Samuel there was a warm attachment, and strong mutual sympathies. He, too, suffered persecution for his adherence to the cause of Presbytery. For this, and his zealous support of Mr Glendinning, whom the Bishop of Galloway treated with such cruelty, he was summoned in November 1636 before the High Commission, and condemned to resign his charge, and remove from Kirkcudbright before the ensuing term of Whitsunday.

‡ Bailiffe is the modern “Bailie,” the name for a city magistrate.

§ Isa. xlviii. 10.

him in trouble.”* I never expected other† at Christ’s hand but much good and comfort ; and I am not disappointed. I find my Lord’s croses overgilded and oiled with comforts. My Lord hath now shown me the white side of His croses. I would not exchange my weeping in prison with the Fourteen Prelates’‡ laughter, amidst their hungry and lean joys. This world knoweth not the sweetness of Christ’s love ; it is a mystery to them.

At my first coming here, I found great heaviness, especially because it had pleased the prelates to add this gentle cruelty to my former sufferings (for it is gentle to them), to inhibit the ministers of the town to give me the liberty of a pulpit. I said, What aileth Christ at my service ? But I was a fool ; He hath chid Himself friends with me. If ye and others of God’s children shall praise His great name, who maketh worthless men witnesses for Him, my silence and sufferings shall preach more than my tongue could do. If His glory be seen in me, I am satisfied ; for I want for no kindness from Christ. And, sir, I dare not smother His liberality. I write it to you, that ye may praise, and desire your brother and others to join with me in this work.

This land shall be made desolate. Our iniquities are full ; the Lord faith, we shall drink, and spue, and fall. Remember my love to your good kind wife. Grace be with you.

Yours in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, *Nov.* 13, 1636.

* Ps. xci. 15.

† Ought else.

‡ Referring probably to the number of prelates (consisting of two archbishops and twelve bishops), who were members of the High Commission by whom he was sentenced to imprisonment.



LXIX.—*To the Noble and Christian Lady the VISCOUNTESS OF
KENMURE.*

(*HIS ENJOYMENT OF CHRIST IN ABERDEEN—A SIGHT OF CHRIST
EXCEEDS ALL REPORTS—SOME ASHAMED OF HIM AND
HIS.*)



MY VERY HONOURABLE AND DEAR LADY,—
Grace, mercy, and peace be to you. I cannot forget
your Ladyship, and that sweet child. I desire to hear
what the Lord is doing to you and him. To write to me were
charity. I cannot but write to my friends, that Christ hath trysted*
me in Aberdeen; and my adversaries have sent me here to be
feasted with love banquets with my royal, high, high, and
princely King Jesus. Madam, why should I smother Christ's hon-
esty? I dare not conceal His goodness to my soul; He looked
fremed† and unco-like‡ upon me when I came first here; but I
believe Himself better than His looks. I shall not again quarrel
Christ for a gloom,§ now He hath taken the mask off His face, and
faith, “Kiss thy fill;” and what can I have more when I get great
heaven in my little arms? Oh how sweet are the sufferings of Christ
for Christ! God forgive them that raise an ill report upon the
sweet cross of Christ. It is but our weak and dim eyes, that look
but to the black side, that makes us mistake. Those who can take
that crabbed tree handsomely upon their back, and fasten it on
cannily,|| shall find it such a burden as wings unto a bird, or sails to
a ship. Madam, rue not of your having chosen the better part.
Upon my salvation, this is Christ's truth I now suffer for. If I
found but cold comfort in my sufferings, I would not beguile others;
I would have told you plainly. But the truth is, Christ's crown,
His sceptre, and the freedom of His kingdom, is that which is now

* Appointed to meet.

† Like one who was no kinsman.

‡ Strange-like.

§ Frown.

|| Quietly, and skilfully.

called in question ; because we will not allow that Christ pay tribute and be a vassal to the shields of the earth, therefore the sons of our mother are angry at us. But it becometh not Christ to hold any man's stirrup. It were a sweet and honourable death to die for the honour of that royal and princely King Jesus. His love is a mystery to the world. I would not have believed that there was so much in Christ as there is. "Come and see" maketh Christ to be known in His excellency and glory. I wish all this nation knew how sweet His breath is. It is little to see Christ in a book, as men do the world in a card.* They talk of Christ by the book and the tongue, and no more ; but to come nigh Christ, and hause† Him, and embrace Him, is another thing. Madam, I write to your honour, for your encouragement in that honourable profession Christ hath honoured you with. Ye have gotten the sunny side of the brae,‡ and the best of Christ's good things. He hath not given you the bastard's portion ; and howbeit ye get strokes and four looks from your Lord, yet believe His love more than your own feeling, for this world can take nothing from you that is truly yours, and death can do you no wrong. Your rock doth not ebb and flow, but your sea. That which Christ hath said, He will bide by it. He will be your tutor. You shall not get your charters of heaven to play you with. It is good that ye have lost your credit with Christ, and that Lord Free-will shall not be your tutor. Christ will lippen§ the taking you to heaven, neither to yourself, nor any deputy, but only to Himself. Blessed be your tutor. When your Head shall appear, your Bridegroom and Lord, your day shall then dawn, and it shall never have an afternoon, nor an evening shadow. Let your child be Christ's ; let him stay beside you as thy Lord's pledge, that you shall willingly render again, if God will.

Madam, I find folks here kind to me ; but in the night, and under their breath. My Master's cause may not come to the crown

* Chart, map. † Close with ; clasp round the neck ; *bals*, the neck, or throat.

‡ Of the hill ; the comfortable and warm situation.

§ Entrust.

of the caufeway.* Others are kind according to their fafhion. Many think me a ftrange man, and my caufe not good ; but I care not much for man's thoughts or approbation. I think no fhame of the crofs. The preachers of the town pretend great love, but the prelates have added to the reft this gentle cruelty (for fo they think of it), to difcharge me of the pulpits of this town. The people murmur and cry out againft it ; and to fpeak truly (howbeit Chrift is moft indulgent to me otherwife), my f Silence on the Lord's day keeps me from being exalted above meafure, and from ftartling† in the heat of my Lord's love. Some people affect‡ me, for the which caufe, I hear the preachers here purpofe to have my confinement changed to another place ; fo cold is northern love ; but Chrift and I will bear it. I have wrefled long with this fad f Silence. I faid, what aileth Chrift at my fervice ? and my foul hath been at a pleading with Chrift, and at yea and nay. But I will yield to Him, providing my fuffering may preach more than my tongue did ; for I give not Chrift an inch but for twice as good again. In a word, I am a fool, and He is God. I will hold my peace hereafter.

Let me hear from your Ladyfhip, and your dear child. Pray for the prifoner of Chrift, who is mindful of your Ladyfhip. Remember my obliged obedience to my good Lady Marr. Grace, grace be with you. I write and pray bleffings to your fweet child.

Yours in all dutiful obedience in his only Lord Jefus,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, Nov. 22, 1636.

* Appear without fhame in public.

† *Startle*, as cattle do in hot weather, run up and down in an excited manner.

‡ Love.



LXX.—*To the Right Honourable and Christian Lady, my LADY
VISCOUNTESS OF KENMURE.*

(EXERCISE UNDER RESTRAINT FROM PREACHING—THE DEVIL
—CHRIST'S LOVING-KINDNESS—PROGRESS.)



ADAM,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you. I received your Ladyship's letter. It refreshed me in my heavens. The blessing and prayer of a prisoner of Christ come upon you. Since my coming hither, Galloway sent me not a line, except what my brother, Earleston and his son did write. I cannot get my papers transported; but, Madam, I want not kindness of one who hath the gate* of it. Christ (if He had never done more for me since I was born) hath engaged my heart, and gained my blessing in this house of my pilgrimage. It pleaseth my Well-beloved to dine with a poor prisoner, and the King's spikenard casteth a fragrant smell. Nothing grieveth me, but that I eat my feasts my lone, and that I cannot edify His saints. O that this nation knew what is betwixt Him and me; none would fear† at the cross of Christ! My silence eats me up, but He hath told me He thanketh me no less, than if I were preaching daily. He fees how gladly I would be at it; and therefore my wages are going to the fore,‡ up in heaven, as if I were still preaching Christ. Captains pay duly bedfast soldiers, howbeit they do§ not march, nor carry armour. “Though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the Lord, and my God shall be my strength.”|| My garland, “the banished minister” (the term of Aberdeen), ashameth me not. I have seen the white side of Christ's cross; how lovely hath He been to His oppressed servant! “The Lord executeth judgment for the oppressed, He giveth food to the hungry: the Lord looseth the prisoner; the Lord raiseth them that are bowed down:

* Way. † Start aside in fear. ‡ Laid up in store for my advantage.

§ Some editions read “dow,”—are not able. || Isa. xlix. 5.

the Lord preserveth the stranger." * If it were come to exchanging of crosses, I would not exchange my cross with any. I am well pleased with Christ, and He with me; I hope none shall hear us.† It is true for all this, I get my meat with many strokes, and am seven times a-day up and down, and am often anxious and cast down for the case of my oppressed brother; yet I hope the Lord will be surety for His servant. But now upon some weak, very weak experience, I am come to love a rumbling and raging devil best. Seeing we must have a devil to hold the saints waking, I wish a cumbersome devil, rather than a secure and sleeping one. At my first coming hither, I took the darts‡ at Christ, and took up a stomach against Him; I said, He had cast me over the dike of the vineyard, like a dry tree. But it was His mercy, I see, that the fire did not burn the dry tree; and now, as if my Lord Jesus had done that fault, and not I (who belied my Lord), He hath made the first mends,§ and He spake not one word against me, but hath come again and quickened my soul with His presence. Nay, now I think the very annuity|| and casualties of the cross of Christ Jesus my Lord, and these comforts that accompany it, better than the world's fet-rent.¶ O how many rich off-fallings¶ are in my King's house! I am persuaded, and dare pawn my salvation on it, that it is Christ's truth I now suffer for. I know His comforts are no dreams; He would not put His seal on blank paper, nor deceive His afflicted ones that trust in Him.

Your Ladyship wrote to me that ye are yet an ill scholar. Madam, ye must go in at heaven's gates, and your book in your hand, still learning. You have had your own large share of troubles, and a double portion; but it saith your Father counteth you not a bastard; full-begotten bairns are nurtured.** I long to hear of the child. I write the blessings of Christ's prisoner and the mercies of

* Ps. cxlvi. 7-9.

† In Thomson's edition this is explained by referring to Proverbs xiv. 10.

‡ Suls.

§ First repaired the injury, made up the quarrel.

|| The quit-rent; better than the world's full rent. ¶ Odds and ends.

** Heb. xii. 8. Legitimate children are put under discipline.

God to him. Let him be Christ's and yours betwixt you, but let Christ be whole play-maker.* Let Him be the lender; and you the borrower, not an owner.

Madam, it is not long since I did write to your Ladyship that Christ is keeping mercy for you; and I bide by it still, and now I write it under my hand. Love Him dearly. Win† in to see Him; there is in Him that which you never saw. He is aye nigh; He is a tree of life, green and blossoming, both summer and winter. There is a nick‡ in Christianity, to the which whosoever cometh, they see and feel more than others can do. I invite you of new to come to Him. "Come and see," will speak better things of Him than I can do. "Come nearer" will say much. God thought never this world a portion worthy of you. He would not even § you to a gift of dirt and clay; nay, He will not give you Esau's portion, but reserves the inheritance of Jacob for you. Are ye not well married now? Have you not a good husband now?

My heart cannot express what sad nights I have had for the virgin daughter of my people. Woe is me, for my time is coming. "Behold, the day, behold, the day is come; the morning hath gone forth, the rod hath blossomed, pride hath budded, violence is risen up in a rod of wickedness, the sun is gone down upon our prophets." A dry wind upon Scotland, but neither to fan nor to cleanse; but out of all question, when the Lord hath cut down the forest, the after-growth of Lebanon shall flourish; they shall plant vines in our mountains, and a cloud shall yet fill the temple. Now the blessing of our dearest Lord Jesus, and the blessing of him that is "separate from his brethren," come upon you.

Yours, at Aberdeen, the prisoner of Christ,

S. R.

ABERDEEN.

* Sole director of the play.

† Get in, in spite of difficulty.

‡ Notch, degree, particular point.

§ A word for disparaging comparison; propose as fit for you.

LXXI.—TO MR HUGH M'KAIL.

[MR HUGH M'KAIL was at this time minister of Irvine. Previous to his settlement in that parish, Rutherford, as we learn from some of the preceding letters to Marion M'Naught, was very desirous of seeing him settled assistant and successor to Mr Robert Glendinning, the aged minister of Kirkcudbright, and to him the people had an eye, but were disappointed, they having been anticipated by the parish of which he was now pastor. He and Mr William Cockburn were appointed by the General Assembly of 1644 to visit the north of Ireland for three months, with the view of promoting the interests of the Presbyterian Church in that country. He was ultimately translated to Edinburgh. In the unhappy controversy between the Resolutioners and Protesters, M'Kail took the side of the former; but he was among the more moderate of the party, and always showed a readiness to enter into healing measures. Baillie often refers to him in his letters. M'Kail died in the beginning of the year 1660, and was buried in the Greyfriars' churchyard, Edinburgh. (*Lamont's Diary*, p. 121.) He was the brother of Mr Matthew M'Kail of Bothwell, who was the father of the youthful Hugh M'Kail. Young Hugh was educated at Edinburgh, under the superintendence of this uncle, and nobly suffered martyrdom in 1666.]

(CHRIST TO BE TRUSTED AMID TRIAL.)

REVEREND AND DEAR BROTHER,—I thank you for your letter. I cannot but show you, that as I never expected anything from Christ, but much good and kindness, so He hath made me to find it in the house of my pilgrimage. And believe me, brother, I give it to you under mine own hand-writ, that whoso looketh to the white side of Christ's cross, and can take it up handsomely with faith and courage, shall find it such a burden as sails are to a ship, or wings to a bird. I find that my Lord hath overgilded that black tree, and hath perfumed it, and oiled it with joy and consolation. Like a fool, once I would chide and plead with Christ, and slander Him to others, of unkindness. But I trust in God, not to call His glooms* unkind again; for He hath taken from me my sackcloth; and I verily cannot tell you what a poor

* Frowns.

Joseph and prisoner (with whom my mother's children were angry) doth now think of kind Christ. I will chide no more, providing He will quit me all by-gones ; * for I am poor. I am taught in this ill weather to go on the lee-side of Christ, and to put Him in between me and the storm ; and (I thank God) I walk on the sunny side of the brae.† I write it, that ye may speak in my behalf the praises of my Lord to others, that my bonds may preach. O if all Scotland knew the feasts, and love-blinks, and visits that the prelates have sent unto me ! I will verily give my Lord Jesus a free discharge of all that I, like a fool, laid to His charge, and beg Him pardon, to the mends.‡ God grant that in my temptations I come not on His wrong side again, and never again fall a raving against my Physician in my fever.

Brother, plead with your mother while ye have time. A pulpit would be a high feast to me ; but I dare not say one word against Him who hath done it. I am not out of the house as yet. My sweet Master saith, I shall have house-room at His own elbow ; albeit their synagogue will need-force§ to cast me out. A letter were a work of charity to me. Grace be with you. Pray for me.

Your brother and Christ's prisoner,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, Nov. 22, 1636.

LXXII.—To WILLIAM GORDON of *Roberton*.

[WILLIAM GORDON of Roberton, in the parish of Borgue in Galloway, to whom this letter is addressed, was the father of William Gordon of Roberton who joined with the Covenanters in the rising at Pentland in 1666, where he was killed, "to the great loss of the country where he lived," says Wodrow, "and his own family, his aged father having no more sons." A daughter of this venerable old man, named Mary, also suffered much for non-conformity at the hands of Claverhouse and his friends. She was married to John Gordon of Largmore (which is in Kells, near Kenmure Castle), who

* Past offences.

† Comfortable side of the hill.

‡ To boot, to make all up.

§ Under plea of absolute necessity.

was also in the battle at Pentland, where he was severely wounded, and who, returning to his own house, died in the course of a few days in consequence of the loss of blood, and of lying in the fields some nights after the engagement. The old man, to whom this letter was written, did not long survive the death of his son and son-in-law; for, on the 8th of September 1668, Mary Gordon is retoured heir of William Gordon of Robertson, her father, in the lands of Roitraix, Robertson, Kingzeantoun, etc. (*Inq. Retor. Abbrev. Kirkcudbright.*)

(HOW TRIALS ARE MISIMPROVED—THE INFINITE VALUE OF
CHRIST—DESPISED WARNINGS.)

DEAR BROTHER,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you. So often as I think on our case, in our soldier's night-watch, and of our fighting life in the fields, while we are here, I am forced to say, prisoners in a dungeon, condemned by a judge to want the light of the sun, and moon, and candle till their dying day, are no more, nay, not so much, to be pitied as we are. For they are weary of their life, they hate their prison; but we fall to,* in our prison, where we see little, to drink ourselves drunk with the night-pleasures of our weak dreams; and we long for no better life than this. But at the blast of the last trumpet, and the shout of the archangel, when God shall take down the shepherd's tent of this fading world, we shall not have so much as a drink of water, of all the dreams that we now build on. Alas! that the sharp and bitter blasts on face and sides, which meet us in this life, have not learned us mortification, and made us dead to this world! We buy our own sorrow, and we pay dear for it, when we spend out our love, our joy, our desires, our confidence, upon an handful of snow and ice, that time will melt away to nothing, and go thirsty out of the drunken inn when all is done. Alas! that we inquire not for the clear fountain, but are so foolish as to drink foul, muddy, and rotten waters, even till our bed-time. And then in the resurrection, when we shall be awakened, our yesternight's sour drink and swinish dregs shall rift† up upon us; and sick, sick, shall many a soul be then.

I know no wholesome fountain but one. I know not a thing

* Occupy ourselves in.

† Be vomited up with violent retching.

worth the buying but heaven ; and my own mind is, if comparison were made betwixt Christ and heaven, I would sell heaven with my blessing, and buy Christ. O if I could raise the market for Christ, and heighten the market a pound for a penny, and cry up Christ in men's estimation ten thousand talents more than men think of Him ! But they are shaping Him, and crying Him down, and valuing Him at their unworthy halfpenny ; or else exchanging and bartering Christ with the miserable old fallen house of this vain world. Or then * they lend Him out upon interest, and play the usurers with Christ : because they profess Him, and give out before men that Christ is their treasure and stock ; and, in the mean time, praise of men, and a name, and ease, and the summer sun of the Gospel, is the usury they would be at. So, when the trial cometh, they quit the stock for the interest, and lose all. Happy are they who can keep Christ by Himself alone, and keep Him clean and whole, till God come and count with them. I know (that) in your hard and heavy trials long since, ye thought well and highly of Christ ; but, truly, no crosses should be old to us. We should not forget them because years are come betwixt us and them, and cast them byhand† as we do old clothes. We may make a cross old in time, new in use, and as fruitful as in the beginning of it. God is where and what He was seven years ago, whatever change may be in us. I speak not this as if I thought ye had forgotten what God did, to have your love long since, but that ye may awake yourself in this sleepy age, and remember fruitfully of Christ's first wooing and suiting of your love, both with fire and water, and try if He got His answer, or if ye be yet to give Him it. For I find in myself, that water runneth not faster through a sieve than our warnings slip from us ; for I have lost and casten byhands† many summons the Lord sent to me ; and therefore the Lord hath given me double charges, that I trust in God shall not rive me.‡ I bless His great name, who is no niggard in holding-in crosses upon me, but spendeth largely His rods, that He may save me from this perishing

* Or, if they did not do this.

† Aside.

‡ Rend in pieces.

world. How plentiful God is in means of this kind is esteemed by many one of God's unkind mercies; but Christ's cross is neither a cruel nor unkind mercy, but the love-token of a father. I am sure, a lover chasing us for our well,* and to have our love, should not be run away from, or fled from. God send me no worse mercy than the sanctified cross of Christ portendeth, and I am sure I should be happy and blessed.

Pray for me, that I may find house-room in the Lord's house to speak in His name. Remember my dearest love in Christ to your wife. Grace, grace be unto you.

Yours in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, 1636.

LXXIII.—*To* EARLSTON, *Elder*.

“And they overcame the dragon by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony, and they loved not their lives unto the death.”—REV. xii. 11.

(CHRIST'S LIBERALITY—HIS OWN MISAPPREHENSIONS OF CHRIST.)



MUCH-HONOURED SIR,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you. I long to see you in paper, and to be refreshed by you. I cannot but desire you, and charge you to help me to praise Him who feedeth a poor prisoner with the fatness of His house. O how weighty is His love! O but there is much telling in Christ's kindness! The Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, hath paid me my hundred-fold, well told, and one to the hundred. I complained of Him, but He is owing me nothing now. Sir, I charge you to help me to praise His goodness, and to proclaim to others my Bridegroom's kindness, whose love is better than wine. I took up an action against Christ, and brought† a plea

* Welfare, weal.

† Entered into a controversy. Old editions have “bought,” by a misprint apparently.

against His love, and libelled unkindness against Christ my Lord; and I said, "This is my death; He hath forgotten me." But my meek Lord held His peace, and beheld me, and would not contend for the last word of flying;* and now He hath chided Himself friends with me. And now I see He must be God, and I must be flesh. I pass from my summons;† I acknowledge He might have given me my fill of it, and never troubled Himself. But now He hath taken away the mask; I have been comforted; He could not smother His love any longer to a prisoner and a stranger. God grant that I may never bring‡ a plea against Christ again, but may keep good quarters with Him. I want here no kindness,§ no love-tokens; but O wife is His love! for, notwithstanding of this hot summer-blink, I am kept low with the grief of my silence. For His word is in me as a fire in my bowels; and I see the Lord's vineyard laid waste, and the heathen entered into the sanctuary: and my belly is pained, and my soul in heaviness, because the Lord's people are gone into captivity, and because of the fury of the Lord, and that wind (but neither to fan nor purge) which is coming upon apostate Scotland. Also I am kept awake with the late wrong done to my brother; but I trust ye will counsel and comfort him. Yet, in this mist, I see and believe the Lord will heal this halting kirk, "and will lay her stones with fair colours, and her foundations with sapphires, and will make her windows of agates, and her gates carbuncles."|| "And for brass He will bring gold." He hath created the smith that formed the sword; no weapon in war shall prosper against us. Let us be glad and rejoice in the Lord, for His salvation is near to come. Remember me to your wife and your son John. And I entreat you to write to me. Grace, grace be with you.

Yours in his only, only Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, Dec. 30, 1636.

* Chiding.

† Do not enforce.

‡ Enter into controversy with. Old editions have "buy."

§ I am not in want of.

|| Isa. liv. 11, 12.

LXXIV.—*To the* LADY CULROSS.

“These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.”—REV. vii. 14.

(*HIS OWN MISCONCEPTION OF CHRIST'S WAYS—CHRIST'S
KINDNESS.*)



ADAM,—Grace, mercy, and peace be multiplied upon you. I greatly long to be refreshed with your letter. I am now (all honour and glory to the King eternal, immortal, and invisible !) in better terms with Christ than I was. I, like a fool, summoned my Husband and Lord, and libelled unkindness against Him ; but now I pass from that foolish pursuit ; I give over the plea. He is God, and I am man. I was loosing a fast* stone, and digging at the ground-stone,† the love of my Lord, to shake and unsettle it. But, God be thanked, it is fast ; all is sure. In my prison He hath shown me daylight ; He doubt‡ not hide His love any longer. Christ was disguised and masked, and I apprehended it was not He, and He hath said, “It is I, be not afraid ;” and now His love is better than wine. O that all the virgins had part of the Bridegroom’s love whereupon He maketh me to feed ! Help me to praise. I charge you, Madam, help me to pay praises ; and tell others, the daughters of Jerusalem, how kind Christ is to a poor prisoner. He hath paid me my hundred-fold ; it is well told me, and one to the hundred. I am nothing behind with Christ. Let not fools, because of their lazy and soft flesh, raise a slander and an ill report upon the cross of Christ. It is sweeter than fair.

I see grace groweth best in winter. This poor persecuted kirk, this lily amongst the thorns, shall blossom, and laugh upon the gardener ; the husbandman’s blessing shall light upon it. O if I

* Firm.

† Foundation-stone.

‡ Was not able. *Doubt* is the past tense of “dow.”

could be free of jealousies* of Christ, after this, and believe, and keep good quarters with my dearest Husband ! for He hath been kind to the stranger. And yet in all this fair hot summer weather, I am kept from saying, “ It is good to be here,” with my silence, and with grief to see my mother wounded and her veil taken from her, and the fair temple casten down. And my belly is pained, my soul is heavy for the captivity of the daughter of my people, and because of the fury of the Lord, and His fierce indignation against apostate Scotland. I pray you, Madam, let me have that which is my prayer here, that my sufferings may preach to the four quarters of this land ; and, therefore, tell others how open-handed Christ hath been to the prisoner and the oppressed stranger. Why should I conceal it ? I know no other way how to glorify Christ, but to make an open proclamation of His love, and of His soft and sweet kisses to me in the furnace, and of His fidelity to such as suffer for Him. Give it me under your hand, that ye will help me to pray and praise ; but rather to praise and rejoice in the salvation of God. Grace, grace be with you.

Yours in his dearest and only, only Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, Dec. 30, 1636.

LXXV.—*To* JOHN KENNEDY, *Bailie of Ayr*.†

[JOHN KENNEDY was the son of Hugh Kennedy, Provost of Ayr. Hugh was an eminent Christian, and greatly instrumental in promoting the cause of religion in the place where he lived. To his religious character, John Welsh, minister of Ayr, bore this high testimony in a letter written to him from France : “ Happy is that city, yea, happy is that nation that has a Hugh Kennedy in it. I have myself certainly found the answer of his prayers from the Lord in my behalf.” On his death-bed, he was filled “ with inexpressible joy in the Holy Ghost, beyond what it was possible to comprehend.” (Wodrow, in his *Life of Boyd of Trochrig*.) John, his son, possessed much of the spirit

* Suspicions.

† Written “ Bailiffe ” in the old editions, as in *Let.* 68.

and character of his father. "He was," says Fleming (Fulfilling of the Scriptures), "as choice a Christian as was at that time." The same writer records a remarkable escape from imminent peril at sea which Kennedy on one occasion experienced; but whether it was the deliverance to which Rutherford refers in a subsequent letter, it is now impossible to ascertain. The case was shortly this: John Stewart, Provost of Ayr, another of Rutherford's correspondents, who had gone to France, having loaded a ship at Rochelle with various commodities for Scotland, proceeded to England by the nearest way, and thence to Ayr. After waiting a considerable time for the arrival of his vessel, he was told that it was captured by the Turks. This information, however, proved to be incorrect, for it at length arrived in the roads; upon hearing of which, Kennedy, an intimate friend of Stewart, was so overjoyed, that he went out to it in a small boat. But a storm suddenly arising, he was driven past the vessel, and the general belief of the onlookers from the shore was that he and his boat were swallowed up; yea, the storm increased to such a degree of violence as to threaten even the shipwreck of the vessel. Deeply affected at the apprehended loss of his friend in such circumstances, Stewart shut himself up in entire seclusion for three days; but at last having gone to visit Kennedy's wife under her supposed painful bereavement, Kennedy, who had been driven far away to another part of the coast, but who had reached the land in safety, made his appearance, to the great joy of his afflicted family and friends. Kennedy was a member of the Scottish Parliament in the years 1644-5-6, for the burgh of Ayr; and is styled in the roll, "John Kennedy, Provost of Ayr." He was also a member of the General Assemblies of 1642-3-4-6 and 7, and his name appears among the ruling elders in the commission for the public affairs of the kirk in all these years. His brother Hugh (also an elder of the Church) was frequently a member of the General Assembly, and, as we learn from *Baillie's Letters*, had an active share in the proceedings of the Covenanters during the reign of Charles I. There are lineal descendants of this family in Ayr at this day: one of them, like his ancestor, was lately Provost of the town.]

(LONGING AFTER CLEARER VIEWS OF CHRIST—HIS LONG-SUFFERING—TRYING CIRCUMSTANCES.)



WORTHY AND DEAR BROTHER,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you. I long to see you in this northern world on paper; I know it is not forgetfulness that ye write not. I am every way in good case, both in soul and body; all honour and glory be to my Lord. I want nothing but a further revelation of the beauty of the unknown Son of God. Either I

know not what Christianity is, or we have stinted a measure of so many ounce weights, and no more, upon holiness; and there we are at a stand, drawing our breath all our life. A moderation in God's way now is much in request. I profess that I have never taken pains to find out Him whom my soul loveth; there is a gate* yet of finding out Christ that I have never lighted upon. Oh, if I could find it out! Alas, how soon are we pleased with our own shadow in a glass! It were good to be beginning in sad† earnest to find out God, and to seek the right tread of Christ. Time, custom, and a good opinion of ourselves, our good meaning, and our lazy desires, our fair shows, and the world's glistening lustres, and these broad passments‡ and buskings§ of religion, that bear bulk in the kirk, is that wherewith most satisfy themselves. But a bed watered with tears, a throat dry with praying, eyes as a fountain of tears for the sins of the land, are rare to be found among us. Oh if we could know the power of godliness!

This is one part of my case; and another is, that I, like a fool, once summoned Christ for unkindness, and complained of His fickleness and inconstancy, because He would have no more of my service nor preaching, and had casten me out of the inheritance of the Lord. And now I confess that this was but a bought plea,|| and I was a fool. Yet He hath borne with me. I gave Him a fair advantage against me, but love and mercy would not let Him take it; and the truth is, now He hath chided Himself friends with me, and hath taken away the mask, and hath renewed His wonted favour in such a manner that He hath paid me my hundred-fold in this life, and one to the hundred. This prison is my banqueting-house; I am handled as softly and delicately as a dawted¶ child. I am nothing behind (I see) with Christ; He can, in a month, make up a year's losses. And I write this to you, that I may entreat, nay, adjure and charge you, by the love of our Well-beloved, to help me to praise; and to

* Way, or manner. † Settled. ‡ Ornaments of lace, sewed on garments.

§ Deckings.

|| Got up; not properly what I had to complain of.

¶ Much fondled, or doted upon.

tell all your Christian acquaintance to help me, for I am as deeply drowned in His debt as any dyvour* can be. And yet in this fair fun-blink I have something to keep me from startling,† or being exalted above measure; His word is as fire shut up in my bowels, and I am weary with forbearing. The ministers in this town are saying that they will have my prison changed into less bounds, because they see God with me. My mother hath borne me a man of contention, one that striveth with the whole earth. The late wrongs and oppressions done to my brother keep my sails low; yet I defy crosses to embark me in such a plea against Christ as I was troubled with of late. I hope to over-hope and over-believe my troubles. I have cause now to trust Christ's promise more than His gloom.‡

Remember my hearty affection to your wife. My soul is grieved for the success of our brethren's journey to New England; but God hath somewhat to reveal that we see not. Grace be with you. Pray for the prisoner.

Yours, in his only Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, Jan. 1, 1637.

LXXVI.—To ROBERT GORDON of Knockbren.

(BENEFIT OF AFFLICTION.)



Y DEAR BROTHER,—Grace, mercy, and peace be multiplied upon you.—I am almost wearying, yea, wondering, that ye write not to me: though I know it is not forgetfulness.

As for myself, I am every way well, all glory to God. I was before at a plea with Christ (but it was brought§ by me, and unlawful), because His whole providence was not yea and nay to my yea and nay, and because I believed Christ's outward look better

* Bankrupt; or rather, debtor.

† Frown.

† Running wild, in high excitement.

§ Got up.

than His faithful promise. Yet He hath in patience waited on, whill* I be come to myself, and hath not taken advantage of my weak apprehensions of His goodness. Great and holy is His name ! He looketh to what I desire to be, and not to what I am. One thing I have learned. If I had been in Christ, by way of adhesion only, as many branches are, I should have been burnt to ashes, and this world would have seen a suffering minister of Christ (of something once in show) turned into unfavoury salt. But my Lord Jesus had a good eye that the tempter should not play foul play, and blow out Christ's candle. He took no thought of my stomach, and fretting and grudging humour, but of His own grace. When He burnt the house, He saved His own goods. And I believe that the devil and the persecuting world shall reap no fruit of me, but burnt ashes : for He will see to His own gold, and save that from being consumed with the fire.

Oh what owe I to the file, to the hammer, to the furnace of my Lord Jesus ! who hath now let me see how good the wheat of Christ is, that goeth through His mill, and His oven, to be made bread for His own table. Grace tried is better than grace, and it is more than grace ; it is glory in its infancy. I now see that godliness is more than the outside, and this world's passments and their buskings.† Who knoweth the truth of grace without a trial ? Oh how little getteth Christ of us, but that which He winneth (to speak so) with much toil and pains ! And how soon would faith freeze without a cross ! How many dumb crosses have been laid upon my back, that had never a tongue to speak the sweetness of Christ, as this hath ! When Christ blesteth His own crosses with a tongue, they breathe out Christ's love, wisdom, kindness, and care of us. Why should I start at the plough of my Lord, that maketh deep furrows on my soul ? I know that He is no idle Husbandman, He purposeth a crop. O that this white, withered lea-ground‡ were made fertile to bear a crop for Him, by whom it is so painfully dressed ; and that this fallow-ground were broken up ! Why was

* Till.

† See last letter.

‡ Land left in grass, not tilled.

I (a fool!) grieved that He put His garland and His rose upon my head—the glory and honour of His faithful witnesses? I desire now to make no more pleas* with Christ. Verily He hath not put me to a loss by what I suffer; He oweth me nothing; for in my bonds how sweet and comfortable have the thoughts of Him been to me, wherein I find a sufficient recompense of reward!

How blind are my adversaries, who sent me to a banqueting-house, to a house of wine, to the lovely feasts of my lovely Lord Jesus, and not to a prison, or place of exile! Why should I smother my Husband's honesty, or sin against His love, or be a niggard in giving out to others what I get for nothing? Brother, eat with me, and give thanks. I charge you before God, that ye speak to others, and invite them to help me to praise! Oh, my debt of praise, how weighty it is, and how far run up! O that others would lend me to pay, and learn me to praise! Oh, I am a drowned dyvour!† Lord Jesus, take my thoughts for payments. Yet I am in this hot summer-blink with the tear in my eye; for (by reason of my silence) sorrow, sorrow hath filled me; my harp is hanged upon the willow-trees, because I am in a strange land. I am still kept in exercise with envious brethren; my mother hath borne me a man of contention.

Write to me your mind anent Y. C.: I cannot forget him; I know not what God hath to do with him:—and your mind anent my parishioners' behaviour, and how they are served in preaching; or if there be a minister as yet thrust in upon them, which I desire greatly to know, and which I much fear.

Dear brother, ye are in my heart, to live and to die with you. Visit me with a letter. Pray for me. Remember my love to your wife. Grace, grace be with you; and God, who heareth prayer, visit you, and let it be unto you according to the prayers of

Your own brother, and Christ's prisoner,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, Jan. 1, 1637.

* Controversies.

† Debtor.

LXXVII.—*To my* LADY BOYD.

[LADY BOYD, whose maiden name was Christian Hamilton, was the eldest daughter of Thomas, first Earl of Haddington. She was first married to Robert, ninth Lord Lindfay of Byres, who died in 1616. To him she had a son, John, tenth Lord Lindfay of Byres, and a daughter, Helen, married to Sir William Scott of Ardross. (*Douglas' Peerage*, vol. i.) She married for her second husband, Robert, sixth Lord Boyd, who died in August 1628. To him she had several children. Lady Boyd was distinguished for piety, and a zealous Presbyterian. Livingstone gives her a place among "some of the professors in the Church of Scotland of his acquaintance, who were eminent for grace and gifts," eulogizes her as "a rare pattern of Christianity, grave, diligent, and prudent;" and adds, "She used every night to write what had been the case of her soul all the day, and what she had observed of the Lord's dealing." In his Life he speaks of residing for some time, during the course of his ministry, in the house of Kilmarnock, with "the worthy Lady Boyd."]

(ABERDEEN—EXPERIENCE OF HIMSELF SAD—PRESSING
FORWARDS.)

MADAM,—Grace, mercy, and peace be unto you. The Lord hath brought me to Aberdeen, where I see God in few. This town hath been advised upon of purpose for me; it consisteth either of Papists, or men of Gallio's naughty* faith. It is counted wisdom in the most, not to countenance a confined minister; but I find Christ neither strange nor unkind; for I have found many faces smile upon me since I came hither. I am heavy and sad, considering what is betwixt the Lord and my soul, which none seeth but He. I find men have mistaken me; it would be no art (as I now see) to spin small,† and make hypocrisy a goodly web, and to go through the market as a saint among men, and yet steal quietly to hell, without observation: so easy is it to deceive men. I have disputed whether or no I ever knew anything of Christianity, save the letters of that name. Men see but as men, and they call ten twenty, and twenty an hundred; but O! to be

* Vile.

† Spin fine.

approved of God in the heart and in sincerity is not an ordinary mercy. My neglects while I had a pulpit, and other things whereof I am ashamed to speak, meet me now, so as God maketh an honest cross my daily sorrow. And, for fear of scandal and stumbling, I must hide this day of the law's pleading: I know not if this court kept within my soul be fenced* in Christ's name. If certainty of salvation were to be bought, God knoweth, if I had ten earths, I would not prig† with God. Like a fool, I believed, under suffering for Christ, that I myself should keep the key of Christ's treasures, and take out comforts when I listed, and eat and be fat: but I see now a sufferer for Christ will be made to know himself, and will be holden at the door as well as another poor sinner, and will be fain to eat with the bairns, and to take the by-board,‡ and glad to do so. My blessing on the cross of Christ that hath made me see this! Oh! if we could take pains for the kingdom of heaven! But we sit down upon some ordinary marks of God's children, thinking we have as much as will separate us from a reprobate; and thereupon we take the play and cry, "Holy day!" and thus the devil casteth water on our fire, and blunteth our zeal and care. But I see heaven is not at the door; and I see, howbeit my challenges§ be many, I suffer for Christ, and dare hazard my salvation upon it; for sometimes my Lord cometh with a fair hour, and O! but His love be sweet, delightful, and comfortable. Half a kiss is sweet; but our doting love will not be content with a right to Christ, unless we get possession; like the man who will not be content with rights|| to bought land, except he get also the ridges and acres laid upon his back to carry home with him. However it be, Christ is wise; and we are fools, to be browden¶ and fond of a pawn in the loof of our hand.** Living on trust by faith may well content us. Madam, I know your Ladyship knoweth this, and that made me bold to write of it, that others might reap

* Constituted by proclaiming its authority.

† Higgle.

‡ Sit at the side-table with the children.

§ Self-upbraidings.

|| Title-deeds. ¶ Eagerly and childishly desirous.

** Palm of the hand.

somewhat by my bonds for the truth ; for I should desire, and I aim at this, to have my Lord well spoken of and honoured, howbeit He should make nothing of me but a bridge over a water. Thus, recommending your Ladyship, your son, and children to His grace, who hath honoured you with a name and room among the living in Jerusalem, and wishing grace to be with your Ladyship, I rest,

Your Ladyship's in his sweetest Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ABERDEEN.

LXXVIII.—*To my* LORD BOYD.

[ROBERT, seventh LORD BOYD, the nobleman to whom this letter is addressed, was the only son of Robert, sixth Lord Boyd, by Lady Christian Hamilton, just now noticed. His father (who was cousin of the famous Robert Boyd of Trochrig, two miles from Girvan, under whom he studied at Saumur) died in August 1628, at the early age of 33. Young Robert was served heir to his father the 9th of May 1629. His earthly course was, however, brief; for he died of a fever on the 17th of November 1640, aged about 24. He was married to Lady Anne Fleming, second daughter of John, second Earl of Wigtown, but their union was without issue. Lord Boyd warmly espoused the side of the Covenanters; and, though not a member of the General Assembly held at Glasgow in 1638, he attended its meetings and took a deep interest in its proceedings. Rutherford affectionately commends and stimulates his early zeal in behalf of the liberties of the Church.]

(ENCOURAGEMENT TO EXERTION FOR CHRIST'S CAUSE.)



Y VERY HONOURABLE AND GOOD LORD,—
Grace, mercy, and peace be to your Lordship. Out of the worthy report that I hear of your Lordship's zeal for this borne-down and oppressed Gospel, I am bold to write to your Lordship, beseeching you by the mercies of God, by the honour of our royal and princely King Jesus, by the sorrows, tears, and desolation of your afflicted mother-Church, and by the peace of your conscience, and your joy in the day of Christ, that your Lordship would go on, in the strength of your Lord, and in the power of His might, to bestir yourself, for the vindicating of the fallen

honour of your Lord Jefus. Oh, blessed hands for evermore, that fhall help to put the crown upon the head of Chrift again in Scotland ! I dare promife, in the name of our Lord, that this will faften and fix the pillars and the ftakes of your honourable houfe upon earth, if you lend and lay in pledge in Chrift's hand, upon fpiritual hazard, life, eftate, houfe, honour, credit, moyen,* friends, the favour of men (fuppofe kings with three crowns), fo being that ye may bear witnefs, and acquit yourfelf as a man of valour and courage to the Prince of your falvation, for the purging of His temple, and fweeping out the lordly Diotrephefes, time-courting Demafes, corrupt Hymeneufes and Philetufes, and other fuch oxen, that with their dung defile the temple of the Lord. Is not Chrift now crying, “ Who will help Me ? who will come out with Me, to take part with Me, and fhare in the honour of My victory over thefe Mine enemies, who have faid, We will not have this man to rule over us ? ”

My very honourable and dear Lord, join, join (as ye do) with Chrift. He is more worth to you and your pofterity than this world's May-flowers, and withering riches and honour, that fhall go away as fmoke, and evanifh in a night vifion, and fhall, in one half-hour after the blaft of the archangel's trumpet, lie in white afhes. Let me befeech your Lordfhip to draw by the lap† of time's curtain, and to look in through the window to great and endlefs eternity, and confider, if a worldly price (fuppofe this little round clay globe of this afhy and dirty earth, the dying idol of the fools of this world, were all your own) can be given for one fmile of Chrift's God-like and foul-ravifhing countenance. In that day when fo many joints and knees of thoufand thoufands wailing fhall ftand before Chrift, trembling, fhouting, and making their prayers to hills and mountains to fall upon them, and hide them from the face of the Lamb, oh, how many would fell lordfhips and kingdoms that day, and buy Chrift ! But, oh, the market fhall be clofed and ended ere then ! Your Lordfhip hath now a blessed venture of winning court with the Prince of the kings of the earth. He Him-

* Intereft.

† Draw afide the loofe fold.

ſelf weeping ; truth borne down and fallen in the ſtreets, and an oppreſſed Goſpel ; Chriſt's bride with watery eyes and ſpoiled of her veil, her hair hanging about her eyes, forced to go in ragged apparel ; the baniſhed, alienated, and imprifoned prophets of God, who have not the favour of liberty to propheſy in ſackcloth, all theſe, I ſay, call for your help. Fear not worms of clay ; the moth ſhall eat them as a garment. Let the Lord be your fear ; He is with you, and ſhall fight for you ; and ye ſhall make the heart of this your mother-Church to ſing for joy. The Lamb and His armies are with you, and the kingdoms of the earth are the Lord's. I am perſuaded that there is not another goſpel, nor another ſaving truth, than that which ye now contend for. I dare hazard my heaven and ſalvation upon it, that this is the only ſaving way to glory.

Grace, grace, be with your Lordſhip.

Your Lordſhip's at all reſpectful obedience in Chriſt,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, 1637.

LXXIX.—*To* MARGARET BALLANTYNE.

[Probably this perſon was one of his Anwoth parifhioners.]

(*VALUE OF THE SOUL, AND URGENCY OF SALVATION.*)



MISSRESS,—Grace, mercy, and peace be unto you.—It is more than time that I ſhould have written to you ; but it is yet good time, if I could help your ſoul to mend your pace, and to go more ſwiftly to your heavenly country. For truly ye have need to make all haſte, becauſe the inch of your day that remaineth will quickly ſlip away ; for whether we ſleep or wake, our glaſs runneth. The tide bideth no man. Beware of a beguile in the matter of your ſalvation. Woe, woe for evermore, to them that loſe that prize. For what is behind, when the ſoul is once loſt, but that finners warm their bits of clay houſes at a fire of their own kindling, for a day or two (which doth rather ſuffocate with its ſmoke than warm them) ; and at length they lie down in

forrow, and are clothed with everlasting flame ! I would seek no further measure of faith to begin withal than to believe really and stedfastly the doctrine of God's justice, His all-devouring wrath, and everlasting burning, where sinners are burnt, soul and body, in a river and great lake of fire and brimstone. Then they would wish no more goods than the thousandth part of a cold fountain-well to cool their tongues. They would then buy death with enduring of pain and torment for as many years as God hath created drops of rain since the creation. But there is no market of buying or selling life or death there. Oh, alas ! the greatest part of this world run to the place of that torment rejoicing and dancing, eating, drinking, and sleeping. My counsel to you is, that ye start in time to be after Christ ; for if ye go quickly, Christ is not far before you ; ye shall overtake Him. O Lord God, what is so needful as this, " Salvation, salvation ! " Fy upon this condemned and foolish world, that would give so little for salvation ! Oh, if there were a free market for salvation proclaimed in that day when the trumpet of God shall awake the dead, how many buyers would be then ! God send me no more happiness than that salvation which the blind world, to their eternal woe, letteth slip through their fingers. Therefore, look if ye can give out your money (as *Isaiah* speaketh*) for bread, and lay Christ and His blood in wadset† for heaven. It is a dry and hungry bairn's part of goods that *Esaus* are hunting for here. I see thousands following the chase, and in the pursuit of such things, while in the meantime they lose the blessing ; and, when all is done, they have caught nothing to roast for supper, but lie down hungry. And, besides, they go to bed, when they die, without a candle ; for God faith to them, " This ye shall have at My hand, ye shall lie down in forrow."‡ And truly this is as ill-made a bed to lie upon as one could wish ; for he cannot sleep soundly, nor rest sweetly, who hath forrow for his pillow. Rouse, rouse up, therefore, your soul, and speer§ how Christ and your soul met together. I am sure that they never got Christ, who were not once

* *Isa.* lv. 2.

† Mortgaged, pledged.

‡ *Isa.* l. 11.

§ Ask.

sick at the yolk of the heart for Him. Too, too many whole souls think that they have met with Christ, who had never a wearied night for the want of Him : but, alas ! what richer are men, that they dreamed the last night they had much gold, and, when they awoke in the morning, they found it was but a dream ? What are all the sinners in the world, in that day when heaven and earth shall go up in a flame of fire, but a number of beguiled dreamers ? Every one shall say of his hunting and his conquest,* “ Behold, it was a dream ! ” Every man in that day will tell his dream. I beseech you, in the Lord Jesus, beware, beware of unsound work in the matter of your salvation : ye may not, ye cannot, ye do not want Christ. Then, after this day, convene all your lovers before your soul, and give them their leave ; and strike hands with Christ, that thereafter there may be no happiness to you but Christ, no hunting for anything but Christ, no bed at night, when death cometh, but Christ. Christ, Christ, who but Christ ! I know this much of Christ, that He is not ill to be found, nor lordly of His love. Woe had been my part of it for evermore, if Christ had made a dainty of Himself to me. But, God be thanked, I gave nothing for Christ. And now I protest before men and angels that Christ cannot be exchanged, that Christ cannot be sold, that Christ cannot be weighed. Where would angels, or all the world, find a balance to weigh Him in ? All lovers blush when ye stand beside Christ ! Woe upon all love but the love of Christ ! Hunger, hunger for evermore be upon all heaven but Christ ! Shame, shame for evermore be upon all glory but Christ’s glory. I cry death, death upon all lives but the life of Christ. Oh, what is it that holdeth us asunder ? O that once we could have a fair meeting !

Thus recommending Christ to you and you to Him, for evermore, I rest. Grace be with you.

Yours, in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, 1637.

* Acquisition ; what he has won.

LXXX.—*For* MARION M'NAUGHT.

(*HIS COMFORT UNDER TRIBULATIONS, AND THE PRISON A
PALACE.*)



MY DEARLY BELOVED SISTER,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you. I complain that Galloway is not kind to me in paper. I have received no letters these sixteen weeks but two. I am well. My prison is a palace to me, and Christ's banqueting-house. My Lord Jesus is as kind as they call Him. O that all Scotland knew my case, and had part of my feast! I charge you in the name of God, I charge you to believe. Fear not the sons of men; the worms shall eat them. To pray and believe now, when Christ seems to give you a nay-say,* is more than it was before. Die believing; die, and Christ's promise in your hand. I desire, I request, I charge your husband and that town,† to stand for the truth of the Gospel. Contend with Christ's enemies; and I pray you show all professors (whom) you know my case. Help me to praise. The ministers here envy me; they will have my prison changed. My mother hath born me a man of contention, and one that striveth with the whole earth. Remember my love to your husband. Grace be with you.

Yours in the Lord,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, Jan. 3, 1637.

LXXXI.—*To* MR JOHN MEINE (*Jun.*)

[MR JOHN MEINE was the son of John Meine, merchant in Edinburgh, "a solid and stedfast professor of the truth of God." His mother was Barbara Hamilton, a notice of whom see at Let. 313. He was now, it would appear from an allusion in the close of this letter, a student of theology, with a view to the holy ministry.]

* A denial.

† Kirkcudbright.

(EXPERIENCE—PATIENT WAITING—SANCTIFICATION.)



WORTHY AND DEAR BROTHER,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you. I have been too long in answering your letter, but other business took me up. I am here waiting, if the fair wind will turn upon Christ's sails in Scotland, and if deliverance be breaking out to this overclouded and benighted kirk. O that we could contend, by prayers and supplications, with our Lord for that effect! I know that He hath not given out His last doom against this land. I have little of Christ, in this prison, but groanings, and longings, and desires. All my stock of Christ is some hunger for Him, and yet I cannot say but I am rich in that. My faith, and hope, and holy practice of new obedience, are scarce worth the speaking of. But blessed be my Lord, who taketh me, light, and clipped, and naughty,* and feckless† as I am. I see that Christ will not prig‡ with me, nor stand upon stepping-stones;§ but cometh in at the broadside|| without ceremonies, or making it nice,¶ to make a poor, ransomed one His own. O that I could feed upon His breathing, and kissing, and embracing, and upon the hopes of my meeting and His! when love-letters shall not go betwixt us, but He will be messenger Himself! But there is required patience on our part, till the summer-fruit in heaven be ripe for us. It is in the bud; but there be many things to do before our harvest come. And we take ill with it, and can hardly endure to set our paper-face to one of Christ's storms, and to go to heaven with wet feet, and pain, and sorrow. We love to carry a heaven to heaven with us, and would have two summers in one year, and no less than two heavens. But this will not do for us: one (and such a one!) may suffice us well enough. The man, Christ, got but one only, and shall we have two?

* Of little value, like clipt coin; and worth naught.

† Pithless, unsubstantial.

§ Require help of stepping-stones.

¶ Being ill to please.

‡ Chaffer, higgie.

|| All at once, frankly.

Remember my love in Christ to your father ; and help me with your prayers. If ye would be a deep divine, I recommend to you sanctification. Fear Him, and He will reveal His covenant to you. Grace be with you.

Yours, in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, Jan. 5, 1637.

LXXXII.—To JOHN GORDON of Cardonefs, Elder.

[JOHN GORDON of Cardonefs, in the parish of Anwoth, was descended from Gordon of Lochinvar; but the degree of his descent cannot now be ascertained, and little is known concerning him. His name appears the first of 188 signatures attached to an unsuccessful petition of the elders and parishioners of Anwoth, presented to the Commission of the General Assembly 1638, for Rutherford being continued minister of that parish, when counter applications were made by the city of Edinburgh and the University of St Andrews for the transference of his services. From Rutherford's letters to him, we learn that he was at this time far advanced in life. He was naturally a man of strong passions, by which it would appear he had, in the previous part of his life, been led astray.

The old castle of *Cardonefs* stands on a tongue of land, at the mouth of the river Fleet, about a mile from Gatehouse. It is built on a rocky height, overhanging the public road, and looking toward the bay. You see an old square-built tower, or fortalice, raising its grey head from among the tall trees that now surround it. Tradition tells of an old proprietor, in league with Græme, the Border outlaw, and how, in consequence of his daring and God-defying deeds, the chief and his whole family perished in the *Black Loch*, in the parish of Anwoth. Though not a descendant, John Gordon seems to have been a man of like strong passions with that old chieftain, till subdued by grace.]

(WIN CHRIST AT ALL HAZARDS—CHRIST'S BEAUTY—A WORD TO CHILDREN.)



MUCH HONOURED SIR,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you.—I have longed to hear from you, and to know the estate of your soul, and the estate of that people with you.

I beseech you, Sir, by the salvation of your precious soul, and

the mercies of God, to make good and fure work of your falvation, and try upon what ground-ftone* ye have builded. Worthy and dear Sir, if ye be upon finking fand, a ftorm of death, and a blaft, will loofe Chrift and you, and wafh you clofe off† the rock. Oh, for the Lord's fake, look narrowly to the work !

Read over your life, with the light of God's day-light and fun ; for falvation is not caften down at every man's door. It is good to look to your compafs, and all ye have need of, ere you take fhipping ; for no wind can blow you back again. Remember, when the race is ended, and the play either won or loft, and ye are in the utmoft circle and border of time, and fhall put your foot within the march‡ of eternity, and all your good things of this fhort night-dream fhall feem to you like the afhes of a bleeze§ of thorns or ftraw, and your poor foul fhall be crying, " Lodging, lodging, for God's fake !" then fhall your foul be more glad at one of your Lord's lovely and homely fmiles, than if ye had the charters of three worlds for all eternity. Let pleasures and gain, will and defires of this world, be put over into God's hands, as arrefted and fenced|| goods that ye cannot intromit¶ with. Now, when ye are drinking the grounds of your cup, and ye are upon the utmoft end of the laft link of time, and old age, like death's long fhadow, is cafting a covering upon your days, it is no time to court this vain life, and to fet love and heart upon it. It is near after-fupper ;** feek reft and eafe for your foul in God through Chrift.

Believe me, that I find it to be hard wrefling to play fair with Chrift, and to keep good quarters with Him, and to love Him in integrity and life, and to keep a conftant courfe of found and folid daily communion with Chrift. Temptations are daily breaking the thread of that courfe, and it is not eafy to caft a knot again ; and many knots make evil work. Oh, how fair have many fhips been plying before the wind, that, in an hour's fpace, have been lying in

* Foundation.

† Completely off.

‡ Border.

§ Sudden blazing, flame.

|| Guarded.

¶ Meddle with.

** The time between fupper and bedtime ; the very lateft part of the day.

the sea-bottom ! How many professors cast a golden lustre, as if they were pure gold, and yet are, under that skin and cover, but base and reprobate metal ? And how many keep breath in their race many miles, and yet come short of the prize and the garland ! Dear Sir, my soul would mourn in secret for you, if I knew your case with God to be but false work. Love to have you anchored upon Christ maketh me fear your tottering and slips. False under-water,* not seen in the ground of an enlightened conscience, is dangerous ; so is often falling, and sinning against light. Know this, that those who never had sick nights or days in conscience for sin, cannot have but such a peace with God as will undercoat,† and break the flesh again, and end in a sad war at death. O how fearfully are thousands beguiled with false hide,‡ grown over old sins, as if the soul were cured and healed !

Dear Sir, I always saw nature mighty, lofty, heady, and strong in you ; and that it was more for you to be mortified and dead to the world, than for another common man. Ye will take a low ebb, and a deep cut, and a long lance, to go to the bottom of your wounds in saving humiliation, to make you a won prey for Christ. Be humbled ; walk softly. Down, down, for God's sake, my dear and worthy brother, with your topsail. Stoop, stoop ! it is a low entry to go in at heaven's gate. There is infinite justice in the party ye have to do with ; it is His nature not to acquit the guilty and the sinner. The law of God will not want one farthing of the sinner. God forgetteth not both the cautioner and the sinner ; and every man must pay, either in his own person (oh ! Lord save you from that payment !), or in his cautioner § Christ. It is violence to corrupt nature for a man to be holy, to lie down under Christ's feet, to quit will, pleasure, worldly love, earthly hope, and an itching of heart after this farded || and over-gilded world, and to be content that Christ trample upon all. Come in, come in to Christ, and see what ye want, and find it in Him. He is the short cut (as we used to say), and the

* Bilge-water.

† Fester, after being skinned over.

‡ False skin.

§ Surety.

|| Painted.

neareſt way to an outgate* of all your burdens. I dare avouch that ye ſhall be dearly welcome to Him ; my ſoul would be glad to take part of the joy ye ſhould have in Him. I dare ſay that angels' pens, angels' tongues, nay, as many worlds of angels as there are drops of water in all the ſeas, and fountains, and rivers of the earth, cannot paint Him out to you. I think His ſweetneſs, ſince I was a priſoner, hath ſwelled upon me to the greatneſs of two heavens. Oh for a ſoul as wide as the utmoſt circle of the higheſt heaven that containeth all, to contain His love ! And yet I could hold little of it. O world's wonder ! Oh, if my ſoul might but lie within the ſmell of His love, ſuppoſe I could get no more but the ſmell of it ! Oh, but it is long to that day when I ſhall have a free world of Chriſt's love ! Oh, what a ſight to be up in heaven, in that fair orchard of the new paradise ; and to ſee, and ſmell, and touch, and kiſs, that fair Field-flower, that ever-green Tree of Life ! His bare ſhadow were enough for me ; a ſight of Him would be the earneſt of heaven to me. Fy, fy upon us ! that we have love lying ruſting beſide us, or, which is worſe, waſting upon ſome loathſome objects, and that Chriſt ſhould lie His lone.† Wo, wo is me ! that ſin hath made ſo many madmen, ſeeking the fool's paradise, fire under ice, and ſome good and deſirable things, without and apart from, Chriſt. Chriſt, Chriſt, nothing but Chriſt, can cool our love's burning languor. O thirſty love ! wilt thou ſet Chriſt, the well of life, to thy head, and drink thy fill ? Drink, and ſpare not ; drink love, and be drunken with Chriſt ! Nay, alas ! the diſtance betwixt us and Chriſt is a death. Oh if we were claſped in other's‡ arms ! We ſhould never twin§ again, except heaven twinned and fundered us ; and that cannot be.

I deſire your children to ſeek this Lord. Deſire them from me, to be requested, for Chriſt's ſake, to be bleſſed and happy, and to come and take Chriſt, and all things with Him. Let them beware of glaſſy and ſlippery youth, of fooliſh young notions, of worldly

* Outlet, eſcape from.

† Alone, and no one of us beſide Him.

‡ Each other's.

§ Separate, be parted.

lusts, of deceivable gain, of wicked company, of cursing, lying, blaspheming, and foolish talking. Let them be filled with the Spirit; acquaint themselves with daily praying; and with the store-house of wisdom and comfort, the good word of God. Help the souls of the poor people. O that my Lord would bring me again among them, that I might tell unco* and great tales of Christ to them! Receive not a stranger to preach any other doctrine to them.

Pray for me, His prisoner of hope. I pray for you without ceasing. I write my blessing, earnest prayers, the love of God, and the sweet presence of Christ to you, and yours, and them. Grace, grace, grace be with you.

Your lawful and loving pastor,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, 1637.

LXXXIII.—*To the* EARL OF LOTHIAN.

[WILLIAM, third EARL OF LOTHIAN, to whom this letter is addressed, was the eldest son of Robert, first Earl of Ancrum; and he acquired the title of Earl of Lothian by his marriage with Anne Ker, Countess of Lothian, the eldest daughter of Robert, second Earl of Lothian, to whose estates and titles she succeeded at his death in 1624. When the differences betwixt the King and his Scottish subjects arose in 1638, in consequence of the attempt of the former to impose on the latter the Anglo-Popish Liturgy or Service Book, and other innovations, this nobleman manifested great zeal for the Covenant. He was a member of the General Assembly which met at Glasgow that year, as elder for the Presbytery of Dalkeith. Hostilities having again commenced in 1640, his Lordship was in the Scottish army that invaded England, defeated the Royalists at Newburn, and took possession of Newcastle, of which he was constituted Governor, with a garrison of 2000 men. In 1643 he was sent from Scotland by the Privy Council, with the approbation of Charles I., to make some propositions to the Court of France relating to certain privileges of the Scottish nation. In 1644 he commanded, with the Marquis of Argyle, the forces sent against the Marquis of Montrose, whom he obliged to retreat, and then delivered up his commission to the Committee of Estates, who passed an act in approbation of his services. His Lordship was president of the Committee

* Strange.

despatched by the Parliament to the King in December 1646, with their last propositions, which were refused. He protested against the raising of an army in 1648 to rescue the King from the hands of the English, without receiving from his Majesty assurance that he would secure the religious liberties of his Scottish subjects,—an attempt which was called the “Engagement.” But while resisting the arbitrary measures of his princes, he was of sincere and ardent loyalty. No sooner was it known that the Parliament of England intended to proceed against Charles I. before the High Court of Justice, than he and other commissioners were sent to remonstrate with them, in name of the kingdom of Scotland, against the violence and indignity which it was feared they intended against the sacred person of the King. The Earl warned them that the whole nation regarded the very thoughts of such a thing with the utmost abhorrence; and he took a solemn protest against their proceedings, for which he was put under arrest, sent with a guard to Gravesend, and thence to Scotland. On his return he received the thanks of Parliament for his conduct on this occasion; and, along with the Earl of Cassilis, was despatched to Breda in 1650 to invite King Charles to Scotland. His Lordship died in the year 1675. By Anne, Countess of Lothian, he had five sons and nine daughters.]

(ADVICE AS TO PUBLIC CONDUCT—EVERYTHING TO BE ENDURED FOR CHRIST.)

RIGHT HONOURABLE, AND MY VERY WORTHY AND NOBLE LORD,—Out of the honourable and good report that I hear of your Lordship’s good-will and kindness, in taking to heart the honourable cause of Christ, and His afflicted Church and wronged truth in this land, I make bold to speak a word, on paper, to your Lordship, at this distance, which I trust your Lordship will take in good part. It is to your Lordship’s honour and credit, to put to your hand, as ye do (all honour to God!), to the falling and tottering tabernacle of Christ, in this your mother-Church, and to own Christ’s wrongs as your own wrongs. O blessed hand, which shall wipe and dry the watery eyes of our weeping Lord Jesus, now going mourning in sackcloth in His members, in His spouse, in His truth, and in the prerogative royal of His kingly power! He needeth not service and help from men; but it pleaseth His wisdom to make the wants and losses, the sores and wounds of His spouse, a field and an office-

house for the zeal of His servants to exercise themselves in. Therefore, my noble and dear Lord, go on, go on in the strength of the Lord, against all opposition, to side with wronged Christ. The defending, and warding off strokes off Christ's bride, the King's daughter, is like a piece of the rest of the way to heaven, knotty, rough, stormy, and full of thorns. Many would follow Christ, but with a reservation that, by open proclamation, Christ would cry down crosses, and cry up fair weather, and a summer sky and sun, till we were all fairly landed at heaven. I know that your Lordship hath not so learned Christ; but that ye intend to fetch* heaven, suppose that your father were standing in your way, and to take it with the wind on your face; for so both storm and wind were on the fair face of your lovely Forerunner, Christ, all His way. It is possible that the success answer not your desire in this worthy cause. What then? duties are ours, but events are the Lord's; and I hope, if your Lordship, and others with you, will go on to dive to the lowest ground and bottom of the knavery and perfidious treachery to Christ of the accursed and wretched prelates, the Antichrist's first-born, and the first-fruit of his foul womb, and shall deal with our Sovereign (law going before you) for the reasonable and impartial hearing of Christ's bill of complaints, and set yourselves singly† to seek the Lord and His face, that your righteousness shall break through the clouds which prejudice hath drawn over it, and that ye shall, in the strength of the Lord, bring our banished and departing Lord Jesus home again to His sanctuary. Neither must your Lordship advise with flesh and blood in this; but wink, and in the dark, reach your hand to Christ, and follow Him. Let not men's fainting discourage you; neither be afraid of men's canny‡ wisdom, who, in this storm, take the nearest shore, and go to the lee and calm side of the Gospel, and hide Christ (if ever they had Him) in their cabinets, as if they were ashamed of Him, or as if Christ were stolen wares, and would blush before the sun.

My very dear and noble Lord, ye have rejoiced the hearts of

* Make for heaven.

† With a single mind.

‡ Prudent and kind.

many, that ye have made choice of Christ and His Gospel, whereas such great temptations do stand in your way. But I love your profession the better that it endureth winds. If we knew ourselves well, to want temptations is the greatest temptation of all. Neither is father, nor mother, nor court, nor honour, in this over-lustred world with all its paintry* and farding,† anything else, when they are laid in the balance with Christ, but feathers, shadows, night-dreams, and straws. Oh, if this world knew the excellency, sweetness, and beauty of that high and lofty One, that Fairest among the sons of men, verily they would see, that if their love were bigger than ten heavens, all in circles beyond each other, it were all too little for Christ our Lord! I hope that your choice will not repent you, when life shall come to that twilight betwixt time and eternity, and ye shall see the utmost border of time, and shall draw the curtain, and look into eternity, and shall one day see God take the heavens in His hands, and fold them together, like an old holey‡ garment, and set on fire this clay part of the creation of God, and consume away into smoke and ashes the idol-hope of poor fools, who think that there is not a better country than this low country of dying clay. Children cannot make comparison aright betwixt this life and that which is to come; and, therefore, the babes of this world, who see no better, mould, in their own brain, a heaven of their own coining, because they see no farther than the nearest side of time.

I dare lay in pawn my hope of heaven, that this reproached way is the only way of peace. I find it is the way that the Lord hath sealed with His comforts now, in my bonds for Christ; and I verily esteem and find chains and fetters for that lovely One, Christ, to be watered over with sweet consolations, and the love-smiles of that lovely Bridegroom, for whose coming we wait. And when He cometh, then shall the blacks and whites of all men come before the sun; then shall the Lord put a final decision upon the pleas§ that Zion hath with her adversaries. And as fast as time

* Painted things.

† Fine colouring.

‡ Full of holes; worn out.

§ Matters of controversy.

poſteth away (which neither ſitteth, nor ſtandeth, nor ſleepeth), as faſt is our hand-breadth of this ſhort winter-night flying away, and the ſky of our long-laſting day drawing near its breaking.

Except your Lordſhip be pleaſed to plead for me againſt the tyranny of prelates, I ſhall be forgotten in this priſon ; for they did ſhape my doom according to their new, lawleſs canons, which is, that a deprived miniſter ſhall be utterly ſilenced, and not preach at all ; which is a cruelty, contrary to their own former practices.

Now, the only wiſe God, the very God of peace, confirm, ſtrengthen, and eſtabliſh your Lordſhip upon the ſtone laid in Zion, and be with you for ever.

Your Lordſhip's at all reſpectful obedience in his ſweet Lord Jeſus,
S. R.

ABERDEEN, 1637.

LXXXIV.—*To* JEAN BROWN.

[JEAN BROWN was the mother of the well-known Mr John Brown, miniſter of Wamphray in Annandale, who, after the reſtoration of Charles II., was ejectioned from his charge and baniſhed from the King's dominions for his oppoſition to Prelacy. As may be gathered from Rutherford's letters to her, ſhe was a woman of intelligence and piety.]

(*THE JOYS OF THIS LIFE EMBITTERED BY SIN—HEAVEN
AN OBJECT OF DESIRE—TRIAL A BLESSED THING.*)



ISTRESS,—Grace, mercy, and peace be unto you. I long to hear how your ſoul prospereth. I earneſtly deſire your on-going toward your country. I know that ye ſee your day melteth away by little and little, and that in a ſhort time ye ſhall be put beyond time's bounds ; for life is a poſt that ſtandeth not ſtill, and our joys here are born weeping, rather than laughing, and they die weeping. Sin, ſin, this body of ſin and corruption embittereth and poiſoneth all our enjoyments. Oh that I were where I ſhall ſin no more ! Oh to be freed of theſe

chains and iron fetters, which we carry about with us! Lord, loofe the fad prifoners! Who of the children of God have not caufe to fay, that they have their fill of this vain life? and, like a full and fick ftomach, to wifh at mid-fupper that the fupper were ended, and the table drawn, that the fick man might win* to bed, and enjoy reft? We have caufe to tire at mid-fupper of the beft meffes that this world can drefs up for us; and to cry to God, that He would remove the table and put the fin-fick fouls to reft with Himfelf. Oh for a long play-day with Chrift, and our long-lafting vacance† of reft! Glad may their fouls be that are fafe over the frith,‡ Chrift having paid the fraught.§ Happy are they who have paffed their hard and wearifome time of apprenticeship, and are now free-men and citizens in that joyful, high city, the New Jerufalem.

Alas! that we fhould be glad of and rejoyce in our fetters, and our prifon-houfe, and this dear inn, a life of fin, where we are abfent from our Lord, and fo far from our home. O that we could get bonds and law-furetyfhip of our love, that it faften not itfelf on thefe clay-dreams, thefe clay-fhadows, and worldly vanities! We might be oftener feeing what they are doing in heaven, and our hearts more frequently upon our fweet treafure above. We fmell of the fmoke of this lower houfe of the earth, becaufe our hearts and our thoughts are here. If we could haunt|| up with God, we fhould fmell of heaven and of our country above; and we fhould look like our country, and like ftrangers, or people not born or brought up hereaway.¶ Our croffes would not bite** upon us if we were heavenly-minded. I know of no obligation which the faints have to this world, feeing we fare but upon the fmoke of it; and, if there be any fmoke in the houfe, it bloweth upon our eyes. All our part of the table is fcarce worth a drink of water; and when we are ftricken, we dare not weep, but fteal our grief away betwixt our Lord and us, and content ourfelves with ftolen forrow

* Get into. † Vacation, holidays. ‡ The ftrait, or eftuary.

§ Freight. || "Haunt," frequent God's prefence up above this world.

¶ In this quarter.

** Leave the mark of their teeth.

behind backs. God be thanked that we have many things that so stroke us against the hair that we may pray, "God keep our better home, God bless our Father's house; and not this smoke, that bloweth us to seek our best lodging." I am sure that this is the best fruit of the cross, when we, from the hard fare of the dear* inn, cry the more that God would send a fair wind, to land us, hungered and oppressed strangers, at the door of our Father's house, which now is made, in Christ, our kindly heritage. Oh! then, let us pull up the stakes and stoups† of our tent, and take our tent on our back, and go with our sitting to our best home; for here we have no continuing city.

I am waiting in hope here, to see what my Lord will do with me. Let Him make of me what He pleaseth; providing He make glory to Himself out of me, I care not. I hope, yea, I am now sure, that I am for Christ, and all that I can or may make is for Him. I am His everlasting dyvour,‡ and still shall be; for, alas, I have nothing for Him, and He getteth but little service of me! Pray for me, that our Lord would be pleased to give me house-room, that I may serve Him in the calling which He hath called me unto. Grace be with you.

Yours, in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, 1637.

LXXXV.—*To JOHN KENNEDY, Bailie of Ayr.*

(*THE REASONABLENESS OF BELIEVING UNDER ALL AFFLICTION—OBLIGATIONS TO FREE GRACE.*)



WORTHY AND WELL-BELOVED BROTHER,—
Grace, mercy, and peace be unto you.—I am yet waiting what our Lord will do for His afflicted Church, and

* Where provision is dear, or costly.

† Posts.

‡ Debtor. Bankrupt is the meaning preferred by some; but that is not necessarily implied. In one of his sermons Rutherford has, "As we say to dyvours, Pay me, or say ye will not!"

for my re-entry to my Lord's house. O that I could hear the forfeiture of Christ (now casten out of His inheritance) recalled and taken off by open proclamation ; and that Christ were restored to be a freeholder and a landed heritor in Scotland ; and that the courts fenced* in the name of the bastard prelates (their godfather, the Pope's, bailiffs and sheriffs) were cried down ! Oh how sweet a sight were it to see all the tribes of the Lord in this land fetching home again our banished King, Christ, to His own palace, His sanctuary, and His throne ! I shall think it mercy to my soul, if my faith will out-watch all this winter-night, and not nod nor slumber till my Lord's summer-day dawn upon me. It is much if faith and hope, in the sad nights of our heavy trial, escape with a whole skin, and without crack or crook. I confess that unbelief hath not reason to be either father or mother to it,† for unbelief is always an irrational thing ; but how can it be, but that such weak eyes as ours must cast water in a great smoke, or that a weak head should not turn giddy when the water runneth deep and strong ? But God be thanked that Christ in His children can endure a stress and a storm, howbeit soft nature would fall down in pieces. O that I had that‡ confidence as to rest on this, though He should grind me into small powder, and bray me into dust, and scatter the dust to the four winds of heaven, that my Lord would gather up the powder, and make me up a new vessel again, to bear Christ's name to the world ! I am sure that love, bottomed and seated upon the faith of His love to me, would desire and endure this, and would even claim and threep§ kindness upon Christ's strokes, and kiss His love-glooms,|| and both spell and read salvation upon the wounds made by Christ's sweet hands. O that I had but a promise made from the mouth of Christ, of His love to me ! and then, howbeit my faith were as tender as paper, I think longing, and dwining,¶ and greening** of sick desires would cause it to bide†† out the siege till the Lord came

* Constituted and opened.

† Unbelief has not its origin in *reason*.

‡ Such.

§ Persevere in vehement assertion.

|| Frowns.

¶ Pining.

** Longing after greedily.

†† Continue to bear or hold out.

to fill the soul with His love. And I know also, that in that case faith would bide * green and sappy at the root, even at mid-winter, and stand out against all storms. However it be, I know that Christ winneth heaven in despite of hell.

But I owe as many praises and thanks to free grace as would lie betwixt me and the utmost border of the highest heaven, suppose ten thousand heavens were all laid above other. But oh ! I have nothing that can hire or bud † grace ; for if grace would take hire, it were no more grace. But all our stability, and the strength of our salvation, is anchored and fastened upon free grace ; and I am sure that Christ hath by His death and blood casten the knot so fast, that the fingers of the devils and hell-fulls of sins cannot loose it. And that bond of Christ (that never yet was, nor ever shall, nor can be registered ‡) standeth surer than heaven, or the days of heaven, as that sweet pillar of the covenant whereon we all hang. Christ, with all his little ones under His two wings and in the compass or circle of His arms, is so sure, that, cast Him and them into the ground § of the sea, He shall come up again and not lose one. An odd one cannot, nor shall be lost in the telling. ||

This was always God's aim, since Christ came into the play betwixt Him and us, to make men dependent creatures ; and, in the work of our salvation, to put created strength, and arms and legs of clay, quite out of play, and out of office and court. And now God hath substituted in our room and accepted His Son, the Mediator, for us and all that we can make. If this had not been, I would have skinked ¶ over and foregone my part of paradise and salvation, for a breakfast of dead, moth-eaten earth ; but now I would not give it, nor let it go for more than I can tell. And truly they are silly fools, and ignorant of Christ's worth, and so full ill-trained and tutored, who tell Christ and heaven over the board for two feathers or two straws of the devil's painted pleasures, only lusted on the outer side. This is our happiness now, that our reckonings

* Continue to hold out.

|| Counting up.

† Bribe.

¶ Renounced by a formal farewell.

‡ Protested.

§ Bottom.

at night, when eternity shall come upon us, cannot be told. We shall be so far gainers, and so far from being super-expended (as the poor fools of this world are, who give out their money, and get in but black hunger), that angels cannot lay our counts, nor sum our advantage and incomes. Who knoweth how far it is to the bottom of our Christ's fulness, and to the ground* of our heaven? Who ever weighed Christ in a pair of balances? Who hath seen the foldings and plies, and the heights and depths of that glory which is in Him, and kept for us? O for such a heaven as to stand afar off, and see, and love and long for Him, whilst† time's thread be cut, and this great work of creation dissolved, at the coming of our Lord!

Now to His grace I recommend you. I beseech you also to pray for a re-entry to me into the Lord's house, if it be His good will.

Yours in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, Jan. 6, 1637.

LXXXVI.—*To my LORD CRAIGHALL.*

[SIR JOHN HOPE, LORD CRAIGHALL, was the eldest son of Sir Thomas Hope (Lord Advocate of Scotland in the time of James VI. and Charles I.), and Elizabeth, daughter of John Bennet of Wallyford. His property, Craighall, is in the parish of Inveresk, near Edinburgh. Sir Thomas was the most eminent lawyer of his day, and was first brought into notice by the ability with which he defended the cause of John Forbes, John Welsh, and the other ministers who were tried for high treason at Linlithgow, on account of their holding a General Assembly at Aberdeen in 1605. John, second baronet of Craighall, followed the profession of law, and quickly rose to distinction and influence. He was admitted a Lord of Session 27th July 1632, and became President of the Court. In 1645 he was appointed one of the Privy Council. He was an elder of the Church, and his name appears on the roll of members of the General Assemblies 1645-1649, and of the commissions which these Assemblies appointed, and invested with full powers for prosecuting, advancing, and bringing to a happy conclusion, the work of uniformity in religion in all his Majesty's dominions. He was married to Margaret, daughter of Sir

* Bottom.

† Till.

Archibald Murray of Blackbarony. This lady died on the 3d of October 1641. His father, in his published Diary, has the following entry of that date in reference to the event: "About 9 of the night, my dear daughter D. M. Murray, spouse to my son Craighall, deceased in child-bed, she and the bairn in her womb. God in mercy pity me, and my son, and his children, for it is a fore stroke" (p. 152). Lord Craighall died at Edinburgh near the end of April 1654. He had a daughter, Mary, who became the wife of William Gordon of Earlston, and two sons, Sir Thomas and Sir Archibald. (*Douglas' Peerage.*)]

(EPISCOPALIAN CEREMONIES—HOW TO ABIDE IN THE TRUTH
—DESIRE FOR LIBERTY TO PREACH CHRIST.)



Y LORD,—I received Mr L.'s* letter with your Lordship's, and his learned thoughts in the matter of ceremonies. I owe respect to the man's learning, for that I hear him to be opposed to Arminian heresies. But, with reverence of that worthy man, I wonder to hear such popish-like expressions as he hath in his letter, as, "Your Lordship may spare doubtings, when the King and Church have agreed in the settling of such orders; and the Church's direction in things indifferent and circumstantial (as if indifferent and circumstantial were all one!) should be the rule of every private Christian." I only viewed the papers two hours' space, the bearer hastening me to write. I find the worthy man not so seen† in this controversy as some turbulent men of our country, whom he calleth "refusers of conformity;" and let me say it, I am more confirmed in non-conformity, when I see such a great wit play the agent‡ so slenderly. But I will lay the blame on the weakness of the cause, not on the meanness of Mr L.'s learning. I

* Who is here meant cannot now be well ascertained. It could not be Mr Robert Leighton, afterwards Archbishop of Glasgow, as he was then abroad, and not ordained. Perhaps it may have been Mr Loudian, of whom Baillie says, "He has written somewhat against our courses (at least for kneeling) against Rutherford. They say he is dead also. I much regrave it: he was an excellent philosophe, sound and orthodoxe, opposite to Canterbury's way, albeit too conform. I counselled oft Glasgow to have him for their Divinity Lecturer." (*Baillie's Letters and Journals*, i. 77.)

† Conversant with.

‡ Advocate?

have been, and still am confident, that Britain* cannot answer one argument, a *scandalo* : and I longed much to hear Mr L. speak to the cause ; and I would say, if some ordinary divine had answered as Mr L. doth, that he understood not the nature of a scandal ; but I dare not vilify that worthy man so. I am now upon the heat of some other employment. I shall (but God willing) answer this, to the satisfying of any not prejudiced.

I will not say that every one is acquainted with the reason in my letter, from God's presence and bright shining face in suffering for this cause. Aristotle never knew the medium of the conclusion : and Christ saith few know it.† I am sure that conscience standing in awe of the Almighty, and fearing to make a little hole in the bottom for fear of under-water,‡ is a strong medium to hold off an erroneous conclusion in the least wing, or lith,§ of sweet, sweet truth, that concerneth the royal prerogative of our kingly and highest Lord Jesus. And my witness is in heaven, that I saw neither pleasure, nor profit, nor honour, to hook me, or catch me, in entering into prison for Christ, but the wind on my face for the present. And if I had loved to sleep in a whole skin, with the ease and present delight that I saw on this side of sun and moon, I should have lived at ease, and in good hopes to fare as well as others. The Lord knoweth that I preferred preaching of Christ, and still do, to anything, next to Christ Himself. And their new canons took my one, my only joy, from me, which was to me as the poor man's one ewe, that had no more ! And, alas ! there is little lodging in their hearts for pity or mercy, to pluck out a poor man's one eye for a thing indifferent ; *i.e.*, for knots of straw, and things (as they mean ||) off the way to heaven. I desire not that my name take journey, and go a pilgrim to Cambridge, for fear I come into the ears of authority. I am sufficiently burnt already.

In the mean time, be pleased to try if the Bishop of St Andrews, ¶

* All the Divines in Britain. † Rev. ii. 17, "hidden manna." ‡ Bilge-water.

§ *Joint*. In a sermon at Kirkmabreck, 1634, he speaks of "the shoulder-blade being *out of lith*."

|| As they reckon, or think.

¶ John Spottiswood.

and Glasgow* (Galloway's† ordinary), will be pleased to abate from the heat of their wrath, and let me go to my charge. Few know the heart of a prisoner; yet I hope that the Lord will hew His own glory out of as knotty timber as I am. Keep Christ, my dear and worthy Lord. Pretended paper-arguments from‡ angering the mother-Church, (that can reel, and nod, and stagger,) are not of such weight as peace with the Father, and Husband. Let the wife gloom, § I care not, if the Husband laugh.

Remember my service to my Lord your father, and mother, and lady. Grace be with you.

Yours at all obedience in Christ,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, Jan. 24, 1637.

LXXXVII.—To ELIZABETH KENNEDY.

[ELIZABETH KENNEDY was the sister of Hugh Kennedy, Provost of Ayr, and a woman as eminent for piety and prayer as her brother. Wodrow records an anecdote of her which illustrates the devotional character of Christians in her time, and their faith in the power of prayer. Being much afflicted with the stone, she was advised to submit to a surgical operation. Several meetings for prayer took place among the godly at Ayr in reference to her case in particular. When the surgeon came to perform the operation, one of these meetings was held in her own house, and the people continued so long in prayer, as nearly to exhaust his patience; but before they had concluded, the stone dissolved, and without surgical aid she obtained immediate relief. (*Wodrow's Analecta*, vol. ii.)]

(DANGER OF FORMALITY—CHRIST WHOLLY TO BE LOVED—
OTHER OBJECTS OF LOVE.)



STRESS,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you.—I have long had a purpose of writing unto you, but I have been hindered. I heartily desire that ye would mind

* James Law was the ordinary or official deputy of the Bishop.

† Thomas Sydferff, Bishop of Galloway.

‡ Arguments drawn from the risk of provoking.

§ Frown.

your country, and consider to what airt* your soul setteth its face ; for all come not home at night who suppose that they have set their face heavenward. It is a woful thing to die, and miss heaven, and to lose house-room with Christ at night : it is an evil journey where travellers are benighted in the fields. I persuade myself that thousands shall be deceived and ashamed of their hope. Because they cast their anchor in sinking sands, they must lose it. Till now I knew not the pain, labour, nor difficulty that there is to win† at home : nor did I understand so well, before this, what that meaneth, “ The righteous shall scarcely be saved.” Oh, how many a poor professor’s candle is blown out, and never lighted again ! I see that ordinary profession, and to be ranked amongst the children of God, and to have a name among men, is now thought good enough to carry professors to heaven. But certainly a name is but a name, and will never bide‡ a blast of God’s storm. I counsel you not to give your soul or Christ rest, nor your eyes sleep, till ye have gotten something that will bide‡ the fire, and stand out the storm. I am sure, that if my one foot were in heaven, and if then He should say, “ Fend§ thyself, I will hold my grips|| of thee no longer,” I should go no farther, but presently fall down in as many pieces of dead nature.

They are happy for evermore who are over head and ears in the love of Christ, and know no sickness but love-sickness for Christ, and feel no pain but the pain of an absent and hidden Well-beloved. We run our souls out of breath, and tire them, in coursing and galloping after our night-dreams (such are the roving of our miscarrying hearts), to get some created good thing in this life, and on this side of death. We would fain stay and spin out a heaven to ourselves, on this side of the water ; but sorrow, want, changes, crosses, and sin, are both woof and warp in that ill-spun web. O how sweet and dear are those thoughts that are still upon the things which are above ! and how happy are they who are longing to have little sand in their glass, and to have time’s

* Quarter of the sky.

§ Take care of.

† Get to.

|| Grasp.

‡ Continue to endure.

thread cut, and can cry to Christ, “ Lord Jefus, have over : * come and fetch the dreary† paffenger ! ” I wifh that our thoughts were more frequently than they are upon our country. Oh but heaven caſteth a fweet ſmell afar off to thoſe who have ſpiritual ſmelling ! God hath made many fair flowers ; but the faireſt of them all is heaven, and the Flower of all flowers is Chriſt. Oh ! why do we not fly up to that lovely One ? Alas, that there is ſuch a ſcarcity of love, and of lovers, to Chriſt amongſt us all ! Fie, fie upon us, who love fair things, as fair gold, fair houſes, fair lands, fair pleaſures, fair honours, and fair perſons, and do not pine and melt away with love to Chriſt ! Oh ! would to God I had more love for His ſake ! O for as much as would lie betwixt me and heaven, for His ſake ! O for as much as would go round about the earth, and over the heaven, yea, the heaven of heavens, and ten thouſand worlds, that I might let all out upon fair, fair, only fair Chriſt ! But, alas ! I have nothing for Him, yet He hath much for me. It is no gain to Chriſt that He getteth my little, feckleſs,‡ ſpan-length and hand-breadth of love.

If men would have ſomething to do with their hearts and their thoughts, that are always rolling up and down (like men with oars in a boat), after ſinful vanities, they might find great and ſweet employment to their thoughts upon Chriſt. If thoſe frothy, fluctuating, and reſtleſs hearts of ours would come all about Chriſt, and look into His love, to bottomleſs love, to the depth of mercy, to the unſearchable riches of His grace, to inquire after and ſearch into the beauty of God in Chriſt, they would be ſwallowed up in the depth and height, length and breadth of His goodneſs. Oh, if men would draw the curtains, and look into the inner ſide of the ark, and behold how the fulneſs of the Godhead dwelleth in Him bodily ! Oh ! who would not ſay, “ Let me die, let me die ten times, to ſee a ſight of Him ” ? Ten thouſand deaths were no great price to give for Him. I am ſure that ſick, fainting love would heighten the market, and raiſe the price to the double for Him. But, alas ! if men and

* Be done.

† Sorrowful.

‡ Unſubſtantial, worthleſs.

angels were roused,* and sold at the dearest price, they would not all buy a night's love, or a four-and-twenty-hours' sight of Christ! Oh, how happy are they who get Christ for nothing! God send me no more, for my part of paradise, but Christ: and surely I were rich enough, and as well heavened as the best of them, if Christ were my heaven.

I can write no better thing to you, than to desire you, if ever ye laid Christ in a count, to take Him up and count over again: and weigh Him again and again: and after this have no other to court your love, and to woo your soul's delight, but Christ. He will be found worthy of all your love, howbeit it should swell upon you from the earth to the uppermost circle of the heaven of heavens. To our Lord Jesus and His love I commend you.

Yours in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, 1637.

LXXXVIII.—To JANET KENNEDY.

[This seems to be the wife of Mr John Fergushill; see Let. 112.]

(CHRIST TO BE KEPT AT EVERY SACRIFICE—HIS INCOMPARABLE LOVELINESS.)



MISSRESS,—Grace, mercy, and peace be unto you. Ye are not a little obliged to His rich grace, who hath separated you for Himself, and for the promised inheritance with the saints in light, from this condemned and guilty world. Hold fast Christ, contend for Him; it is a lawful plea† to go to holding and drawing for Christ; and it is not possible to keep Christ peaceably, having once gotten Him, except the devil were dead. It must be your resolution to set your face against Satan's northern tempests and storms, for salvation. Nature would have heaven to come to us while sleeping in our beds. We

* Sold by public auction.

† Controversy.

would all buy Christ, so being we might make price ourselves. But Christ is worth more blood and lives than either ye or I have to give Him. When we shall come home, and enter to the possession of our Brother's fair kingdom, and when our heads shall find the weight of the eternal crown of glory, and when we shall look back to pains and sufferings, then shall we see life and sorrow to be less than one step or stride from a prison to glory; and that our little inch of time-suffering is not worthy of our first night's welcome-home to heaven. Oh, what then shall be the weight of every one of Christ's kisses! Oh, how weighty, and of what worth shall every one of Christ's love-smiles be! Oh, when once He shall thrust a wearied traveller's head betwixt His blessed breasts, the poor soul will think one kiss of Christ hath fully paid home forty or fifty years' wet feet, and all its sore hearts, and light* sufferings it had in following after Christ! Oh, thrice-blinded souls, whose hearts are charmed and bewitched with dreams, shadows, feckless things, night-vanities, and night-fancies of a miserable life of sin! Shame on us who sit still, fettered with the love and liking of the loan of a piece of dead clay! Oh, poor fools, who are beguiled with painted things, and this world's fair weather, and smooth promises, and rotten, worm-eaten hopes! May not the devil laugh to see us give out our souls, and get in but corrupt and counterfeit pleasures of sin? O for a sight of eternity's glory, and a little tasting of the Lamb's marriage-supper! Half a draught, or a drop of the wine of consolation, that is up at our banqueting-house, out of Christ's own hand, would make our stomachs loathe the brown bread and the four drink of a miserable life. Oh, how far are we bereaved of wit, to chafe, and hunt, and run, till our souls be out of breath, after a condemned happiness of our own making! And do we not sit far in our own light, to make it a matter of bairn's play, to skink and drink over† paradise, and the heaven that Christ

* 2 Cor. iv. 17.

† Skink is formally to renounce his part in a thing; "*and drink over*," drink the health of the buyer over the concluded bargain.

did sweate for, even for a blast of smoke, and for Esau's morning breakfast? O that we were out of ourselves, and dead to this world, and this world dead and crucified to us! And, when we should be close* out of love and conceit of any masked and farded† lover whatsoever, then Christ would win and conquer to Himself a lodging in the inmost yolk of our heart. Then Christ should be our night-song and morning-song: then the very noise and din of our Well-beloved's feet, when He cometh, and His first knock or rap at the door, should be as news of two heavens to us. O that our eyes and our soul's smelling should go after a blasted and sun-burnt flower, even this plastered, fair-outfided‡ world: and then we have neither eye nor smell for the Flower of Jesse, for that Plant of renown, for Christ, the choicest, the fairest, the sweetest rose that ever God planted! Oh, let some of us die to smell the fragrance of Him; and let my part of this rotten world be forfeited and sold for evermore, providing I may anchor my tottering soul upon Christ! I know that it is sometimes at this, "Lord, what wilt Thou have for Christ?" But, O Lord, canst Thou be budded,§ and propined|| with any gift for Christ? O Lord, can Christ be sold? or rather, may not a poor needy sinner have Him for nothing? If I can get no more, oh, let me be pained to all eternity, with longing for Him! The joy of hungering for Christ should be my heaven for evermore. Alas, that I cannot draw souls and Christ together! But I desire the coming of His kingdom, and that Christ, as I assuredly hope He will, would come upon withered Scotland, as rain upon the new-mown grafs. Oh, let the King come! Oh, let His kingdom come! Oh, let their eyes rot in their eye-holes,¶ who will not receive Him home again to reign and rule in Scotland. Grace, grace be with you.

Yours in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, 1637.

* Quite out.

§ Bribed.

† Embellished, painted.

|| Presented with.

‡ That has a fair external.

¶ Zech. xiv. 12.

LXXXIX.—*To my Well-beloved and Reverend Brother,*

MR ROBERT BLAIR.

[MR ROBERT BLAIR was born at Irvine in 1593. After completing his education at the College of Glasgow, he there held for several years the office of Regent, during which time he was licensed as a probationer for the holy ministry. Having a strong desire to go to France, he was encouraged to this by M. Bafnage, a French Protestant minister who visited Scotland in 1622. But Providence ordered his lot otherwise. He was induced to accept of the charge of Bangor, in Ireland, and was admitted in the year 1623. Here he laboured with great diligence and success; and there being in the same part of the country several other devout ministers, by mutual excitement and co-operation, they were instrumental in producing in the north of Ireland a change upon an ignorant and irreligious people, much resembling the effects of the preaching of the Gospel in the apostolic age. But this good work was not allowed to go on unopposed. In the autumn of 1631 he was suspended from his ministry by the Bishop of Down; in May 1632 he was deposed; and in November 1634 solemnly excommunicated; and all this simply for non-conformity. In these circumstances, he and some other ministers similarly situated, together with a considerable number of people, formed the purpose of going to New England, and actually embarked in 1636; but the tempestuous state of the weather forced them to return. He then came over to Scotland, and in 1638 became minister of Ayr, from which by a sentence of the General Assembly he was soon translated to St Andrew's, where he and Rutherford lived in the warmest friendship until the controversy between the Resolutioners and Protesters arose, which in some degree disturbed their mutual good understanding. Rutherford was a strong Protester: Blair endeavoured to remain neutral. He regretted the extremes, as he conceived, to which both parties went; and, with Mr James Durham of Glasgow, endeavoured to restore harmony between them, but without success. Towards the end of September 1661 he was summoned before the Privy Council for a sermon he had preached, in which he dwelt on suffering for righteousness' sake, and bore testimony to the covenanted Reformation, as well as against the defections of the times. His answers to the Council proving unsatisfactory, he was sentenced to be confined to his own house. He was afterwards permitted to retire to Muffelburgh. He next removed to Kirkcaldy, and from thence to Meikle Couston, in the parish of Aberdour, where he died on the 27th of April 1666.]

(GOD'S ARRANGEMENTS SOMETIMES MYSTERIOUS.)



EVEREND AND DEARLY BELOVED BROTHER,

—Grace, mercy, and peace from God our Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ, be unto you.

It is no great wonder, my dear brother, that ye be in heaviness for a season, and that God's will (in crossing your design and desires to dwell amongst a people whose God is the Lord) should move you. I deny not but ye have cause to inquire what His providence speaketh in this to you ; but God's directing and commanding Will can by no good logic be concluded from events of providence. The Lord sent Paul on many errands for the spreading of His Gospel, where he found lions in his way. A promise was made to His people of the Holy Land, and yet many nations were in the way, fighting against, and ready to kill them that had the promise, or to keep them from possessing that good land which the Lord their God had given them. I know that ye have most to do with submission of spirit ; but I persuade myself that ye have learned, in every condition wherein ye are cast, therein to be content, and to say, " Good is the will of the Lord, let it be done." I believe that the Lord tacketh His ship often to fetch the wind, and that He purposeth to bring mercy out of your sufferings and silence, which (I know from mine own experience) is grievous to you. Seeing that He knoweth our willing mind to serve Him, our wages and stipend is running to the fore* with our God, even as some sick soldiers get pay, when they are bedfast and not able to go to the field with others. " Though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the Lord, and my God shall be my strength."† And we are to believe it shall be thus ere all the play be played. " The

* Into account for your advantage.

† Isa. xlix. 5.

violence done to me and to my flesh be upon Babylon" (and the great whore's lovers), "shall the inhabitant of Zion say; and my blood be upon Chaldea, shall Jerusalem say."* And, "Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling to all the people round about, when they shall be in the siege both against Judah and against Jerusalem. And in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people: they that burden themselves with it shall be broken in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it."† When they have eaten and swallowed us up, they shall be sick, and vomit us out living men again; the devil's stomach cannot digest the Church of God. Suffering is the other half of our ministry, howbeit the hardest; for we would be content that our King Jesus should make an open proclamation, and cry down crosses, and cry up joy, gladness, ease, honour, and peace. But it must not be so; through many afflictions we must enter into the kingdom of God. Not only by them, but through them, must we go; and wiles will not take us past the cross. It is folly to think to steal to heaven with a whole skin.

For myself, I am here a prisoner confined in Aberdeen, threatened to be removed to Caithness, because I desire to edify in this town; and am openly preached against in the pulpits in my hearing, and tempted with disputations by the doctors, especially by D. B.‡ Yet I am not ashamed of the Lord Jesus, His garland, and His crown. I would not exchange my weeping with the painted laughter of the fourteen prelates. At my first coming here I took the darts§ at Christ, and would, forsooth, summon Him for unkindness. I fought a plea|| of my Lord, and was tossed with challenges¶ whether He loved me or not; and disputed over again all that He had done to

* Jer. li. 35.

† Zech. xii. 2, 3.

‡ Dr Robert Barron, Professor of Divinity in the Marischal College of Aberdeen, one of the learned doctors of that city, whose dispute, in 1638, with Alexander Henderson, David Dickson, and Andrew Cant, on the subject of the Covenant, excited at the time so much attention.

§ Sulks, pet.

|| A quarrel.

¶ Upbraiding, questioning.

me, because His word was a fire shut up in my bowels, and I was weary with forbearing, because I said I was cast out of the Lord's inheritance. But now I see that I was a fool. My Lord mis-kent* all, and did bear with my foolish jealousies; and mis-kent* that ever I wronged His love. And now He is come again with mercy under His wings. I pass from my (oh wileless!) summons: He is God, I see, and I am man. Now it hath pleased Him to renew His love to my soul, and to dawe† His poor prisoner. Therefore, dear brother, help me to praise, and show the Lord's people with you what He hath done to my soul, that they may pray and praise. And I charge you, in the name of Christ, not to omit it. For this cause I write to you, that my sufferings may glorify my royal King, and edify His Church in Ireland. He knoweth how one of Christ's love coals hath burnt my soul with a desire to have my bonds to preach His glory, whose cross I now bear. God forgive you if you do it not; but I hope the Lord will move your heart, to proclaim in my behalf the sweetness, excellency, and glory of my royal King. It is but our soft flesh that hath raised a slander on the cross of Christ: I see now the white side of it; my Lord's chains are all over-gilded. Oh, if Scotland and Ireland had part of my feast! And yet I get not my meat but with many strokes. There are none here to whom I can speak: I dwell in Kedar's tents. Refresh me with a letter from you. Few know what is betwixt Christ and me.

Dear brother, upon my salvation, this is His truth that we suffer for. Christ would not seal a blank charter to souls. Courage, courage! joy, joy for evermore! O joy unspeakable and glorious! O for help to set my crowned King on high! O for love to Him who is altogether lovely,—that love which many waters cannot quench, neither can the floods drown!

I remember you, and bear your name on my breast to Christ. I beseech you, forget not His afflicted prisoner. Grace, mercy, and peace be with you. Salute in the Lord, from

* Overlooked.

† Dote upon, fondle.

me, Mr Cunningham, Mr Livingstone, Mr Ridge,* Mr Colwart,† &c.

Your brother, and fellow-prisoner,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, *Feb. 7, 1637.*

XC.—*To his Reverend and Dear Brother, MR JOHN LIVINGSTONE.*

[JOHN LIVINGSTONE (the son of Alexander Livingstone, first minister at Monyabroch or Kilfyth, and afterwards at Lanark) was born at Monyabroch on the 21st of January 1603. At the College of Glasgow, where he received his education, he enjoyed the advantage of having as his regent for two years the famous Robert Blair, for whom he continued ever after to retain the highest veneration. He was first settled minister at Killinchie, in Ireland, towards the close of the year 1630, but had not laboured above twelve months in that charge when he was suspended by the Bishop of Down, for non-conformity. Being afterwards deposed, and finally excommunicated, to enjoy religious liberty he accompanied Mr Blair and others in their intended emigration to America; but, with the rest, was forced by the adverse state of the weather to return. Shortly after, when on a visit to the west of Scotland, he received calls from two parishes, Stranraer and Stewarton. By the advice of his friends, whom he consulted, he preferred the call from the former parish, and his induction took place on the 5th of July 1638. Here he continued in the assiduous discharge of his pastoral functions until 1648, when, by the sentence of the General Assembly, he was translated to the parish of Ancrum, in the Presbytery of Jedburgh. Upon the death of Charles I., he was sent to the Hague, and afterwards to Breda, as one of the commissioners from the

* Mr John Ridge was an English minister, whom opposition to ceremonial impositions on conscience led to leave his native country for Ireland. He was admitted to the vicarage of Antrim on the 7th of July 1619, in which he laboured with success for many years; but being at length deposed by Henry Leslie, the Bishop of Down, for non-conformity, he came over to Irvine, where he died.

† Mr Henry Colwart was also a native of England; and, like Mr Ridge, left the land of his birth, and went to Ireland. He was admitted to the pastoral charge of Oldstone in 1630; but being also deposed by Bishop Leslie for refusing to submit to the innovations of Prelacy, he came over to Scotland, and was admitted minister of Paisley, where he died.

Church of Scotland to treat with his son Charles II., whose character he had the penetration to discover. In the controversy between the Resolutioners and Protesters, Livingstone took the side of the latter, but was dissatisfied with the violence manifested by his party. After the restoration of Charles II., being summoned to appear before the Privy Council on the 11th of December 1662, he appeared, and, declining to engage to observe the anniversary of the death of Charles I., and to take the oath of allegiance in the precise way in which it was dictated to him, he was sentenced to quit his native land within two months. Having repaired to Rotterdam, he preached occasionally to the Scottish congregation there, and devoted the remainder of his life to the cultivation of Biblical literature. He died in that city on the 9th of August 1672, in the seventieth year of his age.

It was this same Livingstone that was so blessed in awakenings. By a sermon which he preached in 1630 at the Kirk-of-Shotts, on the Monday after the dispensation of the Lord's Supper, five hundred souls, it is believed, were converted. On a similar occasion, at Holywood, in the north of Ireland, he was the instrument of awakening double that number to inquiry after salvation.]

(RESIGNATION—ENJOYMENT—STATE OF THE CHURCH.)



MY REVEREND AND DEAR BROTHER,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you. I long to hear from you, and to be refreshed with the comforts of The Bride of our Lord Jesus in Ireland. I suffer with you in grief, for the dash that your desires to be at New England have received of late; but if our Lord, who hath skill to bring up His children, had not seen it your best, it would not have befallen you. Hold your peace, and stay yourselves upon the Holy One of Israel. Harken to what He hath said in crossing of your desires; He will speak peace to His people.

I am here removed from my flock, and silenced, and confined in Aberdeen, for the testimony of Jesus. And I have been confined in spirit also with desertions and challenges. I gave in a bill of quarrels, and complaints of unkindness against Christ, who seemed to have cast me over the dyke of the vineyard as a dry tree, and separated me from the Lord's inheritance; but high, high and loud praises be to our royal crowned King in Zion, that He hath not burnt the dry branch. I shall yet live, and see His glory.

Your mother-Church, for her whoredom, is like to be cast off.

The bairns may break their hearts to see such chiding betwixt the husband and the wife. Our clergy is upon a reconciliation with the Lutherans ; and the Doctors are writing books, and drawing up a common confession, at the Council's command. Our Service Book is proclaimed with sound of trumpet. The night is fallen down upon the prophets ! Scotland's day of visitation is come. It is time for the bride to weep, while Christ is a-saying that He will choose another wife. But our sky will clear again ; the dry branch of cut-down Lebanon will bud again and be glorious, and they shall yet plant vines upon our mountains.

Now, my dear brother, I write to you for this end, that ye may help me to praise ; and seek help of others with you, that God may be glorified in my bonds. My Lord Jesus hath taken the withered, dry stranger, and His prisoner broken in heart, into His house of wine. Oh, oh if ye, and all Scotland, and all our brethren with you, knew how I am feasted ! Christ's honey-combs drop comforts. He dineth with His prisoner, and the King's spikenard casteth a smell. The devil cannot get it denied that we suffer for the apple of Christ's eye, His royal prerogatives, as King and Lawgiver. Let us not fear or faint. He will have His Gospel once again roused* in Scotland, and have the matter going to voices, to see who will say, " Let Christ be crowned King in Scotland." It is true that Antichrist stirreth his tail ; but I love a rumbling and raging devil in the kirk (since the Church militant cannot or may not want a devil to trouble her), rather than a subtle or sleeping devil. Christ never yet got a bride without stroke of sword. It is now nigh the Bridegroom's entering into His chamber ;—let us awake and go in with Him.

I bear your name to Christ's door ; I pray you, dear brother, forget me not. Let me hear from you by a letter ; and I charge you, smother not Christ's bounty towards me. I write what I have found of Him in the house of my pilgrimage. Remember my love to all our brethren and sisters there.

* Set up to sale by auction, once more.

The Keeper of the vineyard watch for His besieged city, and for you.

Your brother, and fellow-sufferer,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, *Feb. 7, 1637.*

XCI.—*To* MR EPHRAIM MELVIN.

[EPHRAIM MELVIN, or MELVILLE, was first ordained minister of Queensferry, and afterwards translated to Linlithgow, where he died. His ministry was signally blessed of God for bringing many to the saving knowledge of the truth, among whom were some who afterwards became eminent ministers of the Gospel in their day. One of these was the famous Mr James Durham of Glasgow. Happening, with his pious wife, a daughter of the laird of Duntervie, to pay a visit to her mother, also a religious woman, in Queensferry, when the sacrament of the Lord's Supper was to be observed in that place, his mother-in-law, upon the Saturday, desired him to go with her to hear sermon. Being then a stranger to true religion, he was disinclined to go, and said, with a tone of indifference, "that he had not come there to hear sermon;" but upon being pressed, to gratify his pious relative, he went. The discourse which he heard, though plain and ordinary, was delivered with an affection and earnestness that arrested the attention of Durham, and so impressed him, that on coming home he said to his mother-in-law, "Your minister preached very seriously, and I shall not need to be pressed to go to hear to-morrow." Accordingly he went, and Mr Melvin choosing for his text these words, "To you which believe, He is precious," 1 Peter ii. 7, opened up the preciousness of Christ with such unction and seriousness, that it proved, by the power of the Holy Spirit, the means of his conversion. In that sermon he first closed with Christ, and took his seat at the Lord's Table, though to that day he had been an absolute stranger to believing. He was accustomed afterwards to call Mr Melvin his father, when he spoke of him or to him. Melvin, by a sermon which he preached at Stewarton, when a probationer and chaplain to the excellent Lady Boyd, was also the instrument of converting Mr John Stirling in the fourteenth or sixteenth year of his age, an excellent and useful minister in his day, though less known than Durham. "Some say also," remarks Wodrow, "that he was a spiritual father to Mr John Dury of Dalmeny, who was much esteemed of in his time, as having a taking and soaring gift of preaching, much like Mr William Guthrie's gift." When Rutherford heard of Melvin's death, he is

represented to have said, “ And is Ephraim dead? He was an interpreter among a thousand.” (*Wodrow's Anal.*, vol. iii.)]

(THE IDOLATRY OF KNEELING AT THE COMMUNION.)



EVEREND AND DEAR BROTHER,—I received your letter, and am contented, with all my heart, that our acquaintance in our Lord continue.

I am wrestling as I dow,* up the mount with Christ's cross : my Second† is kind and able to help.

As for your questions, because of my manifold distractions, and letters to multitudes, I have not time to answer them. What shall be said in common for that shall be imparted to you ; for I am upon these questions. Therefore spare me a little, for the Service Book would take a great time. But I think ; Sicut deosculatio religiosa imaginis, aut etiam elementorum, est in se idololatria externa, etsi intentio deosculandi, tota, quanta in actu est, feratur in Deum *πρωτοτυπὸν* ; ita, geniculatio coram pane, quando, nempe, ex instituto, totus homo externus et internus versari debeat circa elementaria signa, est adoratio relativa, et adoratio ipsius panis. Ratio : Intentio adorandi objectum materiale, non est de essentiâ externæ adorationis, ut patet in deoscultatione religiosâ. Sic geniculatio coram imagine Babylonicâ est externa adoratio imaginis, etsi tres pueri mente intendissent adorare Jehovam. Sic, qui ex metu solo, aut spe pretii, aut inanis gloriæ, geniculatur coram aureo vitulo Jeroboami (quod ab ipso rege, qui nullâ religione inductus, sed libidine dominandi tantum, vitulum erexit, factitatum esse, textus satis luculenter clamat), adorat vitulum externâ adoratione ; esto quod putaret vitulum esse meram creaturam, et honore nullo dignum : quia geniculatio, sive nos volumus, sive volumus, ex instituto Dei et naturæ, in actu religioso, est symbolum religiosæ adorationis. Ergo, sicut panis significat corpus Christi, etsi absit actus omnis nostræ intentionis ; sic religiosa geniculatio, sublatâ omni intentione humanâ, est externa adoratio panis, coram quo adoramus, ut coram signo vicario et repræsentativo

* I am able.

† Christ, who is my helper, at my side.

Dei. [As the religious homage done to an image, or even to elements, is in itself an external act of idolatry, in so far as the act is concerned, although the *intention* of such homage may be directed to God the Great First Cause,—so the act of kneeling to a piece of bread, seeing that, according to the ordinance, the whole man, internal and external, ought to be engaged in the elementary signs, is a relative act of worship and an adoration of the bread itself. The reason is: an *intention* to worship a material object is not of the essence of external adoration, as appears in a religious act of homage. Thus, the bending of the knee before the Babylonish image is an external act of worship, even though the three youths had no intention to worship any but the true God; and in like manner, those who, from fear or the hope of reward or vain-glory, bend the knee to Jeroboam's golden calf (which the text clearly enough proclaims to have been done by the king himself, from no religious motive but the mere desire to rule), do pay adoration to the calf by the external act, although, no doubt, they may suppose the calf a mere created object and unworthy of honour,—because the act of homage, whether we mean it or not, is, from the ordinance of God and nature, a symbol of worship. Therefore, as the bread denotes the body of Christ (even though that idea be not present to the mind), so in like manner, kneeling, when used as a religious service, is the external adoration of that bread, in presence of which we bow as before the delegated representative of God, be our intention what it may.]

Thus recommending you to God's tender mercy, I desire that you would remember me to God. Sanctification will settle you most in the truth.

Grace be with you, Brother in Christ Jesus,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, 1637.



XCII.—*To* ROBERT GORDON *of Knockbren.**(VISITS OF CHRIST—THE THINGS WHICH AFFLICTION TEACHES.)*

MY VERY WORTHY AND DEAR FRIEND,—
 Grace, mercy, and peace be to you. Though all
 Galloway should have forgotten me, I would have
 expected a letter from you ere now ; but I will not expound it to
 be forgetfulness of me.

Now, my dear brother, I cannot shew you how matters go
 betwixt Christ and me. I find my Lord going and coming seven
 times a day. His visits are short ; but they are both frequent and
 sweet. I dare not for my life think of a challenge of my Lord. I
 hear ill tales, and hard reports of Christ, from The Tempter and my
 flesh ; but love believeth no evil. I may swear that they are liars,
 and that apprehensions make lies of Christ's honest and unalterable
 love to me. I dare not say that I am a dry tree, or that I have no
 room at all in the vineyard ; but yet I often think that the sparrows
 are blessed, who may resort to the house of God in Anwoth, from
 which I am banished.

Temptations, that I supposed to be stricken dead and laid upon
 their back, rise again and revive upon me ; yea, I see that while I
 live, temptations will not die. The devil seemeth to brag and boast
 as much as if he had more court with Christ than I have ; and as if
 he had charmed and blasted my ministry, that I shall do no more
 good in public. But his wind shaketh no corn.* I will not believe
 that Christ would have made such a mint† to have me to Himself,
 and have taken so much pains upon me as He hath done, and then
 slip so easily from possession, and lose the glory of what He hath
 done. Nay, since I came to Aberdeen, I have been taken up to see
 the new land, the fair palace of the Lamb ; and will Christ let me
 see heaven, to break my heart, and never give it to me ? I shall not
 think my Lord Jesus giveth a dumb earnest, or putteth His seals to

* Does no harm.

† An effort expressive of intention.

blank paper, or intendeth to put me off with fair and false promises. I see that now which I never saw well before. (1.) I see faith's necessity in a fair day is never known aright; but now I miss nothing so much as faith. Hunger in me runneth to fair and sweet promises; but when I come, I am like a hungry man that wanteth teeth, or a weak stomach having a sharp appetite that is filled with the very sight of meat, or like one stupified with cold under the water, that would fain come to land, but cannot grip anything casten* to him. I can let Christ grip* me, but I cannot grip Him. I love to be kissed, and to sit on Christ's knee; but I cannot set my feet to the ground, for afflictions bring the cramp upon my faith. All that I do do† is to hold out a lame faith to Christ, like a beggar holding out a stump, instead of an arm or leg, and cry, "Lord Jesus, work a miracle!" Oh, what would I give to have hands and arms to grip* strongly, and fold heartfomely about Christ's neck, and to have my claim made good with real possession! I think that my love to Christ hath feet in abundance, and runneth swiftly to be at Him, but it wanteth hands and fingers to apprehend Him. I think that I would give Christ every morning my blessing, to have as much faith as I have love and hunger; at least, I miss faith more than love or hunger.

(2.) I see that mortification, and to be crucified to the world, is not so highly accounted of by us as it should be. Oh, how heavenly a thing it is to be dead, and dumb, and deaf to this world's sweet music! I confess it hath pleased His Majesty to make me laugh at the children, who are wooing this world for their match. I see men lying about the world, as nobles about a king's court; and I wonder what they are all doing there. As I am at this present, I would scorn to court such a feckless‡ and petty princefs, or buy this world's kindness with a bow of my knee. I scarce now either hear or see what it is that this world offereth me; I know that it is little which it can take from me, and as little that it can give me. I recommend mortification to you above anything; for, alas! we but chase feathers flying in the air, and tire our own spirits for the froth and over-

* Take fast hold of anything flung to him. † Am able to do. ‡ Worthless.

gilded clay of a dying life. One fight of what my Lord hath let me see within this short time is worth a world of worlds.

(3.) I thought courage, in the time of trouble for Christ's sake, a thing that I might take up at my foot. I thought that the very remembrance of the honesty of the cause would be enough. But I was a fool in so thinking. I have much ado now to win to* one smile. But I see that joy groweth up in heaven, and it is above our short arm. Christ will be steward and dispenser Himself, and none else but He; therefore, now, I count much of one dramweight of spiritual joy. One smile of Christ's face is now to me as a kingdom; and yet He is no niggard to me of comforts. Truly I have no cause to say that I am pinched with penury, or that the consolations of Christ are dried up: for He hath poured down rivers upon a dry wilderness the like of me, to my admiration; and in my very swoonings, He holdeth up my head, and stayeth me with flagons of wine, and comforteth me with apples. My house and bed are strewed with kisses of love. Praise, praise with me. Oh, if ye and I betwixt us could lift up Christ upon His throne, howbeit all Scotland should cast Him down to the ground!

My brother's case toucheth me near. I hope that ye will be kind to him, and give him your best counsel.

Remember my love to your brother, to your wife, and G. M.† Desire him to be faithful, and to repent of his hypocrisy; and say that I wrote it to you. I wish him salvation. Write to me your mind anent C. E. and C. Y., and their wives, and I. G., or any others in my parish. I fear that I am forgotten amongst them; but I cannot forget them.

The prisoner's prayers and blessings come upon you. Grace, grace be with you.

Your brother, in the Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, Feb. 9, 1637.

* To get at.

† All those whose initials are given are understood to have been parishioners of his at Anwoth.

XCIII.—*To the Honourable, and truly Noble Lady, the
VISCOUNTESS OF KENMURE.*

(*GOD'S DEALINGS WITH SCOTLAND—THE EYE TO BE
DIRECTED HEAVENWARD.*)



MADAM,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to your Ladyship.
—I long to hear from you.

I am here waiting, if a good wind, long looked for, will at length blow into Christ's sails, in this land. But I wonder if Jesus be not content to suffer more yet in His members and cause, and in the beauty of His house, rather than He should not be avenged upon this land. I hear that many worthy men, who see more in the Lord's dealings than I can take up with my dim sight, are of a contrary mind, and do believe that the Lord is coming home again to His house in Scotland. I hope He is on His journey that way; yet I look not but that He will feed this land with their own blood, before He establish His throne amongst us.

I know that your honour is not looking after things hereaway.* Ye have no great cause to think that your stock and principal is under the roof of these visible heavens; and I hope that ye would think yourself a beguiled and cozened fool if it were so. I should be sorry to counsel your Ladyship to make a covenant with time, and this life; but rather desire you to hold in fair generals, and afar off from this ill-founded heaven that is on this side of the water. It speaketh somewhat when our Lord bloweth the bloom off our daff† hopes in this life, and lopeth the branches off our worldly joys, well nigh the root, on purpose that they should not thrive. Lord, spill‡ my fool's heaven in this life, that I may be saved for ever. A forfeiture of the saint's part of the yolk and marrow of short-laughing worldly happiness, is not such a real evil as our blinded eyes conceive.

* In this quarter, this present world.

† Blows off the blossom from our foolish hopes.

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‡ Spoil, mar.

I am thinking long* now for some deliverance more than before. But I know I am in an error. It is possible I am not come to that measure of trial which the Lord is seeking in His work. If my friends in Galloway would effectually do† for my deliverance, I should exceedingly rejoice; but I know not but the Lord hath a way whereof He will be the only reaper of praises.

Let me know with the bearer how the child is. The Lord be his father and tutor, and your only comforter. There is nothing here, where I am, but profanity and atheism. Grace, grace, be with your Ladyship.

Your Ladyship's, at all obliged obedience, in Christ,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, Feb. 13, 1637.

XCIV.—*To the Noble and Christian Lady, the VISCOUNTESS OF KENMURE.*

(THE TIMES—CHRIST'S SWEETNESS IN TROUBLE—LONGING AFTER HIM.)



ADAM,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you. I would not omit the occasion to write to your Ladyship with the bearer. I am glad that the child is well. God's favour, even in the eyes of men, be seen upon him!

I hope that your Ladyship is thinking upon these sad and woful days wherein we now live, when our Lord, in His righteous judgment, is sending the kirk the gate‡ she is going to Rome's brothel-house to seek a lover of her own, seeing that she hath given up with Christ her Husband. Oh, what sweet comfort, what rich salvation, is laid up for those who had rather wash and roll their garments in their own blood, than break out§ from Christ by apostacy! Keep yourself in the love of Christ, and stand far aback from

* Am longing. † Act for, make exertions. ‡ The way. § Off, probably.

the pollutions of the world. Side not with these times, and hold off from coming nigh the signs of a conspiracy with those that are now come out against Christ, that ye may be one kept for Christ only. I know that your Ladyship thinketh upon this, and how you may be humbled for yourself and this backsliding land ; for I avouch, that wrath from the Lord is gone out against Scotland. I think aye the longer the better of my royal and worthy Master. He is become a new Well-beloved to me now, in renewed consolations, by the presence of the Spirit of grace and glory. Christ's garments smell of the powder of the merchant, when He cometh out of His ivory chambers. O, His perfumed face, His fair face, His lovely and kindly kisses, have made me, a poor prisoner, see that there is more to be had of Christ in this life than I believed ! We think all is but a little earnest, a four-hours,* a small tasting, that we have, or that is to be had, in this life (which is true compared with the inheritance) ; but yet I know it is more : it is the kingdom of God within us. Wo, wo is me, that I have not ten loves for that one Lord Jesus ; and that love faileth, and drieth up in loving Him ; and that I find no way to spend my love desires, and the yolk of my heart upon that fairest and dearest One. I am far behind with my narrow heart. O, how ebb† a soul have I to take in Christ's love ! for let worlds be multiplied, according to angels' understanding, in millions, whill‡ they weary themselves, these worlds would not contain the thousandth part of His love. O, if I could yoke in§ amongst the thick|| of angels, and seraphims, and now glorified faints, and could raise a new love-song of Christ, before all the world ! I am pained with wondering at new-opened treasures in Christ. If every finger, member, bone, and joint, were a torch burning in the hottest fire in hell, I would that they could all send out love praises, high songs of praise for evermore, to that Plant of Renown, to that royal and high Prince, Jesus my Lord. But alas ! His love swelleth in me, and findeth no vent. Alas ! what can a

* Afternoon meal.

† Shallow.

‡ Till.

§ Join in with energy.

|| The crowd.

dumb prifoner do or fay for Him ! O for an ingine* to write a book of Chrift and His love ! Nay, I am left of Him bound and chained with His love. I cannot find a loofed foul to lift up His praifes, and give them out to others. But oh ! my day-light hath thick clouds ; I cannot fhine in His praifes. I am often like a fhip plying about to feek the wind : I fail at great leifure, and cannot be blown upon that lovelieft Lord. Oh, if I could turn my fails to Chrift's right airth,† and that I had my heart's wifhes of His love ! But I but mar His praifes : nay, I know no comparifon of what Chrift is, and what His worth is. All the angels, and all the glorified, praife Him not fo much as in halves. Who can advance Him, or utter all His praifes ? I want nothing : unknown faces favour me : enemies muft fpeak good of the truth : my Master's caufe purchafeth commendations.

The hopes of my enlargement, from appearances, are cold. My faith hath no bed to fleep upon but omnipotency. The good-will of the Lord, and His sweeteft prefence, be with you and that child. Grace and peace be yours.

Your Ladyfhip's, in all duty in his sweet Lord Jefus,
S. R.

ABERDEEN, 1637.

XCV.—*To the Right Honourable and Chriftian Lady, the
VISCOUNTESS OF KENMURE.*

(CHRIST'S CROSS SWEET—HIS COMING TO BE DESIRED—
JEALOUS OF ANY RIVAL.)



ADAM,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to your Ladyfhip. I would not omit to write a line with this Chriftian bearer ; one in your Ladyfhip's own cafe, driven near to Chrift, in and by her affliction. I wifh that my friends in Gallo-

* Power or faculty.

† Point of the compafs.

way forget me not. However it be, Christ is so good, I will have no other tutor, suppose I could have wale* and choice of ten thousand beside. I think now five hundred heavy hearts for Him too little. I wish that Christ, now weeping, suffering, and contemned of men, were more dear and desirable to many souls than He is. I am sure that if the saints wanted† Christ's crosses, so profitable, and so sweet, they might, for the gain and glory of it, with it were lawful either to buy or borrow His crosses. But it is a mercy that the saints have it laid to their hand for nothing ; for I know no sweeter way to heaven than through free grace and hard trials together ; and one of these cannot well want another.

Oh that time would pass faster, and hasten our looked-for communion with that fairest, fairest among the sons of men ! Oh that the day would favour us and come, and put Christ and us into each other's arms ! I am sure that a few years will do our turn, and the soldier's hour-glass will soon run out. Madam, look to your lamp, and look for your Lord's Coming, and let your heart dwell aloof from that sweet child. Christ's jealousy will not admit of two equal loves in your Ladyship's heart. He must have one, and that the greatest ; a little one to a creature may and must suffice a soul married to Him. “ Thy Maker is thine Husband.”‡ I would wish you well, and my obligations these many years bygone§ speak no less to me ; but more I can neither wish, nor pray, nor desire for your Ladyship, than Christ singled and waled|| out from all created good things, or Christ howbeit wet in His own blood, and wearing a crown of thorns. I am sure that the saints, at their best, are but strangers to the weight and worth of the incomparable sweetness of Christ. He is so new, so fresh in excellency every day of new, to those that search more and more in Him, as if heaven could furnish us as many new Christs (if I may so speak) as there are days betwixt Him and us ; and yet He is one and the same. Oh, we love an unknown lover when we love Christ !

* Liberty of selecting from a store.

† Were destitute of.

‡ Isa. liv. 5.

§ Passed.

|| Selected.

Let me hear how the child is every way. The prayers of a prisoner of Christ be upon him. Grace for evermore, even whill* glory perfect it, be with your Ladyship.

Yours, in his sweet Lord Jefus,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, 1637.

XCVI.—*To the Noble and Christian Lady, the VISCOUNTESS OF KEMMURE.*

(CHRIST ALL WORTHY—ANWOTH.)



ADAM,—Notwithstanding the great haste of the bearer, I would bleſs your Ladyſhip on paper, deſiring, that ſince Chriſt hath ever envied that the world ſhould have your love by Him,† that ye give yourſelf out for Chriſt, and that ye may be for no other. I know none worthy of you but Chriſt.

Madam, I am either ſuffering for Chriſt—and this is either the ſure and good way—or I have done with heaven, and ſhall never ſee God's face, which, I bleſs Him, cannot be.

I write my bleſſing to that ſweet child, that ye have borrowed from God. He is no heritage to you, but a loan : love him as folks do borrowed things. My heart is heavy for you.

They ſay that the kirk of Chriſt hath neither ſon nor heir, and therefore that her enemies ſhall poſſeſs her. But I know that ſhe is not that‡ ill-friended ;§ her Huſband is her heir, and ſhe His heritage.

If my Lord would be pleaſed, I ſhould deſire that ſome be dealt with, for my return to Anwoth. But if that never be, I thank God Anwoth is not heaven ; preaching is not Chriſt. I hope to wait on.

Let me hear how your child is, and your Ladyſhip's mind and hopes of him ; for it would eaſe my heart to know that he is well.

* Till.

† More than He, or to the ſetting Him aſide.

‡ So.

§ Deſtitute of friends.

I am in good terms with Christ ; but oh, my guiltiness ! Yet He bringeth not pleas betwixt Him and me to the streets, and before the sun.

Grace, grace for ever more be with your Ladyship.

Your Ladyship's at all obedience in Christ,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, 1637.

XCVII.—*To ALEXANDER GORDON of Earlston.*

(CHRIST ENDEARED BY BITTER EXPERIENCES—SEARCHINGS
OF HEART—FEARS FOR THE CHURCH.)



MUCH HONOURED SIR,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you. I received your letter, which refreshed me. Except from your son, and my brother, I have seen few letters from my acquaintance in that country ; which maketh me heavy. But I have the company of a Lord who can teach us all to be kind, and hath the right gate* of it. Though, for the present, I have seven ups and downs every day, yet I am abundantly comforted and feasted with my King and Well-beloved daily. It pleaseth Him to come and dine with a sad prisoner, and a solitary stranger. His spikenard casteth a smell. Yet my sweet hath some four mixed with it, wherein I must acquiesce ; for there is no reason that His comforts be too cheap, seeing they are delicacies. Why should He not make them so to His own ? But I verily think now, that Christ hath led me up to a nick† in Christianity that I was never at before ; I think all before was but childhood and bairn's play. Since I departed from you, I have been scalded, whilst‡ the smoke of hell's fire went in at my throat, and I would have bought peace with a thousand years' torment in hell ; and I have been up also, after these deep down-castings and sorrows, before the Lamb's

* Way.

† A point.

‡ Till.

white throne, in my Father's inner court, the Great King's dining-hall. And Christ did cast a covering of love on me. He hath casten a coal into my soul, and it is smoking among the straw and keeping the hearth warm. I look back to what I was before, and I laugh to see the sand-houses I built when I was a child.

At first the remembrance of the many fair feast-days with my Lord Jesus in public, which are now changed into silent Sabbaths, raised a great tempest, and (if I may speak so) made the devil ado* in my soul. The devil came in, and would prompt me to make a plea† with Christ, and to lay the blame on Him as a hard master. But now these mists are blown away, and I am not only silenced as to all quarrelling, but fully satisfied. Now, I wonder that any man living can laugh upon the world, or give it a hearty good-day. The Lord Jesus hath handled me so, that, as I am now disposed, I think never to be in this world's commons‡ again for a night's lodging. Christ beareth me good company. He hath eased me, when I saw it not, lifting the cross off my shoulders, so that I think it to be but a feather, because underneath are everlasting arms. God forbid it come to bartering or niffing§ of crosses; for I think my cross so sweet, that I know not where I would get the like of it. Christ's honey-combs drop so abundantly, that they sweeten my gall. Nothing breaketh my heart, but that I cannot get the daughters of Jerusalem to tell them of my Bridegroom's glory. I charge you in the name of Christ, that ye tell all that ye come to of it; and yet it is above telling and understanding. Oh, if all the kingdom were as I am, except my bonds! They know not the love-kisses that my only Lord Jesus wasteth on a dawted|| prisoner. On my salvation, this is the only way to the New City. I know that Christ hath no dumb seals. Would he put His privy-seal upon blank paper? He hath sealed my sufferings with His comforts. I write this to confirm you. I write now what I have seen as well as heard. Now and then my silence burneth up my spirit; but Christ hath said,

* Astir. See Let. 181, note.

§ Exchanging.

† Controversy.

|| Fondled.

‡ Under obligation to.

“Thy stipend is running up with interest in heaven, as if thou wert preaching;” and this from a King’s mouth rejoiceth my heart. At other times I am sad, dwelling in Kedar’s tents.

There are none (that I yet know of) but two persons in this town that I dare give my word for. And the Lord hath removed my brethren and my acquaintance far from me; and it may be, that I shall be forgotten in the place where the Lord made me the instrument to do some good. But I see that this is vanity in me; let Him make of me what He pleaseth, if He make salvation out of it to me. I am tempted and troubled, that all the fourteen prelates* should have been armed of God against me only, while the rest of my brethren are still preaching. But I dare not say one word but this, “It is good, Lord Jesus, because Thou hast done it.”

Wo is me for the virgin-daughter! wo is me for the desolation of the virgin-daughter of Scotland! Oh, if my eyes were a fountain of tears, to weep day and night for that poor widow-kirk, that poor miserable harlot! Alas, that my Father hath put-to† the door on my poor harlot-mother! Oh for‡ that cloud of black wrath, and fury of the indignation of the Lord, that is hanging over the land!

Sir, write to me, I beseech you. I pray you also be kind to my afflicted brother. Remember my love to your wife; and the prayer and blessing of the prisoner of Christ be on you. Frequent your meetings for prayer and communion with God: they would be sweet meetings to me.

Yours, in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, Feb. 16, 1637.

XCVIII.—*To the Worthy and much Honoured Mr ALEXANDER COLVILLE of Blair.*

[ALEXANDER COLVILLE of Blair (which is in the parish of Carnock, Fifeshire) early commended himself to the gratitude of Rutherford by be-

* See note Let. 68.

† Shut.

‡ Alas! for.

friending him under prelatie persecutions. When Rutherford in 1630 was summoned before the High Commission Court, this gentleman, being one of the judges, so exerted himself in his behalf, that his influence, together with the absence of the Archbishop of St Andrews (whom the tempestuous state of the weather prevented from attending), occasioned the desertion of the diet, and put a stop to the proceedings against the obnoxious minister. (See *Letter XI.*) As we learn from this letter, he also showed much kindness to Rutherford's brother on his trial before the High Commission in November 1636, for his non-conformity and zealous support of Mr Glendinning, the injured minister of Kirkcudbright. Colville was an elder of the Church, and his name appears on the roll of the members of the General Assemblies 1645, 1646, 1648, and 1649, and of the Commissions appointed by these Assemblies. In the roll he is styled "Mr Alexander Colville, Justice-Depute." We find him after this, in co-operation with another individual, delating Mr Robert Bruce, minister of Ballagray, of which they were parishioners, on the ground that they were not edified by his doctrine.]

*(INCREASING EXPERIENCE OF CHRIST'S LOVE—GOD WITH
HIS SAINTS.)*



MUCH HONOURED SIR,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you. The bearer hereof, Mr R. F., is most kind to me; I desire you to thank him. But none is so kind as my only royal King and Master, whose cross is my garland. The King dineth with His prisoner, and His spikenard casteth a smell. He hath led me up to such a pitch and nick* of joyful communion with Himself, as I never knew before. When I look back to by-gones,† I judge myself to have been a child at A, B, C, with Christ. Worthy Sir, pardon me, I dare not conceal it from you; it is as a fire in my bowels. (In His presence who seeth me I speak it!) I am pained, pained with the love of Christ; He hath made me sick, and wounded me. Hunger for Christ outrunneth faith; I miss faith more than love. Oh, if the three kingdoms would come and see! Oh, if they knew His kindness to my soul! It hath pleased Him to bring me to this, that I will not strike fails to this world, nor flatter it, nor adore this clay idol that fools worship. As I am now disposed, I think that I shall neither borrow

* Degree.

† Things passed, former attainments.

nor lend * with it ; and yet I get my meat from Christ with nurture ; † for seven times a-day I am lifted up, and casten down. My dumb Sabbaths burden my heart, and make it bleed. I want not fearful challenges, and jealousies ‡ sometimes of Christ's love, that He hath casten me over the dyke § of the vineyard as a dry tree. But this is my infirmity. By His grace I take myself || in these ravings. It is kindly ¶ that faith and love both be sick, and fevers are kindly to most joyful communion with Christ.

Ye are blessed who avouch Christ openly before The Prince of this kingdom, whose eyes are upon you. It is your glory to lift Him up on His throne, to carry His train, and bear up the hem of His robe royal. He hath an hiding-place for Mr Alexander Colville against the storm : go on, and fear not what man can do. The saints seem to have the worst of it (for apprehension can make a lie of Christ and His love) ; but it is not so. Providence is not rolled upon unequal and crooked wheels ; all things work together for the good of those who love God, and are called according to His purpose. Ere it be long, we shall see the white side of God's providence.

My brother's case hath moved me not a little. He wrote to me your care and kindness. Sir, the prisoner's blessings and prayers, I trust, shall not go past you. He that is able to keep you, and to present you before the presence of His face with joy, establish your heart in the love of Christ.

Yours, in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, 19th Feb. 1637.

XCIX.—To EARLSTON, Younger.

[WILLIAM GORDON, to whom this letter is addressed, was the eldest son of Alexander Gordon of Earlston, formerly noticed (Let. 59). He exhi-

* That is, have no dealings with it.

† Discipline ; such as a child gets when training.

‡ Questionings and suspicions. § The dry wall. || Retract my word.

¶ According to nature.

bited in youth much of the piety and public spirit of his father, which Rutherford, in his correspondence with him, is careful to strengthen. His well-known attachment to the cause of Presbytery rendered him early obnoxious to Charles II. and the Malignant party. When that monarch came to Scotland in 1651, and held a Parliament, Gordon (like many other gentlemen within the kingdom) was fined for his compliance with the English; and on his refusing to pay the fine, foldiers were sent out to extract it by compulsion from his tenants, who were almost ruined by the driving away of their cattle and the robbing of their houses. He was again fined by Middleton, in the Parliament 1662. But still further: he was summoned before the Privy Council; and on the 1st of March 1664, sentence of banishment from the kingdom was pronounced upon him for keeping conventicles, and for refusing to engage to refrain from such meetings in all time coming. He accordingly left the kingdom. Whither he went we have not discovered; but the Council, on being petitioned, granted him license to return until the 15th of March ensuing, at the same time requiring him to “depart and remain forth of the kingdom the said day, in case the said Lords give order therefor.” (*Decr. Secr. Council, Register House, Edin.*) After this he remained at home, but had not long to live. He died a martyr in the cause of religious freedom, of which he had proved a noble defender during life. Coming up to join the forces of the Covenanters at Bothwell, in the beginning of the year 1679, after the defeat (either on the day of it, or the day after), he was met near the place by a party of English dragoons, who, upon his refusing to surrender, killed him on the spot. “Thus fell,” says Howie, in the *Scots Worthies*, “a renowned Gordon, one whose character at present I am in no capacity to describe; only I may venture to say, that he was a gentleman of good parts and endowments; a man devoted unto religion and godliness, and a prime supporter of the Presbyterian interest in that part of the country where he lived.” He was married to Mary, daughter of Sir John Hope, second baronet of Craighall, and President of the Court of Session, by his wife Margaret, daughter of Sir Archibald Murray of Blackbarony. His eldest son, Alexander, succeeded him.]

(CHRIST'S WAYS MISUNDERSTOOD—HIS INCREASING KINDNESS
—SPIRITUAL DELICACY—HARD TO BE DEAD TO THE WORLD.)



HONOURED AND DEAR BROTHER, — Grace, mercy, and peace be to you. I received your letter, which refreshed my soul.

I thank God that the court is closed; I think shame of my part of it. I pass now from my unjust summons of unkindness libelled against Christ my Lord. He is not such a Lord and Master

as I took Him to be ; verily He is God, and I am dust and ashes. I took Christ's glooms* to be as good as Scripture speaking wrath ; but I have seen the other side of Christ, and the white side of His cross now. I behoved to come to Aberdeen to learn a new mystery in Christ, that His promise is better to be believed than His looks, and that the devil can cause Christ's glooms* to speak a lie to a weak man. Nay, verily, I was a child before : all by-gones† are but bairn's play. I would I could begin to be a Christian in sad‡ earnest. I need not blame Christ if I be not one, for He hath showed me heaven and hell in Aberdeen. But the truth is, for all my sorrow, Christ is nothing in my debt, for comforts have refreshed my soul. I have heard and seen Him in His sweetness, so as I am almost saying, it is not He that I was wont to meet with. He smileth more cheerfully, His kisses are more sweet and soul-refreshing than the kisses of the Christ I saw before were, though He be the same. Or rather, the King hath led me up to a measure of joy and communion with my Bridegroom that I never attained to before, so that often I think that I will neither borrow nor lend with this world.§ I will not strike sail to crosses, nor flatter them to be quit of them, as I have done. Come all crosses, welcome, welcome ! so that I may get my heartful of my Lord Jesus. I have been so near Him, that I have said, " I take instruments that this is the Lord. Leave a token behind Thee, that I may never forget this." Now, what can Christ do more to dawe|| one of His poor prisoners ? Therefore, Sir, I charge you in the name of my Lord Jesus, praise with me, and show unto others what He hath done unto my soul. This is the fruit of my sufferings, that I desire Christ's name may be spread abroad in this kingdom, in my behalf. I hope in God not to slander Him again. Yet in this, I get not my feasts without some mixture of gall ; neither am I free of old jealousies, for He hath removed my lovers and friends far from me ; He hath made my congregation desolate, and taken away my crown. And my dumb Sabbaths are like a stone tied to a bird's foot, that wanteth not wings,—they

* Frowns. † The past matters. ‡ Settled. § Let. 98. || Dote upon, fondle.

seem to hinder me to fly, were it not that I dare not say one word, but, “ Well done, Lord Jefus.”

We can, in our prosperity, sport ourselves, and be too bold with Chrif; yea, be that* infolent, as to chide with Him; but under the water we dare not fpeak. I wonder now of my fometime† boldnefs, to chide and quarrel Chrif, to nickname providence when it ftroked me againft the hair; for now, fwimming in the waters, I think my will is fallen to the ground‡ of the water: I have loft it. I think that I would fain let Chrif alone, and give Him leave to do with me what He pleafeth, if He would fmile upon me. Verily, we know not what an evil it is to fpill§ and indulge ourfelves, and to make an idol of our will. I was once that I would not eat except I had waled|| meat; now I dare not complain of the crumbs and parings under His table. I was once that I would make the houfe ado,¶ if I faw not the world carved and fet in order to my liking; now I am filent when I fee God hath fet fervants on horfe-back, and is fattening and feeding the children of perdition. I pray God, that I may never find my will again. Oh, if Chrif would fubject my will to His, and, trample it under His feet, and liberate me from that lawlefs lord!

Now, Sir, in your youth gather faft; your fun will mount to the meridian quickly, and thereafter decline. Be greedy of grace. Study above anything, my dear brother, to mortify your lufts. Oh, but pride of youth, vanity, luft, idolizing of the world, and charming pleafures, take long time to root them out! As far as ye are advanced in the way to heaven, as near as ye are to Chrif, as much progrefs as ye have made in the way of mortification, ye will find that ye are far behind, and have moft of your work before you. I never took it to be fo hard to be dead to my lufts and to this world. When the day of vifitation cometh, and your old idols come weeping about you, ye will have much ado** not to break your heart:

* So.

† Former.

‡ Bottom.

§ Spoil.

|| Carefully felected.

¶ Aftir.

** Troublesome occupation. “ *Ado*” here is a noun; in the phrafe, “ make the houfe ado,” it is an adjective.

it is best to give up in time with them, so as ye could at a call quit your part of this world for a drink of water, or a thing of nothing. Verily I have seen the best of this world, a moth-eaten, threadbare coat : I purpose to lay it aside, being now old and full of holes. O for my house above, not made with hands !

Pray for Christ's prisoner : and write to me. Remember my love to your mother. Desire her, from me, to make ready for removing ; the Lord's tide will not bide her : and to seek an heavenly mind, that her heart may be often there. Grace be with you.

Yours, and Christ's prisoner,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, *Feb.* 20, 1637.

C.—*To the* LADY CARDONESS.

(*THE ONE THING NEEDFUL—CONSCIENTIOUS ACTING IN THE
WORLD—ADVICE UNDER DEJECTING TRIALS.*)



MY DEARLY BELOVED, AND LONGED-FOR IN THE LORD,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you.— I long to hear how your soul prospereth, and how the kingdom of Christ thriveth in you. I exhort you and beseech you in the bowels of Christ, faint not, weary not. There is a great necessity of heaven ; ye must needs have it. All other things, as houses, lands, children, husband, friends, country, credit, health, wealth, honour, may be wanted ; but heaven is your one thing necessary, the good part that shall not be taken from you. See that ye buy the field where the pearl is. Sell all, and make a purchase of salvation. Think it not easy ; for it is a steep ascent to eternal glory : many are lying dead by the way, that were slain with security.

I have now been led by my Lord Jesus to such a nick* in Christianity, as I think little of former things. Oh what I want ! I want so many things, that I am almost asking if I have anything

* Degree, point.

at all. Every man thinketh he is rich enough in grace, till he take out his purse, and tell his money, and then he findeth his pack but poor and light in the day of a heavy trial. I found that I had not to bear my expenses; and I should have fainted, if want and penury had not chased me to the store-house of all.

I beseech you make conscience of your ways. Deal kindly, and with conscience, with your tenants. To fill a breach, or a hole, make not a greater breach in the conscience. I wish plenty of love to your soul. Let the world be the portion of bastards, make it not yours. After the last trumpet is blown, the world and all its glory will be like an old house that is burnt to ashes, and like an old fallen castle, without a roof. Fy, fy upon us, fools! who think ourselves debtors to the world! My Lord hath brought me to this, that I would not give a drink of cold water for this world's kindness. I wonder that men long after, love, or care for these feathers. It is almost an unco* world to me. To think that men are so mad as to block† with dead earth! To give out conscience, and get in clay again, is a strange bargain!

I have written my mind at length to your husband. Write to me again his case. I cannot forget him in my prayers; I am looking.‡ Christ hath some claim to him. My counsel is, that ye bear with him when passion overtaketh him: "A soft answer putteth away wrath." Answer him in what he speaketh, and apply yourself in the fear of God to him; and then ye will remove a pound weight of your heavy crosses, that way, and so it shall become light.

When Christ hideth Himself, wait on, and make din till He return; it is not time then to be carelessly patient. I love to be grieved when He hideth His smiles. Yet believe His love in a patient on-waiting and believing in the dark. Ye must learn to swim and hold up your head above the water, even when the sense of His presence is not with you to hold up your chin. I trust in God that He will bring your ship safe to land. I counsel you to study sanctification, and to be dead to this world. Urge kindness on Knockbrev.

* Strange.

† Bargain.

‡ For an answer, Ps. v. 3.

Labour to benefit by his company; the man is acquainted with Christ.

I beg the help of your prayers, for I forget not you. Counsel your husband to fulfil my joy, and to seek the Lord's face. Show him, from me, that my joy and desire is to hear that he is in the Lord. God casteth him often in my mind: I cannot forget him. I hope Christ and he have something to do together. Bless John from me. I write blessings to him, and to your husband, and to the rest of your children. Let it not be said, "I am not in your house," through neglect of the Sabbath exercise.

Your lawful and loving pastor in his only, only Lord,
S. R.

ABERDEEN, Feb. 20, 1637.

CI.—To JONET MACCULLOCH.

[No doubt this lady was one of the *Maccullochs* of *Ardwell*, a residence near Anwoth, next to Cardonefs, and to this day in possession of the same family. The Letter, 284, to Mr Thomas Macculloch of *Nether Ardwell*, relates apparently to another of the same house. The house is very pleasantly situated near the mouth of the Fleet. The old mansion-house of Ardwell, or Ardwall, bore the name "Nether Ardwell;" it occupied a spot about a hundred yards distant from the present mansion, lying toward the shore, a little below where the bay has received the waters of the Fleet. "Higher Ardwell" was toward the north: a farm near Bushy Bield (Rutherford's old manse, which was originally a mansion-house) still bears that name. The family of the Maccullochs, who were intimate with Rutherford, still retain the property. They are an ancient family; for William Macculloch got a feu-charter of the lands of Nether Ardwell from his cousin, or uncle, Macculloch of Cardonefs and Myreton, in 1587. It is the wife of this William Macculloch, in all probability, of whom the following lines speak, on the tomb at the south side of the raised pile in the old Churchyard:—

"Dumb, senseless statue of a painted stone,
What means this boast? Thy captive is but clay.
Thou gainest nothing but some lifeless bones;
Her choicest part, her soul, triumphs for aye.
Then, gazing friends, do not her death deplore;
You lose, while she doth gain for evermore.

“ Margrat Maklellan, goodwife of Ardwell, departed this life 1620. *Ætatis suæ 31.*”

We may add, the grand-daughter of this lady, to whom the lines on the monument refers, was mother of the martyr, John Bell of Whyteside.]

(CHRIST'S SUFFICIENCY—STEDFASTNESS IN THE TRUTH.)



DEAR SISTER,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you.—

I long to hear how your soul prospereth.

I am as well as a prisoner of Christ can be, feasted and made fat with the comforts of God. Christ's kisses are made sweeter to my soul than ever they were. I would not change my Master with all the kings of clay upon the earth. Oh! my Well beloved is altogether lovely, and loving. I care not what flesh can do.

I persuade my soul that I delivered the truth of Christ to you. Slip not from it, for any blows* or fear of men. If ye go against the truth of Christ that I now suffer for, I shall bear witness against you in the day of Christ.

Sister, fasten your grips† fast on Christ. Follow not the guises‡ of this sinful world. Let not this clay portion of earth take up your soul: it is the portion of bastards, and ye are a child of God; and, therefore, seek your Father's heritage. Send up your heart to see the dwelling-house and fair rooms in the New City. Fy, fy upon those who cry, “Up with the world, and down with conscience and heaven!” We have bairn's wits, and therefore we cannot prize Christ aright. Counsel your husband, and mother, to make them ready for eternity. That day is drawing nigh.

Pray for me, the prisoner of Christ. I cannot forget you.

Your lawful pastor and brother,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, Feb. 20, 1637.

* Threatened blows; often written *boiss*.

† Your hold.

‡ Ways; mapper, (French).

CII.—*To ALEXANDER GORDON of Knockgray.*

[Knockgray is a farm-like house, enclosed by trees, at the foot of the hills of Carsphairn. It is on your right hand, coming from Earlston to Carsphairn, after passing the little hill of Dundeech. “Alexander Gordon of Knockgray,” says Livingstone, who personally knew him, “was a rare Christian in his time. His chief, the Laird of Lochinvar, put him out of his land mostly for his religion; yet, being thereafter restored by that man’s son, Lord Viscount of Kenmure, he told me the Lord had blessed him, so as he had ten thousand sheep.” (*Select Biograph.* vol. i.) From what Rutherford says in a subsequent letter addressed to him—“Christ’s ways were known to you long before I (who am but a child) knew anything of Him,”—it may be concluded that he was much older than Rutherford. As, therefore, Rutherford was born about the year 1600, and Gordon many years before, there is reason to believe that the following act of Privy Council may refer to Gordon’s son, and not to himself: “Ordaining the baillies of the Canongate to set at liberty Alexander Gordon, designed of Knockgray, in regard they find he is not an heritor, that he is an old dying man, and has renounced in the King’s favours, or his donator, any lands he had the time of the rebellion, and has given bond to appear when called.” (*Decr. Secr. Conc.*) At any rate the venerable old man, to whom this act refers, was apprehended in his own house by one Captain Stuart; by whom also he seems to have been carried to Edinburgh, and there incarcerated. Alexander, his son (the grandson of Rutherford’s correspondent), had also his own share of persecution under the intolerant reign of Charles II. He suffered much by garrisons put into his house, by the household articles which they carried away, and by the forfeiture of his property, which was gifted to Lord Livingstone. (*Wodrow, MSS.*, vol. xxxvii.)]

(*GROUND OF PRAISE—AFFLICTION TEMPTS TO MISREPRESENT
CHRIST—IDOLS.*)



DEAR BROTHER,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you.

I long to hear how your soul prospereth. I expected letters from you ere now.

As for myself, I am here in good case, well feasted with a great King. At my coming here, I was that bold * as to take up a jealousy†

* Bold to such an extent that.

† Suspicion.

of Christ's love. I said I was cast over the dyke of the Lord's vineyard, as a dry tree ; but I see that if I had been a withered branch, the fire would have burned me long ere now. Blessed be His high name, who hath kept sap in the dry tree. And now, as if Christ hath done the wrong, He hath made the mends, and hath misken* my ravings ; for a man under the water cannot well command his wit, far less his faith and love. Because it was a fever, my Lord Jesus forgave me that amongst the rest. He knoweth that in our afflictions we can find a spot in the fairest face that ever was, even in Christ's face. I would not have believed that a gloom† should have made me to misken‡ my old Master ; but we must be whiles§ sick. Sickness is but kindly|| to both faith and love. But O how exceedingly is a poor dawted¶ prisoner obliged to sweet Jesus ! My tears are sweeter to me than the laughter of the Fourteen Prelates is to them. The worst of Christ, even His chaff, is better than the world's corn.

Dear Brother, I beseech you, I charge you in the name and authority of the Son of God, to help me to praise His Highness ; and I charge you, also, to tell all your acquaintance, that my Master may get many thanks. Oh, if my hairs, all my members, and all my bones, were well-tuned tongues, to sing the high praises of my great and glorious King ! Help me to lift Christ up upon His throne, and to lift Him up above the thrones of the clay-kings, the dying sceptre-bearers of this world. The prisoner's blessing, the blessing of him that is separate from his brethren, be upon them all who will lend me a lift in this work. Show this to that people with you to whom I sometimes preached.

Brother, my Lord hath brought me to this, that I will not flatter the world for a drink of water. I am no debtor to clay ; Christ hath made me dead to that. I now wonder that ever I was such a child, long since, as to beg at such beggars ! Fy upon us, who woo such a black-skinned harlot, when we may get such a

* Overlooked, as if He did not know.

† Frown.

‡ Overlook.

§ At times.

|| Quite natural.

¶ Fondled.

fair, fair match in heaven ! Oh that I could give up this clay-idol, this masked, painted, over-gilded dirt, that Adam's sons adore ! We make an idol of our will. As many lusts in us, as many gods ; we are all godmakers. We are like to lose Christ, the true God, in the throng of those new and false gods. Scotland hath cast her crown off her head ; the virgin-daughter hath lost her garland. Wo, wo to our harlot-mother. Our day is coming ; a time when women shall wish they had been childless, and fathers shall bless miscarrying wombs and dry breasts : many houses great and fair shall be desolate. This kirk shall sit on the ground all the night, and the tears shall run down her cheeks. The sun hath gone down upon her prophets. Blessed are the prisoners of hope, who can run into their stronghold, and hide themselves for a little, till the indignation be overpast.

Commend me to your wife, your daughters, your son-in-law, and to A. T. Write to me the case of your kirk. Grace be with you.

I am much moved for my brother. I entreat for your kindness and counsel to him.

Yours, in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, *Feb.* 23, 1637.

CIII.—*To the* LADY CARDONESS, *Elder.*

(CHRIST AND HIS CAUSE RECOMMENDED—HEAVENLY-MINDEDNESS—CAUTION AGAINST COMPLIANCES—ANXIETY ABOUT HIS PARISH.)



WORTHY AND WELL-BELOVED IN THE LORD,
—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you. I long to hear from you on paper, that I may know how your soul prospereth. My desire and longing is to hear that ye walk in the truth, and that ye are content to follow the despised, but most lovely Son of God.

I cannot but recommend Him unto you, as your Husband, your Well-Beloved, your Portion, your Comfort, and your Joy. I speak this of that lovely One, because I praise and commend the Lord (as we use to speak) as I find it. He hath watered with His sweet comforts an oppressed prisoner. He was always kind to my soul; but never so kind as now, in my greatest extremities. I dine and sup with Christ. He visiteth my soul with the visitations of love, in the night-watches.

I persuade my soul that this is the way to heaven, and His own truth I now suffer for. I exhort you in the name of Christ to continue in the truth which I delivered unto you. Make Christ sure to your soul; for your day draweth nigh to an end. Many slide back now, who seemed to be Christ's friends, and prove dishonest to Him; but be ye faithful to the death, and ye shall have the crown of life. This span-length of your days (whereof the Spirit of God speaketh,*) shall, within a short time, come to a finger-breadth, and at length to nothing. O how sweet and comfortable will the feast of a good conscience be to you, when your eye-strings shall break, your face wax pale, and the breath turn cold, and your poor soul come fighting to the windows of the house of clay of your dying body, and shall long to be out, and to have the jailor to open the door, that the prisoner may be set at liberty! Ye draw nigh the water-side: look your accounts; ask for your Guide to take you to the other side. Let not the world be your portion; what have ye to do with dead clay? Ye are not a bastard, but a lawfully begotten child; therefore, set your heart on the inheritance. Go up beforehand, and see your lodging. Look through all your Father's rooms in heaven: in your Father's house are many dwelling-places. Men take a sight of lands ere they buy them. I know that Christ hath made the bargain already; but be kind to the house ye are going to, and see it often. Set your heart on things that are above, where Christ is at the right hand of God.

Stir up your husband to mind his own country at home.

* Ps. xxxix. 5.

Counfel him to deal mercifully with the poor people of God under him. They are Chrifst's, and not his ; therefore, defire him to fhew them merciful dealing and kindnefs, and to be good to their fouls. I defire you to write to me. It may be that my parifh forget me ; but my witnefs is in heaven that I dow* not, I do not, forget them. They are my fighs in the night, and my tears in the day. I think myfelf like a husband plucked from the wife of his youth. O Lord, be my Judge : what joy would it be to my foul to hear that my miniftry hath left the Son of God among them, and that they are walking in Chrif ! Remember my love to your fon and daughter. Defire them from me to feek the Lord in their youth, and to give Him the morning of their days. Acquaint them with the word of God and prayer.

Grace be with you. Pray for the prifoner of Chrif ; in my heart I forget you not.

Your lawful and loving paftor, in his only Lord Jefus,
S. R.

ABERDEEN, *March 6, 1637.*

CIV.—*To the Right Honourable and Chriftian Lady, my
LADY VISCOUNTESS OF KENMURE.*

(*PAINS-TAKING IN THE KNOWLEDGE OF CHRIST—UNUSUAL
ENJOYMENT OF HIS LOVE—NOT EASY TO BE A CHRISTIAN
—FRIENDS MUST NOT MISLEAD.*)



ADAM,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you.—I am refreshed with your letter. The right hand of Him to whom belong the iffues from death hath been gracious to that fweet child. I dow not,* I do not, forget him and your Ladyfhip in my prayers.

Madam, for your own cafe. I love careful, and withal, *doing*

* Cannot.

complaints of want of praëctice ; becaufe I obferve many who think it holinefs enough to complain, and fet themselves at nothing ; as if to fay “ I am fick ” could cure them. They think complaints a good charm for guiltinefs. I hope that ye are wrestling and struggling on, in this dead age, wherein folks have loft tongue, and legs, and arms for Chrift. I urge upon you, Madam, a nearer communion with Chrift, and a growing communion. There are curtains to be drawn by* in Chrift, that we never faw, and new foldings of love in Him. I defpair that ever I fhall win to the far end of that love, there are fo many plies† in it. Therefore, dig deep ; and fweat, and labour, and take pains for Him ; and fet by as much time in the day for Him as you can. He will be won with labour.

I, His exiled prifoner, fought Him, and He hath rued‡ upon me, and hath made a moan for me, as He doth for His own ;§ and I know not what to do with Chrift. His love furroundeth and furchargeth me. I am burdened with it ; but Oh how fweet and lovely is that burden ! I dow|| not keep it within me. I am fo in love with His love, that if His love were not in heaven, I fhould be unwilling to go thither. Oh, what weighing, and what telling is in Chrift’s love ! I fear nothing now fo much as the lofing ¶ of Chrift’s crofs, and of the love-showers that accompany it. I wonder what He meaneth, to put fuch a flave at the board-head,** at His own elbow. Oh that I fhould lay my black mouth to fuch a fair, fair, fair face as Chrift’s ! But I dare not refufe to be loved. The caufe is not in me, why He hath looked upon me, and loved me, for He got neither bud†† nor hire of me ; it coft me nothing, it is good-cheap‡‡ love. O the many pound-weights of His love, under which I am fweetly preffed !

Now, Madam, I perfuade you, that the greateft part but play with Chriftianity ; they put it by-hand§§ eafily. I thought it had

* Afide. † Folds. ‡ Grieved for. § Jer. xxxi. 20; Hos. xi. 8. || Cannot. ¶ The fear to be deprived of it. Former editions give “ *laugbing*,” which feems a mifprint.

** Head of the table.

†† Bribe.

‡‡ Very cheap

§§ Put it paf, and are done with it.

been an easy thing to be a Christian, and that to seek God had been at the next door; but O the windings, the turnings, the ups and the downs that He hath led me through! And I see yet much way to the ford. He speaketh with my reins in the night-season; and in the morning, when I awake, I find His love-arrows, that He shot at me, sticking in my heart. Who will help me to praise? Who will come to lift up with me, and set on high, His great love? And yet I find that a fire-flaught* of challenges will come in at midsummer, and question me. But it is only to keep a sinner in order.

As for friends, I will not think the world to be the world if that well go not dry. I trust, in God, to use the world as a canny† or cunning master doth a knave servant (at least God give me grace to do so!): he giveth him no handling nor credit, only he intrusteth him with common errands, wherein he cannot play the knave. I pray God that I may not give this world the credit of my joys, and comforts, and confidence. That were to put Christ out of His office. Nay, I counsel you, Madam, from a little experience, let Christ keep the great seal, and intrust Him so as to hing‡ your vessels, great and small, and pin your burdens, upon the Nail fastened in David's house.§ Let me not be well, if ever they get the tutoring of my comforts. Away, away with irresponsal|| tutors that would play me a slip, and then Christ would laugh at me, and say, "Well-warded; ¶ try again ere you trust." Now wo is me, for my whorish mother, the Kirk of Scotland! Oh, who will bewail her!

Now the presence of the great Angel of the Covenant be with you and that sweet child.

Yours in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, *March 7, 1637.*

* Fire-flake, or flash of lightning.

§ Isa. xxii. 23.

† Prudent.

|| Irresponsable.

‡ Hang.

¶ Well-deserved.

CV.—*To a Gentlewoman, upon the death of her Husband.*

(RESIGNATION UNDER BEREAVEMENT—HIS OWN ENJOYMENT
OF CHRIST'S LOVE.)



MISTRESS,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you.

I cannot but rejoice, and withal be grieved, at your case. It hath pleased the Lord to remove your husband (my friend, and this kirk's faithful professor*) soon to his rest; but shall we be sorry that our loss is his gain, seeing his Lord would want his company no longer? Think not much of short summons; for, seeing he walked with his Lord in his life, and desired that Christ should be magnified in him at his death, ye ought to be silent and satisfied. When Christ cometh for His own, He runneth fast: mercy, mercy to the faints goeth not at leisure. Love, love in our Redeemer is not slow; and withal He is homely† with you, who cometh at His own hand to your house, and intromitteth,‡ as a friend, with anything that is yours. I think He would fain borrow and lend with you. Now he shall meet with the solacious§ company, the fair flock and blessed bairn-teme|| of the first-born, banqueting at the marriage supper of the Lamb. It is a mercy that the poor wandering sheep get a dyke-side in this stormy day, and a leaking ship a safe harbour, and a sea-sick passenger a sound and soft bed ashore. Wrath, wrath, wrath from the Lord is coming upon this land that he hath left behind him. Know, therefore, that the wounds of your Lord Jesus are the wounds of a lover, and that He will have compassion upon a sad-hearted servant; and that Christ hath said, He will have the husband's room in your heart. He loved you in your first husband's time, and He is but wooing you still. Give Him heart and chair, house and all. He will not be made companion with any other. Love is full of jealousies: He will have all your

* Confessor?

† Familiar.

‡ Intermeddleth.

§ Full of consolation.

|| Family by one mother.

love ; and who should get it but He ? I know that ye allow it upon Him. There are comforts both sweet and satisfying laid up for you : wait on. Frift* Christ ; He is an honest debtor.

Now for mine own case. I think some poor body would be glad of a dawted prisoner's leavings.† I have no scarcity of Christ's love : He hath wasted more comforts upon His poor banished servant than would have refreshed many souls. My burden was once so heavy, that one ounce weight would have casten the balance, and broken my back ; but Christ said, " Hold, hold ! " to my sorrow, and hath wiped a bluthered‡ face, which was foul with weeping. I may joyfully go my Lord's errands, with wages in my hands. Deferred hopes need not make me dead-fweir§ (as we used to say) : my cross is both my cross and my reward. Oh that men would sound His high praise ! I love Christ's worst reproaches, His glooms,|| His cross, better than all the world's plastered glory. My heart is not longing to be back again from Christ's country ; it is a sweet foil I am come to. I, if any in the world, have good cause to speak much good of Him. Oh, hell were a good-cheap¶ price to buy Him at ! Oh, if all the three kingdoms were witnesses to my pained, pained soul, overcome with Christ's love !

I thank you most kindly, my dear sister, for your love to, and tender care of, my brother. I shall think myself obliged to you if ye continue his friend. He is more to me than a brother now, being engaged to suffer for so honourable a Master and cause.

Pray for Christ's prisoner ; and grace, grace be with you.

Yours in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ÅBERDEEN, *March 7, 1637.*

* Give Him credit to a future day.

† What an over-indulged prisoner leaves after his feast is over.

‡ Blurred with tears. § Extremely lazy. || Frowns. ¶ Very cheap.



CVI.—*To the Right Honourable and Christian Lady, my*
LADY KENMURE.

(WEAK ASSURANCE—GRACE DIFFERENT FROM LEARNING—
SELF-ACCUSATIONS.)



ADAM,—Upon the offered opportunity of this worthy bearer, I could not omit to answer the heads of your letter.

*I*fly, I think not much to set down on paper some good things anent Christ (that sealed and holy thing),* and to feed my soul with raw wishes to be one with Christ; for a wish is but broken and half love. But verily to obey this, “Come and see,” is a harder matter! Oh, I have rather smoke than fire, and guessings rather than real assurances of Him. I have little or nothing to say, that I am as one who hath found favour in His eyes; but there is some pining and mismantered† hunger, that maketh me miscall‡ and nickname Christ as a changed Lord. But alas! it is ill-fitten.§ I cannot believe without a pledge. I cannot take God’s word without a caution, || as if Christ had lost and sold His credit, and were not in my books responfal, ¶ and law-biding.** But this is *my* way; for *His* way is, “After that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise.”††

2dly, Ye write, “that I am filled with knowledge, and stand not in need of these warnings.” But certainly my light is dim when it cometh to handy-grips.‡‡ And how many have full coffers, and yet empty bellies! Light, and the saving use of light, are far different. Oh, what need then have I to have the ashes blown away from my dying-out fire! I may be a bookman, and (yet) be an idiot and stark fool in Christ’s way! Learning will not beguile Christ.

* Luke i. 35.

† Give wrong names to.

|| Security given. ¶ Responsible.

†† Eph. i. 13.

‡‡ Close grappling.

† That makes a man unmannerly.

§ A misplaced rebuke.

** Able to face the law.

The Bible beguiled the Pharisees, and so may I be misled. Therefore, as night-watchers hold one another waking by speaking to one another, so have we need to hold one another on foot : sleep stealeth away the light of watching, even the light that reproveth sleeping. I doubt not but more would fetch* heaven, if they believed not heaven to be at the next door. The world's negative holiness—'no adulterer, no murderer, no thief, no cozeners,'—maketh men believe they are already glorified saints. But the sixth chapter to the Hebrews may affright us all, when we hear that men may take (a taste) of the gifts and common graces of the Holy Spirit, and a taste of the powers of the life to come, to hell with them. Here is reprobate silver, which yet seemeth to have the King's image and superscription upon it!

3dly, I find you complaining of yourself. And it becometh a sinner so to do. I am not against you in that. Sense of death is a sib friend,† and of kin and blood to life ; the more sense, the more life ; the more sense of sin, the less sin. I would love my pain, and foreness, and my wounds, howbeit these should bereave me of my night's sleep, better than my wounds without pain. Oh how sweet a thing it is to give Christ His handful of broken arms and legs, and disjointed bones !

4thly, Be not afraid for little grace. Christ soweth His living seed, and He will not lose His seed. If He have the guiding of my stock and state, it shall not miscarry. Our spilled‡ works, losses, deadness, coldness, wretchedness, are the ground upon which the Good Husbandman laboureth.

5thly, Ye write, " that His compassions fail not, notwithstanding that your service to Christ miscarrieth." To which I answer :

God forbid that there were buying and selling, and blocking§ for as good again, betwixt Christ and us ; for then free grace might go to play, and a Saviour sing dumb,|| and Christ go to sleep. But we go to heaven with light shoulders ; and all the bairn-teme, ¶ and

* Make for ; Lett. 83.

† Near relative.

‡ Spoiled.

§ Bargaining.

|| Be silenced.

¶ Family. Peden uses the word thus: " The Church shall come forth with a bonny bairn-teme at her back."

the vessels great and small that we have, are fastened upon the sure Nail.* The only danger is, that we give grace more to do than God giveth it; that is, by turning His grace into wantonnefs.

6thly, Ye write, that “few see your guiltinefs, and that ye cannot be free with many, as with me.” I answer: Blessed be God, that Christ and we are not heard before men’s courts. It is at home, betwixt Him and us, that pleas are taken away.

Grace be with you.

Yours, in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ABERDEEN.

CVII.—*To the Right Honourable and Christian Lady, my*
LADY BOYD.

(CONSCIOUSNESS OF DEFECTS NO ARGUMENT OF CHRIST BEING
UNKNOWN—HIS EXPERIENCE IN EXILE.)



ADAM,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you, from God our Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ.

I cannot but thank your Ladyship for your letter, that hath refreshed my soul. I think myself many ways obliged to your Ladyship for your love to my afflicted brother, now embarked with me in that same cause. His Lord hath been pleased to put him on truth’s side. I hope that your Ladyship will befriend him with your counsel and countenance in that country, where he is a stranger. And your Ladyship needeth not fear but your kindness to His own will be put up into Christ’s accounts.

Now, Madam, for your Ladyship’s case. I rejoice exceedingly that the Father of lights hath made you see that there is a nick† in Christianity, which ye contend to be at; and that is, to quit the right eye, and the right hand, and to keep the Son of God. I hope your desire is to make Him your garland, and that your eye looketh

* Ifa. xxii. 23, 24.

† A degree or point.

up the mount, which certainly is nothing but the new creature. Fear not, Christ will not cast water upon your smoking coal ; and then, who else dare do it if He say nay ? Be sorry at corruption, and be not secure. That companion lay with you in your mother's womb, and was as early friends with you as the breath of life. And Christ will not have it otherwise ; for He delighteth to take up fallen bairns, and to mend broken brows. Binding up of wounds is His office.*

First, I am glad that Christ will get employment of His calling in you. Many a whole soul is in heaven which was sickerer† than ye are. He is content that ye lay broken arms and legs on His knee, that He may spelk‡ them. *Secondly*, hiding of His face is wise love. His love is not fond, doting, and reasonless, to give your head no other pillow whill§ ye be in at heaven's gates, but to lie between His breasts, and lean upon His bosom. Nay, His bairns must often have the frosty cold side of the hill, and set down both their bare feet among thorns. His love hath eyes, and, in the meantime, is looking on. Our pride must have winter weather to rot it. But I know that Christ and ye will not be heard ; || ye will whisper it over betwixt yourselves, and agree again. For the anchor-tow¶ abideth fast within the vail ; the end of it is in Christ's ten fingers : who dare pull, if He hold ? “ I, the Lord thy God, will hold thy right hand, saying, Fear not, I will help thee. Fear not, Jacob.”** The sea-sick passenger shall come to land ; Christ will be the first to meet you on the shore. I hope that your Ladyship will keep the King's highway. Go on (in the strength of the Lord), in haste, as if ye had not leisure to speak to the innkeepers by the way. He is over beyond time, on the other side of the water, who thinketh long†† for you.

For my unfaithful self, Madam, I must say a word. At my

* Isa. lxi. 1.

† Support by splinters or trufs.

|| No one will ever hear the chiding.

** Isa. xli. 13, 14.

† Stronger.

§ Till.

¶ Cable.

†† Longeth for.

first coming hither, the devil made many a black lie of my Lord Jesus, and said the court was changed, and he was angry, and would give an evil servant his leave at mid-term.* But He gave me grace not to take my leave. I resolved to bide summons,† and sit, howbeit it was suggested and said, “What should be done with a withered tree, but over the dyke with it?” But now, now (I dare not, I dow‡ not keep it up!), who is feasted as His poor exiled prisoner? I think shame of the board-head§ and the first mess, and the royal King’s dining-hall, and that my black hand should come upon such a Ruler’s table. But I cannot mend it; Christ must have His will: only He paineth my soul so sometimes with His love, that I have been nigh to pass modesty, and to cry out. He hath left a smoking, burning coal in my heart, and gone to the door Himself, and left me and it together. Yet it is not desertion; I know not what it is, but I was never so sick for Him as now. I durst not challenge my Lord, if I got no more for heaven; it is a dawting|| cros. I know He hath other things to do than to play with me, and to trindle¶ an apple with me, and that this feast will end. O for instruments** in God’s name, that this is He! and that I may make use of it, when, it may be, a near friend within me will say, and when it will be said by a challenging†† devil, “Where is thy God?” Since I know that it will not last, I desire but to keep broken meat. But let no man after me slander Christ for His cros.

The great Lord of the Covenant, who brought from the dead the great Shepherd of His sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant establish you, and keep you and yours to His appearance.

Yours in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, *March 7, 1637.*

* Discharge His servant, turn him off.

† Cannot.

|| That has fondness in it.

** A law phrase; taking documents in proof of a thing.

†† Accusing, upbraiding.

† Obey the citation.

§ Head of the table.

¶ Trundle.

CVIII.—*To the* LADY KASKIBERRY.

[This lady was wife to *James Schoneir* of *Kaskeberrie*, or *Kaskeberrian*, in Fife. His name occurs as elder to the General Assembly in 1647, and he was ruling elder in the Presbytery of Kirkcaldy. (*Lamont's Diary*, 1650.) His lady died in 1655, and was buried in Kinglassie church. (*Do.*)]

(GRATITUDE FOR KINDNESS—CHRIST'S PRESENCE FELT.)



ADAM,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you.—I long to hear how your Ladyship is. I know not how to requite your Ladyship's kindness; but your love to the saints, Madam, is laid up in heaven. I know it is for your well-beloved Christ's sake that ye make His friends so dear to you, and concern yourself so much in them.

I am, in this house of pilgrimage, every way in good case: Christ is most kind and loving to my soul. It pleaseth Him to feast, with His unseen consolations, a stranger and an exiled prisoner; and I would not exchange my Lord Jesus with all the comfort out of heaven. His yoke is easy, and His burden is light.

This is His truth which I now suffer for; for He hath sealed it with His blessed presence. I know that Christ shall yet win the day, and gain the battle in Scotland. Grace be with you.

Yours in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, *March 7*, 1637.

CIX.—*To the* LADY EARLSTON.

[This was probably Lady Earlston, senior, as may be inferred from Ruthersford's reminding her that her "afternoon sun will soon go down." Her maiden name was Elizabeth Gordon, she being the daughter of John Gordon of Muirfad, in Kirkmabreck, next parish to Anwoth (the same who was afterwards designed of Penningham), the second son of Sir John Gordon of Lochinvar,

and brother to Sir John Gordon of Lochinvar, father of first Lord Kenmure. (*Nisbet's Heraldry*, vol. i.) Sir John Gordon was married to Jean Glendonning. (*Minutes of Com. of Cor.*, p. 29.)]

(FOLLOWING CHRIST NOT EASY—CHILDREN NOT TO BE OVER-
LOVED—JOY IN THE LORD.)



MY DISTRESS,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you.—I long to hear how your soul prospereth. I exhort you to go on in your journey; your day is short, and your afternoon sun will soon go down. Make an end of your accounts with your Lord; for death and judgment are tides that bide* no man. Salvation is supposed to be at the door, and Christianity is thought an easy task; but I find it hard, and the way strait and narrow, were it not that my Guide is content to wait on me, and to care for a tired traveller. Hurt not your conscience with any known sin. Let your children be as so many flowers borrowed from God: if the flower die or wither, thank God for a summer loan of them, and keep good neighbourhood, to borrow and lend† with Him. Set your heart upon heaven, and trouble not your spirit with this clay-idol of the world, which is but vanity, and hath but the lustre of the rainbow in the air, which cometh and goeth with a flying March shower. Clay is the idol of bastards, not the inheritance of the children.

My Lord hath been pleased to make many unknown faces laugh upon me, and hath made me well content of a borrowed fireside, and a borrowed bed. I am feasted with the joys of the Holy Ghost, and my royal King beareth my charges honourably. I love the smell of Christ's sweet breath better than the world's gold. I would I had help to praise Him.

The great Messenger of the Covenant, the Son of God, establish you on your Rock, and keep you to the day of His coming.

Yours in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, *March 7, 1637.*

* Wait for.

† To be on good terms.

CX.—*To his Reverend and Dear Brother, MR DAVID DICKSON.*

[DAVID DICKSON or DICK, born in 1583, was the only son of Mr John Dickson, a pious and wealthy merchant in Glasgow. After finishing his studies at the University of Glasgow, he was admitted Professor of Philosophy in that University, a situation which he held for eight years. In 1618 he was ordained minister of Irvine, where he laboured with much acceptance and success. In 1622, refusing to practise the ceremonies then imposed upon the Church by the Perth Articles, he was summoned by James Law, Archbishop of Glasgow, to appear before the High Commission Court. Dickson appeared, but declined the authority of the Court in ecclesiastical matters. The result was, that he was deprived of his charge at Irvine, and banished to Turriff, in Aberdeenshire. There he was employed every Sabbath by the incumbent of the parish. Yielding to the solicitations of the Earl of Eglinton and the town of Irvine, the Bishop granted him liberty to return to his old charge about the end of July 1623. He resumed his pastoral duties with increased ardour; and in addition to his Sabbath labours, preached every Monday (the market-day of Irvine), for the benefit of the rural population. Great numbers, particularly from the neighbouring parish of Stewarton, attending these meetings, the result was the famous Stewarton Revival, which lasted from 1623 to 1630. After the renewal of the National Covenant, in 1638, Dickson, who was then distinguished as a leader, in conjunction with Alexander Henderfon and Andrew Cant, was sent on a mission to Aberdeen, to explain the Covenant to the inhabitants who were hostile to it, when the celebrated controversy between the three commissioners and the doctors of Aberdeen, on the subject, took place. In 1642 he was appointed Professor of Divinity in the University of Glasgow, in which office he was associated with the celebrated Robert Baillie. He was afterwards translated to the same office in the University of Edinburgh. In the differences between the Resolutioners and Protesters, he took the side of the former; but on seeing how matters went upon the restoration of Charles II., is reported to have said to one who visited him on his deathbed, that the Protesters were the truest prophets. He died in December 1662. Dickson was a man of more than ordinary talents, of extensive theological acquirements, of a very intrepid spirit, and a popular preacher. He was the author of various works, which have been highly esteemed.]

(GOD'S DEALINGS—THE BITTER SWEETENED—NOTES ON
SCRIPTURE.)

REVEREND AND DEAREST BROTHER,—What joy have I out of heaven's gates, but that my Lord Jesus be glorified in my bonds? Blessed be ye of the Lord who contribute anything to my obliged and indebted praises. Dear brother, help me, a poor dyvour,* to pay the interest; for I cannot come nigh to render the principal. It is not jest nor sport which maketh me to speak and write as I do: I never before came to that nick† or pitch of communion with Christ that I have now attained to. For my confirmation, I have been these two Sabbaths or three in private, taking instruments‡ in the name of God, that my Lord Jesus and I have kissed each other in Aberdeen, the house of my pilgrimage. I seek not an apple to play me with (He knoweth, whom I serve in the spirit!) but a seal. I but beg earnest, and am content to suspend and frist§ glory whill|| supper-time. I know that this world will not last with me; for my moon-light is noon-day light, and my four hours¶ above my feasts when I was a preacher; at which time, also, I was embraced very often in His arms. But who can blame Christ to take me on behind Him (if I may say so), on His white horse, or in His chariot, paved with love, through a water? Will not a father take his little dawted Davie** in his arms, and carry him over a ditch or a mire? My short legs could not step over this lair,†† or sinking mire; and, therefore, my Lord Jesus will bear me through. If a change come, and a dark day (so being that He will keep my faith without flaw or crack), I dare not blame Him, howbeit I get no more whill|| I come to heaven. But ye know that the physick behoved to have fugar: my faith was fallen aswoon,‡‡ and Christ but held up a swooning man's

* Debtor.

† Degree.

‡ The documents that prove the matter settled.

§ Postpone for a time.

|| Till. ¶ Slight afternoon refreshment.

** His fondled boy, or pet.

†† Sinking bog.

‡‡ Into a swoon.

head. Indeed, I pray not for a dawted* bairn's diet: He knoweth that I would have Christ, four or fweet,—any way, so being it be Christ indeed. I stand not now upon pared apples, or sugared dishes, but I cannot blame Him to give, and I must gape and make a wide mouth. Since Christ will not pantry† up joys, He must be welcome who will not bide away. I seek no other fruit than that He may be glorified. He knoweth that I would take hard fare to have His name set on high.

I bless you for your counsel. I hope to live by faith, and swim without a mass or bundle of joyful sense under my chin; at least to venture, albeit I should be ducked.

Now for my case: I think that the council should be essayed, and the event referred to God;—duties are ours, and events are God's.

I shall go through yours upon the Covenant at leisure, and write to you my mind thereanent;‡ and anent the Arminian contract betwixt the Father and the Son. I beseech you, set to,§ to go through Scripture.¶ Yours on the Hebrews is in great request with all who would be acquainted with Christ's Testament. I purpose, God willing, to set about Hosea, and to try if I can get it to the press here.

It refresheth me much that ye are so kind to my brother. I hope your counsel will do him good. I recommend him to you, since I am so far from him. I am glad that the dying servant of God,

* Fondled.

† Lock up in the pantry, or cupboard.

‡ Regarding this.

§ Set about, begin.

¶ Rutherford seems here to allude to a plan of furnishing short commentaries on the whole Bible, which was suggested and set on foot by Dickson at the beginning of the seventeenth century. "The Hebrews," as is mentioned in this letter, together with "The Psalms" and "Matthew," were undertaken by Dickson; and "Hosea," which Rutherford here intimates his intention to undertake, but never accomplished, was contributed by Hutchison instead of him. In the Preface to one of the earliest editions of the Letters, a complaint is made that some one was secreting a MS. commentary of Rutherford's, upon *Isaiah*.

famous and faithful Mr Cunningham, sealed your ministry before he fell asleep.

Grace, grace be with you.

Yours in his fweet Lord Jefus,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, *March 7, 1637.*

CXI.—*To* JEAN BROWN.

(CHRIST'S UNTOLD PRECIOUSNESS—A WORD TO HER BOY.)



WELL-BELOVED AND DEAR SISTER,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you.—I received your letter, which I esteem an evidence of your Christian affection to me, and of your love to my honourable Lord and Master. My desire is, that your communion with Christ may grow, and that your reckonings may be put by-hand* with your Lord ere you come to the water-side.

Oh, who knoweth how sweet Christ's kisses are! Who hath been more kindly embraced and kissed than I, His banished prisoner? If the comparison could stand, I would not exchange Christ with heaven itself. He hath left a dart and arrow of love in my soul, and it paineth me till He come and take it out. I find pain of those wounds, because I would have possession. I know now that this worm-eaten apple, the plastered, rotten world, which the silly children of this world are beating, and buffeting, and pulling each other's ears for, is a portion for bastards, good enough; and that it is all they have to look for. I am not offended that my adversaries stay at home at their own fireside, with more yearly rent than I. Should I be angry that the Goodman of this house of the world casteth a dog a bone to hurt his teeth? He hath taught me to be content with a borrowed fireside, and an unco† bed; and I think I have lost nothing, the income is so great. O what telling is in Christ!

* Put aside, as finished and over.

† Strange.

O how weighty is my fair garland, my crown, my fair supping-hall in glory, where I shall be above the blows and buffeting of prelates! Let this be your desire, and let your thoughts dwell much upon that blessedness that abideth you in the other world. The fair side of the world will be turned to you quickly, when ye shall see the crown. I hope that ye are near your lodging. Oh, but I would think myself blessed, for my part, to win* to the house before the shower come on; for God hath a quiver full of arrows to shoot at and shower down upon Scotland.

Ye have the prayers of a prisoner of Christ. I desire Patrick to give Christ his young love, even the flower of it; and to put it by all others. It were good to start soon to the way; he should thereby have a great advantage in the evil day. Grace be with you.

Yours in his only Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, *March 7, 1637.*

CXII.—*To* MR JOHN FERGUSHILL.

[MR JOHN FERGUSHILL's mother was Janet Kennedy, sister or near relative to Hugh Kennedy of Ayr. He was at this time minister of Ochiltree, a parish in the centre of Ayrshire, in the district of Kyle. When Mr Robert Blair was translated from Ayr to St Andrews by the General Assembly, 1639, Fergushill was, by the same Assembly, appointed his successor. He died in 1644. He is mentioned by Livingstone, as one of the "many of the godly and able ministers" in Scotland. He was a member of the famous Glasgow Assembly 1638. Lady Gaitgirth's mansion was near Ochiltree; see Let. 187.]

(*THE ROD UPON GOD'S CHILDREN—PAIN FROM A SENSE OF CHRIST'S LOVE—HIS PRESENCE A SUPPORT UNDER TRIALS—CONTENTEDNESS WITH HIM ALONE.*)



EVEREND AND WELL-BELOVED IN THE LORD,—I was refreshed with your letter. I am sorry for that lingering and longsome visitation that is

* Reach in spite of difficulty.

upon your wife; but I know that ye take it as the mark of a lawfully begotten child, and not of a bastard, to be under your Father's rod. Till ye be in heaven, it will be but foul weather; one shower up and another down. The lintel-stone and pillars of the New Jerusalem suffer more knocks of God's hammer and tool than the common side-wall stones. And if twenty crosses be written for you in God's book, they will come to nineteen, and then at last to one, and after that to nothing, but your head shall lie betwixt Christ's breasts for evermore, and His own soft hand shall dry your face, and wipe away your tears. As for public sufferings for His truth, your Master also will see to these. Let us put Him into His own office, to comfort and deliver. The gloom* of Christ's cross is worse than itself.

I cannot keep up what He hath done to my soul. My dear brother, will I not get help of you to praise, and to lift Christ up on high? He hath pained me with His love, and hath left a love-arrow in my heart, that hath made a wound, and swelled me up with desires, so that I am to be pitied for want of real possession. Love would have the company of the party loved; and my greatest pain is the want of Him, not of His joys and comforts, but of a near union and communion.

This is His truth, I am fully persuaded, which I now suffer for; for Christ hath taken upon Him to be witness to it by His sweet comforts to my soul; and shall I think Him a false witness? or that He would subscribe blank paper? I thank His high and dreadful name for what He hath given. I hope to keep His seal and His pawn till He come and loose it Himself. I defy hell to put me off it. But He is Christ, and He hath met with His prisoner; and I took instruments in His own hand,† that it was He, and none other for Him. When the devil fenceth a bastard-court‡ in my Lord's ground, and giveth me forged summons, it will be my shame to mis-

* The frown imagined to be in it.

† Took documents that proved the matter settled.

‡ Opens and constitutes an unauthorized court.

believe,* after such a fair broad seal. And yet Satan and my apprehension sometimes make a lie of Christ, as if He hated me. But I dare believe no evil of Christ. If He would cool my love-fever for Himself with real presence and possession, I would be rich ; but I dare not be mislearned,† and seek more in that kind, howbeit it be no shame to beg at Christ's door. I pity my adversaries. I grudge not that my Lord keepeth them at their own fireside, and hath given me a borrowed fireside : let the Goodman of the house cast the dog a bone, why should I take offence ? I rejoice that the broken bark shall come to land, and that Christ will, on the shore, welcome the sea-sick passenger. We have need of a great stock against this day of trial that is coming. There is neither chaff nor corn in Scotland, but it shall once ‡ pass through God's sieve. Praise, praise, and pray for me ; for I cannot forget you. I know that ye will be friendly to my afflicted brother, who is now embarked in the same cause with me. Let him have your counsel and comforts.

Remember my love in Christ to your wife ; her health is coming, and her salvation sleepeth not. Ye have the prayers and blessing of a prisoner of Christ. Sow fast, deal bread plentifully. The pantry-door will be locked on the bairns, in appearance, ere long. Grace, grace, be with you.

Yours in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, *March 7, 1637.*

CXIII.—*To his Reverend and Dear Brother, MR ROBERT DOUGLAS.*

[ROBERT DOUGLAS, one of the ablest and most respected ministers of the Church of Scotland in his day, was the illegitimate son of one Mr Douglas, who was believed to have been a bastard child of Queen Mary, by Sir G. Douglas, Governor of Lochleven Castle, born when she was prisoner there. He was thus the grandson of Queen Mary (*Wodrow's Analecta*, iv. 226). Having finished his preparations for the ministry, he was ordained to be chaplain for the forces

* Not to believe truly. † Ill-bred, indiscreet. ‡ Some time or other.

that served under the celebrated Gustavus of Sweden. Continuing in this situation for a considerable time, he attracted the notice of the Swedish monarch, who held his character and talents in high estimation. It is said that, in one of Gustavus' engagements, surveying the battle from an eminence, and observing something wrong in the left wing of Gustavus' army which threatened to prove disastrous, he either went personally, or sent a messenger to acquaint the commanding officer with the circumstance, and that this information led to victory. When he left the army, Gustavus parted with him reluctantly, pronouncing him to be a man of the most distinguished abilities he had ever known. "There," says he, "is a man who, for wisdom and prudence, might be a counsellor to any king in Europe. He might be a moderator to any assembly in the world; and he might be a general to conduct any army, for his skill in military affairs" (*Ibid.* iv. 221). During this period, he committed to memory the greater part of the Bible, having almost no other book to read. Returning to his own country, he was admitted colleague to Mr James Simson, minister of Kirkcaldy, in 1630. Thence he was translated to Edinburgh in 1641. For a time he was deceived by the duplicity of James Sharp, but at last he detected his real character; and when the traitor (shortly before he went up to London to be consecrated Archbishop) happened to meet with him, and addressed him as "Brother," the good man, disgusted at his hypocrisy, exclaimed, "Brother! no more brother! James, if my conscience had been of the make of yours, I could have been Bishop of St Andrews sooner than you." (*Analeſta*, vol. iii. p. 130.) In 1669 he was admitted indulged minister at Pencaitland, where he died at an advanced age in 1674, and was buried in Edinburgh. (*Ibid.* vol. i. p. 337; *Wodrow's History*, vol. ii. p. 133.)]

(GREATNESS OF CHRIST'S LOVE REVEALED TO THOSE WHO
SUFFER FOR HIM.)



MY VERY REVEREND AND DEAR BROTHER,
—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you.—I long to see you on paper. I cannot but write you, that this which I now suffer for is Christ's truth; because He hath been pleased to seal my sufferings with joy unspeakable and glorious. I know that He will not put His seal upon blank paper; Christ hath not dumb seals, neither will He be a witness to a lie. I beseech you, my dear brother, to help me to praise, and to lift Christ up on His throne above the shields of the earth. I am astonished and confounded at the greatness of His kindness to such a sinner. I know that Christ

and I shall never be even ;* I shall die in His debt. He hath left an arrow in my heart that paineth me for want of real possession ; and hell cannot quench this coal of God's kindling. I wish no man to slander Christ or His cros for my cause ; for I have much cause to speak much good of Him. He hath brought me to a nick† and degree of communion with Himself that I knew not before. The din and gloom‡ of our Lord's cros is more fearful and hard than the cros itself. He taketh the bairns in His arms when they come to a deep water ; at least, when they lose ground, and are put to swim, then His hand is under their chin.

Let me be helped by your prayers ; and remember my love to your kind wife. Grace be with you.

Your brother, and Christ's prisoner,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, *March 7, 1637.*

CXIV.—*To the much Honoured WILLIAM RIGG, of Athernie, in Fife, near Leven.*

[WILLIAM RIGG of Athernie, in the capacity of one of the bailies of Edinburgh, “gave great evidence (says Livingstone) that he had the spirit of a magistrate beyond many, being a terror to all evil-doers.” He took an active part against all attempts to introduce Prelacy, and contributed liberally to the printing of such books as “crossed the course of Conformity.” In March 1624, a committee of the Privy Council, by the authority of the King, deprived Rigg of his office, fined him in fifty thousand pounds Scots, and ordered him to be warded in Blackness Castle till the sum was paid, and afterwards to be confined in Orkney. This sentence, however, was afterwards mitigated. He was distinguished above most for devoting a large portion of his income to religious purposes. Such was his liberality, that one said, “To my certain knowledge, he spends yearly more on pious uses than all my estate is

* Be quits, have accounts fairly balanced.

† Explained by the next word, “degree,” which probably has crept into the text from the margin. So in Let. 110, “pitch.”

‡ The noise made about the cros, and the frown.

worth ; and mine will be towards 8 or 9000 merks (about L.350) in the year." He was a man of much prayer, and generally commenced with deep and bitter complaints and confession of sin, but ended with unspeakable assurance, and joy and thanksgiving. His death took place on the 2d of January 1644, and is thus recorded by Sir Thomas Hope, in his Diary (p. 201): "This day, my worthy cousin, William Rigg of Athernie, departed, at his house of Athernie, having taken bed on Sunday of before, and died on the third day. The Lord prepare me ; for this, next to my dearest son, is a heavy stroke."]

(SUSTAINING POWER OF CHRIST'S LOVE—SATAN'S OPPOSITION
—YEARNINGS FOR CHRIST HIMSELF—FEARS FOR THE
CHURCH.)



MUCH HONOURED SIR,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you. I received your long-looked-for and short letter. I would that ye had spoken more to me, who stand in need. I find Christ, as ye write, aye the longer the better ; and therefore cannot but rejoice in His salvation, who hath made my chains my wings, and hath made me a king over my crosses, and over my adversaries. Glory, glory, glory to His high, high and holy name ! Not one ounce, not one grain-weight more is laid on me than He hath enabled me to bear ; and I am not so much wearied to suffer as Zion's haters are to persecute. Oh, if I could find a way, in any measure, to strive to be even with* Christ's love ! But that I must give over. Oh, who would help a dyvour† to pay praises to the King of saints, who triumpheth in His weak servants !

I see that if Christ but ride upon a worm or feather, His horse will neither stumble nor fall. The worm Jacob is made by Him a new, sharp threshing instrument, having teeth, to thresh the mountains, and beat them small, and to make the hills as chaff, and to fan them so as the wind shall carry them away, and the whirlwind shall scatter them.‡ Christ's enemies are but breaking their own heads in pieces, upon the Rock laid in Zion ; and the stone is not removed out of its place. Faith hath cause to take courage from our very afflictions ; the devil is but a whetstone to sharpen the

* Be quits ; repay in full.

† Debtor.

‡ Isa. xli. 14-16.

faith and patience of the faints. I know that he but heweth and polifheth ſtones, all this time, for the New Jeruſalem.

But in all this, three things have much moved me, ſince it hath pleaſed my Lord to turn my moon-light into day-light. *Fiſt*, He hath yoked* me to work, to wreſtle with Chriſt's love; of† longing wherewith I am ſick, pained, fainting, and like to die becauſe I cannot get Himſelf; which I think a ſtrange ſort of deſertion. For I have not Himſelf, whom if I had, my love-ſickneſs would cool, and my fever go away: at leaſt, I ſhould know the heat of the fire of complacency, which would cool the ſcorching heat of the fire of deſire. (And yet I have no penury of His love!) And ſo I dwine,‡ I die, and He ſeemeth not to rue§ on me. I take inſtruments in His hand,|| that I would have Him, but I cannot get Him; and my beſt cheer is black hunger. I bleſs Him for that feaſt.

Secondly, Old challenges¶ now and then revive, and caſt all down. I go halting and ſighing, fearing there be an unſeen proceſs yet coming out, and that heavier than I can answer. I cannot read diſtinctly my ſurety's act of cautionary** for me in particular, and my diſcharge; and ſenſe, rather than faith, aſſureth me of what I have; ſo unable am I to go but by a hold. I could, with reverence of my Lord, forgive Chriſt, if He would give me as much faith as I have hunger for Him. I hope the pardon is now obtained, but the peace is not ſo ſure to me as I would wiſh. Yet, one thing I know, there is not a way to heaven but the way which He hath graced me to profeſs and ſuffer for.

Thirdly, Wo, wo is me for the virgin-daughter of Scotland, and for the fearful deſolation and wrath appointed for this land! And yet all are ſleeping, eating and drinking, laughing and ſporting, as if all were well. O our dim gold! our dumb, blind paſtors! The ſun is gone down upon them, and our nobles bid Chriſt fend††

* Engaged, bound me in a preſſing way.

† I am ſick of longing for which.

|| Take documents in evidence.

** Suretyſhip.

‡ Pine.

§ Take pity on.

¶ Self-upbraidings, or rebukes.

†† Provide for, ſhift for.

for Himself, if He be Christ. It were good that we should learn in time the way to our stronghold.

Sir, howbeit not acquainted, remember my love to your wife. I pray God to establish you.

Yours in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, *March 9, 1637.*

CXV.—*To* Mr ALEXANDER HENDERSON.

[ALEXANDER HENDERSON, the well-known hero of the Second Reformation, was born in the year 1583, and received his education at the University of St Andrews. After having taught for several years a class of philosophy and rhetoric in that University, he obtained a presentation to the parish of Leuchars, in 1612. Being at that time unimpressed with spiritual truth, he was a defender of the principles and measures of the prelate party in the Church. His settlement was on these accounts so unpopular, that on the day of his ordination the church-doors were secured by the people, and the members of Presbytery, together with the presentee, were obliged to break in by the window. But his soul was soon after visited by the Holy Spirit, and underwent an entire change. He became Leader in effecting that revolution in the ecclesiastical affairs of Scotland which commenced about the year 1637. He was Moderator of the famous Assembly which met at Glasgow in 1638, and by that Assembly was translated to Edinburgh. In the civil war, Henderson was appointed by the Covenanters to act as one of their commissioners in treating with his Majesty Charles I. In 1642, he was delegated by the Commission of the General Assembly to sit as one of their commissioners in the Westminster Assembly of Divines, which kept him in London for several years. He died on the 12th of August 1646, in the 63d year of his age, shortly after his return from England. Baillie, in his speech to the General Assembly in the following year, pronounced him, "the fairest ornament after Mr John Knox, of incomparable memory, that ever the Church of Scotland did enjoy."]

(*SADNESS BECAUSE CHRIST'S HEADSHIP NOT SET FORTH—HIS CAUSE ATTENDED WITH CROSSES—THE BELIEVER SEEN OF ALL.*)



Y REVEREND AND DEAR BROTHER,—I received your letters. They are as apples of gold to me; for with my sweet feasts (and they are above the

deserving of such a sinner, high and out of measure), I have sadness to ballast me, and weight* me a little. It is but His boundless wisdom which hath taken the tutoring of His witless child; and He knoweth that to be drunken with comforts is not safest for our stomachs. However it be, the din and noise and glooms† of Christ's cross are weightier than itself. I protest to you (my witness is in heaven), that I could wish many pound-weights added to my cross, to know that by my sufferings Christ were set forward in His kingly office in this land. Oh, what is my skin to His glory; or my losses, or my sad heart, to the apple of the eye of our Lord and His beloved Spouse, His precious truth, His royal privileges, the glory of manifested justice in giving of His foes a dash, the testimony of His faithful servants, who do glorify Him, when He rideth upon poor, weak worms, and triumpheth in them! I desire you to pray, that I may come out of this furnace with honesty, and that I may leave Christ's truth no worse than I found it; and that this most honourable cause may neither be stained nor weakened.

As for your cause, my reverend and dearest brother, ye are the talk of the north and south; and looked to, so as if ye were all crystal glass. Your moles and dust would soon be proclaimed, and trumpets blown at your slips. But I know that ye have laid help upon One that is mighty. Intrust not your comforts to men's airy and frothy applause, neither lay your down-castings on the tongues of salt‡ mockers and reproachers of godliness. "As deceivers, and yet true; as unknown, and yet well known."§ God hath called you to Christ's side, and the wind is now in Christ's face in this land; and seeing ye are with Him, ye cannot expect the lee-side,|| or the sunny side of the brae. But I know that ye have resolved to take Christ upon any terms whatsoever. I hope that ye do not rue,¶ though your cause be hated, and prejudices are taken up against it.

* Burden, depress.

† Frowns.

‡ Bitter, sarcastic? In Jamieson's Dict. we have it signifying "troublesome."

§ 2 Cor. vi. 8, 9.

|| The sheltered side of the hill.

¶ Repent of it.

The shields of the world think our Master cumbersome wares, and that He maketh too great din, and that His cords and yokes make blains, and deep scores in their neck. Therefore they kick. They say, "This man shall not reign over us."

Let us pray one for another. He who hath made you a chosen arrow in His quiver, hide you in the hollow of His hand!

I am yours, in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, March 9, 1637.

CXVI.—*To the Right Honourable my LORD LOUDON.*

[JOHN CAMPBELL, first Earl of Loudon, and the son of Sir James Campbell of Lawers, was a man of distinguished talents, and of a very decided character. In the history of his country he makes no small figure as a strenuous opponent of the attempts made by Charles I. to impose Prelacy and arbitrary power on Scotland. He was a member of the General Assembly which met at Glasgow in 1638, in the business of which he took an active part. When the King, dissatisfied with the proceedings of this Assembly, put himself at the head of an army to reduce his Scottish subjects to submission, Loudon had a leading hand in the measures then adopted for preserving the religion and liberties of Scotland, according to the ecclesiastical and civil laws of the kingdom. In the skirmish at Newburn, where the King's forces were defeated by the Scottish army, he commanded a brigade of horse. In 1641, when peace was restored between the King and his Scottish subjects, Loudon was made Lord Chancellor of Scotland, a situation which he held till after the execution of Charles I., and the calling home of Charles II. by the Scots in 1650. Malignants being again brought into places of power and trust, he demitted his office. He continued, however, strongly to adhere to the cause of Charles, in consequence of which he was excepted from Cromwell's act of indemnity, and his estates forfeited. But all that he had suffered for the royal cause did not recommend him to the favour of the unprincipled government of Charles II. His name is in the list of Middleton's fines (imposed upon the gentlemen of Ayrshire in 1662) for L.12,000. He felt convinced that, should his life be spared, he would fall an early victim to the vengeance of his enemies, and often exhorted his pious lady to beseech the Lord that he might not live to the next session of Parliament, else he would share the same fate with the Marquis of Argyle. His wish was granted; for he died at Edinburgh, March 15, 1662. Rutherford's "Divine Right of Church Government and

Excommunication," printed at London in 1646, is dedicated to this nobleman, who was then Chancellor of the University of St Andrews. His son James, second Earl of Loudon, was subjected to no small persecution under the dominancy of Prelacy; and, seeking refuge in Holland, took up his residence at Leyden, where he died on the 29th of October 1684.]

(BLESSEDNESS OF ACTING FOR CHRIST—HIS LOVE TO HIS PRISONER.)



MY VERY NOBLE AND HONOURABLE LORD,—
 Grace, mercy, and peace be to you.—I make bold to write to your Lordship, that you may know the honourable cause which ye are graced* to profess is Christ's own truth. Ye are many ways blessed of God, who have taken upon you to come out to the streets with Christ on your forehead, when so many are ashamed of Him, and hide Him (as it were) under their cloak, as if He were a stolen Christ. If this faithless generation, and especially the nobles of this kingdom, thought not Christ dear wares, and religion expensive, hazardous, and dangerous, they would not slip from His cause as they do, and stand looking on with their hands folded behind their back when louns† are running with the spoil of Zion on their back, and the boards of the Son of God's tabernacle. Law and justice are to be had by any, especially for money and moyen;‡ but Christ can get no law, good-cheap§ or dear. It were the glory and honour of you, who are the nobles of this land, to plead for your wronged Bridegroom and His oppressed spouse, as far as zeal and standing law will go with you. Your ordinary logic from the event, "that it will do no good to the cause, and, therefore, silence is best till the Lord put to His own hand," is not (with reverence to your Lordship's learning) worth a straw. Events are God's. Let us do,|| and not plead against God's office. Let Him sit at His own helm, who moderateth all events. It is

* Allusion to Luke i. 28, *κεχαριτωμένη*, "graced, highly favoured."

† Rogues, worthless scoundrels.

§ Gratis.

‡ Means, influence.

|| Act.

not a good courſe to complain that we cannot get a providence of gold, when our lazineſs, cold zeal, temporizing, and faithleſs fearfulneſs ſpilleth * good providence.

Your Lordſhip will pardon me : I am not of that mind, that tumults or arms is the way to put Chriſt on His throne ; or that Chriſt will be ſerved and truth vindicated, only with the arm of fleſh and blood. Nay, Chriſt doth His turn with leſs din, than with garments rolled in blood. But I would that the zeal of God were in the nobles to do their part for Chriſt ; and I muſt be pardoned to write to your Lordſhip thus.

I dow not, † I dare not, but ſpeak to others what God hath done to the ſoul of His poor, afflicted exile-prifoner. His comfort is more than I ever knew before. He hath ſealed the honourable cauſe which I now ſuffer for, and I ſhall not believe that Chriſt will put His amen and ring ‡ upon an imagination. He hath made all His promiſes good to me, and hath filled up all the blanks with His own hand. I would not exchange my bonds with the plaſtered joy of this whole world. It hath pleaſed Him to make a ſinner the like of me an ordinary banqueter in His houſe-of-wine, with that royal, princely One, Chriſt Jeſus. O what weighing, O what telling is in His love ! How ſweet muſt He be, when that black and burdenſome tree, His own croſs, is ſo perfumed with joy and gladneſs ! Oh for help to liſt Him up by praifes on His royal throne ! I ſeek no more than that His name may be ſpread abroad in me, that meikle § good may be ſpoken of Chriſt on my behalf ; and this being done, my loſſes, place, ſtipend, credit, eaſe, and liberty, ſhall all be made up to my full contentment and joy of heart.

I ſhall be confident that your Lordſhip will go on in the ſtrength of the Lord, and keep Chriſt, and avouch Him, that He may read your name publicly before men and angels. I ſhall entreat your Lordſhip to exhort and encourage that nobleman, your chief, || to

* Spoils.

† I cannot.

‡ As if ſealing it by His ring as in marriage, or as Eſth. iii. 10.

§ Much.

|| The Earl of Argyle.

do the fame. But I am wo* that many of you find a new wiſdom, which deſerveth not ſuch a name. It were better that men would ſee that their wiſdom be holy, and their holineſs wife.

I muſt be bold to deſire your Lordſhip to add to your former favours to me (for the which your Lordſhip hath a priſoner's bleſſing and prayers), this, that ye would be pleaſed to befriend my brother, now ſuffering for the ſame cauſe; for as he is to dwell nigh your Lordſhip's bounds, your Lordſhip's word and countenance may help him.

Thus recommending your Lordſhip to the ſaving grace and tender mercy of Chriſt Jeſus our Lord, I reſt, your Lordſhip's obliged ſervant in Chriſt,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, *March* 9, 1637.

CXVII.—To MR WILLIAM DALGLEISH, *Minifter of the Goſpel.*

[MR WILLIAM DALGLEISH was miniſter of the conjunct pariſhes of Anwoth, Kirkdale, and Kirkmabreck.† He preached at Anwoth only every alternate week; but ſo abundantly bleſſed were his labours to the people, that when he ſurrendered (*quoad ſacra*) the charge of Anwoth to Rutherford, upon its being formed into a diſtinct parochial charge, not only many of the humbler claſs of the pariſhioners, but the proprietors too, had embraced the doctrines of the Goſpel. Dalgleiſh ſtrictly adhered to Preſbyterian principles, and on that account was ſubjected to trouble. Upon the death of Andrew Lamb, the tolerant Biſhop of Galloway, in 1634, and the elevation of Thomas Sydſerff, Biſhop of Brechin, a man of the moſt intolerant character, to the vacant ſee, the prelate immediately threatened Rutherford and Dalgleiſh with a proſecution before the High Commiſſion Court, as appears from a letter written at that time by Rutherford to Marion M'Naught, referring to a requeſt which he and Dalgleiſh had made to her to uſe her influence in inducing Lord Kirkcudbright

* Grieved.

† *Barholm Caſtle* is in this pariſh, and was the ſpot where John Knox was ſecreted previous to his eſcape for the Continent. His ſignature was long ſhown on the wall of one of the rooms. You ſee the old walls, covered with ivy, on the right of the road as you are going from Kirkdale to Creetown. The modern *Barholm* is a fine manſion, on the other ſide of Creetown.

to extend to them his protection. (See *Let.* 34.) Next year, he was deprived of his charge as minister of the united parishes of Kirkdale* and Kirkmabreck. In 1637, when Episcopacy began to be the losing cause, he returned to his flock. His name appears on the roll of the members of the famous Assembly which met at Glasgow in 1638; and in 1639 he was translated to Cramond, as successor to Mr William Colville, afterwards Principal of the University of Edinburgh; to whom he appears to have been related, as the name of his wife was Elizabeth Colville. He was the intimate friend of the well-known Alexander Henderson, who by his latter will ordained his executor “to deliver to my dear acquaintance Mr John Duncan, at Culrofs, and Mr William Dalgleish, minister at Cramond, all my manuscripts and papers which are in my study, and that belong to me any where else; and after they have received them, to destroy or preserve and keep them, as they shall judge convenient for their own private or the public good.” In 1662, Dalgleish was ejected for non-conformity, and died before the Revolution. Rutherford often preached at Kirkmabreck. We have notes of several sermons in print, as preached by him there, at Communions.]

(CHRIST’S KINDNESS—DEPENDENCE ON PROVIDENCE—
CONTROVERSIES.)



EVEREND AND DEAR BROTHER,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you.—I am well. My Lord Jesus is kinder to me than ever He was. It pleaseth Him to dine and sup with His afflicted prisoner. A King feasteth me, and His spikenard casteth a sweet smell. Put Christ’s love to the trial, and put upon it our burdens, and then it will appear love indeed. We employ not His love, and therefore we know it not. I verily count the sufferings of my Lord more than this world’s lustred† and over-gilded glory. I dare not say but my Lord Jesus hath fully recompensed my sadness with His joys, my losses with His own presence. I find it a sweet and rich thing to exchange my sorrows with Christ’s joys, my afflictions with that sweet peace I have with Himself.

* The modern mansion of Kirkdale looks across the bay to Wigton, and is seen peering out on the passer-by from its high platform above the road. *Kirkmabreck* was a pendicle of the abbey of *Dundrennan*, which is about seven miles from Kirkcudbright. (Nicolson’s *Scotland*.)

† Shining by art.

Brother, this is His own truth I now suffer for. He hath sealed my sufferings with His own comforts, and I know that He will not put His seal upon blank paper. His seals are not dumb nor delusive, to confirm imaginations and lies. Go on, my dear brother, in the strength of the Lord, not fearing man who is a worm, nor the son of man that shall die. Providence hath a thousand keys, to open a thousand fundry doors for the deliverance of His own, when it is even come to a *conclamatum est*.^{*} Let us be faithful, and care for our own part, which is to do and suffer for Him, and lay Christ's part on Himself, and leave it there. Duties are ours, events are the Lord's. When our faith goeth to meddle with events, and to hold a court (if I may so speak) upon God's providence, and beginneth to say, "How wilt Thou do this and that?" we lose ground. We have nothing to do there. It is our part to let the Almighty exercise His own office, and steer His own helm. There is nothing left to us, but to see how we may be approved of Him, and how we may roll the weight of our weak souls in well-doing upon Him who is God Omnipotent : and when that we thus essay miscarrieth, it will be neither our sin nor cross.

Brother, remember the Lord's word to Peter ; "Simon, lovest thou Me?—Feed My sheep." No greater testimony of our love to Christ can be, than to feed carefully and faithfully His lambs.

I am in no better neighbourhood with the ministers here than before : they cannot endure that any speak of me, or to me. Thus I am, in the mean time, silent, which is my greatest grief. Dr Barron† hath often disputed with me, especially about Arminian con-

* "All is over!"

† Barron was a branch of the family of Kinnaid in Fifeshire, and educated at St Andrews. He afterwards became minister in the parish of Keith; in 1624 was appointed to a charge in Aberdeen; and 1625 nominated Professor of Divinity in Marischal College there. He was a determined opponent of Rutherford, Dickson, and others, and was obliged to resign the chair and retire to Berwick, where he died in 1639. *Vide* Funeral Sermon by Patrick Forbes, published by the Spotteswoode Society, p. 27, and Baillie's Letters, i. 221.

troverfies, and for the ceremonies. Three yokings* laid him by ; and I have not been troubled with him fince. Now he hath appointed a difpute before witneffes ; I truſt that Chriſt and truth will do for themſelves.

I hope, brother, that ye will help my people ; and write to me what ye hear the Biſhop is to do with them. Grace be with you.

Your brother in bonds,

S. R.

ABERDEEN.

CXVIII.—*To MR HUGH MACKAIL, Miniſter of the Goſpel at Irvine.*

(CHRIST'S BOUNTIFUL DEALINGS—JOY IN CHRIST THROUGH
THE CROSS.)



EVEREND AND DEAR BROTHER,—I bleſs you for your letter. He is come down as rain upon the mown grafs ; He hath revived my withered root ; and He is the dew of herbs. I am moſt ſecure in this priſon : ſalvation is for walls in it ; and what think ye of theſe walls ? He maketh the dry plant to bud as the lily, and to bloſſom as Lebanon :—the great Huſbandman's bleſſing cometh down upon the plants of righteouſneſs. Who may ſay this, my dear brother, if I, His poor exiled ſtranger and priſoner, may not ſay it ? Howbeit all the world ſhould be ſilent, I cannot hold my peace. Oh how many black accounts have Chriſt and I rounded over together in the houſe of my pilgrimage ! and how fat a portion He hath given to a hungry ſoul ! I had rather have Chriſt's four-hours,† than have dinner and ſupper both in one from any other. His dealing, and the way of His judgments, are paſt finding out. No preaching, no book, no learning, could give me that which it behoved me to come and get in this town. But what of all this, if I were not miſted,‡ and

* Conteſts, onſets.

† Afternoon reſreſhment, which was very flight.

‡ Like one in a miſt.

confounded, and astonished how to be thankful, and how to get Him praised for evermore! And, what is more, He hath been pleased to pain me with His love, and my pain groweth through want of real possession.

Some have written to me, that I am possibly too joyful of the croses; but my joy overleapeth the croses, it is bounded and terminated upon Christ. I know that the sun will overcloud and eclipse, and that I shall again be put to walk in the shadow: but Christ must be welcome to come and go, as He thinketh meet. Yet He would be more welcome to me, I trow, to come than to go. And I hope He pitieth and pardoneth me, in casting apples to me at such a fainting time as this. Holy and blessed is His name! It was not my flattering of Christ that drew a kiss from His mouth. But He would send me as a spy into this wilderness of suffering, to see the land and try the ford; and I cannot make a lie of Christ's croses. I can report nothing but good both of Him and it, lest others should faint. I hope, when a change cometh, to cast anchor at midnight upon the Rock which He hath taught me to know in this day-light; whither I may run, when I must say my lesson without book, and believe in the dark. I am sure it is sin to tarrow* at Christ's good meat, and not to eat when He saith, "Eat, O well-beloved, and drink abundantly." If He bear me on His back, or carry me in His arms over this water, I hope for grace to set down my feet on dry ground, when the way is better. But this is slippery ground: my Lord thought good I should go by a hold, and lean on my Well-beloved's shoulder. It is good to be ever taking from Him. I desire that He may get the fruit of praises, for dawting† and thus dandling me on His knee: and I may give my bond of thankfulness, so being I have Christ's back-bond‡ again for my relief, that I shall be strengthened by His powerful grace to pay my vows to Him. But, truly, I find that we have the advantage of the brae upon our

* To be pettish at.

† Fondling.

‡ A bond given after a former bond, declaring the person who gave the first bond free.

enemies : we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us ; and they know not wherein our strength lieth.

Pray for me. Grace be with you.

Your brother in Christ,

S. R.

ABERDEEN.

CXIX.—To Mr DAVID DICKSON.

(JOYFUL EXPERIENCE—CUP OVERFLOWING IN EXILE.)

REVEREND AND DEAR BROTHER,—Grace, mercy, and peace be unto you.—I find that great men, especially old friends, scaur* to speak for me. But my kingly and royal Master biddeth me to try his moyen† to the uttermost, and I shall find a friend at hand. I still depend upon Him ; His court is still as before ; the prisoner is welcome to Him. The black, crabbed tree of my Lord's cross hath made Christ and my soul very entire. He is my song in the night. I am often laid in the dust with challenges, and apprehensions of His anger ; and then, if a mountain of iron were laid upon me, I cannot be heavier ; and with much wrestling I win into the King's house-of-wine. And then, for the most part, my life is joy ; and such joy through His comforts, as I have been afraid lest I should shame myself and cry out, for I can scarce bear what I get. Christ giveth me a measure heaped up, pressed down, and running over ; and, believe it, His love paineth more than prison and banishment. I cannot get the way of Christ's love. Had I known what He was keeping for me, I should never have been so faint-hearted. In my heaviest times, when all is lost, the memory of His love maketh me think Christ's glooms are but for the fashion.‡ I seek no more than a vent to my wine ;§ I am

* Are afraid, boggle at.

† Frowns for form's sake.

‡ Means or interest.

§ Alluding to Job xxxii. 19.

smothered and ready to burst for want of vent. Think not much of persecution. It is before you ; but it is not as men conceive of it. My fugged cross forceth me to say this to you, ye shall have waled* meat. The sick bairn is ofttime the spilled† bairn ; ye shall command all the house. I hope that ye help a tired prisoner to praise and pray. Had I but the annual of annual‡ to give to my Lord Jesus, it would ease my pain. But, alas ! I have nothing to pay, He will get nothing of poor me ; but I am wo that I have not room enough in my heart for such a stranger. I am not cast down to go farther north. I have good cause to work for my Master, for I am well paid beforehand ; I am not behind, howbeit I should not get one smile more till my feet be up within the King's dining-hall.

I have gone through yours upon the Covenant ;§ it hath edified my soul, and refreshed a hungry man. I judge it sharp, sweet, quick, and profound. Take me at my word, I fear that it get no lodging in Scotland.

The brethren of Ireland write not to me ; chide with them for that. I am sure that I may give you and them a commission (and I will abide by it), that you tell my Beloved that I am sick of love. I hope in God to leave some of my rust and superfluities in Aberdeen. I cannot get a house in this town wherein to leave drink-silver|| in my Master's name, save one only. There is no sale for Christ in the north ; He is like to lie long on my hand, ere any accept Him. Grace be with you.

Yours, in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ABERDEEN.

* The best, selected.

† The spoilt child.

‡ The smallest return, the quit-rent of a quit-rent.

§ Therapeutica Sacra ; seu de curandis casibus conscientiarum circa regenerationem per Fœderum Divinorum applicationem.

|| A token of regard for kindness shown.

CXX.—To Mr MATTHEW MOWAT.

[MATTHEW MOWAT, son to the Laird of Busbie (Lett. 133), was minister of Kilmarnock. He was one of the seven leading ministers in the west whom the Parliament, after the restoration of Charles II., brought before them with the view of extorting their acquiescence in the establishment of Prelacy; which, if effected, it was apprehended would have an influence in leading others to comply. They were all put in prison, and refusing (though several times brought before the Parliament), to take the oath of allegiance without explanation, inasmuch as it involved the oath of supremacy, they were more severely treated. Livingstone describes Mowat as “one of a meek, sweet disposition, straight and zealous for the truth.” Rutherford, who highly valued him, says in one of his letters, “I cannot speak to a man so sick of love to Christ as Mr Matthew Mowat;” and in another, “I am greatly in love with Mr Matthew Mowat, for I see him really stamped with the image of God.” The time of his death is unknown. Some additional notices of him are to be found in Wodrow’s *Analecæ*, vol. iii.]

(PLENITUDE OF CHRIST’S LOVE—NEED TO USE GRACE ARIGHT
—CHRIST THE RANSOMER—DESIRE TO PROCLAIM HIS GOS-
PEL—SHORTCOMINGS AND SUFFERINGS.)



REVEREND AND DEAR BROTHER,—I am a very far mistaken man. If others knew how poor my stock was, they would not think upon the like of me, but with compassion. For I am as one kept under a strict tutor; I would have more than my tutor alloweth me. But it is good that a bairn’s wit is not the rule which regulateth my Lord Jesus. Let Him give what He will, it shall aye be above merit, and my ability to gain therewith. I would not wish a better stock, whill* heaven be my stock, than to live upon credit at Christ’s hands, daily borrowing. Surely, running-over love (that vast, huge, boundless love of Christ that there is telling† in for man and angels!) is the only thing I most fain would be in hands with. He knoweth that I have little but the love of that love; and that I shall be happy, suppose I never get another heaven but only an eternal, lasting, feast of that

* Till.

† Which will try the skill of men and angels to estimate.

love. But suppose my wishes were poor, He is not poor : Christ, all the seasons of the year, is dropping sweetness. If I had vessels, I might fill them ; but my old, riven,* and running-out dish, even when I am at the Well, can bring little away. Nothing but glory will make tight and fast our leaking and rifted† vessels. Alas ! I have skailed‡ more of Christ's grace, love, faith, humility, and godly sorrow, than I have brought with me. How little of the sea can a child carry in his hand ! As little dow§ I take away of my great Sea, my boundless and running-over Christ Jesus.

I have not lighted upon the right gate|| of putting Christ to the bank, and making myself rich with Him. My misguiding and childish trafficking with that matchless Pearl, that heaven's Jewel, the Jewel of the Father's delights, hath put me to a great loss. O that He would take a loan of me, and my stock, and put His name in all my bonds, and serve Himself heir to the poor, mean, portion which I have, and be accountable for the talent Himself ! Gladly would I put Christ into my room to guide all ; and let me be but a servant to run errands, and act by His direction. Let me be His interdicted¶ heir. Lord Jesus, work upon my minority, and let Him win a pupil's blessing. Oh, how would I rejoice to have this work of my salvation legally fastened upon Christ ! A back-bond** of my Lord Jesus that it should be forthcoming to the orphan, would be my happiness. Dependency on Christ were my surest way ; if Christ were my foundation, I were sure enough. I thought the guiding of grace had been no art ; †† I thought it would come of will ; but I would spill‡‡ my own heaven yet, if I had not burdened Christ with all. I but lend my bare name to the sweet covenant ; Christ, behind and before, and on either side, maketh all sure. God will not take an Arminian cautioner.§§ Freewill is a weather-cock, turning at a serpent's tongue, a tutor that cowped||| our Father Adam, unto us ; and brought down the house ; and

* Rent. † Full of rents. ‡ Spilled. § Am able to. || Way.

¶ Forbidden by interdict to enter a possession in the meantime.

** See Let. 118. †† Required no skill, but would come as I chose.

‡‡ Mar. §§ Surety. ||| Overturned, upset.

fold the land ; and sent the father, and mother, and all the bairns through the earth to beg their bread. Nature in the Gospel hath but a cracked credit. Oh, well to* my poor soul for evermore, that my Lord called grace to the council, and put Christ Jesus, with free merits and the blood of God, foremost in the chase to draw sinners after a Ransomer ! Oh, what a sweet block† was it by way of buying and selling, to give and tell down a ransom for grace and glory to dyvours !‡ Oh, would to my Lord that I could cause paper and ink to speak the worth and excellency, the high and loud praises of a Brother-ransomer ! The Ransomer needeth not my report, but, oh, if He would take it, and make use of it ! I should be happy if I had an errand to this world, but for some few years, to spread proclamations, and outcries, and love-letters of the highness, the highness for evermore, the glory, the glory for evermore, of the Ransomer, whose clothes were wet and dyed in blood ! albeit, after I had done that, my soul and body should go back to their mother *Nothing* that their Creator brought them once out from, as from their beginning. But why should I pine away, and pain myself with wishes ? and not believe, rather, that Christ will hire such an outcast as I am, a masterless§ body, put out of the house by the sons of my mother, and give me employment and a calling, one way or other, to set out Christ and His wares to country buyers, and propose Christ unto, and press Him upon some poor souls, that fainer than their life would receive Him ?

You complain heavily of “ your shortcoming in practice, and venturing on suffering for Christ.” You have many marrows.¶ For the first, I would put you off a sense of wretchedness. Hold on ! Christ never yet slew a sighing, groaning child : more of that would make you won goods,¶ and a meet prey for Christ. Alas ! I have too little of it, for venturing on suffering. I had not so much free gear** when I came to Christ’s camp as to buy a sword. I

* It has been well for my soul.

§ None to own him as under his care.

¶ Goods already got.

† Bargain drawn up. ‡ Debtors.

¶ Many to match you.

** Money.

wonder* that Christ should not laugh at such a foldier. I am no better yet ; but faith liveth and spendeth upon our Captain's charges, who is able to pay for all. We need not pity Him, He is rich enough.

Ye desire me also "Not to mistake Christ under a mask." I blefs you, and thank God for it. But alas ! masked or bare-faced, kissing or glooming, I mistake Him : yea, I mistake Him the farthest when the mask is off ; for then I play me with His sweetness. I am like a child that hath a gilded book, that playeth with the ribbons and the gilding, and the picture on the first page, but readeth not the contents of it. Certainly, if my desires to my Well-beloved were fulfilled, I could provoke devils, and crosses, and the world, and temptations to the field ; but oh ! my poor weakness maketh me lie behind the bush and hide me.

Remember my service and my blessing to my Lord. I am mindful of him as I am able. Desire him from a prisoner, to come and visit my good Master, and feel but the smell of His love. It setteth him† well, howbeit he be young, to make Christ his garland. I could not wish him in a better case, than in a fever of love-sickness for Christ.

Remember my bonds. The Lord Jesus be with your spirit.

Yours in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, 1637.

CXXI.—To WILLIAM HALLIDAY.

[The name "Halliday" occurs on the tombstones of the old churchyard of Anwoth. No doubt this correspondent was one of his flock at Anwoth. One of the name lies buried in the old churchyard, with the following inscription on her tombstone :—

"*Margaret Halliday*, spouse of John Bell in Archland, 1631. O death,

* In old editions, it is "*a* wonder," as if in way of exclamation.

† It becomes him.

I will be thy death ! Now is Christ risen from the dead, and is the first fruits of them that . . .” (broken off.)

Archland is the same place as *Henton*, in the parish of Anwoth, a notice of which is given at Letter 219, addressed to this John Bell.]

(DILIGENCE IN SECURING SALVATION.)



LOVING FRIEND,—I received your letter.—I wish that ye take pains for salvation. Mistaken grace, and somewhat like conversion which is not conversion, is the saddest and most doleful thing in the world. Make sure of salvation, and lay the foundation sure, for many are beguiled. Put a low price upon the world's clay ; but a high price upon Christ. Temptations will come , but if they be not made welcome by you, ye have the best of it. Be jealous over yourself and your own heart, and keep touches* with God. Let Him not have a faint and feeble soldier of you. Fear not to back Christ, for He will conquer and overcome. Let no man scaur† at Christ, for I have no quarrels at His cross ; He and His cross are two good guests, and worth the lodging. Men would fain have Christ good-cheap ;‡ but the market will not come down. Acquaint yourself with prayer. Make Christ your Captain and your armour. Make conscience of sinning§ when no eye seeth you. Grace be with you.

Yours, in Christ Jesus,

ABERDEEN.

S. R.

CXXII.—*To a Gentlewoman, after the death of her Husband.*

(VANITY OF EARTHLY POSSESSIONS—CHRIST A SUFFICIENT PORTION—DESIGN OF AFFLICTION.)



DEAR AND LOVING SISTER,—I know that ye are minding your sweet country, and not taking your inn, the place of your banishment, for your home. This

* Keep faith with. It is an old English phrase for “exact performance of agreement.”

† Boggle at, go off in fear.

‡ Gratis.

§ Be conscientious as to sinning.

life is not worthy to be the thatch, or outer wall, of the paradife of your Lord Jefus, that He did fweat for to you, and that He keepeth for you. Short, and filly, and fand-blind were our hope, if it could not look over the water to our beft heritage, and if it ftayed only at home about the doors of our clay houfe.

I marvel not, my dear fifter, that ye complain that ye come fhort of your old wreftlings which ye had for a bleffing; and that now you find it not fo. Bairns are but hired to learn their leffon when they firft go to fchool. And it is enough that thofe who run a race fee the gold only at the ftarting-place; and poffibly they fee little more of it, or nothing at all till they win to the rinks-end,* and get the gold in the loof† of their hand. Our Lord maketh delicates and dainties of His fweet prefents and love-vifits to His own: but Chrift's love, under a veil, is love. If ye get Chrift, howbeit not the fweet and pleafant way ye would have Him, it is enough; for the Well-beloved cometh not our way; He muft wale His own gate‡ Himself. For worldly things, feeing there are meadows and fair flowers in your way to heaven, a fmell in the by-going§ is fufficient. He that would reckon and tell all the ftones in his way, in a journey of three or four hundred miles, and write up in his count-book|| all the herbs and the flowers growing in his way, might come fhort of his journey. You cannot ftay, in your inch of time, to lofe your day (feeing that you are in hafte, and the night and your afternoon will not bide¶ you), in fetting your heart on this vain world. It were your wifdom to read your account-book,|| and to have in readinefs your bufinefs, againft the time you come to death's water-side. I know that your lodging is taken; your forerunner, Chrift, hath not forgotten that; and therefore you muft fet yourfelf to your "one thing," which you cannot well want.

In that our Lord took your hufband to Himself, I know it was that He might make room for Himself. He cutteth off your love to the creature, that ye might learn that God only is the right owner

* Get to the end of the courfe.

† Palm of the hand.

‡ Select His own way.

§ In the paffing by.

|| Journal. ¶ Wait for.

of your love. Sorrow, los, sadnes, death, are the worst of things that are, except sin. But Christ knoweth well what to make of them, and can put His own in the cross's common,* that we shall be obliged to affliction, and thank God who taught us to make our acquaintance with such a rough companion, who can hale us to Christ. You must learn to make your evils your great good; and to spin comforts, peace, joy, communion with Christ, out of your troubles, which are Christ's wooers, sent to speak for you† to Himself. It is easy to get good words, and a comfortable message from our Lord, even from such rough serjeants as divers temptations. Thanks to God for crosses! When we count and reckon our losses in seeking God, we find that godliness is great gain. Great partners of a shipful of gold are glad to see the ship come to the harbour;—surely we, and our Lord Jesus together, have a shipful of gold coming home, and our gold is in that ship. Some are so in love, or, rather, in lust, with this life, that they sell their part of the ship for a little thing. I would counsel you to buy hope, but sell it not, and give not away your crosses for nothing. The inside of Christ's cross is white and joyful, and the far-end of the black cross is a fair and glorious heaven of ease. And seeing Christ hath fastened heaven to the far-end of the cross, and He will not loose the knot Himself, and none else can (for when Christ casteth‡ a knot, all the world cannot loose it), let us then count it exceeding joy when we fall into divers temptations.

Thus recommending you to the tender mercy and grace of our Lord, I rest, your loving brother,

S. R.

ABERDEEN.

CXXIII.—To JOHN GORDON of Cardonefs, Younger.

[JOHN GORDON of Cardonefs, younger, like his father, previously noticed (Let. 82), was naturally a man of strong passions. Judging from this letter, he

* Put you under deep obligations to the cross.

† See 1 Kings ii. 18.

‡ Tieth.

appears not only to have been neglectful of religion, but to have freely indulged in the follies and vices of youth. Rutherford warns him of his sin and danger with much freedom and affectionate earnestness; and these warnings, it is to be hoped, were not in vain. He was in the Covenanters' army in England in 1644, as appears from a letter of his preserved among the Wodrow MSS. It is dated "Sunderland, 28th March 1644," and is addressed to Mr Thomas Wylie. It is written in a religious strain. After referring to the success of the army, and to the account of this drawn up by Mr Robert Douglas, it contains in the close the following passage:—"I entreat you be kind to my wife, and deal with her neither to take my absence, nor the form of coming from her, in evil part; for, in God's presence, public duties and nothing else removed me, or marred the form of my removal. Be earnest with her that she seek a nearer acquaintance with Christ: and fail not to pray for her and her family, and me." (*Wodrow MSS.*, vol. xxix. 4to.)]

(REASONS FOR BEING EARNEST ABOUT THE SOUL, AND FOR RESIGNATION.)



HONOURED AND DEAR BROTHER,—I wrote of late to you: multitudes of letters burden me now. I am refreshed with your letter.

I exhort you in the bowels of Christ, set to work for your soul. And let these bear weight with you, and ponder them seriously: 1st, Weeping and gnashing of teeth in utter darkness, or heaven's joy. 2^{dly}, Think what ye would give for an hour, when ye shall lie like dead, cold, blackened clay. 3^{dly}, There is sand in your glass yet, and your sun is not gone down. 4^{thly}, Consider what joy and peace are in Christ's service. 5^{thly}, Think what advantage it will be to have angels, the world, life and death, crosses, yea, and devils, all for you, as the King's serjeants and servants, to do your business. 6^{thly}, To have mercy on your seed, and a blessing on your house. 7^{thly}, To have true honour, and a name on earth that casteth a sweet smell. 8^{thly}, How ye will rejoice when Christ layeth down your head under His chin, and betwixt His breasts, and drieth your face, and welcometh you to glory and happiness. 9^{thly}, Imagine what pain and torture is a guilty conscience; what slavery to carry the devil's dishonest loads. 10^{thly}, Sin's joys are but night-dreams, thoughts, vapours, imaginations, and shadows. 11^{thly},

What dignity it is to be a son of God. *12thly*, Dominion and mastery over temptations, over the world and sin. *13thly*, That your enemies should be the tail, and you the head.

For your bairns, now at rest, I speak to you and your wife (and cause her read this). *1st*, I am a witness for Barbara's glory in heaven. *2dly*, For the rest, I write it under my hand, there are days coming on Scotland when barren wombs, and dry breasts, and childless parents shall be pronounced blessed. They are, then, in the lee of the harbour ere the storm come on. *3dly*, They are not lost to you that are laid up in Christ's treasury in heaven. *4thly*, At the resurrection, ye shall meet with them; thither they are sent before, but not sent away. *5thly*, Your Lord loveth you, who is homely* to take and give, borrow and lend. *6thly*, Let not bairns be your idols; for God will be jealous, and take away the idol, because He is greedy of your love wholly.

I bless you, your wife, and children. Grace for evermore be with you.

Your loving pastor,

S. R.

ABERDEEN.

CXXIV.—*To JOHN GORDON of Cardonefs, Elder.*

(CALL TO EARNESTNESS ABOUT SALVATION—INTRUSION OF MINISTERS.)



HONOURABLE, AND DEAREST IN THE LORD,—
Your letter hath refreshed my soul. My joy is fulfilled if Christ and ye be fast together. Ye are my joy and my crown. Ye know that I have recommended His love to you. I defy the world, Satan, and sin. His love hath neither brim nor bottom in it. My dearest in Christ, I write my soul's desire to you. Heaven is not at the next door. I find Christianity to be a hard task; set to in your evening. We would all keep both Christ and our

* Acts the part of a familiar friend.

right eye, our right hand and foot ; but it will not do with us. I beseech you, by the mercies of God, and your compearance* before Christ, look Christ's account-book† and your own together, and collate them. Give the remnant of your time to your soul. This great idol-god, the world, will be lying in white ashes on the day of your compearance;* and why should night-dreams, and day-shadows, and water-froth, and May-flowers run away with your heart? When we win to the water-side, and black death's river-brink, and put our foot into the boat, we shall laugh at our folly. Sir, I recommend unto you the thoughts of death, and how ye would wish your soul to be when ye shall lie cold, blue, ill-smelling clay.

For any hireling to be intruded, I, being the King's prisoner, cannot say much ; but, as God's minister, I desire you to read Acts i. 15, 16, to the end, and Acts vi. 2-5, and ye shall find that God's people should have a voice in choosing church-rulers and teachers. I shall be sorry if, willingly, ye shall give way to his unlawful intrusion upon my labours. The only wife God direct you.

God's grace be with you.

Your loving pastor,

S. R.

ABERDEEN.

CXXV.—*To the* LADY FORRET.

[LADY FORRET was, we suppose, a “faint in Cæsar's household ;” for Lord Forret (originally Mr David Balfour), was one of Lauderdale's friends, appointed to watch the outed ministers in Fife. See *Blair's Life*, by Row.]

(SICKNESS A KINDNESS—CHRIST'S GLOOMS BETTER THAN
THE WORLD'S JOYS.)



WORTHY MISTRESS,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you.—I long to hear from you. I hear Christ hath been that‡ kind as to visit you with sickness, and to bring

* Appearing in court in obedience to a summons.

† Journal of transactions.

‡ So very kind.

you to the door of the grave : but ye found the door shut (blessed be His glorious name !) whill* ye be riper for eternity. He will have more service of you ; and, therefore, He seeketh of you that henceforth ye be honest to your new Husband, the Son of God. We have all idol-love, and are whorishly inclined to love other things beside our Lord ; and, therefore, our Lord hunteth for our love more ways than one or two. Oh that Christ had His own of us ! I know He will not want you, and that is a sweet wilfulness in His love : and ye have as good cause, on the other part, to be headstrong and peremptory in your love to Christ, and not to part, nor divide your love betwixt Him and the world. If it were more, it is little enough, yea, too little for Christ.

I am now, every way, in good terms with Christ. He hath set a banished prisoner as a seal on His heart, and as a bracelet on His arm. That crabbed and black tree of the cross laugheth upon me now ; the alarming noise of the cross is worse than itself. I love Christ's glooms† better than the world's worm-eaten joys. Oh, if all the kingdom were as I am, except these bonds ! My loss is gain ; my sadness joyful ; my bonds, liberty ; my tears comfortable. This world is not worth a drink of cold water. Oh, but Christ's love casteth a great heat ! Hell, and all the salt sea, and the rivers of the earth, cannot quench it.

I remember you to God ; ye have the prayers of a prisoner of Christ. Grace, grace, be with you.

Yours, in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, *March 9, 1637.*

* Till.

† Frowns.



CXXVI.—*For* MARION M'NAUGHT.(ADHERENCE TO DUTY AMIDST OPPOSITION—POWER OF
CHRIST'S LOVE.)

LOVING AND DEAR SISTER,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you. Your letter hath refreshed my soul. You shall not have my advice to make haste to go out of that town ; for if you remove out of Kirkcudbright, they will easily undo all. You are at God's work, and in His way there. Be strong in the Lord ; the devil is weaker than you are, because stronger is He that is in you than he that is in the world. Your care of and love showed towards me, now a prisoner of Christ, is laid up for you in heaven, and you shall know that it is come up in remembrance before God.

Pray, pray for my desolate flock ; and give them your counsel, when you meet with any of them. It shall be my grief to hear that a wolf enter in upon my labours ; but if the Lord permit it, I am silent. My sky shall clear, for Christ layeth my head in His bosom, and admitteth me to lean there. I never knew before what His love was in such a measure. If He leave me, He leaveth me in pain, and sick of love ; and yet my sickness is my life and health. I have a fire within me ; I defy all the devils in hell and all the prelates in Scotland, to cast water on it.

I rejoice at your courage and faith. Pray still, as if I were on my journey to come and be your pastor. What iron gates or bars are able to stand it out against Christ ? for when He bloweth, they open to Him.

I remember your husband. Grace, grace, be with you.

Yours, in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, *March* 11, 1637.

CXXVII.—To JOHN CARSEN.

[JOHN CARSEN was the son of Andrew Carfen, merchant and burgefs of Kirkcudbright. He was retoured heir of his father 13th May 1635.—*Inquir. Gener. No. 2121*. There are still feveral of the name in Kirkcudbright, and it is found often in the churchyard. There is “Bailie John Carfen” in the “Minute-book of Comm. of Covenanters,” along with Bailie Ewart; and is called “Carfen of *Senawick*.”]

(NOTHING WORTH THE FINDING, BUT CHRIST.)



MY WELL-BELOVED AND DEAR FRIEND,—
Every one seeketh not God, and far fewer find Him; because they seek amifs. He is to be fought for above all things, if men would find what they seek. Let feathers and shadows alone to children, and go seek your Well-beloved. Your only errand to the world, is to woo Chrift; therefore, put other lovers from about the houle, and let Chrift have all your love, without minching* or dividing it. It is little enough, if there were more of it. The ferving of the world and fin hath but a bafe reward and fmoke instead of pleafures, and but a night-dream for true eafe to the foul. Go where you will, your foul fhall not fleep found but in Chrift's bofom. Come in to Him, and lie down, and reft you on the flain Son of God, and inquire for Him. I fought Him; and now, a fig for all the worm-eaten pleafures, and moth-eaten glory out of heaven, fince I have found Him, and in Him all I can want or wifh! He hath made me a king over the world. Princes cannot overcome me. Chrift hath given me the marriage-kifs, and He hath my marriage-love: we have made up a full bargain, that fhall not go back on either fide. Oh, if ye, and all in that country, knew what fweet terms of mercy are betwixt Him and me! Grace be with you.

Yours, in his fweet Lord Jefus,

ABERDEEN, *March 11, 1637.*

S. R.

* Cutting into fmall pieces.

CXXVIII.—*To the* EARL OF CASSILLIS.

[JOHN KENNEDY, sixth EARL OF CASSILLIS, was the son of Gilbert Kennedy, master of Cassillis (which is six miles from Ayr), third son of Gilbert, fourth Earl of Cassillis. He was served heir to his uncle, John, fifth Earl of Cassillis, in 1616. His Lordship was a person of considerable talents, of great virtue, and a zealous Covenanter. Having studied under Dr Cameron, Principal of the College of Glasgow, a great defender of absolute government, he could not yield to some clauses in the first draught of The Covenant, which seemed to vindicate the use of defensive arms against the King; but he agreed to the Covenant as it now stands. He sat in the Glasgow Assembly, 1638, being returned as elder by the Presbytery of Ayr; and was one of the three ruling elders sent to the Assembly of Divines at Westminster in 1643. He was one of the commissioners who, in March 1650, went from Scotland to Breda, to treat with Charles II., and who returned 23d June that year, bringing his Majesty along with them. He attended at the crowning of Charles at Scoone, January 1, 1651. So strongly attached was he to the royal family, that when Cromwell, at one time, summoned him to a meeting, instead of attending it, he, along with some ministers and his chaplain, kept a day of fasting and prayer in his family. Such was his hostility to the measures of the court, in establishing Prelacy and in ejecting the Presbyterian ministers from their charges for non-conformity, that he would scarce ever pay stipend to any of the curates intruded into their places till he got a charge of horning. Wodrow designates him “the great and worthy Earl of Cassillis.” “I have this account,” says he, “of the Earl of Cassillis, that he was singularly pious, and a man of a very high spirit, who carried with a great state and majesty. His carriage in his family was most exemplary and religious. He was very much in secret duty, and had his hours wherein none had access to him. Upon the Sabbath his carriage was singular. He usually wrote the sermon, and at night caused his chaplain to examine all his servants and his children, even after they were pretty big, upon the sermon; and every one behoved to give their notes; and after all, many times he took out his own papers and read to them. When at Edinburgh, Lauderdale sent a servant to him upon a Sabbath night, telling him he was coming to wait on him. Presently he called Mr Violant, his chaplain, and ordered him to go out and meet Lauderdale, and tell him that if he designed a Sabbath day’s visit he was very welcome, but he would discourse upon no other thing with him but what was suitable to the day. Lauderdale came up, and discoursed with him,—as he could very well do,—only upon points of divinity.” (*Wodrow’s Analecta*.) His Lordship died at his own house in the West in 1668.

The mansion is a peculiar edifice, near Dalrymple. It is on the banks of the Doon, and embosomed in wood, with the hill called *The Dounans* facing the house. It is a confused pile of building. A long avenue of fine old trees leads up to it.]

(HONOUR OF TESTIFYING FOR CHRIST.)



Y VERY NOBLE AND HONOURABLE LORD,
—I make bold (out of the honourable and Christian report I hear of your Lordship, having no other thing to say but that which concerneth the honourable cause which the Lord hath enabled your Lordship to profess) to write this, that it is your Lordship's crown, your glory, and your honour, to set your shoulder under the Lord's glory, now falling to the ground, and to back Christ now, when so many think it wisdom to let Him fend* for Himself. The shields of the earth ever did, and do still believe that Christ is a cumbersome neighbour, and that it is a pain to hold up His yeas and nays. They fear that He take their chariots, and their crowns, and their honour from them; but my Lord standeth in need of none of them all. But it is your glory to own Christ and His buried truth; for, let men say what they please, the plea with Zion's enemies in this day of Jacob's trouble is, if Christ should be King, and no mouth speak laws but His? It concerneth the apple of Christ's eye, and His royal privileges, what is now debated; and Christ's kingly honour is come to yea and nay. But let me be pardoned, my dear and noble Lord, when I beseech you by the mercies of God, by the comfort of the Spirit, by the wounds of our dear Saviour, by your compearance† before the Judge of quick and dead, to stand for Christ, and to back Him.‡ Oh, if the nobles had done their part, and been zealous for the Lord! it had not been as it is now. But men think it wisdom to stand beside Christ till His head be broken, and sing dumb.§ There is a time coming when Christ will have a thick|| court, and He will be the glory of

* Provide for, shift for.

† Appearing when summoned.

‡ Help, second Him in what He does.

§ Be reduced to silence.

|| Crowded.

Scotland ; and He will make a diadem, a garland, a feal upon His heart, and a ring upon His finger, of those who have avouched Him before this faithless generation. Howbeit, ere that come, wrath from the Lord is ordained for this land.

My Lord, I have cause to write this to your Lordship ; for I dare not conceal His kindness to the foul of an afflicted, exiled prisoner. Who hath more cause to boast in the Lord than such a sinner as I, who am feasted with the consolations of Christ, and have no pain in my sufferings, but the pain of soul-sickness of love for Christ, and sorrow that I cannot help to sound aloud the praises of Him who hath heard the sighing of the prisoner, and is content to lay the head of His oppressed servant in His bosom, under His chin, and let Him feel the smell of His garments ? It behoved me to write this, that your Lordship might know that Christ is as good as He is called ; and to testify to your Lordship, that the cause, which your Lordship now professeth before the faithless world, is Christ's, and that your Lordship shall have no shame of it.

Grace be with you.

Your Lordship's obliged servant,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, *March 13, 1637.*

CXXIX.—To MR ROBERT GORDON, *Bailie of Ayr.*

[ROBERT GORDON was a merchant in Ayr. In Paterfon's *History of the County of Ayr*, he and his partner merchants are mentioned as having, in 1644, supplied the Scots army in Ireland, at a certain price, with a large quantity of meal and beans. He was cousin to John, Viscount of Kenmure, whose "Laft and Heavenly Speeches and Glorious Departure" were published by Rutherford, and to which there is a reference in the beginning of this letter. This appears from the following quotations from these Speeches:—"To a cousin (Robert Gordon, bailie of Ayr), he said, 'Robert, I know you have light and understanding ; and though you have no need to be instructed by me, yet have you need to be incited'" (p. 94). Gordon was frequently a member of the Town Council of Ayr. In the Records, he appears in 1631 as Dean of Guild, and in 1632 as Bailie. In 1638, and 1647, he held the office of Pro-

voft. He was a man of piety, and a zealous fupporter of the Prefbyterian caufe. In an old parchment copy of the National Covenant 1638 (in the poffeffion of Hugh Cowan, Efquire, Ayr), Gordon's fignature appears, as well as the fignatures of the other members of the Town Council, fome of whom were Rutherford's correspondents, as John Kennedy, John Ofburn, and John Stewart. The above copy of the National Covenant is figned by Rothés, Montrofe, and other men of rank, being one of the copies fent at that time by the Covenanters from Edinburgh to the various burghs throughout the country to be fubfcribed.]

(CHRIST ABOVE ALL.)



WORTHY SIR,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you.—I long to hear from you on paper. Remember your chief's fpeeches* on his death-bed. I pray you, fir, fell all, and buy the Pearl. Time will cut you from this world's glory; look what will do you good, when your glaſs ſhall be run out. And let Chriſt's love bear moſt court in your ſoul, and that court will bear down the love of other things. Chriſt ſeeketh your help in your place; give Him your hand. Who hath more cauſe to encourage others to own Chriſt than I have? for He hath made me ſick of love, and left me in pain to wreſtle with His love. And love is like to fall afwoon through His abſence. I mean not that He deſerteth me, or that I am ebb† of comforts; but this is an unco‡ pain. O that I had a heart and a love to render to Him back again! Oh, if principalities and powers, thrones and dominions, and all the world would help me to praife! Praiſe Him in my behalf.

Remember my love to your wife. I thank you moſt kindly for your love to my brother. Grace be with you.

Yours, in his ſweet Lord Jeſus,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, *March* 13, 1637.

* The words of Lord Kenmure.

† At a low tide in reſpect of.

‡ Strange.

CXXX.—To JOHN KENNEDY, *Bailie of Ayr.*

(CHRIST'S LOVE—THE THREE WONDERS—DESIRES FOR HIS
SECOND COMING.)



RACE, mercy, and peace be to you. Your not writing to me cannot bind me up from remembering you now and then, that at least ye may be a witness, and a third man, to behold on paper what is betwixt Christ and me. I was in His eyes like a young orphan, wanting known parents, casten out in the open fields; either Christ behoved to take me up, and to bring me home to His house and fireside, else I had died in the fields. And now I am homely* with Christ's love, so that I think the house mine own, and the Master of the house mine also. Christ inquired not, when He began to love me, whether I was fair, or black, or sun-burnt; love taketh what it may have. He loved me before this time, I know; but now I have the flower of His love; His love is come to a fair bloom, like a young rose opened up out of the green leaves; and it casteth a strong and fragrant smell. I want nothing but ways of expressing Christ's love. A full vessel would have a vent. Oh, if I could smoke out, and cast out coals, to make a fire in many breasts of this land! Oh! it is a pity that there were not many imprisoned for Christ, were it for no other purpose than to write books and love-songs of the love of Christ. This love would keep all created tongues of men and angels in exercise, and busy night and day, to speak of it. Alas! I can speak nothing of it, but wonder at three things in His love:—*First*, freedom. Oh that lumps of sin should get such love for nothing! *Secondly*, the sweetness of His love. I give over either to speak or write of it; but those that feel it, may better bear witness what it is. But it is so sweet, that, next to

* At home with, on no ceremony with.

Christ Himself, nothing can match it. Nay, I think that a soul could live eternally blessed only on Christ's love, and feed upon no other thing. Yea, when Christ in love giveth a blow, it doeth a foul good; and it is a kind of comfort and joy to it to get a cuff* with the lovely, sweet, and soft hand of Jesus. And, *thirdly*, what power and strength are in His love! I am persuaded it can climb a steep hill, with hell upon its back; and swim through water and not drown; and sing in the fire, and find no pain; and triumph in losses, prisons, sorrows, exile, disgrace, and laugh and rejoice in death. O for a year's lease of the sense of His love without a cloud, to try what Christ is! O for the coming of the Bridegroom! O, when shall I see the Bridegroom and the Bride meet in the clouds, and kiss each other! O, when will we get our day, and our heart's fill of that love! O, if it were lawful to complain of the famine of that love, and want of the immediate vision of God! O time, time! how dost thou torment the souls of those that would be swallowed up of Christ's love, because thou movest so slowly! Oh, if He would pity a poor prisoner, and blow love upon me, and give a prisoner a taste or draught of that sweetness, which is glory as it were begun, to be a confirmation that Christ and I shall have our fill of each other for ever! Come hither, O love of Christ, that I may once kiss thee before I die! What would I not give to have time, that lieth betwixt Christ and me, taken out of the way, that we might once meet! I cannot think but that, at the first sight I shall see of that most lovely and fairest face, love will come out of His two eyes, and fill me with astonishment. I would but desire to stand at the outer side of the gates of the New Jerusalem, and look through a hole of the door, and see Christ's face. A borrowed vision in this life would be my borrowed and begun heaven, whilst† the long, long-looked-for day dawn. It is not for nothing that it is said, "Christ in you the hope of glory."‡ I will be content of no pawn of heaven but Christ Himself; for Christ, possessed by faith here, is young heaven, and glory in the bud. If

* A blow.

† Till.

‡ Col. 1. 27.

I had that pawn, I would bide horning* and hell both, ere I gave it again. All that we have here is scarce the picture of glory. Should not we young bairns long and look for the expiring of our minority? It were good to be daily begging propines† and love-gifts, and the Bridegroom's favours; and, if we can do no more, to seek crumbs, and hungry dinners of Christ's love, to keep the taste of heaven in our mouth whill‡ supper-time. I know it is far after noon, and nigh the marriage-supper of the Lamb; the table is covered already. O Well-beloved, run, run fast! O fair day, when wilt thou dawn! O shadows, flee away! I think hope and love, woven through other,§ make our absence from Christ spiritual torment. It is a pain to wait on; but hope that maketh not ashamed swalloweth up that pain. It is not unkindness that keepeth Christ and us so long afunder. What can I say to Christ's love? I think more than I can say. To consider, that when my Lord Jesus may take the air (if I may so speak), and go abroad, yet He will be confined and keep the prison with me! But, in all this sweet communion with Him, what am I to be thanked for? I am but a sufferer. Whether I will or not, He will be kind to me; as if He had defied my guiltiness to make Him unkind, He so beareth His love in on me. Here I die with wondering, that justice hindereth not love; for there are none in hell, nor out of hell, more unworthy of Christ's love. Shame may confound and scaur|| me once to hold up my black mouth to receive one of Christ's undeserved kisses. If my inner-side were turned out, and all men saw my vileness, they would say to me, "It is a shame for thee to stand still whill‡ Christ kifs thee and embrace thee." It would seem to become me rather to run away from His love, as ashamed at my own unworthiness; nay, I may think shame to take heaven, who have so highly provoked my Lord Jesus. But seeing Christ's love will shame me, I am content to be shamed. My desire is, that my Lord would give

* A legal demand for payment of a debt, under threat of imprisonment if disregarded. It used to be made with three blasts of a horn in the market-place.

† Presents.

‡ Till.

§ Through one another.

|| Make afraid.

me broader and deeper thoughts, to feed myself with wondering at His love. I would I could weigh it, but I have no balance for it. When I have worn my tongue to the stump, in praising of Christ, I have done nothing to Him. I must let Him alone, for my withered arms will not go about His high, wide, long, and broad love. What remaineth, then, but that my debt to the love of Christ lie unpaid for all eternity? All that are in heaven are black-shamed* with His love as well as I. We must all be dyvours† together; and the blessing of that houseful, or heavenful, of dyvours† shall rest for ever upon Him. Oh, if this land and nation would come and stand beside His inconceivable and glorious perfections, and look in, and love, and adore! Would to God I could bring in many lovers to Christ's house! But this nation hath forsaken the Fountain of living waters. Lord, cast not water on Scotland's coal. Wo, wo will be to this land, because of the day of the Lord's fierce anger that is so fast coming.

Grace be with you.

Your affectionate brother, in our Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ABERDEEN.

CXXXI.—To JEAN BROWN.

(*HIS WISDOM IN OUR TRIALS—REJOICE IN TRIBULATION.*)



MISTRESS,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you. I am glad that ye go on at Christ's back, in this dark and cloudy time. It were good to sell other things for Him; for when all these days are over, we shall find it our advantage that we have taken part with Christ. I confidently believe that His enemies shall be His footstool, and that He will make green flowers dead, withered hay, when the honour and glory shall fall off them, like the bloom or flower of a green herb shaken with

* Made black with shame.

† Debtors.

the wind. It were not wisdom for us to think that Christ and the Gospel would come and sit down at our fireside; nay, but we must go out of our own warm houses, and seek Christ and His Gospel. It is not the sunny side of Christ that we must look to, and we must not forsake Him for want of that; but must set our face against what may befall us in following on, till He and we be through the briers and bushes, on the dry ground. Our soft nature would be borne through the troubles of this miserable life in Christ's arms; and it is His wisdom, who knoweth our mould, that His bairns go wet-shod and cold-footed to heaven. Oh, how sweet a thing were it for us to learn to make our burdens light, by framing our hearts to the burden, and making our Lord's will a law!

I find Christ and His cross not so ill* to please, nor yet such troublesome guests, as men call them; nay, I think patience should make the water which Christ giveth us good wine, and His drops good metal. And we have cause to wait on; for, ere it be long, our Master will be at us, and bring this whole world out, before the sun and daylight, in their blacks and whites. Happy are they who are found watching. Our sand-glass is not so long as we need to weary; time will eat away and root out our woes and sorrow. Our heaven is in the bud, and growing up to an harvest. Why then should we not follow on, seeing our span-length of time will come to an inch? Therefore I commend Christ to you, as your last-living, and longest-living Husband, and the staff of your old age. Let Him now have the rest of your days. And think not much of a storm upon the ship that Christ saileth in: there shall no passenger fall overboard; but the crazed ship and the sea-sick passengers shall come to land safe.

I am in as sweet communion with Christ as a poor sinner can be; and am only pained that He hath much beauty and fairness, and *I* little love; He great power and mercy, and *I* little faith; He much light, and *I* bleared eyes. O that I saw Him in the sweetness of His love, and in His marriage-clothes, and were over head and ears in love

* Difficult.

with that princely one, Christ Jesus my Lord! Alas, my riven * dish, and the running-out vessel, can hold little of Christ Jesus!

I have joy in this, that I would not refuse death before† I put Christ's lawful heritage in men's trying; and what know I, if they would have pleased both Christ and me? Alas, that this land hath put Christ to open rousing,‡ and to an "Any man bids more?" Blessed are they who would hold the crown on His head, and buy Christ's honour with their own losses.

I rejoice to hear that your son John§ is coming to visit Christ, and taste of His love. I hope that he will not lose his pains, nor rue of that choice. I had always (as I said often to you) a great love to dear Mr John Brown, because I thought I saw Christ in him more than in his brethren. Fain would I write to him, to stand by my sweet Master; and I wish ye would let him read my letter, and the joy I shall have if he will appear for, and side with, my Lord Jesus. Grace be with you.

Yours, in his sweet Jesus,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, *March* 13, 1637.

CXXXII.—*To* JEAN MACMILLAN.

[There were Macmillans at Dalshangan, near Carlsphairn, noted as Covenanters. But the name is a common one, and this correspondent was probably an Anwoth parishioner.]

(*STRIVE TO ENTER IN.*)



OVING SISTER,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you.

I cannot come to you to give you my counsel; and howbeit I would come, I cannot stay with you. But I be-

* Rent, cracked.

† I would die, ere ever I would put Christ's property at the disposal of men who may choose to appoint their own times.

‡ Public sale by auction.

§ This was he who was afterwards so well known as an eminent Christian, Brown of Wamphray.

feech you to keep Christ, for I did what I could to put you within grips* of Him. I told you Christ's testament and latter-will plainly, and I kept nothing back that my Lord gave me; and I gave Christ to you with good will. I pray you to make Him your own, and go not from that truth which I taught you, in one hair-breadth. That truth will save you if you follow it. Salvation is not an easy thing, and soon gotten. I often told you that few are saved, and many damned: I pray you to make your poor soul sure of salvation, and the seeking of heaven your daily task. If ye never had a sick night and a pained soul for sin, ye have not yet lighted upon Christ. Look to the right marks of having closed with Christ. If ye love Him better than the world, and would quit all the world for Him, then that faith the work is found. Oh, if ye saw the beauty of Jesus, and smelled the fragrance of His love, you would run through fire and water to be at Him! God send you Him.

Pray for me, for I cannot forget you. Grace be with you.

Your loving pastor,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, 1637.

CXXXIII.—*To the* LADY BUSBIE.

[LADY BUSBIE is probably the mother-in-law of R. Blair, Rutherford's intimate friend. R. Blair married Catherine, daughter of Hugh Montgomery, Laird of Busbie, near Glasgow, in 1635.]

(COMPLETE SURRENDER TO CHRIST—NO IDOLS—TRIALS DISCOVER SINS—A FREE SALVATION—THE MARRIAGE SUPPER.)



ISTRESS,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you.—I am glad to hear that Christ and ye are one, and that ye have made Him your “one thing,” whereas many are painfully toiled in seeking many things, and their many things are

* Reach, grasp.

nothing. It is only best that ye set yourself apart, as a thing laid up and out of the gate,* for Christ alone; for ye are good for no other thing than Christ; and He hath been going about you these many years, by afflictions, to engage you to Himself. It were a pity and a loss to say Him nay. Verily I could wish that I could swim through hell, and all the ill weather in the world, and Christ in my arms. But it is my evil and folly, that except Christ come unsent for, I dow† not go to seek Him: when He and I fall a-reckoning, we are both behind, He in payment, and I in counting; and so marches‡ lie still unredd,§ and accounts uncleared betwixt us. Oh that He would take His own blood for counts and miscounts,|| that I might be a free man, and none had any claim to me but only, only Jesus. I will think it no bondage to be roused,¶ comprised,** and possessed by Christ as His bondman.

Think well of the visitation of your Lord; for I find one thing, which I saw not well before, that when the saints are under trials, and well humbled, little sins raise great cries and war-shouts in the conscience; and in prosperity, conscience is a pope, to give dispensations, and let out and in, and give latitude and elbow-room to our heart. Oh, how little care we for pardon at Christ's hand, when we make dispensations! And all is but bairns' play, till a cross without beget a heavier cross within, and then we play no longer with our idols. It is good still†† to be severe against ourselves; for we but transform God's mercy into an idol, and an idol that hath a dispensation to give, for the turning of the grace of God into wantonness. Happy are they who take up God, wrath, justice, and sin, as they are in themselves; for we have miscarrying light, that parteth with the child, when we have good resolutions only. But, God be thanked, that salvation is not rolled upon our wheels.

Oh, but Christ hath a saving eye! salvation is in His eyelids! When He first looked on me, I was saved; it cost Him but a look

* Out of the way.

† Cannot.

‡ Boundaries.

§ Undefined.

|| Erroneous reckonings.

¶ Set up to public sale by auction.

** Seized for debt.

†† Always.

to make hell quit of me ! Oh, but merits, free merits, and the dear blood of God, were the best gate* that ever we could have gotten out of hell ! Oh what a sweet, oh what a safe and sure way is it, to come out of hell leaning on a Saviour ! That Christ and a sinner should be one, and have heaven betwixt them, and be halvers of salvation, is the wonder of salvation. What more humble could love be ? And what an excellent smell doth Christ cast on His lower garden, where there grow but wild flowers, if we speak by way of comparison. But there is nothing but perfect garden flowers in heaven, and the best plentiful† that is there is Christ. We are all obliged to love heaven for Christ's sake. He graceth heaven, and all His Father's house, with His presence. He is a Rose that beautifieth all the upper garden of God ; a leaf of that Rose of God for smell is worth a world. O that He would blow His smell upon a withered and dead soul ! Let us, then, go on to meet with Him, and to be filled with the sweetness of His love. Nothing will hold Him from us. He hath decreed to put time, sin, hell, devils, men, and death out of the way, and to rid‡ the rough way betwixt us and Him, that we may enjoy one another. It is strange and wonderful, that He would think long§ in heaven without us ; and that He would have the company of sinners to solace and delight Himself withal in heaven. And now the supper is abiding us. Christ, the Bridegroom, with desire is waiting on, till the bride, the Lamb's wife, be busked|| for the marriage, and the great hall be redd¶ for the meeting of that joyful couple. Oh, fools ! what do we here ? and why sit we still ? Why sleep we in the prison ? Were it not best to make us wings, to flee up to our blessed Match, our Marrow,** and our fellow Friend ?

I think, Mistresses, that ye are looking thereaway,†† and that this is your second or third thought. Make forward ; your Guide waiteth on you.

* Way, manner.

§ Have a longing heart.

** Partner.

† Furniture of a house.

|| Decked with ornaments.

†† To that quarter.

‡ Annihilate.

¶ Cleared out.

I cannot but bless you for your care and kindness to the saints. God give you to find mercy, in that day of our Lord Jesus; to whose saving grace I recommend you.

Yours, in our Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, 1637.

CXXXIV.—*To JOHN EWART, Bailie of Kirkcudbright.*

[JOHN EWART'S name often occurs in the "Minute Book of Comm. of Covenanters," as residing in Kirkcudbright. He is understood to be the father of the John Ewart who was sentenced to banishment, 1663, for refusing to take part in quelling a tumult raised at the intrusion of a curate in room of the ejected minister of Kirkcudbright.—(*Wodrow's Hist.*) A descendant of his at Stranraer has a small silver cup, which has been handed down as once belonging to his ancestors.]

(*THE CROSS NO BURDEN—NEED OF SURE FOUNDATION.*)



MY VERY WORTHY AND DEAR FRIEND,—I cannot but most kindly thank you for the expressions of your love. Your love and respect to me is a great comfort to me.

I bless His high and glorious name, that the terrors of great men have not affrighted me from openly avouching the Son of God. Nay, His cross is the sweetest burden that ever I bare; it is such a burden as wings are to a bird, or sails are to a ship, to carry me forward to my harbour. I have not much cause to fall in love with the world; but rather to wish that He who sitteth upon the floods would bring my broken ship to land, and keep my conscience safe in these dangerous times; for wrath from the Lord is coming on this sinful land.

It were good that we prisoners of hope know of our stronghold to run to, before the storm come on; therefore, Sir, I beseech you by the mercies of God, and comforts of His Spirit, by the blood of

your Saviour, and by your compearance* before the sin-revenging Judge of the world, keep your garments clean, and stand for the truth of Christ, which ye profess. When the time shall come that your eye-strings shall break, your face wax pale, your breath grow cold, and this house of clay shall totter, and your one foot shall be over the march,† in eternity, it will be your comfort and joy that ye gave your name to Christ. The greatest part of the world think heaven at the next door, and that Christianity is an easy task; but they will be beguiled. Worthy Sir, I beseech you, make sure work of salvation. I have found by experience, that all I could do hath had much ado‡ in the day of my trial; and, therefore, lay up a sure foundation for the time to come.

I cannot requite you for your undeserved favours to me and my now afflicted brother. But I trust to remember you to God. Remember me heartily to your kind wife.

Yours, in his only Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, *March 13, 1637.*

CXXXV.—*To WILLIAM FULLERTON, Provost of Kirkcudbright.*

(*FEAR NOT THEM WHO KILL THE BODY—UNEXPECTED FAVOUR.*)



MUCH HONOURED SIR,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you. I am much obliged to your love in God. I beseech you, Sir, let nothing be so dear to you as Christ's truth, for salvation is worth all the world; and, therefore, be not afraid of men that shall die. The Lord will do for you§ in your suffering for Him, and will bless your house and seed; and ye have God's promise, that ye shall have His presence in fire, water, and in seven tribulations. Your day shall wear to an end, and your

* Appearance in court in obedience to a summons.

† My utmost strength is hard put to.

‡ Boundary.

§ Act for.

fun go down. In death it will be your joy that ye have ventured all ye have for Christ; and there is not a promise of heaven made but to such as are willing to suffer for it. It is a castle taken by force. This earth is but the clay portion of bastards; and, therefore, no wonder that the world smile on its own; but better things are laid up for His lawfully-begotten bairns, whom the world hateth.

I have experience to speak this; for I would not exchange my prison and sad nights with the court, honour, and ease of my adventures. My Lord is pleased to make many unknown faces to laugh upon me, and to provide a lodging for me; and He Himself visiteth my soul with feasts of spiritual comforts. Oh how sweet a Master is Christ! Blessed are they who lay down all for Him.

I thank you kindly for your love to my distressed brother. Ye have the blessing and prayers of the prisoner of Christ to you, your wife and your children.

Remember my love and blessing to William and Samuel. I desire them in their youth to seek the Lord, and to fear His great name; to pray twice a-day, at least, to God, and to read God's word; to keep themselves from cursing, lying, and filthy talking.

Now the only wife God, and the presence of the Son of God, be with you all.

Yours in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, *March 13, 1637.*

CXXXVI.—*To ROBERT GLENDINNING, Minister of Kirkcudbright.*

(PREPARE TO MEET THY GOD—CHRIST HIS JOY.)



MY DEAR FRIEND,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you. I thank you most kindly for your care of me, and your love and respective* kindness to my brother in

* Perhaps this word means kindness that had respect to his special needs.

his distrefs. I pray the Lord that ye may find mercy in the day of Chrift; and I entreat you, Sir, to confider the times which ye live in, and that your foul is more worth to you than the whole world, which, in the day of the blowing of the Laft Trumpet, fhall lie in white afhes, as an old caſtle burned to nothing. And remember that judgment and eternity is before you. My dear and worthy friend, let me entreat you in Chrift's name, and by the falvation of your foul, and by your compearance* before the dreadful and fin-revenging Judge of the world, to make your accounts ready. Redd† them ere ye come to the water-fide; for your afternoon will wear ſhort, and your fun fall low and go down; and ye know that this long time your Lord hath waited on you. Oh how comfortable a thing it will be to you, when time fhall be no more, and your foul fhall depart out of the houſe of clay to vaſt and endleſs eternity, to have your foul dreſſed up, and prepared for your Bridegroom! No loſs is comparable to the loſs of the foul; there is no hope of regaining that loſs. Oh how joyful would my foul be to hear that ye would ſtart to the gate,‡ and contend for the crown, and leave all vanities, and make Chrift your garland! Let your foul put away your old lovers, and let Chrift have your whole love.

I have ſome experience to write of this to you. My witneſs is in heaven, that I would not exchange my chains and bonds for Chrift, and my ſighs, for ten worlds' glory. I judge this clay-idol, which Adam's ſons are rousing§ and ſelling their fouls for, not worth a drink of cold water. Oh, if your foul were in my foul's ſtead, how ſick would ye be of love for that faireſt One, that Faireſt among the ſons of men! May-flowers, and morning vapour, and ſummer miſt, poſteth not ſo faſt away as theſe worm-eaten pleaſures which we follow. We build caſtles in the air, and night-dreams are our daily idols that we doat on. Salvation, falvation is our only neceſſary thing. Sir, call home your thoughts to this work, to inquire for your Well-beloved. This earth is the portion

* Appearing in court.

† Begin with alacrity the journey.

‡ Settle; ſet in order.

§ Setting up to auction

of bastards : seek the Son's inheritance, and let Christ's truth be dear to you.

I pawn* my salvation on it, that this is the honour of Christ's kingdom which I now suffer for (and this world, I hope, shall not come between me and my garland); and that this is the way to life. When ye and I shall lie lumps of pale clay upon the ground, our pleasures, that we now naturally love, shall be less than nothing in that day. Dear brother, fulfil my joy, and betake you to Christ without further delay. Ye will be fain at length to seek Him, or do infinitely worse. Remember my love to your wife. Grace be with you.

Yours, in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, *March 13, 1637.*

CXXXVII.—*To* WILLIAM GLENDINNING.

[WILLIAM GLENDINNING was the son of Mr Robert Glendinning, minister of Kirkcudbright. A short time before this letter was written, he was ordered to be imprisoned in Kirkcudbright by Bishop Sydferff, for refusing to incarcerate his father, whom that intolerant prelate had suspended from his office, and had ordered to be imprisoned, because he would neither conform to Episcopacy, nor admit as his assistant a creature of the Bishop. He was a member of the General Assembly of Glasgow 1638, being returned by the burgh of Kirkcudbright, of which he was then Provost. During the subsequent years, he was frequently a member of the General Assembly; and his name appears as a member of Parliament for the burgh of Kirkcudbright, and sent by the Committee of Estates, in 1644, 1645, and 1646.]

(*PERSEVERANCE AGAINST OPPOSITION.*)



WELL-BELOVED AND DEAR BROTHER,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you. I thank you most kindly for your care and love to me, and in particular to my

* Pledge.

brother, in his distrefs in Edinburgh.* Go on through your waters without wearying; your Guide knoweth the way; follow Him, and caft your cares and temptations upon Him. And let not worms, the fons of men, affright you; they fhall die, and the moth fhall eat them. Keep your garland; there is no lefs at the ftake, in this game betwixt us and the world, than our confcience and falvation. We have need to take heed to the game, and not to yield to them. Let them take other things from us; but here, in matters of confcience, we muft hold and draw† with kings, and fet ourfelves in terms of oppofition with the fhields of the earth. O the fweet communion, for evermore, that hath been between Chrift and His prifoner! He wearieth not to be kind. He is the faireft fight I fee in Aberdeen, or in any part that ever my feet were in.

Remember my hearty kindnefs to your wife. I defire her to believe, and lay her cares on God, and make faft work of falvation. Grace be with you.

Yours, in his only Lord Jefus,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, *March 13, 1637.*

* Rutherford here refers to the trial of his brother George, fchoolmafter and reader in Kirkcudbright, before the High Commiffion, at Edinburgh, in November the preceding year, for his non-conformity and zealous fupport of Mr Robert Glendinning, the perfecuted minifter of Kirkcudbright. As previously noticed (Let. 67), he was condemned to refign his charge, and to remove from Kirkcudbright before the enfuing term of Whitsunday. When at Edinburgh, and on his trial, he experienced much kindnefs from feveral of the correpondents of our author, who, in his letters to them, makes the moft heartfelt grateful acknowledgments. After his ejection, “he feems,” fays Murray, “to have taken refuge in Ayrfhire; for in a letter to Lord Loudon, Rutherford fpeaks of his brother as being nigh his Lordship’s bounds; and every individual whom he addreffed on his behalf (after his removal from Kirkcudbright), was connected with that county. The kindnefs and the frequency with which, in his letters, he fpeaks of him, do honour to his heart.”—*Life of Rutherford*, p. 93.

† We muft ftruggle with.

CXXXVIII.—To MR HUGH HENDERSON.

[HUGH HENDERSON was first minister of Dalry, a parish in the district of Cunningham, Ayrshire, and afterwards of Dumfries. The first instance in which we meet with his name as minister of Dalry is in 1643, when he was nominated as one of the eight ministers whom the General Assembly appointed to visit Ireland by pairs, and to continue there for three months successively, to instruct, comfort, and encourage the Presbyterians in that country, who had been deprived of their ministers through the tyranny of the prelates. In 1645 he was appointed by the General Assembly chaplain to Colonel Stuart's regiment; and in 1648 translated to Dumfries, by a sentence of the Assembly. Shortly after the restoration of Charles II., he, and all the ministers of the Presbytery of Dumfries, were, by the order of the King's Commissioner, carried prisoners to Edinburgh, for having, on various grounds, agreed not to observe the 29th day of May as a religious anniversary, in commemoration of the King's birth and restoration. But he and the rest, with the exception of two, at last yielded so far as to engage simply to preach on that day, knowing it would be the day of their ordinary weekly sermon; upon which they were dismissed. This engagement seems hardly compatible with straightforwardness and steadfastness to principle, as it was something like a disingenuous attempt to make it appear that they were complying with the statute of Parliament, when they were merely discharging a professional duty. Henderson exhibited more consistency and steadfastness the subsequent year, when he preferred being expelled from his charge to conforming to Prelacy. He was ejected in the close of the year 1662, by the Earl of Middleton. After this, Henderson frequently preached in his own house in Galloway.]

(TRIALS SELECTED BY GOD—PATIENCE—LOOKING FOR THE
JUDGE.)



MY REVEREND AND DEAR BROTHER,—I hear that you bear the marks of Christ's dying about with you, and that your brethren have cast you out for your Master's sake. Let us wait on till the evening, and till our reckoning in black and white come before our Master. Brother, since we must have a devil to trouble us, I love a raging devil best. Our Lord knoweth what sort of devil we have need of: it is best that Satan be in his own skin, and look like himself. Christ weeping looketh like Himself also, with whom Scribes and Pharisees were at yea and nay, and sharp contradiction.

Ye have heard of the patience of Job. When he lay in the ashes, God was with him, clawing and curing his scabs, and letting out his boils, comforting his soul; and He took him up at last. That God is not dead yet: He will stoop and take up fallen bairns. Many broken legs since Adam's days hath He spelked,* and many weary hearts hath He refreshed. Bless Him for comfort. Why? None cometh dry from David's well. Let us go among the rest, and cast down our toom† buckets into Christ's ocean, and suck consolations out of Him. We are not so fore stricken, but we may fill Christ's hall with weeping. We have not gotten our answer from Him yet. Let us lay up our broken pleas to a full sea, and keep them till the day of Christ's Coming. We and this world will not be even‡ till then: they would take our garment from us; but let *us* hold and *them* draw.

Brother, it is a strange world if we laugh not. I never saw the like of it, if there be not "paiks the man,"§ for this contempt done to the Son of God. We must do as those who keep the bloody napkin to the Bailie,|| and let him see blood; we must keep our wrongs to our Judge, and let Him see our bluddered¶ and foul faces. Prisoners of hope must run to Christ, with the gutters** that tears have made on their cheeks.

Brother, for myself, I am Christ's dawted†† one for the present; and I live upon no deaf‡‡ nuts, as we use to speak. He hath opened fountains to me in the wilderness. Go, look to my Lord Jesus: His love to me is such, that I defy the world to find either brim or bottom to it. Grace be with you.

Your brother, in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, March 13, 1637.

* Trussed up, bound with splinters.

† Empty. ‡ Be quits.

§ "Paiks" is *blows*. "Be the man soundly beaten;" an expression used to intimate what the man deserved.

|| The magistrate who was to judge the case. ¶ Blurred.

** The marks left by the tears that ran down and soiled the face.

†† Fondled.

‡‡ No kernel in them.

CXXXIX.—*To my LORD BALMERINOC.*

[JOHN ELPHINSTON, second LORD BALMERINOC, was the only son of the first marriage of the Honourable Sir James Elphinston, first Lord Balmerinoc. He distinguished himself in 1633 for his opposition to the measures of the Court in favour of Prelacy, and particularly for opposing in Parliament the Act concerning the King's prerogative in imposing apparel on churchmen, and the Act ratifying the Acts previously made for settling and advancing the estate of bishops. Soon after he was libelled and condemned to death as guilty of treason. However, after a long and severe imprisonment, he at last obtained from his Majesty a free though reluctant pardon. True to his former principles, he still continued to oppose the measures then pursued by Government, and particularly the attempts to introduce the Service Book into Scotland. He was a member of the Glasgow Assembly 1638, being returned as elder for the Presbytery of Edinburgh. "His Lordship," says Wood, "was, without exception, the best friend the Covenanters had, as he not only assisted that party with his advice on all occasions, but also supplied them with large sums of money, by which he irreparably injured the very ample fortune he inherited from his father. He lived in habits of strict friendship with the chief leaders of the Presbyterians, and was particularly intimate with Sir Archibald Johnston of Warriston. He had so strong a sense of justice, that having reason to suspect his father had made too advantageous a purchase of the lands of Balumby, in the county of Forfar, he, of his own accord, gave 10,000 merks to the heir of that estate, by way of compensation."—(*Wood's Cramond*.) He died suddenly in 1649, at the time when Charles II. was proclaimed King of Scotland, and when commissioners were to be sent to Holland to treat with him, of which his Lordship was chosen to be one.—(*Lamont's Diary*, p. 1.)]

(*HIS HAPPY OBLIGATIONS TO CHRIST—EMPTYNESS OF THE WORLD.*)



Y VERY NOBLE AND TRULY HONOURABLE LORD,—I make bold to write news to your Lordship from my prison, though your Lordship have experience more than I can have. At my first entry here, I was not a little casten down with challenges,* for old, unrepented-of sins; and

* Self-upbraidings.

Satan and my own apprehensions made a lie of Christ, that He hath casten a dry, withered tree over the dyke of the vineyard. But it was my folly, blessed be His great name, the fire cannot burn the dry tree. He is pleased now to feast the exiled prisoner with His lovely presence; for it suiteth Christ well to be kind, and He dineth and suppeth with such a sinner as I am. I am in Christ's tutoring here. He hath made me content with a borrowed fireside, and it casteth as much heat as mine own. I want nothing but real possession of Christ; and He hath given me a pawn of that also, which I hope to keep till He come Himself to loose the pawn. I cannot get help to praise His high name. He hath made me king over my losses, imprisonment, banishment; and only my dumb Sabbaths stick in my throat. But I forgive Christ's wisdom in that. I dare not say one word; He hath done it, and I will lay my hand upon my mouth. If any other hand had done it to me, I could not have borne it.

Now, my Lord, I must tell your Lordship that I would not give a drink of cold water for this clay idol, this plastered world. I testify, and give it under my own hand, that Christ is most worthy to be suffered for. Our lazy flesh, which would have Christ to cry down crosses by open proclamation, hath but raised a slander upon the cross of Christ. My Lord, I hope that ye will not forget what He hath done for your soul. I think that ye are in Christ's count-book, as His obliged debtor.

Grace, grace be with your spirit.

Your Lordship's obliged servant,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, *March* 13, 1637.

CXL.—*To my* LADY MAR, *Younger*.

[LADY MAR, *Younger*, whose maiden name was Christian Hay (being the daughter of Francis, ninth Earl of Errol), was the wife of John Erskine, eighth Earl of Mar. She became a widow in 1654, his Lordship having died

in that year. She had to him a son, John, who became ninth Earl of Mar, and a daughter, Elizabeth, who was married to Archibald, Lord Napier. Lord James Erskine of Grange, one of the senators of the College of Justice, who lived in the beginning of the last century, was the great-grandson of this lady.—(*Douglas' Peerage*, vol. ii., p. 216; *Crawford's History of the Shire of Renfrew*, p. 112.) Lady Mar, *senior*, from whom she is distinguished, was Lady Mary Stewart, daughter of Esme, Duke of Lennox, second wife of John, Lord Erskine, seventh Earl of Mar. She died in the house of Sir Thomas Hope, in the Cowgate, Edinburgh, and was buried at Alloa, 11th May 1644.—(*Sir Thomas Hope's Diary*, p. 205.) It was for her that, in 1625, the book of devotion, called, “*The Countess of Mar's Sanctuary, or Arcadia*,” was drawn up—a little work of which only two copies were known to be in existence, till reprinted this year, 1862, at Edinburgh.]

(NO EXCHANGE FOR CHRIST.)



MY VERY NOBLE AND DEAR LADY,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you. I received your Ladyship's letter, which hath comforted my soul. God give you to find mercy in the day of Christ.

I am in as good terms and court with Christ as an exiled, oppressed prisoner of Christ can be. I am still welcome to His house; He knoweth my knock, and letteth in a poor friend. Under this black, rough tree of the cross of Christ, He hath ravished me with His love, and taken my heart to heaven with Him. Well and long may He brook* it. I would not niffer† Christ with all the joys that man or angel can devise beside Him. Who hath such cause to speak honourably of Christ as I have? Christ is King of all crosses, and He hath made His faints little kings under Him; and He can ride and triumph upon weaker bodies than I am (if any can be weaker), and His horse will neither fall nor stumble.

Madam, your Ladyship hath much ado with Christ, for your soul, husband, children, and house. Let Him find much employment for His calling with you; for He is such a friend as delighteth to be burdened with suits and employments; and the more ye lay

* Possess, enjoy.

† Exchange.

on Him, and the more homely* ye be with Him, the more welcome. O the depth of Christ's love! It hath neither brim nor bottom. Oh, if this blind world saw His beauty! When I count with Him for His mercies to me, I must stand still and wonder, and go away as a poor dyvour,† who hath nothing to pay. Free forgiveness is payment. I would that I could get Him set on high; for His love hath made me sick, and I die except I get real possession.

Grace, grace be with you.

Your Ladyship's, at all obedience in Christ,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, *March* 13, 1637.

CXLI.—*To* JAMES MACADAM.

[John Livingstone (*Hiflor. Relation*), along with Marion M'Naught and other such, mentions John Macadam and Christian Macadam of Waterhead, near Carsphairn, as eminent Christians. The person to whom this letter is addressed may have been one of that family. The famous road engineer in our day, Macadam, was born at Waterhead, descended from this ancient family.

It seems that the Christian Macadam mentioned above was afterwards Lady Cardonefs; and because of her connection with this correspondent of Rutherford's, we may give the inscription on her tomb. The tomb is part of the enclosed pile close to the old Anwoth church. The inscription is on the north side of the pile:—

“Christian M'Adam, Lady Cardynes. Departed 16th June of 1628.

Ætatis suæ, 33.

“Ye gazers on the trophy of a tomb,
Send out one groan for want of her whose life,
Twice born on earth, now is in earth's womb;
Lived long a virgin, now a spotless wife.
Church keeps her godly life, the tomb her corpse,
And earth her precious name. Who then does lose?
Her husband? No, since heaven her soul doth gain.”

* At home, familiar.

† Debtor.

(THE KINGDOM TAKEN BY FORCE.)



MY VERY DEAR AND WORTHY FRIEND,—
 Grace, mercy, and peace be to you. I long to hear of your growing in grace, and of your advancing in your journey to heaven. It will be the joy of my heart to hear that ye hold your face up the brae,* and wade through temptations without fearing what man can do. Christ shall, when He ariseth, mow down His enemies, and lay bulks† (as they use to speak) on the green, and fill the pits with dead bodies.‡ They shall lie like handfuls of withered hay, when He ariseth to the prey. Salvation, salvation is the only necessary thing. This clay idol, the world, is not to be fought; it is a morsel not for you, but for hunger-bitten bastards. Contend for salvation. Your Master, Christ, won heaven with strokes: it is a besieged castle; it must be taken with violence. Oh, this world thinketh heaven but at the next door, and that godliness may sleep in a bed of down till it come to heaven! But that will not do it.

For myself, I am as well as Christ's prisoner can be; for by Him I am master and king of all my crosses. I am above the prison, and the lash of men's tongues; Christ triumpheth in me. I have been casten down, and heavy with fears, and haunted with challenges. I was swimming in the depths, but Christ had His hand under my chin all the time, and took good heed that I should not lose breath; and now I have gotten my feet again, and there are love-feasts of joy, and spring-tides of consolation betwixt Christ and me. We agree well; I have court with Him; I am still welcome to His house. Oh, my short arms cannot fathom His love! I beseech you, I charge you, to help me to praise. Ye have a prisoner's prayers, therefore forget me not.

* The slope, or hillside.

† Carcases; properly, the *trunk*, or *bulk* of the man. Some write it "bouks;" but "*bulks*" is in all the old editions.

‡ Ps. cx. 6; "the places."

I desire Sibylla to remember me dearly to all in that parish who know Christ, as if I had named them.

Grace, grace be with you.

Yours, in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, *March 13, 1637.*

CXLII.—*To my very dear Brother, WILLIAM LIVINGSTONE.*

[Probably one of his Anwoth parishioners. There are Livingstones in that neighbourhood to this day.]

(COUNSEL TO A YOUTH.)



MY VERY DEAR BROTHER,—I rejoice to hear that Christ hath run away with your young love, and that ye are so early in the morning matched with such a Lord; for a young man is often a dressed lodging for the devil to dwell in. Be humble and thankful for grace; and weigh it not so much by weight, as if it be true. Christ will not cast water on your smoking coal; He never yet put out a dim candle that was lighted at the Sun of Righteousness. I recommend to you prayer and watching over the sins of your youth; for I know that missive* letters go between the devil and young blood. Satan hath a friend at court in the heart of youth; and there pride, luxury, lust, revenge, forgetfulness of God, are hired as his agents. Happy is your soul if Christ man† the house, and take the keys Himself, and command all, as it suiteth Him full well to rule all wherever He is. Keep Christ, and entertain Him well. Cherish His grace; blow upon your own coal; and let Him tutor you.

Now for myself: know that I am fully agreed with my Lord. Christ hath put the Father and me into each other's arms. Many a sweet bargain He made before, and He hath made this among the

* Letters empowering a person to act.

† Man the house, means act as the goodman of the house, attending to visitors.

reft. I reign as king over my croffes. I will not flatter a temptation, nor give the devil a good word : I defy hell's iron gates. God hath paffed over my quarrelling of Him at my entry here, and now He feedeth and feafteth with me.

Praife, praife with me ; and let us exalt His name together.

Your brother in Chrift,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, *March 13, 1637.*

CXLIII.—*To WILLIAM GORDON of Whitepark.*

[This may be a fon of George Gordon, who is recorded as heir to the estate of " Whytpark," March 20, 1628. It was in the Parifh of Anwoth.]

(*NOTHING LOST BY TRIALS—LONGING FOR CHRIST HIMSELF,
BECAUSE OF HIS LOVE.*)



WORTHY SIR,—Grace, mercy, and peace be unto you. I long to hear from you. I am here the Lord's prifoner and patient, handled as foftly by my Phyfician as if I were a fick man under a cure. I was at hard terms with my Lord, and pleaded with Him, but I had the worft fide. It is a wonder that He fhould have fuffered the like of me to have nicknamed the Son of His love, Chrift, and to call Him a changed Lord, who hath forfaken me. But mifbelief* hath never a good word to fpeak of Chrift. The drofs of my crofs gathered a fcum of fears in the fire—doubtings, impatience, unbelief, challenging of Providence as fleeping, and as not regarding my sorrow ; but my goldfmith, Chrift, was pleafed to take off the fcum, and burn it in the fire. And, bleffed be my Refiner, He hath made the metal better, and furnifhed new fupply of grace, to caufe me hold out weight ; and I hope that He hath not loft one grain-weight by burning His fervant.

* Erroneous faith.

Now His love in my heart casteth a mighty heat ; He knoweth that the desire I have to be at Himself paineth me. I have sick nights and frequent fits of love-fevers for my Well-beloved. Nothing paineth me now but want of His presence. I think it long till day. I challenge time as too slow in its pace, that holdeth my only fair one, my love, my Well-beloved, from me. Oh, if we were together once ! I am like an old crazed ship that hath endured many storms, and that would fain be in the lee of the shore, and feareth new storms ; I would be that* nigh heaven, that the shadow of it might break the force of the storm, and the crazed ship might win to land.† My Lord's sun casteth a heat of love and beam of light on my soul. My blessing thrice every day upon the sweet crofs of Christ ! I am not ashamed of my garland, "the banished minister," which is the term of Aberdeen. Love, love defieth reproaches. The love of Christ hath a corslet of proof on it, and arrows will not draw blood of it. We are more than conquerors through the blood of Him that loved us.‡ The devil and the world cannot wound the love of Christ. I am further from yielding to the course of defection than when I came hither. Sufferings blunt not the fiery edge of love. Cast love into the floods of hell, it will swim above. It careth not for the world's busked§ and plastered offers. It hath pleased my Lord so to line my heart with the love of my Lord Jesus, that, as if the field were already won, and I on the other side of time, I laugh at the world's golden pleasures, and at this dirty idol which the sons of Adam worship. This worm-eaten god is that which my soul hath fallen out of love with.

Sir, ye were once my hearer : I desire now to hear from you and your wife. I salute her and your children with blessings. I am glad that ye are still handfasted|| with Christ. Go on in your journey, and take the city by violence. Keep your garments clean. Be clean virgins to your husband the Lamb. The world shall fol-

* So nigh. † Get to.

§ Decker with ornaments.

‡ Romans viii. 37.

|| Betrothed to by joining hands.

low you to heaven's gates : and ye would not wish it to go in with you. Keep fast Christ's love. Pray for me, as I do for you.

The Lord Jesus be with your spirit.

Yours, in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, *March 13, 1637.*

CXLIV.—To MR GEORGE GILLESPIE.

[GEORGE GILLESPIE was the son of Mr John Gillespie, sometime minister of the Gospel at Kirkcaldy. He was licensed to preach the Gospel some time prior to 1638; and in April, that year, was ordained minister of Wemyss. In 1642, by a sentence of the General Assembly, he was translated to one of the churches in Edinburgh, where he continued till his death. Gillespie possessed talents of the highest order; and so much were these appreciated, that he was one of the four ministers sent as commissioners from the Church of Scotland to the Westminster Assembly in 1643. There he attracted general notice, by the cogency of argument, and the rare learning which he showed in pleading the cause of Presbytery, and opposing Erastianism. At one of the meetings of that Assembly, when the learned Selden had delivered a long and an elaborate discourse in favour of Erastianism, to which none seemed prepared to reply, Gillespie, who was still a young man, was observed to be writing. A venerable friend went to his chair, and asked if he had taken notes, but found that he had written nothing except these words, frequently repeated, "Give light, Lord." His friend urged him to answer. Gillespie at last rose, and in an extempore speech refuted Selden with a power of reasoning and an amount of learning which excited the admiration of all present. Selden himself is said to have observed, after hearing this reply, "That young man, by a single speech, has swept away the labour and the learning of ten years of my life!" Gillespie died in December 1648, in the 36th year of his age. During his last illness he enjoyed little comfort, but was strong in the faith of adherence to the divine promises—a subject on which he insisted much in his sermons. When asked if he had any comfort, he said, "No; but though the Lord allow me no comfort, yet I will *believe* that my Beloved is mine, and that I am His." To two ministers, who asked what advice he had to give them, he answered: "I have little experience of the ministry, having been in it only nine years; but I can say that I have got more assistance in the work of preaching from prayer than study; and much more help from the assistance of the Spirit than from books." And yet he was known to have been an in-

defatigable student. He is the author of various works, which are chiefly controversial, such as “The English Popish Ceremonies,” and “Aaron’s Rod Blossoming.”]

(*SUSPICIONS OF CHRIST’S LOVE REMOVED—THREE DESIRES.*)

REVEREND AND DEAR BROTHER,—I received your letter. As for my case, brother, I bleſs His glorious name, that my loſſes are my gain, my priſon a palace, and my ſadneſs joyfulneſs. At my firſt entry, my apprehenſions ſo wrought upon my croſs, that I became jealous* of the love of Chriſt, as being by Him thruſt out of the vineyard, and I was under great challenges ;† as, ordinarily,‡ melted gold caſteth forth a droſſy ſcum, and Satan and our corruption form the firſt words that the heavy croſs ſpeaketh, and ſay, “God is angry, He loveth you not.” But our apprehenſions are not canonical ;§ they indite lies of God and Chriſt’s love. But ſince my ſpirit was ſettled, and the clay has fallen to the bottom of the well, I ſee better what Chriſt was doing. And now my Lord is returned with ſalvation under His wings. Now I want little of half a heaven, and I find Chriſt every day ſo ſweet, comfortable, lovely, and kind, that three things only trouble me : 1ſt, I ſee not how to be thankful, or how to get help to praiſe that Royal King, who raiſeth up thoſe that are bowed down. 2d, His love paineth me, and woundeth my ſoul, ſo that I am in a fever for want of real preſence. 3d, An exceſſive deſire to take inſtruments|| in God’s name, that this is Chriſt and His truth, which I now ſuffer for ; yea, the apple of the eye of Chriſt’s honour, even the ſovereignty and royal privileges of our King and Lawgiver, Chriſt. And, therefore, let no man ſcaur at Chriſt’s croſs, or raiſe an ill report upon Him or it ; for He beareth the ſufferer and it both.

I am here troubled with the diſputes of the great doctōrs (eſpecially with Dr B.¶) in Ceremonial and Arminian controverſies,

* Suſpicious. † Rebukes. ‡ Usually § Authentic Scripture.

|| Take documents to atteſt the matter.

¶ Dr Robert Barron.

for all are corrupt here ; but, I thank God, with no detriment to the truth, or discredit to my profession. So, then, I see that Christ can triumph in a weaker man* nor I ; and who can be more weak ? But His grace is sufficient for me.

Brother, remember our old covenant, and pray for me, and write to me your case. The Lord Jesus be with your spirit.

Yours, in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, *March 13, 1637.*

CXLV.—*To* JEAN GORDON.

(*GOD THE SATISFYING PORTION—ADHERENCE TO CHRIST.*)



MY VERY DEAR AND LOVING SISTER,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you.—I long to hear from you. I exhort you to set up the brae† to the King's city, that must be taken by violence. Your afternoon's sun is wearing low. Time will eat up your frail life, like a worm gnawing at the root of a May-flower. Lend Christ your heart. Set Him as a seal there. Take Him in within, and let the world and children stand at the door. They are not yours ; make‡ you and them for your proper owner, Christ. It is good that He is your Husband and their Father. What missing can there be of a dying man, when God filleth His chair ? Give hours of the day to prayer. Fast§ Christ (if I may speak so), and importune Him ; be often at His gate ; give His door no rest. I can tell you that He will be found. Oh what sweet fellowship is betwixt Him and me ! I am imprisoned, but He is not imprisoned. He hath shamed me with His kindness. He hath come to my prison, and run away with my heart and all my love. Well may He brook|| it ! I wish that my love get never

* Than.

† Push up the hill.

‡ This seems to mean, mould, fashion yourself and them.

§ Trouble ; by being importunate.

|| Possess, enjoy.

an owner but Christ. Fy, fy upon old lovers, that held us so long afunder ! We shall not part now. He and I shall be heard, before He win out of my grips.* I resolve to wrestle with Christ, ere I quit Him. But my love to Him hath casten my soul into a fever, and there is no cooling of my fever, till I get real possession of Christ. O strong, strong love of Jesus, thou hast wounded my heart with thine arrows ! Oh pain ! Oh pain of love for Christ ! Who will help me to praise ?

Let me have your prayers. Grace be with you.

Yours, in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, *March 13, 1637.*

CXLVI.—*To MR JAMES BRUCE, Minister of the Gospel.*

[MR JAMES BRUCE was minister of Kingsbarns, in the Presbytery of St Andrews. He was admitted in 1630. Prelacy and the English ceremonies had then, for a considerable time, been imposed upon the Church of Scotland. But Bruce, like many other of her ministers, being in principle decidedly favourable to Presbytery, refused to practise the ceremonies. He was, however, overlooked, and permitted to continue in his charge, the Bishops at that time removing very few, because, the introduced ceremonies being so unpopular, it was judged dangerous and impolitic to enforce a rigid and universal compliance with them. Bruce made an early public appearance against the attempts of the court to impose the Anglo-Popish liturgy, or Service-book, in 1637. He was a member of the Glasgow Assembly, 1638. He died at Kingsbarns, May 26, 1662, when the storm of persecution was about to break upon the Church of Scotland, being thus taken away from the evil to come.]

(*MISJUDGING OF CHRIST'S WAYS.*)



EVEREND AND WELL-BELOVED BROTHER,—

Grace, mercy, and peace be to you.—Upon the nearest acquaintance (that we are Father's children), I thought good to write to you. My case in my bonds for the honour of my

royal Prince and King, Jefus is as good as becometh the witnefs of fuch a fovereign King. At my firft coming hither, I was in great heavinefs, wrefling with challenges;* being burdened in heart (as I am yet), for my filent Sabbaths, and for a bereaved people, young ones new-born, plucked from the breaft, and the children's table drawn.† I thought I was a dry tree caft over the dyke of the vineyard. But my fecret conceptions of Chrift's love, at His fweet and long-defired return to my foul, were found to be a lie of Chrift's love, forged by the tempter and my own heart. And I am perfuaded it was fo. Now there is greater peace and fecurity within than before; the court is raifed and difmiffed, for it was not fenced‡ in God's name. I was far miftaken who fhould have fummoned Chrift for unkindnefs; mifted§ faith, and my fever, conceived amifs of Him. Now, now, He is pleafed to feaft a poor prifoner, and to refresh me with joy unfpeakable and glorious! fo as the Holy Spirit is witnefs that my fufferings are for Chrift's truth; and God forbid that I fhould deny the testimony of the Holy Spirit and make Him a falfe witnefs. Now, I testify under my hand, out of fome fmall experience, that Chrift's caufe, even with the crofs, is better than the king's crown; and that His reproaches are fweet, His crofs perfumed, the walls of my prifon fair and large, my loffes gain.

I defire you, my dear brother, to help me to praife, and to remember me in your prayer to God. Grace, grace be with you.

Yours, in our Lord Jefus,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, *March*, 14, 1637.

CXLVII.—*To JOHN GORDON, at Rufco, in Parifh of Anwoth, Galloway.*

[The old tower, or caftle, ftill ftands on a gentle flope, three miles from Anwoth, but uninhabited. It was at this old manfion (Rufco) that Robert

* Self-upbraidings.

† Removed.

‡ Opened and constituted.

§ That has a mift between it and its object.

Campbell, laird of Kinzeanleugh, the friend of John Knox, died of fever, in 1574, when on a visit to Gordon of Lochinvar, “expressing his confidence of victory, and his desire to depart and be with Christ.”]

(PRESSING INTO HEAVEN—A CHRISTIAN NO EASY ATTAINMENT—SINS TO BE AVOIDED.



MY WORTHY AND DEAR BROTHER,—Mispend not your short sand-glass, which runneth very fast; seek your Lord in time. Let me obtain of you a letter under your hand, for a promise to God, by His grace, to take a new course of walking with God. Heaven is not at the next door; I find it hard to be a Christian. There is no little thrusting and thringing* to thrust in at heaven's gates; it is a castle taken by force; —“Many shall strive to enter in, and shall not be able.”

I beseech and obtest you in the Lord, to make conscience of rash and passionate oaths, of raging and sudden avenging anger, of night drinking, of needless companionry,† of Sabbath-breaking, of hurting any under you by word or deed, of hating your very enemies. “Except ye receive the kingdom of God as a little child,” and be as meek and sober-minded as a babe, “ye cannot enter into the kingdom of God.” That is a word which should touch you near, and make you stoop and cast yourself down, and make your great spirit fall. I know that this will not be easily done, but I recommend it to you, as you tender your part of the kingdom of heaven.

Brother, I may, from new experience, speak of Christ to you. Oh, if ye saw in Him what I see! A river of God's unseen joys have flowed from bank to brae‡ over my soul since I parted with you. I wish that I wanted part, so being ye might have; that your soul might be sick of love for Christ, or rather satiated with Him. This clay-idol, the world, would seem to you then not worth a fig; time will eat you out of possession of it. When the eye-strings break, and the breath groweth cold, and the imprisoned soul looketh

* Pressing urgently. † Associating with companions; companionships.

‡ Rising high above ordinary limits.

out of the windows of the clay-houfe, ready to leap out into eternity, what would you then give for a lamp full of oil? Oh feek it now.

I defire you to correct and curb banning,* fwearing, lying, drinking, Sabbath-breaking, and idle fpending of the Lord's day in abfence from the kirk, as far as your authority reacheth in that parifh.

I hear that a man is to be thruft into that place, to the which I have God's right. I know that ye fhould have a voice by God's word in that (Acts i. 15, 16, to the end; vi. 3-5). Ye would be loath that any prelate fhould put you out of your poffeffion earthly; and this is your right. What I write to you, I write to your wife. Grace be with you.

Your loving paftor,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, *March 14, 1637.*

CXLVIII.—*To the* LADY HALLHILL.

[LADY HALLHILL, whofe maiden name was Learmonth, was the wife of Sir James Melville of Hallhill, in Fife, the fon of Sir James Melville of Hallhill, a privy counfellor to King James VI., and an accomplished ftateman and courtier in his day, who died in 1617.—(*Douglas' Peerage*, vol. ii.) Confequently, this lady was fiftter-in-law to Lady Culrofs, formerly noticed. Livingftone, who was perfonally acquainted with her, describes her as “eminent for grace and gifts; and whofe “memory was very precious and refrefhing” to him.]

(CHRIST'S CROSSES BETTER THAN EGYPT'S TREASURES.)



DEAR AND CHRISTIAN LADY,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you.—I longed much to write to your Ladyfhip; but now, the Lord offering a fit occaffion, I would not omit to do it.

I cannot but acquaint your Ladyfhip with the kind dealing of Chrift to my foul, in this houfe of my pilgrimage, that your Lady-

* Smaller oaths.

ship may know that He is as good as He is called. For at my first entry into this trial (being casten down and troubled with challenges and jealousies* of His love, whose name and testimony I now bear in my bonds), I feared nothing more than that I was casten over the dyke of the vineyard, as a dry tree. But, blessed be His great name, the dry tree was in the fire, and was not burnt; His dew came down and quickened the root of a withered plant. And now He is come again with joy, and hath been pleased to feast His exiled and afflicted prisoner with the joy of His consolations. Now I weep, but am not fad; I am chafened, but I die not; I have los, but I want nothing; this water cannot drown me, this fire cannot burn me, because of the good-will of Him that dwelt in The Bush. The worst things of Christ, His reproaches, His cross, are better than Egypt's treasures. He hath opened His door, and taken into His house-of-wine a poor sinner, and hath left me so sick of love for my Lord Jesus, that if heaven were at my disposing, I would give it for Christ, and would not be content to go to heaven, except I were persuaded that Christ were there. I would not give, nor exchange, my bonds for the prelates' velvets; nor my prison for their coaches; nor my sighs for all the world's laughter. This clay-idol, the world, hath no great court† in my soul. Christ hath come and run away to heaven with my heart and my love, so that neither heart nor love is mine: I pray God, that Christ may keep both without reversion.‡ In my estimation, as I am now disposed, if my part of this world's clay were roused§ and sold, I would think it dear of a drink of water. I see Christ's love is so kingly, that it will not abide a marrow;|| it must have a throne all alone in the soul. And I see that apples beguile bairns, howbeit they be worm-eaten. The moth-eaten pleasures of this present world make bairns believe ten is a hundred, and yet all that are here are but shadows. If they would draw by ¶ the curtain that is hung betwixt

* Self-upbraidings and suspicions.

† No great influence.

‡ Without there being any one to possess it after Him.

§ Set up to public sale.

|| A companion on equal terms.

¶ Draw aside.

them and Christ, they should see themselves fools who have so long miskenned* the Son of God. I seek no more, next to heaven, than that He may be glorified in a prisoner of Christ; and that in my behalf many would praise His high and glorious name who heareth the sighing of the prisoner.

Remember my service to the laird, your husband; and to your son, my acquaintance. I wish that Christ had His young love, and that in the morning he would start to the gate,† to seek that which the world knoweth not, and, therefore, doth not seek it.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

Yours, in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, *March 14, 1637.*

CXLIX.—*To the much honoured JOHN OSBURN, Provost of Ayr.*

[Of JOHN OSBURN, merchant in Ayr, and at this time chief magistrate of that burgh, little is now known. He died about the close of the year 1653, or beginning of the following year, as appears from his son David being retoured his heir on 17th January 1654.—(*Inq. Gener.* No. 3884.) He had a daughter, Jane, who was married to Robert Kelfo of Halrig and Kelfoland, the representative of one of the most ancient families of Ayrshire, to whom she had two sons, John, surveyor of the customs at Port-Glasgow, and William of Dalkeith, writer to the signet. Their father appears on the list of the gentlemen in Ayrshire, whom Middleton fined, in 1662.]

(ADHERENCE TO CHRIST—HIS APPROBATION WORTH ALL
WORLDS.)



MUCH HONOURED SIR,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you.—Upon our small acquaintance, and the good report I hear of you, I could not but write to you. I have nothing to say, but that Christ, in that honourable place He hath put you in, hath intrusted you with a dear pledge, which is His own glory; and hath armed you with His sword to keep the

* Mistaken through ignorance.

† Set out on his journey with alacrity.

pledge, and make a good account of it to God. Be not afraid of men. Your Master can mow down His enemies, and make withered hay of fair flowers. Your time will not be long; after your afternoon will come your evening, and after evening, night. Serve Christ. Back Him; let His cause be your cause; give not an hair-breadth of truth away; for it is not yours, but God's. Then, since ye are going, take Christ's testificate* with you out of this life—"Well done, good and faithful servant!" His "well done" is worth a shipful of "Good-days" and earthly honours. I have cause to say this, because I find Him truth itself. In my sad days, Christ laugheth cheerfully, and faith, "All will be well!" Would to God that all this kingdom, and all that know God, knew what is betwixt Christ and me in this prison—what kisses, embracements, and love communions! I take His cross in my arms with joy; I bless it, I rejoice in it. Suffering for Christ is my garland. I would not exchange Christ for ten thousand worlds! nay, if the comparison could stand, I would not exchange Christ with heaven.

Sir, pray for me, and the prayers and blessing of a prisoner of Christ meet you in all your straits. Grace be with you.

Yours, in Christ Jesus, his Lord,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, *March* 14, 1637.

CL.—*To his loving Friend*, JOHN HENDERSON. [See Let. 208.]

(CONTINUING IN CHRIST—PREPAREDNESS FOR DEATH.)



LOVING FRIEND,—Continue in the love of Christ, and the doctrine which I taught you faithfully and painfully, according to my measure. I am free of your blood. Fear the dreadful name of God. Keep in mind the ex-

* Testimonial, or certificate of character.

aminations* which I taught you, and love the truth of God. Death, as fast as time fleeth, chafeth you out of this life; it is possible that ye may make your reckoning with your Judge before I see you. Let salvation be your care, night and day, and set aside hours and times of the day for prayer. I rejoice to hear that there is prayer in your house. See that your servants keep the Lord's day. This dirt and god of clay (I mean the vain world) is not worth the seeking.

An hireling pastor is to be thrust in upon you, in the room to which I have Christ's warrant and right. Stand to your liberties, for the word of God alloweth you a vote in choosing your pastor.

What I write to you, I write to your wife. Commend me heartily to her. The grace of God be with you.

Your loving Friend and Pastor,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, *March 14, 1637.*

CLI.—*To JOHN MEINE, Senior.*

[JOHN MEINE, merchant in Edinburgh, was a man of enlightened piety, and a decided Presbyterian. His zeal and steadfastness in maintaining Presbyterian principles, exposing him to the resentment of the court and prelates, he was, on different occasions, the object of their persecution. Having, with other citizens of Edinburgh, encouraged Nonconforming ministers, by accompanying them to the court when dragged before the High Commission, he was, without citation, trial, or conviction, banished to Wigtown by the Privy Council, according to the orders of the king. But the execution of the sentence was suspended. In regard to the Perth Articles, he would make no compromise. In 1624, when the Town Council, Session, and citizens of Edinburgh, convened, according to an ancient custom observed among them from the time of the Reformation, to remove such grounds of difference as might have arisen, before uniting in the celebration of the Lord's Supper, Meine strongly pleaded that the ordinance should be solemnised without kneeling, a ceremony with which (he said) he could not comply. On account of his zeal in this matter, he was summoned before the Privy Council. The result was, that in

* Perhaps (see in Let. 166) his instructions on the Catechism are meant.

June that year, Meine was sentenced by the Council to be confined within the town of Elgin. About the beginning of January next year, he obtained liberty for a few days to come home to visit his family. He was afterwards ordered to return to his place of confinement; but James VI. dying on the 27th of March that year, an end was put to his trouble for a time. Livingstone, describing him in his *Memorable Characteristics*, says, "He used, summer and winter, to rise about three in the morning, and always sing some psalm as he put on his clothes. He spent till six o'clock alone in religious exercises, and at six worshipped God with his family, and then went to his shop." Meine was married to Barbara Hamilton, sister to the first wife of the famous Robert Blair.]

(*ENJOYMENT OF GOD'S LOVE—NEED OF HELP—BURDENS.*)

DEAR BROTHER,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you.
—I wonder that ye sent me not an answer to my last letter, for I stand in need of it. I am in some piece of court* with our great King, whose love would cause a dead man to speak, and live. Whether my court* will continue or not, I cannot well say; but I have His ear frequently, and (to His glory only I speak it), no penury of the love-kisses of the Son of God. He thinketh good to cast apples to me in my prison to play withal, lest I should think long† and faint. I must give over all attempts to fathom the depth of His love. All I can do is, but to stand beside His great love, and look and wonder. My debts of thankfulness affright me; I fear that my creditor get a dyvour-bill‡ and ragged account.‡

I would be much the better of help. Oh, for help! and that ye would take notice of my case. Your not writing to me maketh me think ye suppose that I am not to be bemoaned, because He sendeth comfort. But I have pain in my unthankfulness, and pain in the feeling of His love, whill§ I am sick again for real presence and real possession of Christ. Yet there is no gowked|| (if I may so speak), nor fond love in Christ. He casteth me down sometimes for

* Have something like influence.

† Yearn wearily.

‡ A bankrupt debtor's account; torn and incomplete. § Till.

|| Foolish; love that puts the person in a foolish position.

old faults ; and I know that He knoweth well that sweet comforts are swelling, and, therefore sorrow must take a vent to the wind.

My dumb Sabbaths are undercoating* wounds. The condition of this oppressed kirk, and my brother's case (I thank you and your wife for your kindness to him), hold my fore smarting, and keep my wounds bleeding. But the groundwork standeth sure. Pray for me. Grace be with you. Remember me to your wife.

Yours, in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, *March 14, 1637.*

CLII.—To MR THOMAS GARVEN.

[This correspondent was one of the ministers of Edinburgh. Letters 165 and 247, are also addressed to him.]

(A PRISONER'S JOYS—LOVE OF CHRIST—THE GOOD PART—
HEAVEN IN SIGHT.)



REVEREND AND DEAR BROTHER,—I bless you for your letter ; it was a shower to the new-mown grass. The Lord hath given you the tongue of the learned. Be fruitful and humble.

It is possible that ye may come to my case, or the like ; but the water is neither so deep, nor the stream so strong, as it is called. I think my fire is not so hot ; my water is dry land, my loss rich loss. Oh, if† the walls of my prison be high, wide, and large, and the place sweet ! No man knoweth it, no man, I say, knoweth it, my dear brother, so well as He and I ; no man can put it down in black and white as my Lord hath sealed it in my heart. My poor stock hath grown since I came to Aberdeen ; and if any had known the wrong I did, in being jealous of such an honest lover as Christ, who withheld not His love from me, they would think the more of it. But I see, He must be above me in mercy. I will never strive

* Festering under the skin.

† “ *Ob if;*” *q. d.*, What will you say if I tell you that the walls of my prison are, etc.

with Him ; to think to recompense Him is folly. If I had as many angels' tongues, as there have fallen drops of rain since the creation, or as there are leaves of trees in all the forests of the earth, or stars in the heaven, to praise, yet my Lord Jesus would ever be behind with me.* We will never get our accounts fitted. A pardon must close the reckoning ; for His comforts to me in this honourable cause have almost put me beyond the bounds of modesty ; howbeit I will not let every one know what is betwixt us. Love, love (I mean Christ's love), is the hottest coal that ever I felt. Oh, but the smoke of it be hot ! Cast all the salt sea on it, it will flame ; hell cannot quench it ; many many waters will not quench love. Christ is turned over to His poor prisoner in a mass and globe of love. I wonder that He should waste so much love upon such a waster as I am ; but He is no waster, but abundant in mercy. He hath no niggard's alms, when He is pleased to give. Oh that I could invite all the nation to love Him ! Free grace is an unknown thing. This world hath heard but a bare name of Christ, and no more. There are infinite plies in His love that the faints will never win† to unfold ; I would it were better known, and that Christ got more of His own due than He doth.

Brother, ye have chosen the good part, who have taken part with Christ. Ye will see Him win the field, and shall get part of the spoil when He divideth it. They are but fools who laugh at us ; for they see but the backside of the moon, yet our moonlight is better than their twelve-hours'‡ fun. We have gotten the New Heavens, and, as a pledge of that, the Bridegroom's love-ring. The children of the wedding-chamber have cause to skip and leap for joy ; for the marriage-supper is drawing nigh, and we find the four-hours'§ sweet and comfortable. O time, be not slow ! O fun, move speedily, and hasten our banquet ! O Bridegroom, be like a roe or a young hart upon the mountains ! O Well-beloved, run fast, that we may once || meet !

* Never get me to come up to His due. † Folds that faints will not get at.

‡ Noon of the day ; their fun at his best.

§ The slight meal taken in the afternoon. || Some time or other.

Brother, I restrain myself for want of time. Pray for me; I hope to remember you. The good-will of Him who dwelt in the bush, the tender mercies of God in Christ, enrich you. Grace be with you.

Yours, in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, *March 14, 1637.*

CLIII.—*To* BETHAIA AIRD.

[The name *Aird* is not uncommon in the history of the Church. *Mr Wm. Aird* was a noted minister in Edinburgh in Livingstone's days. Wodrow's History mentions *Aird* of Muirkirk, and also *John Aird* of Milton. In the memoir of Walter Pringle of Greenknow, we find *James Aird* was his intimate friend. But whether this correspondent was related to any of them, we know not. She may have been simply an Anwoth parishioner.]

(UNBELIEF UNDER TRIALS—CHRIST'S SYMPATHY.)



WORTHY SISTER,—Grace, mercy, and peace be unto you. I know that ye desire news from my prison, and I shall show you news. At my first entry hither, Christ and I agreed not well upon it. The devil made a plea* in the house, and I laid the blame upon Christ; for my heart was fraughted† with challenges, and I feared that I was an outcast, and that I was but a withered tree in the vineyard, and but held the sun off the good plants with my idle shadow, and that, therefore, my Master had given the evil servant the fields, to fend‡ him. Old guiltiness (as witnesses) said, “All is true.” My apprehensions were with child of faithless fears, and unbelief put a seal and amen to all. I thought myself in a hard case. Some said I had cause to rejoice that Christ had honoured me to be a witness for Him; and I said in my heart, “These are words of men, who see but mine outside, and cannot tell if I be a false witness or not.”

* Controversy, dispute.

† Fully filled with self-upbraidings.

‡ To shift for himself in the fields; cast him out.

If Christ had in this matter been as wilful and short* as I was, my faith had gone over the brae,† and broken its neck. But we were well met,—a hafty fool, and a wife, patient, and meek Saviour. He took no law-advantage of my folly, but waited on till my ill-blood was fallen, and my drumbled‡ and troubled well began to clear. He was never a whit angry at the fever-ravings of a poor tempted sinner; but He mercifully forgave, and came (as it well becometh Him), with grace and new comfort, to a sinner who deserved the contrary. And now He is content to kiss my black mouth, to put His hand into mine, and to feed me with as many consolations as would feed ten hungry souls. Yet I dare not say that He is a wafter of comforts, for no less would have borne me up; one grain-weight less would have casten § the balance.

Now, who is like to that royal King, crowned in Zion! Where shall I get a seat for real Majesty to set Him on? If I could set Him as far above the heaven as thousand thousands of heights devised by men and angels, I should think Him but too low. I pray you, for God's sake, my dear sister, to help me to praise. His love hath neither brim nor bottom; His love is like Himself, it passeth all natural understanding. I go to fathom it with my arms; but it is as if a child would take the globe of sea and land in his two short arms. Blessed and holy is His name! This must be His truth which I now suffer for; for He would not laugh upon a lie, nor be witness with His comforts to a night-dream.

I entreat for your prayers; and the prayer and blessing of a prisoner of Christ be upon you. Grace be with you.

Yours in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, *March 14, 1637.*

* Short-tempered; hafty.

† Disturbed, made muddy.

‡ Fallen over the hill.

§ Turned the scale.

CLIV.—*To ALEXANDER GORDON of Knockgray, near Carsphairn.*

(PROSPECTIVE TRIALS.)



DEAR BROTHER,—I have not leisure to write to you. Christ's ways were known to you long before I, who am but a child, knew anything of Him. What wrong and violence the prelates may, by God's permission, do unto you, for your trial, I know not; but this I know, that your ten days' tribulation will end. Contend to the last breath for Christ. Banishment out of these kingdoms is determined against me, as I hear; this land do^{*} not bear me. I pray you, to recommend my case and bonds to my brethren and sisters with you. I intrust more of my spiritual comfort to you and them that way, my dear brother, than to many in this kingdom besides. I hope that ye will not be wanting to Christ's prisoner.

Fear nothing; for I assure you that Alexander Gordon of Knockgray shall win away,† and get his soul for a prey. And what can he then want that is worth the having? Your friends are cold (as ye write); and so are those in whom I trusted much. Our Husband doth well in breaking our idols in pieces. Dry wells send us to the fountain. "My life is not dear to me, so being I may fulfil my course with joy." I fear that ye must remove, if your new hireling will not bear your discountenancing of him; for the prelate is afraid that Christ get you; and that he hath no will to.

Grace be with you.

Yours in his sweet Lord and Master,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, 1637.

* Is not able to.

† Get away from this world.

CLV.—To GRIZZEL FULLERTON.

[GRIZZEL FULLERTON was the daughter of William Fullerton, Provost of Kirkcudbright, and Marion M'Naught. See Let. 6.]

(THE ONE THING NEEDFUL—CHRIST'S LOVE.)

DEAR SISTER,—I exhort you in the Lord, to seek your one thing, Mary's good part, that shall not be taken from you. Set your heart and soul on the children's inheritance. This clay-idol, the world, is but for bastards, and ye are His lawfully-begotten child. Learn the way (as your dear mother hath done before you) to knock at Christ's door. Many an alms of mercy hath Christ given to her, and hath abundance behind to give to you. Ye are the seed of the faithful, and born within the covenant; claim your right. I would not exchange Christ Jesus for ten worlds of glory. I know now (blessed be my Teacher!) how to shute* the lock, and unbolt my Well-beloved's door; and He maketh a poor stranger welcome when He cometh to His house. I am swelled up and satisfied with the love of Christ, that is better than wine. It is a fire in my soul; let hell and the world cast water on it, they will not mend themselves. I have now gotten the right gate† of Christ. I recommend Him to you above all things. Come and find‡ the smell of His breath; see if His kisses be not sweet. He desireth no better than to be much made of; be homely§ with Him, and ye shall be the more welcome; ye know not how fain Christ would have all your love. Think not this is imagination and bairns' play, which we make din for. || I would not suffer for it, if it were so. I dare pawn my heaven for it, that it is the way to glory. Think much of truth, and abhor these ways devised by men in God's worship.

* Shove back. † Way of dealing with.

‡ Feel; or find out.

§ At home with; familiar.

|| Make so much noise about.

The grace of Christ be with you.

Yours, in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, *March 14, 1637.*

CLVI.—*To* PATRICK CARSEN.

[This was, perhaps, the son of John Carfen, formerly noticed. See Let. 127.]

(*EARLY DEVOTEDNESS TO CHRIST.*)



DEAR AND LOVING FRIEND,—I cannot but, upon the opportunity of a bearer, exhort you to resign the love of your youth to Christ; and in this day, while your sun is high and your youth serveth you, to seek the Lord and His face. For there is nothing out of heaven so necessary for you as Christ. And ye cannot be ignorant but your day will end, and the night of death shall call you from the pleasures of this life: and a doom given out in death standeth for ever—as long as God liveth! Youth, ordinarily, is a post and ready servant for Satan, to run errands; for it is a nest for lust, cursing, drunkenness, blaspheming of God, lying, pride, and vanity. Oh, that there were such an heart in you as to fear the Lord, and to dedicate your soul and body to His service! When the time cometh that your eye-strings shall break, and your face wax pale, and legs and arms tremble, and your breath shall grow cold, and your poor soul look out at your prison house of clay, to be set at liberty; then a good conscience, and your Lord's favour, shall be worth all the world's glory. Seek it as your garland and crown.

Grace be with you.

Yours, in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, *March 14, 1637.*

CLVII.—*To* CARLETON.

[Livingstone, in his *Characteristics*, mentions two persons of this name: "Fullerton of Carleton, in Galloway, a grave and cheerful Christian;" and "Cathcart of Carleton, in Carrick, an old, experienced Christian," in much repute among the religious of his day, for his skill in solving cases of conscience, and dealing with persons under spiritual affliction. But it seems clear that Rutherford's correspondent was *John Fullerton of Carleton*, in the parish of Borgue. For, in Let. 15, he is spoken of as in Galloway. In the "Minutes of Comm. of Covenanters," we find the following estates put side by side, all of them a few miles from Anwoth, viz., "*Roberton and Carleton*, Caillie and Rufco, Carluth and Cassinacrie." His lady's name appears prefixed to Let. 256.

This, too, was the Carleton that wrote the Acrostic on Marion M'Naught (see note on Let. 5). He was author of a poem—"The Turtle Dove, under the absence and presence of her only *Choice*. 1664,"—dedicated by the author to Lady Jane Campbell, Viscountess Kenmure, with whom he was connected. The only copy known is in possession of Mr Nicholson, Kirkcudbright. He also wrote "A Manifesto of the Kingdom of Scotland in favour of the League and Covenant," in verse. (See "Minutes of Comm. of Covenanters.")]

(INCREASING SENSE OF CHRIST'S LOVE—RESIGNATION—
DEADNESS TO EARTH—TEMPTATIONS—INFIRMITIES.)



MUCH HONOURED SIR,—I will not impute your not writing to me to forgetfulness. However, I have One above who forgetteth me not—nay, He groweth in His kindness. It hath pleased His holy Majesty to take me from the pulpit, and teach me many things, in my exile and prison, that were mysteries to me before.

I see His bottomless and boundless love and kindness, and my jealousies and ravings, which, at my first entry into this furnace, were so foolish and bold, as to say to Christ, who is truth itself, in His face, "Thou liest." I had well nigh lost my grips.* I wondered if it was Christ or not; for the mist and smoke of my per-

* Firm hold.

turbed heart made me mistake my Master, Jesus. My faith was dim, and hope frozen and cold; and my love, which caused jealousies, had some warmth, and heat, and smoke, but no flame at all. (Yet I was looking for some good of Christ's old claim to me.) I thought I had forfeited all my rights. But the tempter was too much upon my counsels, and was still blowing the coal. Alas! I knew not well before how good skill my Intercessor and Advocate, Christ, hath of pleading, and of pardoning me such follies. Now He is returned to my soul with healing under His wings; and I am nothing behind with Christ* now; for He hath overpaid me, by His presence, the pain I was put to by on-waiting, and any little loss that I sustained by my witnessing against the wrongs done to Him. I trow it was a pain to my Lord to hide Himself any longer. In a manner, He was challenging† His own unkindness, and repented Him of His glooms.‡ And now, what want I on earth that Christ can give to a poor prisoner? Oh, how sweet and lovely is He now! Alas! that I can get none to help me to lift up my Lord Jesus upon His throne, above all the earth.

2dly, I am now brought to some measure of submission, and I resolve to wait till I see what my Lord Jesus will do with me. I dare not now nickname, or speak one word against, the all-seeing and over-watching providence of my Lord. I see that providence runneth not on broken wheels. But I, like a fool, carved a providence for my own ease, to die in my nest, and to sleep still till my grey hairs, and to lie on the sunny side of the mountain, in my ministry at Anwoth. But now I have nothing to say against a borrowed fireside, and another man's house, nor Kedar's tents, where I live, being removed far from my acquaintance, my lovers, and my friends. I see that God hath the world on His wheels, and casteth it as a potter doth a vessel on the wheel. I dare not say that there is any inordinate or irregular motion in providence. The Lord hath done it. I will not go to law with Christ, for I would gain nothing of that.

* Christ has paid me all my claim.

† Rebuking.

‡ Frowns.

3^{dly}, I have learned some greater mortification ; and not to mourn after, or seek to suck, the world's dry breasts. Nay, my Lord hath filled me with such dainties, that I am like to a full banqueter, who is not for common cheer. What have I to do to fall down upon my knees, and worship mankind's great idol, the world ? I have a better God than any claygod : nay, at present, as I am now disposed, I care not much to give this world a discharge of my life-rent of it, for bread and water. I know that it is not my home, nor my Father's house ; it is but His foot-stool, the outer close* of His house, His out-fields and muir-ground. Let bastards take it. I hope never to think myself in its common,† for honour or riches. Nay, now, I say to laughter, “ Thou art madness.”

4^{thly}, I find it to be most true, that the greatest temptation out of hell, is, to live without temptations. If my waters should stand, they would rot. Faith is the better of the free air, and of the sharp winter storm in its face. Grace withereth without adversity. The devil is but God's master fencer, to teach us to handle our weapons.

5^{thly}, I never knew how weak I was, till now when He hideth Himself, and when I have Him to seek, seven times a day. I am a dry and withered branch, and a piece of dead carcass, dry bones, and not able to step over a straw. The thoughts of my old sins, are as the summons of death to me, and my late brother's case hath stricken me to the heart. When my wounds are closing, a little ruffle‡ causeth them to bleed afresh ; so thin-skinned is my soul, that I think it is like a tender man's skin that may touch nothing. Ye see how short I would shoot of the prize, if His grace were not sufficient for me.

Wo is me for the day of Scotland ! Wo, wo is me for my harlot-mother ; for the decree is gone forth ! Women of this land shall call the childless and miscarrying wombs blessed. The anger of the Lord is gone forth, and shall not return, till He perform the purpose of His heart against Scotland. Yet He shall make Scotland

* The lane, or passage, forming the entry to the house.

† Under obligation to.

‡ It is written “ rifle,” in old editions.

a new, sharp instrument, having teeth to thresh the mountains, and fan the hills as chaff.

The prisoner's blessing be upon you.

Yours, in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, *March 14, 1637.*

CLVIII.—*To the* LADY BUSBIE. [See Let. 133.]

(CHRIST ALL-WORTHY AND BEST AT OUR LOWEST—SINFULNESS
OF THE LAND—PRAYERS.)



MISSRESS,—I know that ye are thinking sometimes what Christ is doing in Zion, and that the haters of Zion may get the bottom of our cup, and the burning coals of our furnace that we have been tried in, those many years bygone. Oh, that this nation would be awakened to cry mightily unto God, for the setting up of a new tabernacle to Christ in Scotland. Oh, if this kingdom knew how worthy Christ were of His room! His worth was ever above man's estimation of Him.

And for myself I am pained at the heart, that I cannot find myself disposed to leave myself and go wholly into Christ. Alas, that there should be one bit of me out of Him, and that we leave too much liberty and latitude for ourselves, and our own ease, and credit, and pleasures, and so little room for all-love-worthy Christ! Oh, what pains and charges it costeth Christ ere He get us! and when all is done, we are not worth the having. It is a wonder that He should seek the like of us. But love overlooketh blackness and fecklessness;* for if it had not been so, Christ would never have made so fair and blessed a bargain with us as the covenant of grace is. I find that in all our sufferings Christ is but redding marches,† that every one of us may say, “Mine, and thine;” and

* Worthless, uselessness.

† Settling the boundaries.

that men may know by their crosses, how weak a bottom nature is to stand upon in trial; that the end which our Lord intendeth, in all our sufferings, is to bring grace into court* and request, amongst us. I should succumb and come short of heaven, if I had no more than my own strength to support me; and if Christ should say to me, "Either do or die," it were easy to determine what should become of me. The choice were easy, for I behoved to die if Christ should pass by with straitened bowels; and who then would take us up in our straits? I know we may say that Christ is kindest in His love, when we are at our weakest; and that if Christ had not been to the fore,† in our sad days, the waters had gone over our soul. His mercy hath a set period, and appointed place, how far and no farther the sea of affliction shall flow, and where the waves thereof shall be stayed. He prescribeth how much pain and sorrow, both for weight and measure, we must have. Ye have, then, good cause to recall your love from all lovers, and give it to Christ. He who is afflicted in all your afflictions, looketh not on you in your sad hours with an insensible heart or dry eyes.

All the Lord's faints may see that it is lost love which is bestowed upon this perishing world. Death and judgment will make men lament that ever their miscarrying hearts carried them to lay and lavish out their love upon false appearances and night-dreams. Alas! that Christ should fare the worse, because of His own goodness in making peace and the Gospel to ride together; and that we have never yet weighed the worth of Christ in His ordinances, and that we are like to be deprived of the well, ere we have tasted the sweetness of the water. It may be that with watery eyes, and a wet face, and wearied feet, we seek Christ, and shall not find Him. Oh, that this land were humbled in time, and by prayers, cries, and humiliation, would bring Christ in at the Church-door again, now when His back is turned toward us, and He is gone to the threshold, and His one foot, as it were, is out of the door! I am

* Into favour.

† If Christ had not been existing still.

sure that His departure is our deserving ; we have bought it with our iniquities ; for even the Lord's own children are fallen asleep, and, alas ! professors are made all of shows and fashions, and are not at pains to recover themselves again. Every one hath his set measure of faith and holiness, and contenteth himself with but a stinted measure of godliness, as if that were enough to bring him to heaven. We forget that as our gifts and light grow, so God's gain and the interest of His talents, should grow also ; and that we cannot pay God with the old use and wont (as we use to speak) which we gave Him seven years ago ; for this were to mock the Lord, and to make price with Him as we list. Oh, what difficulty is there in our Christian journey, and how often come we short of many thousand things that are Christ's due ! and we consider not, how far our dear Lord is behind with us.

Mistress, I cannot render you thanks, as I would, for your kindness to my brother, an oppressed stranger ; but I remember you unto the Lord as I am able. I entreat you to think upon me, His prisoner, and pray that the Lord would be pleased to give me room to speak to His people in His name.

Grace, grace be with you.

Yours in his sweet Lord and Master,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, 1637.

CLIX.—*To JOHN FLEMING, Bailie of Leith.*

(DIRECTIONS FOR CHRISTIAN CONDUCT).



WORTHY AND DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD,—Grace, mercy, and peace be unto you. I received your letter. I wish that I could satisfy your desire in drawing up, and framing for you, a Christian directory. But the learned have done it before me, more judiciously than I can ;

especially Mr Rogers,* Greenham,† and Perkins.‡ Notwithstanding, I shall show you what I would have been at myself; howbeit I came always short of my purpose.

1. That hours of the day, less or more time, for the word and prayer, be given to God, not sparing the twelfth hour, or mid-day, howbeit it should then be the shorter time.

2. In the midst of worldly employments, there should be some thoughts of sin, death, judgment, and eternity, with at least a word or two of ejaculatory prayer to God.

3. To beware of wandering of heart in private prayers.

4. Not to grudge, howbeit ye come from prayer without sense of joy. Down-casting, sense of guiltiness, and hunger, are often best for us.

5. That the Lord's-day, from morning to night, be spent always either in private or public worship.

6. That words be observed, wandering and idle thoughts be avoided, sudden anger and desire of revenge, even of such as persecute the truth, be guarded against; for we often mix our zeal with our wild-fire.

* Dr Daniel Rogers, a Puritan divine, author of a treatise called "David's Cost; or, What it will cost to serve God aright;" "A Practical Catechism;" "Naaman the Syrian," and others. He was born in 1573, educated at Cambridge, suffered from the persecution of Laud, and died in 1652, at the age of eighty. He was a man of great talents, deep humility and devotion, but of a temper so bold that a friend said of him, "He had grace enough for *two* men, but not enough for himself."

† Richard Greenham, a Puritan, who was born in 1531, and died of the plague 1591. He was the author of several sermons and practical treatises. (See *Brooke's Lives of the Puritans*, vol. ii., pp. 448.)

‡ Dr Wm. Perkins, an English divine, who lived in the end of the sixteenth century, and was the author of several practical and doctrinal treatises; among others, the one here referred to, "A Case of Conscience, and Thirteen Principles of Religion," published after his death. He was a strict Calvinist, and took part in the controversy against Arminianism. He used so to apply the terrors of the law to the conscience, that oftentimes his hearers fell down before him. It was also said that he pronounced the word "*Damnation*" with such an emphasis and pathos as left a doleful echo in the ear long after. He wrote on all his books, "Thou art a minister of the Word: mind thy business."

7. That known, discovered, and revealed sins, that are against the conscience, be eschewed, as most dangerous preparatives to hardness of heart.

8. That in dealing with men, faith and truth in covenants and trafficking be regarded, that we deal with all men in sincerity; that conscience be made of idle and lying words; and that our carriage be such, as that they who see it may speak honourably of our sweet Master and profession.

9. I have been much challenged,* 1. For not referring all to God as the last end; that I do not eat, drink, sleep, journey, speak, and think for God. 2. That I have not benefited by good company; and that I left not some word of conviction, even upon natural and wicked men, as by reproving swearing in them; or because of being a silent witness to their loose carriage; and because I intended not in all companies to do good. 3. That the woes and calamities of the Kirk, and of particular professors, have not moved me. 4. That at the reading of the life of David, Paul, and the like, when it humbled me, I (coming so far short of their holiness) laboured not to imitate them, afar off at least, according to the measure of God's grace. 5. That unrepented sins of youth were not looked to, and lamented for. 6. That sudden stirrings of pride, lust, revenge, love of honours, were not resisted and mourned for. 7. That my charity was cold. 8. That the experiences I had of God's hearing me, in this and the other particular, being gathered, yet in a new trouble I had always (once at least) my faith to seek, as if I were to begin at A, B, C, again. 9. That I have not more boldly contradicted the enemies speaking against the truth, either in public church meetings, or at tables, or ordinary conference. 10. That in great troubles I have received false reports of Christ's love, and misbelieved Him in His chastening; whereas the event hath said, "All was in mercy;" 11. Nothing more moveth me, and weighteth† my soul,

* Rebuked.

† Weighed down with sadness. "Death did not weight the martyrs when it was laid on them," occurs in one of his sermons.

than that I could never from* my heart, in my prosperity, so wrestle in prayer with God, nor be so dead to the world, so hungry and sick of love for Christ, so heavenly-minded, as when ten stone-weight of a heavy cross was upon me. 12. That the cross extorted vows of new obedience, which ease hath blown away, as chaff before the wind. 13. That practice was so short and narrow, and light so long and broad. 14. That death hath not been often meditated upon. 15. That I have not been careful of gaining others to Christ. 16. That my grace and gifts bring forth little or no thankfulness.

There are some things, also, whereby I have been helped : as, 1. I have been benefited by riding alone a long journey, in giving that time to prayer. 2. By abstinence, and giving days to God. 3. By praying for others ; for by making an errand to God for them, I have gotten something for myself. 4. I have been really confirmed, in many particulars, that God heareth prayers ; and, therefore, I used to pray for anything, of how little importance soever. 5. He enabled me to make no question, that this mocked way, which is nicknamed, is the only way to heaven.

Sir, these and many more occurrences in your life, should be looked unto ; and, 1. Thoughts of Atheism should be watched over, as, “ If there be a God in heaven ? ” which will trouble and assault the best, at some times. 2. Growth in grace should be cared for above all things ; and falling from our first love mourned for. 3. Conscience made of praying for the enemies, who are blinded.

Sir, I thank you most kindly for the care of my brother, and of me also. I hope it is laid up for you, and remembered in heaven.

I am still ashamed with Christ's kindness to such a sinner as I am. He hath left a fire in my heart, that hell cannot cast water on, to quench or extinguish it. Help me to praise, and pray for me, for ye have a prisoner's blessing and prayers.

Remember my love to your wife. Grace be with you. Yours in Christ Jesus,

ABERDEEN, *March* 15, 1637.

S. R.

* Should probably be “ *from* ; ” though it is “ *for* , ” in other editions.

CLX.—*To ALEXANDER GORDON of Earlston.*

(*HUNGERING AFTER CHRIST HIMSELF RATHER THAN HIS LOVE.*)



MUCH HONOURED AND WORTHY SIR,—Grace, mercy, and peace be unto you.—I long to hear from you. I have received few letters since I came hither; I am in need of a word. A dry plant should have some watering.

My case betwixt Christ my Lord, and me, standeth between love and jealousy, faith and suspicion of His love; it is a marvel He keepeth house with me. I make many pleas* with Christ, but He maketh as many agreements with me. I think His unchangeable love hath said, “I defy thee to break Me and change Me.” If Christ had such changeable and new thoughts of my salvation as I have of it, I think I should then be at a sad loss. He humoureth not a fool like me in my unbelief, but rebuketh me, and fathereth kindness upon me. Christ is more like the poor friend and needy prisoner begging love, than I am. I cannot, for shame, get Christ said “nay” of my whole love, for He will not want His errand for the seeking. God be thanked that my Bridegroom tireth not of wooing. Honour to Him! He is a wilful suitor of my soul. But as love is His, pain is mine, that I have nothing to give Him. His account-book is full of my debts of mercy, kindness, and free love towards me. Oh that I might read with watery eyes! Oh that He would give me the interest of interest to pay back! Or rather, my soul’s desire is, that He would comprise† my person, soul and body, love, joy, confidence, fear, sorrow, and desire, and drive‡ the point, and let me be roused,§ and sold to Christ, and taken home to my creditor’s house and fireside.

* Quarrels.

† Arrest by a civil process, by writ.

‡ Drive away the cattle that has been seized, is the primary meaning of the term.

§ Set up by public auction to sale.

'The Lord knoweth that, if I could, I would sell myself without reversion to Christ. O sweet Lord Jesus, make a market, and overbid all my buyers ! I dare swear, that there is a mystery in Christ which I never saw ; a mystery of love. Oh, if He would lay by* the lap of the covering that is over it, and let my greening† foul see it ! I would break the door, and be in upon Him, to get a wombful of love ; for I am an hungered and famished soul. O, sir, if you, or any other, would tell Him how sick my soul is, dying for want of a hearty draught of Christ's love ! Oh, if I could dote (if I may make use of that word in this case) as much upon Himself as I do upon His love ! It is a pity that Christ Himself should not rather be my heart's choice, than Christ's manifested love. It would satisfy me, in some measure, if I had any bud‡ to give for His love. Shall I offer Him my praises ? Alas ! He is more than praises. I give it over to get Him exalted according to His worth, which is above what can be known.

Yet all this time I am tempting Him, to see if§ there be both love and anger in Him against me. I am plucked from His flock (dear to me !), and from feeding His lambs ; I go, therefore, in sackcloth, as one who hath lost the wife of His youth. Grief and sorrow are suspicious, and spew out against Him the smoke of jealousies ; and I say often, " Show me wherefore Thou contendest with me. Tell me, O Lord : read the process against me." But I know that I cannot answer His allegations ; I shall lose the cause when it cometh to open pleading. Oh, if I could force my heart to believe dreams to be dreams ! Yet when Christ giveth my fears the lie, and faith to me, " Thou art a liar," then I am glad. I resolve to hope to be quiet, and to lie on the brink on my side, till the water fall and the ford be ridable.¶ And, howbeit there be pain upon me, in longing for deliverance that I may speak of Him in the great congregation, yet I think there is joy in that pain and on-waiting ; and I even rejoice that He putteth me off for a time, and shifteth me. Oh, if I

* Put aside. † Earnestly longing.

‡ Bribe.

§ As if I wished to find out.

¶ Can be crossed on horseback

could wait on for all eternity, howbeit I should never get my foul's desire, so being He were glorified ! I would with my pain and my ministry could live long to serve Him ; for I know that I am a clay vessel, and made for His use. Oh, if my very broken sherds could serve to glorify Him ! I desire Christ's grace to be willingly content, that my hell (excepting His hatred and displeasure, which I put out of all play, for submission to this is not called for) were a preaching of His glory to men and angels for ever and ever ! When all is done, what can I add to Him ? or what can such a clay-shadow as I do ? I know that He needeth not me. I have cause to be grieved, and to melt away in tears, if I had grace to do it (Lord, grant it to me !), to see my Well-beloved's fair face spitted upon by dogs, to see loons* pulling the crown off my royal King's head ; to see my harlot-mother and my sweet Father agree so ill, that they are going to skail† and give up house. My Lord's palace is now a nest of unclean birds. Oh, if harlot, harlot Scotland, would rue‡ upon her provoked Lord, and pity her good Husband, who is broken with her whorish heart ! But these things are hid from her eyes.

I have heard of late of your new trial by the Bishop of Galloway.§ Fear not clay, worms' meat. Let truth and Christ get no wrong in your hand. It is your gain if Christ be glorified ; and your glory to be Christ's witnesses. I persuade you, that your sufferings are Christ's advantage and victory ; for He is pleased to reckon them so. Let me hear from you. Christ is but winning a clean kirk out of the fire ; He will win this play. He will not be in your common || for any charges ye are at in His service. He is not poor,

* Worthless scoundrels. † To part ; break up and disperse. ‡ Repent.

§ The Bishop of Galloway held this year a High Commission Court in Galloway, in which, besides fining some gentlemen, and confining the magistrates of Kirkcudbright to Wigtown, for matters of nonconformity, he fined Gordon of Earlston for his absence, five hundred merks (about L.28), and sentenced him to be confined to Montrose. (*Baillie's Letters and Journals.*) This, no doubt, is the "new trial by the Bishop of Galloway," to which Rutherford refers. See notice of Alexander Gordon of Earlston, *Let.* 59.

|| Under obligation to.

to fit in your debt ; He will repay an hundred-fold more, it may be, even in this life.

The prayers and blessings of Christ's prisoner be with you.

Your brother, in his sweet Lord Jesus,

ABERDEEN, 1637.

S. R.

CLXI.—*To* JOHN STUART, *Provost of Ayr.*

[JOHN STUART, Provost of Ayr, is described by Livingstone as “a godly and zealous Christian of a long standing,” for he had, from his earliest years, been impressed with a sense of religion. Inheriting, after the death of his father, considerable property, he largely applied it to benevolent purposes. Such was his disinterestedness and love to those who were the friends of Christ and His truth, that he called a number of them whose distressed and straitened condition he knew, to meet with him in Edinburgh, and after some time spent in prayer, told them he had brought a little money to lend to each of them, which they were not to offer to pay back till he required it, at the same time requiring them to promise not to make this known during his life. Not long after (the plague raging with severity in Ayr, and trade becoming, in consequence, much depressed) he himself fell into pecuniary difficulties, which made him at that time remove from the country. Borrowing a little money, he went over to France, and coming to Rochelle, loaded a ship with salt and other commodities, which he purchased upon credit at a very cheap rate, there having been little or no trading there for a long time. He then returned the nearest way to England, and thence to Ayr, in expectation of the ship's return. After waiting long he was informed that it was taken by the Turks, which, considering the loss which others in that case would sustain, much afflicted him. But it at last arrived in the road ; and it was on this occasion that his friend John Kennedy, going out to the vessel in a small boat, was driven away by a storm. (See notice of Kennedy, Letter 75.) Stuart having sold the commodities which he brought from France, not only was enabled by the profits to pay all his debts, but cleared twenty thousand merks. (*Fleming's Fulfilling of the Scriptures.*) He joined with Mr Blair, Mr Livingstone, and others, in their intended emigration to New England ; but they were forced, from the tempestuous state of the weather, to return. This good man was much afflicted on his death-bed. One day he said, “I testify, that except when I slept, or was in business, I was not these ten years without thoughts of God, so long as I would be in going from my own house to the cross ; and yet I doubt myself, and am in great agony, yea, at the brink of despair.” But a day or two before he died, all his doubts were dispelled ; and to Mr Ferguson, the pious minister of Ayr, he said, referring to his struggle with

temptations at that time, “I have been fighting and working out my salvation with fear and trembling, and now I bless God it is perfected, sealed, confirmed, and all fears are gone.”]

(*COMMERCIAL MISFORTUNES—SERVICE-BOOK—BLESSEDNESS OF TRIAL.*)



MUCH HONOURED SIR,—Grace, mercy, and peace be unto you. I long to hear from you, being now removed from my flock, and the prisoner of Christ at Aberdeen. I would not have you to think it strange that your journey to New England hath gotten such a dash.* It indeed hath made my heart heavy; yet I know it is no dumb providence, but a speaking one, whereby our Lord speaketh His mind to you, though for the present ye do not well understand what He saith. However it be, He who sitteth upon the floods hath shown you His marvellous kindness in the great depths. I know that your loss is great, and your hope is gone far against you; but I entreat you, sir, expound aright our Lord's laying all hindrances in the way. I persuade myself that your heart aimeth at the footsteps of the flock, to feed beside the shepherds' tents, and to dwell beside Him whom your soul loveth; and that it is your desire to remain in the wilderness, where the Woman is kept from the Dragon. And this being your desire, remember that a poor prisoner of Christ said it to you, that that miscarried journey is with child to you of mercy and consolation; and shall bring forth a fair birth, on which the Lord will attend. Wait on; “He that believeth maketh not haste.”†

I hope that ye have been asking what the Lord meaneth, and what further may be His will, in reference to your return. My dear brother, let God make of you what He will, He will end all with consolation, and will make glory out of your sufferings; and would you wish better work? This water was in your way to heaven, and written in your Lord's book; ye behoved to cross it, and, therefore, kiss His wife and unerring providence. Let not the censures of men, who see but the outside of things, and scarce well

* See note at Let. 63.

† Isa. xxviii. 16.

that, abate your courage and rejoicing in the Lord. Howbeit your faith seeth but the black side of providence; yet it hath a better side, and God will let you see it. Learn to believe Christ better than His strokes, Himself and His promises better than His glooms.* Dashes and disappointments are not canonical Scripture; fighting for the promised land seemed to cry to God's promise, "Thou liest." If our Lord ride upon a straw, His horse shall neither stumble nor fall. "For we know that all things work together for good to them that love God;"† *ergo*, shipwreck, losses, &c., work together for the good of them that love God. Hence I infer, that losses, disappointments, ill-tongues, loss of friends, houses, or country, are God's workmen, set on work to work out good to you, out of everything that befalleth you. Let not the Lord's dealing seem harsh, rough, or unfatherly, because it is unpleasant. When the Lord's blessed will bloweth across your desires, it is best, in humility, to strike sail to Him, and to be willing to be led any way our Lord pleaseth. It is a point of denial of yourself, to be as if ye had not a will, but had made a free disposition of it to God, and had sold it over to Him; and to make use of His will for your own is both true holiness, and your ease and peace. Ye know not what the Lord is working out of this, but ye shall know it hereafter.

And what I write to you, I write to your wife. I compassionate her case, but entreat her not to fear nor faint. This journey is a part of her wilderness to heaven and the promised land, and there are fewer miles behind. It is nearer the dawning of the day to her than when she went out of Scotland. I should be glad to hear that ye and she have comfort and courage in the Lord.

Now, as concerning our Kirk; our Service-book is ordained, by open proclamation and found of trumpet, to be read in all the kirks of the kingdom.‡ Our prelates are to meet this month about

* Frowns.

† Rom. viii. 28.

‡ The Service-book, or Liturgy, at this time imposed upon Scotland, was just that of England, but containing numerous alterations. The Act of Privy Council, enjoining the use of the Service-book, is dated 20th December 1636; and it was next day proclaimed at the cross of Edinburgh: but it was not

our Canons,* and for a reconciliation betwixt us and the Lutherans. The Professors of Aberdeen University are charged to draw up the Articles of an uniform Confession ; but reconciliation with Popery is intended. This is the day of Jacob's visitation ; the ways of Zion mourn, our gold is become dim, the sun is gone down upon our prophets. A dry wind, but neither to fan nor to cleanse, is coming upon this land ; and all our ill is coming from the multiplied transgressions of this land, and from the friends and lovers of Babel among us. "The violence done to me and to my flesh be upon thee, Babylon, shall the inhabitant of Zion say ; and, My blood upon the inhabitants of Chaldea, shall Jerusaleme say."†

published till towards the end of May 1637. Its title is, "The Booke of Common Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments and other parts of Divine Service, for the use of the Church of Scotland. Edinburgh, 1637." This book was extremely obnoxious to the great body of the ministers and people of Scotland, both from the manner of its introduction, which was by the sole authority of the King, without the Church having been even consulted in the matter, and from the doctrines which it contained, in which it approached nearer to the Roman missal than the English liturgy. It was drawn up by James Wedderburn, Bishop of Dunblane, and John Maxwell, Bishop of Ross, with the assistance of Sydserff, Bishop of Galloway, and Ballenden, Bishop of Aberdeen. It was revised by Archbishop Laud, and Wren, Bishop of Norwich. Kirkton mentions that he saw the original copy corrected by Laud's own hands, and that all his corrections approached towards Popery and the Roman missal. (*Kirkton's History*, p. 30.)

* The Book of Canons was, in obedience to the King's orders, drawn up by four of the Scottish bishops,—Sydserff of Galloway, Maxwell of Ross, Ballenden of Aberdeen, and Whiteford of Dunblane. After being submitted to Archbishop Laud and two other English prelates for revision, it received the Royal sanction, and became law in 1635. This book, like the Service-book which followed it, was extremely unpopular in Scotland, because it was imposed solely by Royal authority, and from the nature of the canons themselves, which prescribed a variety of ceremonial and superstitious rites in the observance of baptism and the Lord's Supper ; invested bishops with uncontrollable power ; inculcated the doctrine of the King's supremacy in matters ecclesiastical as well as civil,—affirming that no meeting of General Assembly could be held unless called by the King's authority ; and introduced other innovations equally arbitrary and obnoxious.

† Jer. li. 35

Now for myself : I was three days before the High Commiſſion, and accused of treaſon preached againſt our King. (A miniſter being witneſs, went well nigh to ſwear it.) God hath ſaved me from their malice. *1ſt*, They have deprived me of my miniſtry ; *2dly*, Silenced me, that I exerciſe no part of the miniſterial function within this kingdom, under the pain of rebellion ; *3dly*, Confined my perſon within the town of Aberdeen, where I find the miniſters working for my confinement in Caithneſs or Orkney, far from them, becauſe ſome people here (willing to be edified) reſort to me. At my firſt entry, I had heavy challenges* within me, and a court fenced† (but I hope not in Chriſt's name), wherein it was aſſerted that my Lord would have no more of my ſervices, and was tired of me ; and, like a fool, I ſummoned Chriſt alſo for unkindneſs. My ſoul fainted, and I reſuſed comfort, and ſaid, “ What ailed Chriſt at me ? for I deſired to be faithful in His houſe.” Thus, in my rovings‡ and miſtakings, my Lord Jeſus beſtowed mercy on me, who am leſs than the leaſt of all ſaints. I lay upon the duſt, and bought a plea from Satan againſt Chriſt, and He was content to ſell it. But at length Chriſt did ſhow Himſelf friends with me, and in mercy pardoned and paſſed my part of it, and only complained that a court ſhould be holden in His bounds without His allowance. Now I paſs from my compearance ; § and, as if Chriſt had done the fault, He hath made the mends, || and returned to my ſoul ; ſo that now His poor priſoner feedeth on the feaſts of love. My adverſaries know not what a courtier I am now with my Royal King, for whoſe crown I now ſuffer. It is but our ſoft and lazy fleſh that hath raiſed an ill report of the croſs of Chriſt. O ſweet, ſweet is His yoke ! Chriſt's chains are of pure gold ; ſufferings for Him are perfumed. I would not give my weeping for the laughing of all the fourteen prelates ; ¶ I would not exchange my ſadneſs with the world's joy. O lovely, lovely Jeſus, how ſweet muſt thy kiſſes

* Upbraidings. † Conſtituted. ‡ Wanderings, like one out of his mind.

§ Appearing in court in obedience to legal citation.

|| Made up for the wrong.

¶ Fourteen was the number of biſhops in Scotland.

be, when thy crofs finelleth fo fweetly ! Oh, if all the three kingdoms had part of my love-feaft, and of the comfort of a dawted* prifoner !

Dear Brother, I charge you to praife for me, and to feek help of our acquaintance there to help me to praife. Why fhould I fmother Chrift's honefty to me ? My heart is taken up with this, that my filence and sufferings may preach. I befeech you in the bowels of Chrift, to help me to praife. Remember my love to your wife, to Mr Blair, and Mr Livingftone, and Mr Cunningham. Let me hear from you, for I am anxious what to do. If I faw a call for New England, I would follow it. Grace be with you.

Yours in our Lord Jefus,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, 1637.

CLXII.—To JOHN STUART, *Provost of Ayr.*

(THE BURDEN OF A SILENCED MINISTER—SPIRITUAL
SHORTCOMINGS.)



MUCH HONoured AND DEAREST IN CHRIST,
—Grace, mercy, and peace from God our Father, and
from our Lord Jefus Chrift, be upon you.

I expected the comfort of a letter to a prifoner from you, ere now. I am here, Sir, putting off† a part of my inch of time ; and when I awake firft in the morning (which is always with great heavinefs and fadnefs), this question is brought to my mind, “ Am I ferving God or not ? ” Not that I doubt of the truth of this honourable caufe wherein I am engaged ; I dare venture into eternity, and before my Judge, that I now fuffer for the truth : becaufe that I cannot endure that my Mafter, who is a freeborn King, fhould pay tribute to any of the fhields or potfherds of the earth. Oh that I could hold the crown upon my princely King's head with

* Fondled.

† Spending.

my sinful arm, howbeit it should be struck from me in that service, from the shoulder-blade. But my closed mouth, my dumb Sabbath, the memory of my communion with Christ, in many fair, fair days in Anwoth, whereas now my Master getteth no service of my tongue as then, hath almost broken my faith in two halves. Yet in my deepest apprehensions of His anger, I see through a cloud that I am wrong; and He, in love to my soul, hath taken up the controversy betwixt faith and apprehensions, and a decreet* is passed on Christ's side of it, and I subscribe the decreet.* The Lord is equal in His ways, but my guiltiness often overmastereth my believing. I have not been well known: for except as to open out-breakings, I want nothing of what Judas and Cain had; only He hath been pleased to prevent me in mercy, and to cast me into a fever of love for Himself, and His absence maketh my fever most painful. And beside, He hath visited my soul and watered it with His comforts. But yet I have not what I would. The want of real and felt possession is my only death. I know that Christ pitieth me in this.

The great men, my friends, that did† for me, are dried up like winter-brooks of water. All say, "No dealing for that man; his best will be to be gone out of the kingdom." So I see they tire of me. But, believe me, I am most gladly content that Christ breaketh all my idols in pieces. It hath put a new edge upon my blunted love to Christ; I see that He is jealous of my love, and will have all to Himself. In a word, these six things are my burden: 1. I am not in the vineyard as others are; it may be, because Christ thinketh me a withered tree, not worth its room. But God forbid! 2. Woe, woe, woe is coming upon my harlot-mother, this apostate Kirk! The time is coming when we shall wish for doves' wings to flee and hide us. Oh, for the desolation of this land! 3. I see my dear Master Christ going His lone‡ (as it were), mourning in sackcloth. His fainting friends fear that King Jesus shall lose the field. But

* A sentence of the Court.

† Acted for me.

‡ Going lonely, by himself; Ps. cii. 7.

He must carry the day. 4. My guiltiness and the sins of youth are come up against me, and they would come into the plea in my sufferings, as deserving causes in God's justice ; but I pray God, for Christ's sake, that He may never give them that room. 5. Woe is me, that I cannot get my royal, dreadful, mighty, and glorious Prince of the kings of the earth set on high. Sir, ye may help me and pity me in this ; and bow your knee, and bless His name, and desire others to do it, that He hath been pleased, in my sufferings, to make Atheists, Papists, and enemies about me say, " It is like that God is with this prisoner." Let hell and the powers of hell (I care not) be let loose against me to do their worst, so being that Christ, and my Father, and His Father, be magnified in my sufferings. 6. Christ's love hath pained me : for howbeit His presence hath shamed me, and drowned me in debt, yet He often goeth away when my love to Him is burning. He seemeth to look like a proud wooer, who will not look upon a poor match that is dying of love. I will not say He is lordly. But I know He is wise in hiding Himself from a child and a fool, who maketh an idol and a god of one of Christ's kisses, which is idolatry. I fear that I adore His comforts more than Himself, and that I love the apples of life better than the tree of life.

Sir, write to me. Commend me to your wife. Mercy be her portion. Grace be with you.

Yours, in his dearest Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, 1637.

CLXIII.—To JOHN STUART, *Provost of Ayr.*

(VIEW OF TRIALS PAST—HARD THOUGHTS OF CHRIST—CROSSES
—HOPE.)



WORTHY AND DEARLY BELOVED IN OUR LORD,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you.—I was refreshed and comforted with your letter. What I wrote to you, for your comfort, I do not remember ; but I believe

that love will prophesy homeward,* as it would have it. I wish that I could help you to praise His great and holy name who keepeth the feet of His saints, and hath numbered all your goings. I know that our dearest Lord will pardon and pass by our honest errors and mistakes, when we mind His honour; yet I know that none of you have seen the other half, and the hidden side, of your wonderful return home to us again. I am confident ye shall yet say, that God's mercy blew your sails back to Ireland again.†

Worthy and dear Sir, I cannot but give you an account of my present estate, that ye may go an errand for me to my high and royal Master, of whom I boast all the day. I am as proud of His love (nay, I bless myself, and boast more of my present lot) as any poor man can be of an earthly king's court, or of a kingdom. *First*, I am very often turning both the sides of my crosses, especially my dumb and silent Sabbaths; not because I desire to find a crook or defect in my Lord's love, but because my love is sick with fancies and fear. Whether or not the Lord hath a process leading against my guiltiness, that I have not yet well seen, I know not. My desire is to ride fair, and not to spark‡ dirt (if, with reverence to Him, I may be permitted to make use of such a word) in the face of my only, only Well-beloved; but fear of guiltiness is a talebearer be-

* In its own favour.

† Some of those who had embarked in that voyage had important work to perform in Scotland. The ministers, after their return coming over to this country, were settled in various parishes; Messrs Blair at Ayr, Livingstone at Stranraer, M'Clelland at Kirkcudbright, and Hamilton at Dumfries. They were zealous promoters of the subscribing of the National Covenant, and of other measures by which the triumph of the Presbyterian Church in Scotland was ultimately secured; and all of them were chosen members of the celebrated Assembly held at Glasgow in 1638, in the proceedings of which they took a prominent part. Speaking of their return, Row of Ceres says, "Neither the prelates and conformists, nor they themselves, knew that within a year the Lord would not only root out the prelates in Scotland, and, after that, out of England and Ireland, but make some of them, especially Messrs Blair, Livingstone, and M'Clelland, to be very instrumental in the work of reformation."—*Life of Robert Blair* (Wodrow Society).

‡ Cause sparks of dirt to be squirted.

twixt me and Christ, and is still whispering ill tales of my Lord, to weaken my faith. I had rather that a cloud went over my comforts by these messages, than that my faith should be hurt; for, if my Lord get no wrong by me, verily I desire grace not to care what become of me. I desire to give no faith nor credit to my sorrow, that can make a lie of my best friend Christ. Woe, woe be to them all who speak ill of Christ! Hence these thoughts awake with me in the morning, and go to bed with me. Oh, what service can a dumb body do in Christ's house! Oh, I think the word of God is imprisoned also! Oh, I am a dry tree! Alas, I can neither plant nor water! Oh, if my Lord would make but dung of me, to fatten and make fertile His own corn-ridges in Mount Zion! Oh, if I might but speak to three or four herdboys* of my worthy Master, I would be satisfied to be the meanest and most obscure of all the pastors in this land, and to live in any place, in any of Christ's basest outhouses! But he saith, "Sirrah, I will not send you; I have no errands for you thereaway."† My desire to serve Him is sick of jealousy, lest He be unwilling to employ me. *Secondly*, This is seconded by another; Oh! all that I have done in Anwoth, the fair work that my Master began there, is like a bird dying in the shell; and what will I then have to show of all my labour, in the day of my compearance‡ before Him, when the Master of the vineyard calleth the labourers, and giveth them their hire? *Thirdly*, But truly, when Christ's sweet wind is in the right airth, § I repent, and I pray Christ to take law-burrows|| of my quarrelous ¶ unbelieving sadness and sorrow. Lord, rebuke them that put ill betwixt a poor servant like me and his good Master. Then I say, whether the black cross will or not, I must climb on hands and feet up to my Lord. I am now ruing from my heart that I pleased the law (my old dead husband) so far as to apprehend wrath in my

* Boys, like David, keeping the sheep or cattle.

† In those places.

‡ Appearance, because summoned.

§ Quarter.

|| Pledge, such as the law demands from a man that he will not injure his neighbour.

¶ Querulous, or quarrelsome rather.

sweet Lord Jesus. I had far rather take a hire to plead for the grace of God, for I think myself Christ's sworn debtor; and the truth is (to speak of my Lord what I cannot deny), I am over head and ears, drowned in many obligations to His love and mercy.

He handleth me some time so, that I am ashamed almost to seek more for a four-hours,* but to live content (till the marriage-supper of the Lamb) with that which He giveth. But I know not how greedy and how ill† to please love is. For either my Lord Jesus hath taught me ill manners, not to be content with a seat, except my head lie in His bosom, and except I be fed with the fatness of His house; or else I am grown impatiently dainty, and ill to please, as if Christ were obliged, under this cross, to do no other thing but bear me in His arms, and as if I had claim by merit for my suffering for Him. But I wish He would give me grace to learn to go on my own feet, and to learn to do without His comforts, and to give thanks and believe, when the sun is not in my firmament, and when my Well-beloved is from home, and gone another errand. Oh, what sweet peace have I, when I find that Christ holdeth and I draw; when I climb up and He shuteth‡ me down; when I grip§ Him and embrace Him, and He seemeth to loose the grips§ and flee away from me! I think there is even a sweet joy of faith, and contentedness, and peace, in His very tempting unkindness, because my faith faith, "Christ is not in sad earnest with me, but trying if I can be kind to His mask and cloud that covereth Him, as well as to His fair face." I bless His great name that I love His vail which goeth over His face, whill|| God send better; for faith can kiss God's tempting reproaches when He nicknameth a sinner, "A dog, not worthy to eat bread with the bairns."¶ I think it an honour that Christ miscalleth** me, and reproacheth me. I will take that well of Him, howbeit I would not bear it well if another should be that homely;†† but because I am His own (God be thanked), He may use me as He pleaseth. I must say, the saints

* A slight afternoon's meal. † Difficult. ‡ Shoveth, pusheth. § Grasp.
 || Till. ¶ Mark vii. 27, 28. ** Gives me by-names. †† So familiar.

have a sweet life between them and Christ. There is much sweet solace of love between Him and them, when He feedeth among the lilies, and cometh into His garden, and maketh a feast of honeycombs, and drinketh His wine and His milk, and crieth, "Eat, O friends: drink, yea, drink abundantly, O well-beloved." One hour of this labour is worth a shipful of the world's drunken and muddy joy; nay, even the gate* to heaven is the funny side of the brae, and the very garden of the world. For the men of this world have their own unchristened and profane crosses; and woe be to them and their cursed crosses both; for their ills are salted with God's vengeance, and our ills seasoned with our Father's blessing. So that they are no fools who choose Christ, and sell all things for Him. It is no bairns' market, nor a blind block;† we know well what we get, and what we give.

Now, for any resolution to go to any other kingdom, I dare not speak one word.‡ My hopes of enlargement are cold, my hopes of re-entry to my Master's ill-dressed vineyard again are far colder. I have no feat for my faith to sit on, but bare omnipotency, and God's holy arm and good-will. Here I desire to stay, and ride at

* This seems to mean, "The very way (gate) to heaven is pleasant."

† Bargain.

‡ At present the prospects of the Church were so dark, that Rutherford appears sometimes to have entertained the idea of removing to another country, should he succeed in obtaining his liberty. In a preceding letter to Stuart, he names New England, then an asylum for multitudes who were persecuted for conscience sake, as a place to which he would willingly go, provided he could see the call of Providence. And some of his friends about this time were desirous that he might be honourably and usefully employed abroad. Robert Baillie, in a letter to Mr William Spang, minister at Campvere, dated January 29, 1637, says, "Alwayes I take the man [Rutherford] to be among the most learned and best ingynes of our nation. I think he were verie able for some profession in your colledges of Utreck, Groninge, or Rotterdame; for our King's dominions, there is no appearance he will ever gett living into them. If you could quietly procure him a calling, I think it were a good service to God to relieve one of his troubled ministers; a good to the place he came to, for he is both godlie and learned; yea, I think by time he might be ane ornament to our natione."—*Baillie's Letters and Journals*, vol. i., p. 9.

anchor, and winter, whill* God fend fair weather again, and be pleased to take home to His house my harlot-mother. Oh, if her husband would be that† kind, as to go and fetch her out of the brothel-house, and chafe her lovers to the hills! But there will be fad days ere it come to that. Remember my bonds. Grace be with you.

Yours, in our Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, 1637.

CLXIV.—To NINIAN MURE [see Let. 191], *one of the family of Cassin-carrie.*

[We do not know more of *Ninian Mure* than that he was a parishioner of Anwoth. The name “*Mure*” is found on several tombs in the old church-yard, of which the oldest and most interesting is the following, on the east side of the enclosed pile :—

“Walking with God in purity of life,
In Christ I died, and endit all my strife.
For in my faul Christ here did dwell by grace;
Now dwells my faul in glory of His face.
Therefore my body shall not here remain,
But to full glory surely rise again.”

“*Marion Mure*, goodwife of Cullindock,
Departed this life, anno 1612.”

(A YOUTH ADMONISHED.)



LOVING FRIEND,—I received your letter. I entreat you now, in the morning of your life, to seek the Lord and His face. Beware of the follies of dangerous youth, a perilous time for your soul. Love not the world. Keep faith and truth with all men in your covenants and bargains. Walk with God, for He seeth you. Do nothing but that which ye may and would do if your eye-strings were breaking, and your breath

* Till.

† So really kind.

growing cold. Ye heard the truth of God from me, my dear heart, follow it, and forsake it not. Prize Christ and salvation above all the world. To live after the guise* and course of the rest of the world will not bring you to heaven; without faith in Christ, and repentance, ye cannot see God. Take pains for salvation; press forward toward the mark for the prize of the high calling. If ye watch not against evils night and day, which beset you, ye will come behind.† Beware of lying, swearing, uncleanness, and the rest of the works of the flesh; because “for these things the wrath of God cometh upon the children of disobedience.” How sweet soever they may seem for the present, yet the end of these courses is the eternal wrath of God, and utter darkness, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth. Grace be with you.

Your loving pastor,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, 1637.

CLXV.—TO MR THOMAS GARVEN.

[THOMAS GARVEN, one of the ministers of Edinburgh. R. Blair's Life, by Row, tells of his being banished from the town by the King in 1662, for his adherence to Presbytery.]

(PERSONAL INSUFFICIENCY—GRACE FROM CHRIST ALONE—
LONGINGS AFTER HIM.)



EVEREND AND DEAR BROTHER,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you. I am sorry that what joy and sorrow drew from my imprisoned pen in my love-fits hath made you and many of God's children believe that there is something in a broken reed the like of me. Except that Christ's grace hath bought such a sold body, I know not what else any may think of me, or expect from me. My stock is less (my Lord

* Manner.

† 1 Cor. i. 7; fall short, or be wanting in.

knoweth that I speak truth) than many believe. My empty sounds have promised too much. I should be glad to lie under Christ's feet, and kep* and receive the off-fallings, or the old pieces of any grace, that fall from His sweet fingers to forlorn sinners. I lie often, unco†-like, looking at the King's windows. Surely I am unworthy of a seat in the King's hall-floor; I but often look afar off, both feared and fremmed-like,‡ to that fairest face, fearing He bid me look away from Him. My guiltiness riseth up upon me, and I have no answer for it. I offered my tongue to Christ, and my pains in His house: and what know I what it meaneth, when Christ will not receive my poor propine?§ When love will not take, we expone|| that it will neither take nor give, borrow nor lend. Yet Christ hath another sea-compass which He faileth by, than my short and raw thoughts. I leave His part of it to Himself. I dare not expound His dealing as sorrow and misbelief often dictate to me. I look often with bleared and blind eyes to my Lord's crosses; and when I look to the wrong side of His crosses, I know that I miss a step and slide. Surely, I see that I have not legs of my own for carrying me to heaven: I must go in at heaven's gates, borrowing strength from Christ.

I am often thinking, "Oh, if He would but give me leave to love Him, and if Christ would but open up His wares, and the infinite plies, and windings, and corners of His soul-delighting love, and let me see it, backside and fore-side; and give me leave but to stand beside it, like a hungry man beside meat, to get my fill of wondering, as a preface to my fill of enjoying!" But, verily, I think that my foul eyes would defile His fair love to look to it. Either my hunger is over humble (if that may be said), or else I consider not what honour it is to get leave to love Christ. Oh, that He would pity a prisoner, and let out a flood upon the dry ground! It is nothing to him to fill the like of me; one of His looks would do

* Catch up when falling.

† Strange.

‡ Like one who has no bond of relationship to the person.

§ Present held out.

|| Expound the meaning to be.

me meikle* world's good, and Him no ill. I know that I am not at a point yet with Christ's love : I am not yet fitted for so much as I would have of it. My hope sitteth neighbour with meikle black† hunger : and certainly I dow‡ not but think that there is more of that love ordained for me than I yet comprehend, and that I know not the weight of the pension which the King will give me. I shall be glad if my hungry bill get leave to lie beside Christ, waiting on an answer. Now I should be full and rejoice, if I got a poor man's alms of that sweetest love ; but I confidently believe that there is a bed made for Christ and me, and that we shall take our fill of love in it. And I often think, when my joy is run out, and at the lowest ebb, that I would seek no more than my rights passed the King's great seal,§ and that these eyes of mine could see Christ's hand at the pen.

If your Lord call you to suffering, be not dismayed ; there shall be a new allowance of the King for you when you come to it. One of the softest pillows Christ hath is laid under His witnesses' head, though often they must set down their bare feet among thorns. He hath brought my poor soul to desire and wish, " Oh that my ashes, and the powder I shall be dissolved into, had well-tuned tongues to praise Him ! "

Thus in haste, desiring your prayers and praises, I recommend you to my sweet, sweet Master, my honourable Lord, of whom I hold all. Grace be with you.

Your own, in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, 1637.

* As much as having a world's good things.

† Much of terrible hunger.

‡ Cannot.

§ Things I am to get, handed to me in the shape of title-deeds from the King.



CLXVI.—*To CARDONESS, the Elder.*

(*A GOOD CONSCIENCE—CHRIST KIND TO SUFFERERS—
RESPONSIBILITY—YOUTH.*)



MUCH HONOURED SIR,—I long to hear how your soul prospereth. I wonder that ye write not to me ; for the Holy Ghost beareth me witness, that I cannot, I dare not, I do* not forget you, nor the souls of those with you, who are redeemed by the blood of the great Shepherd. Ye are in my heart in the night-watches ; ye are my joy and crown in the day of Christ. O Lord, bear me witness, if my soul thirsteth for anything out of heaven, more than for your salvation. Let God lay me in an even balance, and try me in this.

Love heaven ; let your heart be on it. Up, up, and visit the new Land and view the fair City, and the white Throne, and the Lamb, the bride's Husband in His Bridegroom's clothes, sitting on it. It were time that your soul cast itself, and all your burdens, upon Christ. I beseech you by the wounds of your Redeemer, and by your compearance† before Him, and by the salvation of your soul, lose no more time ; run fast, for it is late. God hath sworn by Himself, who made the world and time, that time shall be no more.‡ Ye are now upon the very border of the other life. Your Lord cannot be blamed for not giving you warning. I have taught the truth of Christ to you, and delivered unto you the whole counsel of God ; and I have stood before the Lord for you, and I will yet still stand. Awake, awake to do righteously. Think not to be eased of the burdens and debts that are on your house by oppressing any, or being rigorous to those that are under you. Remember how I endeavoured to walk before you in this matter, as an example. “ Behold, here am I, witness against me, before the Lord

* “*Dow* not,” in old editions ; but we have given it “*do* not ;” for “*cannot*” is the same as “*dow* not.”

† Appearing in obedience to a summons.

‡ Rev. x. 6.

and His Anointed : whose ox or whose ass have I taken ? Whom have I defrauded ? Whom have I oppressed ?”* Who knoweth how my soul feedeth upon a good conscience, when I remember how I spent this body in feeding the lambs of Christ ?

At my first entry hither, I grant, I took a stomach against my Lord, because He had casten me over the dyke of the vineyard, as a dry tree, and would have no more of my service. My dumb Sabbaths broke my heart, and I would not be comforted. But now He whom my soul loveth is come again, and it pleaseth Him to feast me with the kisses of His love. A King dineth with me, and His spikenard casteth a sweet smell. The Lord is my witness above, that I write my heart to you. I never knew, by my nine years’ preaching, so much of Christ’s love, as He has taught me in Aberdeen, by six months’ imprisonment. I charge you in Christ’s name to help me to praise ; and show that people and country the loving-kindness of the Lord to my soul, that so my sufferings may someway preach to them when I am silent. He hath made me to know now better than before, what it is to be crucified to the world. I would not now give a drink of cold water for all the world’s kindness. I owe no service to it : I am not the flesh’s debtor. My Lord Jesus hath dawted† His prisoner, and hath thoughts of love concerning me. I would not exchange my sighs with the laughing of adversaries. Sir, I write this to inform you, that ye may know that it is the truth of Christ I now suffer for, and that He hath sealed my suffering with the comforts of His Spirit on my soul ; and I know that He putteth not His seal upon blank paper.

Now, sir, I have no comfort earthly, but to know that I have espoused, and shall present a bride to Christ in that congregation. The Lord hath given you much, and therefore He will require much of you again. Number your talents, and see what you have to render back. Ye cannot be enough persuaded of the shortness of your time. I charge you to write to me, and in the fear of God to be plain with me, whether or not ye have made your salvation

* 1 Sam. xii. 3.

† Fondled.

sure. I am confident, and hope the best ; but I know that your reckonings with your Judge are many and deep. Sir, be not beguiled, neglect not your one thing,* your one necessary thing,† the good part that shall not be taken from you. Look beyond time : things here are but moonshine. They have but children's wit who are delighted with shadows, and deluded with feathers flying in the air.

Desire your children, in the morning of their life, to begin and seek the Lord, and to remember their Creator in the days of their youth,‡ to cleanse their way, by taking heed thereto, according to God's word.§ Youth is a glassy age. Satan finds a swept chamber, for the most part, in youthhood, and a garnished lodging for himself and his train. Let the Lord have the flower of their age ; the best sacrifice is due to Him. Instruct them in this, that they have a soul, and that this life is nothing in comparison of eternity. They will have much need of God's conduct in this world, to guide them by|| those rocks upon which most men split ; but far more need when it cometh to the hour of death, and their compareance before Christ. Oh that there were such an heart in them, to fear the name of the great and dreadful God, who hath laid up great things for those that love and fear Him ! I pray that God may be their portion. Show others of my parishioners, that I write to them my best wishes, and the blessings of their lawful pastor. Say to them from me, that I beseech them, by the bowels of Christ, to keep in mind the doctrine of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, which I taught them ; that so they may lay hold on eternal life, striving together for the faith of the Gospel, and making sure salvation to themselves. Walk in love, and do righteousness ; seek peace ; love one another. Wait for the coming of our Master and Judge. Receive no doctrine contrary to that which I delivered to you. If ye fall away, and forget it, and that Catechism which I taught you, and so forsake your own mercy, the Lord be Judge betwixt you and me. I take heaven and earth to witness, that such shall eternally perish. But if they serve the Lord, great will their reward

* Phil. iii. 13. † Luke x. 42. ‡ Eccles. xii. 1. § Ps. cxix. 9. || Past.

be when they and I shall stand before our Judge. Set forward up the mountain, to meet with God ; climb up, for your Saviour calleth on you. It may be that God will call you to your rest, when I am far from you ; but ye have my love, and the desires of my heart for your soul's welfare. He that is holy, keep you from falling, and establish you, till His own glorious appearance.

Your affectionate and lawful pastor,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, 1637.

CLXVII.—*To my* LADY BOYD. [Let. 107.]

(LESSONS LEARNED IN THE SCHOOL OF ADVERSITY.)



ADAM,—Grace, mercy, and peace from God our Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ, be multiplied upon you.

I have reasoned with your son* at large ; I rejoice to see him set His face in the right airth,† now when the nobles love the sunny side of the Gospel best, and are afraid that Christ want soldiers, and shall not be able to do for Himself.

Madam, our debts of obligation to Christ are not small ; the freedom of grace and of salvation is the wonder of men and angels. But mercy in our Lord scorneth hire. Ye are bound to lift Christ on high, who hath given you eyes to discern the devil now coming out in his whites, and the idolatry and apostasy of the time, well washen‡ with fair pretences ; but the skin is black and the water foul. It were art, I confess, to wash a black devil, and make him white.

I am in strange ups and downs, and seven times a-day I lose ground. I am put often to swimming ; and again my feet are set on the Rock that is higher than myself. He hath now let me see four things which I never saw before : 1/ʒ, That the Supper shall be great cheer, that is up in the great hall with the Royal King of

* Lord Boyd. See notice of him, Let. 78.

† Quarter.

‡ Washed ; whitened over.

glory, when the four-hours,* the standing drink,* in this dreary wilderness, is so sweet. When He bloweth a kiss afar off to His poor heart-broken mourners in Zion, and fendeth me but His hearty commendations till we meet, I am confounded with wonder to think what it shall be, when the Fairest among the sons of men shall lay a King's sweet soft cheek to the sinful cheeks of poor sinners. O time, time, go swiftly, and hasten that day! Sweet Lord Jesus, post! come, flying like a young hart or a roe upon the mountains of separation. I think that we should tell† the hours carefully, and look often how low the sun is. For love hath no "Ho!"‡ it is pained, pained in itself, till it come into grips § with the party beloved.

2dly. I find Christ's absence to be love's sickness and love's death. The wind that bloweth out of the air where my Lord Jesus reigneth is sweet-smelled, soft, joyful, and heartsome|| to a soul burnt with absence. It is a painful battle for a soul sick of love to fight with absence and delays. Christ's "Not yet" is a stounding ¶ of all the joints and limbs** of the soul. A nod of His head, when He is under a mask, would be half a pawn.†† To say, "Fool, what aileth thee? He is coming," would be life to a dead man. I am often in my dumb Sabbaths seeking a new plea‡‡ with my Lord Jesus (God forgive me!), and I care not if there be not two or three ounce-weight of black wrath in my cup.

3dly. For the third thing, I have seen my abominable vileness; if I were well known, there would none in this kingdom ask how I do. Many take my ten to be a hundred, but I am a deeper hypocrite, and shallower professor, than every one believeth. God knoweth I feign not. But I think my reckonings on the one page written in great letters, and His mercy to such a forlorn § and

* When even the slight afternoon meal and the cup handed to one at the door is so sweet.

† Count. ‡ Cessation; cry to halt. § Grasp. || Cheering.

¶ A dull stroke that comes suddenly and vibrates through the body.

** Joints; the one word explains the other. "Joist" was in the margin of old editions.

†† A pledge. ‡‡ Quarrel; controversy. §§ Lost prodigal debtor.

wretched dyvour on the other, to be more than a miracle. If I could get my finger-ends upon a full assurance, I trow that I would grip* fast; but my cup wanteth not gall. And, upon my part, despair might be almost excused, if every one in this land saw my inner side. But I know that I am one of them who have made great sale, and a free market, to free grace. If I could be saved, as I would fain believe, sure I am that I have given Christ's blood, His free grace, and the bowels of His mercy, a large field to work upon; and Christ hath manifested His art, I dare not say to the uttermost (for He can, if He would, forgive all the devils and damned reprobates, in respect of the wideness of His mercy), but I say to an admirable degree.

4thly. I am stricken with fear of unthankfulness. This apostate Kirk hath played the harlot with many lovers. They are spitting in the face of my lovely King, and mocking Him, and I dow† not mend it; and they are running away from Christ in troops, and I dow† not mourn and be grieved for it. I think Christ lieth like an old forcasten‡ castle, forsaken of the inhabitants; all men run away now from Him. Truth, innocent truth, goeth mourning and wringing her hands in sackcloth and ashes. Woe, woe, woe is me, for the virgin daughter of Scotland! Woe, woe to the inhabitants of this land! for they are gone back with a perpetual backsliding.

These things take me so up, that a borrowed bed, another man's fireside, the wind upon my face (I being driven from my lovers and dear acquaintance, and my poor flock), find no room in my sorrow. I have no spare or odd sorrow for these; only I think the sparrows and swallows that build their nests in the kirk of Anwoth, blessed birds. Nothing hath given my faith a harder back-set§ till it crack again, than my closed mouth. But let me be miserable myself alone; God keep my dear brethren from it. But still I keep breath; and when my royal, and never, never-enough-praised King returneth to

* Grip.

† Am not able.

‡ Not used; cast off.

§ A thrust back. In a sermon at Anwoth, 1630, on Zech. xiii. 7, he says, "God gives a back-set and fall under temptation."

His sinful prisoner, I ride upon the high places of Jacob. I divide Shechem,* I triumph in His strength. If this kingdom would glorify the Lord in my behalf ! I desire to be weighed in God's even balance in this point, if I think not my wages paid to the full. I shall crave no more hire of Christ.

Madam, pity me in this, and help me to praise Him ; for whatever I be, the chief of sinners, a devil, and a most guilty devil, yet it is the apple of Christ's eye, His honour and glory, as the Head of the Church, that I suffer for now, and that I will go to eternity with.

I am greatly in love with Mr M. M. ;† I see him stamped with the image of God. I hope well of your son, my Lord Boyd.

Your Ladyship and your children have a prisoner's prayers. Grace be with you.

Your Ladyship's, at all obedience in Christ,

ABERDEEN, May 1, 1637.

S. R.

CLXVIII.—*To his reverend and dear Brother, MR DAVID DICKSON.*

(CHRIST'S INFINITE FULLNESS.)



Y REVEREND AND DEAR BROTHER,—I fear that ye have never known me well. If ye saw my inner side, it is possible that ye would pity me, but you would hardly give me either love or respect : men mistake me the whole length of the heavens. My sins prevail over me, and the terrors of their guiltiness. I am put often to ask, if Christ and I did ever shake hands together in earnest. I mean not that my feast-days are quite gone, but I am made of extremes. I pray God that ye never have the woful and dreary experience of a closed mouth ; for then ye shall judge the sparrows, that may sing on‡ the church of Irvine, blessed birds. But my soul hath been refreshed and watered,

* Psalm lx. 6.

† Mr Matthew Mowat, minister of Kilmarnock. See notice of him, Let.

120.

‡ *On*, not “*in*,” as in old editions.

when I hear of your courage and zeal for your never-enough-praised, praised Master, in that ye put the men of God, chased out of Ireland, to work.* Oh, if I could confirm you! I darefay, in God's presence, "That this shall never hasten your suffering, but will be David Dickson's feast and speaking joy, that while he had time and leifure, he put many to work, to lift up Jesus, his sweet Master, high in the skies." O man of God, go on, go on; be valiant for that Plant of renown, for that Chief among ten thousands, for that Prince of the kings of the earth. It is but little that I know of God; yet this I dare write, that Christ will be glorified in David Dickson, howbeit Scotland be not gathered.

I am pained, pained, that I have not more to give my sweet Bridegroom. His comforts to me are not dealt with a niggard's hand; but I would fain learn not to idolize comfort, sense, joy, and sweet, felt presence. All these are but creatures, and nothing but the kingly robe, the gold ring, and the bracelets of the Bridegroom; the Bridegroom Himself is better than all the ornaments that are about Him. Now, I would not so much have these as God Himself, and to be swallowed up of love to Christ. I see that in delighting in a communion with Christ, we may make more gods than one. But, however, all was but bairns' play between Christ and me, till now. If one would have sworn unto me, I would not have

* When Mr Robert Blair and Mr John Livingstone, who had been deposed in Ireland by the Bishop of Down, were obliged to leave that country, to avoid falling into the hands of the Government, which had given orders for their apprehension, on account of their preaching in their own private houses, they came over to Irvine in 1637, to Mr Dickson. Dickson had been advised by some respectable gentlemen not to employ them to preach, lest the bishops, who were then zealous in urging on ministers the use of the Service-book, should thereby take occasion to remove him from his ministry. "But," said Dickson, "I dare not be of their opinion, nor follow their counsel, so far as to discountenance these worthies, now when they are suffering for holding fast the name of Christ, and every letter of that blessed name, as not to employ them as in former times. Yea, I would think my so doing would provoke the Lord, so that I might upon another account be deposed, and not have so good a conscience."—(*Life of Robert Blair.*)

believed what may be found in Christ. I hope that ye pity my pain that * much, in my prifon, as to help me yourfelf, and to caufe others help me, a dyvour,† a finful wretched dyvour, to pay fome of my debts of praife to my great King. Let my God be judge and witnefs, if my foul would not have fweet eafe and comfort, to have many hearts confirmed in Christ, and enlarged with His love, and many tongues fet on work to fet on high my royal and princely Well-beloved. Oh that my fufferings could pay tribute to fuch a king! I have given over wondering at His love; for Christ hath manifested a piece of art upon me, that I never revealed to any living. He hath gotten fair and rich employment, and fweet fale, and a goodly market for His honourable calling of fhowing mercy, on me the chief of finners. Every one knoweth not fo well as I do, my wofully-often broken covenants. My fins againft light, working‡ in the very act of finning, have been met with admirable mercy: but, alas! he will get nothing back again, but wretched unthankfulnefs. I am fure, that if Christ pity anything in me next to my fin, it is pain of love for an armful and foulful of Himfelf, in faith, love, and begun fruition. My sorrow is, that I cannot get Christ lifted off the duft in Scotland, and fet on high, above all the skies, and heaven of heavens.

Yours, in his fweet Lord Jefus,

ABERDEEN, May 1, 1637.

S. R.

CLXIX.—*To the LAIRD OF CARLETON.*

(GOD'S WORKING INCOMPREHENSIBLE—LONGING AFTER
ANY DROP OF CHRIST'S FULNESS.)



WORTHY SIR,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you. I received your letter, and am heartily glad that our Lord hath begun to work for the apparent delivery

* So greatly.

† Debtor; bankrupt.

‡ The fenfe feems to be, “My fins againft light, which was at work even when I was in the act of finning.”

of this poor oppressed Kirk. Oh that salvation would come for Zion !

I am for the present hanging by hope, waiting what my Lord will do with me, and if it will please my sweet Master to send me amongst you again, and keep out a hireling from my poor people and flock. It were my heaven till I come home, even to spend this life in gathering in some to Christ. I have still great heaviness for my silence, and my forced standing idle in the market, when this land hath such a plentiful, thick harvest. But I know that His judgments, who hath done it, pass finding out. I have no knowledge to take up the Lord in all His strange ways, and passages of deep and unsearchable providences. For the Lord is before me, and I am so bemisted* that I cannot follow Him ; He is behind me, and following at the heels, and I am not aware of Him ; He is above me, but His glory so dazzleth my twilight of short knowledge, that I cannot look up to Him. He is upon my right hand, and I see Him not ; He is upon my left hand, and within me, and goeth and cometh, and His going and coming are a dream to me ; He is round about me, and compasseth all my goings, and still I have Him to seek. He is every way higher, and deeper, and broader than the shallow and ebb† handbreadth of my short and dim light can take up ; and, therefore, I would that my heart could be silent, and sit down in the learnedly-ignorant wondering at the Lord, whom men and angels cannot comprehend. I know that the noon-day light of the highest angels, who see Him face to face, seeeth not the borders of His infiniteness. They apprehend God near hand ;‡ but they cannot comprehend Him. And, therefore, it is my happiness to look afar off, and to come near to the Lord's back parts, and to light my dark candle at His brightness, and to have leave to sit and content myself with a traveller's light, without the clear vision of an enjoyer. I would seek no more till I were in my country, than a little watering and sprinkling of a withered soul, with some half out-breakings and half

* Involved in a mist.

† Low, shallow.

‡ They have to do with God near at hand.

out-lookings of the beams, and small ravishing smiles of the fairest face of a revealed and believed-on Godhead. A little of God would make my soul bankfull.* Oh that I had but Christ's odd off-fallings ; that He would let but the meanest of His love-rays and love-beams fall from Him, so as I might gather and carry them with me ! I would not be ill† to please with Christ, and veiled visions of Christ ; neither would I be dainty in seeing and enjoying of Him : a kiss of Christ blown over His shoulder, the parings and crumbs of glory that fall under His table in heaven, a shower like a thin May-mist of His love, would make me green, and sappy, and joyful, till the summer-sun of an eternal glory break up.‡ Oh that I had anything of Christ ! Oh that I had a sip, or half a drop, out of the hollow of Christ's hand, of the sweetness and excellency of that lovely One ! Oh that my Lord Jesus would rue upon me, and give me but the meanest alms of felt and believed salvation ! Oh, how little were it for that infinite sea, that infinite fountain of love and joy, to fill as many thousand thousand little vessels (the like of me) as there are minutes of hours since the creation of God ! I find§ it true that a poor soul, finding¶ half a smell of the Godhead of Christ, hath desires (paining and wounding the poor heart so with longings to be up at Him) that make it sometimes think, "Were it not better never to have felt anything of Christ, than thus to lie dying twenty deaths, under these felt wounds, for the want of Him ?" Oh, where is He ? O Fairest, where dwellest Thou ? O never-enough admired Godhead, how can clay win|| up to Thee ? how can creatures of yesterday be able to enjoy Thee ? Oh, what pain is it, that time and sin should be so many thousand miles betwixt a loved and longed-for Lord and a dwinning¶ and love-sick soul, who would rather than all the world have lodging with Christ ! Oh, let this bit of love of ours, this inch and half-span length of heavenly longing, meet with Thy infinite love ! Oh, if the little I have were swallowed up with the infiniteness of that excellency which is in Christ ! Oh that we

* Like a river, full up to its bank.

§ Experience, or feel.

† Difficult.

|| Get up.

‡ Song ii. 17.

¶ Pining.

little ones were in at the greatest Lord Jesus ! Our wants should soon be swallowed up with His fulness.

Grace, grace be with you.

Yours in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, May 10, 1637.

CLXX.—To ROBERT GORDON of Knockbren.

(LONGING FOR CHRIST'S GLORY—FELT GUILTINESS—LONGING FOR CHRIST'S LOVE—SANCTIFICATION.)



DEAR BROTHER,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you. I received your letter from Edinburgh.

I would not wish to see another heaven, whill* I get mine own heaven, but a new moon like the light of the sun, and a new sun like the light of seven days shining upon my poor self, and the Church of Jews and Gentiles, and upon my withered and sunburnt mother, the Church of Scotland, and upon her sister Churches, England and Ireland ; and to have this done, to the setting on high of our great King ! It mattereth† not, howbeit I were separate from Christ, and had a sense of ten thousand years' pain in hell, if this were. O blessed nobility ! Oh, glorious, renowned gentry ! Oh, blessed were the tribes in this land to wipe my Lord Jesus' weeping face, and to take the sackcloth of Christ's loins, and to put His kingly robes upon Him ! Oh, if the Almighty would take no less‡ wagger of me than my heaven to have it done ! But my fears are still for wrath once§ upon Scotland. But I know that her day will clear up, and that glory shall be upon the top of the mountains, and joy at the voice|| of the married wife, once again. Oh that our Lord would make us to contend, and plead, and wrestle by prayers and tears, for our Husband's restoring of His forfeited heritage in Scotland.

* Till.

† *Mattereth* ? In other editions it is “*maketh*.”

‡ Pledge.

§ Some time or other.

|| “*Noife*,” in old editions.

Dear brother, I am for the present in no small battle, betwixt felt guiltiness, and pining longings and high fevers for my Well-beloved's love! Alas! I think that Christ's love playeth the niggard to me, and I know it is not for scarcity of love. There is enough in Him, but my hunger prophesieth of in-holding and sparingness in Christ; for I have but little of Him, and little of His sweetness. It is a dear summer with me; yet there is such joy in the eagerness and working of hunger for Christ, that I am often at this, that if I had no other heaven than a continual hunger for Christ, such a heaven of ever-working hunger were still a heaven to me. I am sure that Christ's love cannot be cruel; it must be a ruing, a pitying, a melting-hearted love; but suspension of that love I think half a hell, and the want of it more than a whole hell. When I look to my guiltiness, I see that my salvation is one of our Saviour's greatest miracles, either in heaven or earth. I am sure I may defy any man to show me a greater wonder. But, seeing I have no wares, no hire, no money for Christ, He must either take me with want, misery, corruption, or then* want me. Oh, if He would be pleased to be compassionate and pitiful-hearted to my pining fevers of longing for Him; or then* give me a real pawn† to keep, out of His own hand, till God send a meeting betwixt Him and me! But I find neither as yet. Howbeit He who is absent be not cruel nor unkind, yet His absence is cruel and unkind. His love is like itself; His love is *His* love; but the covering and the cloud, the vail and the mask of His love, is more wise than kind, if I durst speak my apprehensions. I lead no process now against the suspension and delay of God's love; I would with all my heart frist till a day‡ ten heavens, and the sweet manifestations of His love. Certainly I think that I could give Christ much on His word; but my whole pleading is about intimated and borne-in assurance of His love. Oh, if He would persuade me of § my heart's desire of

* Or else. † A pledge. ‡ Defer to a day that might be named.

§ Convince me that He intends to gratify my heart's desire.

His love at all, He should have the term-day of payment at His own cowing.* But I know that raving unbelief speaketh its pleasure, while it looketh upon guiltiness and this body of corruption. Oh how loathsome and burdensome is it to carry about a dead corpse, this old carrion of corruption! Oh how steadable† a thing is a Saviour, to make a sinner rid of His chains and fetters!

I have now made a new question, whether Christ be more to be loved, for giving Sanctification or for free Justification. And I hold that He is more and most to be loved for sanctification. It is in some respect greater love in Him to sanctify, than to justify; for He maketh us most like Himself, in His own essential portraiture and image, in sanctifying us. Justification doth but make us happy, which is to be like angels only. Neither is it such a misery to lie a condemned man, and under unforgiven guiltiness, as to serve sin, and work the works of the devil; and, therefore, I think sanctification cannot be bought: it is above price. God be thanked for ever, that Christ was a told-down price for sanctification. Let a sinner, if possible, lie in hell for ever, if He make him truly holy; and let him lie there burning in love to God, rejoicing in the Holy Ghost, hanging upon Christ by faith and hope,—that is heaven in the heart and bottom of hell!

Alas! I find a very thin harvest here, and few to be saved.

Grace, grace be with you.

Yours, in his lovely and longed-for Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, 1637.


CLXXI.—*To the LAIRD OF MONCRIEFF.*

[SIR JOHN MONCRIEFF, of that ilk, was the eldest son of William Moncrieff of that ilk, by his wife Anne, daughter of Robert Murray of Abercarnie. He married, first, Anne, daughter of David Beaton of Creich, and, secondly,

* Cutting out; as we say, “at His own carving.” † Available; serviceable.

Lady Mary Murray, daughter of William, second Earl of Tullibardin. He was a zealous Covenanter, and a ruling elder in the parish of Carnbee, in which he resided. His name appears in the list of the General Assembly's Commission for the public affairs of the Church, in the years 1646 and 1648; and he was an active member of the Presbytery of St Andrews, as appears from the minutes of that Presbytery. He died about the close of the year 1650, or beginning of the year 1651. Lady Leyes, to whom reference is made in this letter, was his third sister Jean, who was married to Hay of Leyes. (*Douglas' Baronage of Scotland*, p. 46).]

(CONCERT IN PRAYER—STEDFASTNESS TO CHRIST—GRIEF
MISREPRESENTS CHRIST'S GLORY.)

UCH HONOURED SIR,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you. Although not acquainted, yet at the desire of your worthy sister, the Lady Leys, and upon the report of your kindness to Christ and His oppressed truth, I am bold to write to you, earnestly desiring you to join with us (so many as in these bounds profess Christ), to wrestle with God, one day of the week, especially the Wednesday, for mercy to this fallen and decayed Kirk, and to such as suffer for Christ's name; and for your own necessities, and the necessities of others, who are by covenant engaged in that business. For we have no other armour in these evil times but prayer, now when wrath from the Lord is gone out against this backsliding land. For ye know we can have no true public fasts, neither are the true causes of our humiliation ever laid before the people.

Now, very worthy Sir, I am glad in the Lord, that the Lord reserveth any of your place, or of note, in this time of common apostasy, to come forth in public to bear Christ's name before men, when the great men think Christ a cumbersome neighbour, and that religion carrieth hazards, trials, and persecutions with it. I persuade myself that it is your glory and your garland, and shall be your joy in the day of Christ, and the standing of your house and seed, to inherit the earth, that you truly and sincerely profess Christ. Neither is our King, whom the Father hath crowned in Mount Zion, so weak, that He cannot do for Himself and His own cause. I verily

believe that they are blessed who can hold the crown upon His head, and carry up the train of His robe royal, and that He shall be victorious, and triumph in this land. It is our part to back our royal King, howbeit there was not six in all the land to follow Him. It is our wisdom now to take up, and discern the devil and the anti-christ coming out in their whites, and the apostasy and idolatry of this land washen* with foul waters. I confess that it is art to wash the devil till his skin be white.

For myself, Sir, I have bought a plea† against Christ, since I came hither, in judging my princely Master angry at me, because I was cast out of the vineyard as a withered tree, my dumb Sabbaths working me much sorrow. But I see now that sorrow hath not eyes to read love written upon the cross of Christ; and, therefore, I pass from my rash plea. Woe, woe is me, that I should have received a slander of Christ's love to my soul! And for all this, my Lord Jesus hath forgiven all, as not willing to be heard‡ with such a fool; and is content to be, as it were, confined with me, and to bear me company, and to feast a poor oppressed prisoner. And now I write it under my hand, worthy Sir, that I think well and honourably of this cross of Christ. I wonder that He will take any glory from the like of me. I find when he but sendeth His hearty commendations to me, and but bloweth a kiss afar off, I am confounded with wondering what the supper of the Lamb will be, up in our Father's dining-palace of glory, since the four-hours§ in this dismal wilderness, and (when in prisons and in our sad days), a kiss of Christ, are so comfortable. Oh, how sweet and glorious shall our case be, when that Fairest among the sons of men will lay His fair face to our now sinful faces, and wipe away all tears from our eyes! O time, time, run swiftly and hasten this day! O sweet Lord Jesus, come flying like a roe or a young hart! Alas! that we,

* Washed.

† Got up a quarrel.

‡ Not willing to be heard disputing with such a fool.

§ The slight afternoon's meal is so refreshing,—

“If such the sweetness of the stream,
What must the fountain be?”

blind fools, are fallen in love with moonshine and shadows. How sweet is the wind that bloweth out of the airth* where Christ is ! Every day we may see some new thing in Christ ; His love hath neither brim nor bottom. Oh, if I had help to praise Him ! He knoweth that if my sufferings glorify His name, and encourage others to stand fast for the honour of our supreme Lawgiver, Christ, my wages then are paid to the full. Sir, help me to love that never-enough-praised Lord. I find now, that the faith of the faints, under suffering for Christ, is fair before the wind, and with full sails carried upon Christ. And I hope to lose nothing in this furnace but dross ; for Christ can triumph in a weaker man than I am, if there be any such. And when all is done, His love paineth me, and leaveth me under such debt to Christ, as I can neither pay principal nor interest. Oh, if He would comprise† myself, and if I were sold to Him as a bondman, and that He would take me home to His house and fireside ; for I have nothing to render to Him ! Then, after me, let no man think hard of Christ's sweet crosses ; for I would not exchange my sighs with the painted laughter of all my adversaries. I desire grace and patience to wait on, and to lie upon the brink, till the water fill and flow. I know that He is fast coming.

Sir, ye will excuse my boldness : and, till it please God that I see you, ye have the prayers of a prisoner of Christ ; to whom I recommend you, and in whom I rest.

Yours, at all obedience in Christ,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, May 14, 1637.

* Point of the compass.

† Arrest me by writ.



CLXXII.—To JOHN CLARK (*supposed to be one of his Parishioners at Anwoth*).

(MARKS OF DIFFERENCE BETWIXT CHRISTIANS AND
REPROBATES.)



LOVING BROTHER,—Hold fast Christ without wavering, and contend for the faith, because Christ is not easily gotten nor kept. The lazy professor hath put heaven as it were at the very next door, and thinketh to fly up to heaven in his bed, and in a night-dream ; but, truly, that is not so easy a thing as most men believe. Christ Himself did sweat ere He wan* this city, howbeit He was the freeborn heir. It is Christianity, my Heart, to be sincere, unfeigned, honest, and upright-hearted before God, and to live and serve God, suppose there was not one man nor woman in all the world dwelling beside you, to eye you. Any little grace that ye have, see that it be sound and true.

Ye may put a difference betwixt you and reprobates, if ye have these marks :—1. If ye prize Christ and His truth so as ye will sell all and buy Him ; and suffer for it. 2. If the love of Christ keepeth you back from sinning, more than the law, or fear of hell. 3. If ye be humble, and deny your own will, wit, credit, ease, honour, the world, and the vanity and glory of it. 4. Your profession must not be barren, and void of good works. 5. Ye must in all things aim at God's honour ; ye must eat, drink, sleep, buy, sell, sit, stand, speak, pray, read, and hear the word, with a heart-purpose that God may be honoured. 6. Ye must show yourself an enemy to sin, and reprove the works of darkness, such as drunkenness, swearing, and lying, albeit the company should hate you for so doing. 7. Keep in mind the truth of God, that ye heard me teach, and have nothing to do with the corruptions and new guises entered into the house of God. 8. Make conscience of your calling, in covenants, in buying and selling. 9. Acquaint yourself with daily

* Won ; obtained possession of.

praying; commit all your ways and actions to God, by prayer, supplication, and thanksgiving; and count not much of being mocked; for Christ Jesus was mocked before you.

Persuade yourself, that this is the way of peace and comfort which I now suffer for. I dare go to death and into eternity with it, though men may possibly see another way. Remember me in your prayers, and the state of this oppressed Church. Grace be with you.


Your soul's well-wisher,

ABERDEEN.

S. R.

CLXXIII.—*To CARDONESS, the Younger.* [Let. 123.]

(WARNING AND ADVICE AS TO THINGS OF SALVATION.)

UCH HONOURED SIR,—I long to hear whether or not your soul be hand-fasted* with Christ. Lose your time no longer: flee the follies of youth: gird up the loins of your mind, and make you ready for meeting the Lord. I have often summoned you, and now I summon you again, to appear† before your Judge, to make a reckoning of your life. While ye have time, look upon your papers, and consider your ways. Oh that there were such an heart in you, as to think what an ill conscience will be to you, when ye are upon the border of eternity, and your one foot out of time! Oh then, ten thousand thousand floods of tears cannot extinguish these flames, or purchase to you one hour's release from that pain! Oh, how sweet a day have ye had! But this is a fair-day‡ that runneth fast away. See how ye have spent it, and consider the necessity of salvation! and tell me, in the fear of God, if ye have made it sure. I am persuaded, that ye have a conscience that will be speaking somewhat to you. Why will ye die, and destroy yourself? I charge you in Christ's name,

* Betrothed by joining hands. † Appear in obedience to a summons.

‡ A market-day.

to roufe up your confcience, and begin to indent* and contract with Chrift in time, while falvation is in your offer. This is the accepted time, this is the day of falvation. Play the merchant ; for ye cannot expect another market-day when this is done. Therefore, let me again befeech you to “ confider, in this your day, the things that belong to your peace, before they be hid from your eyes.” Dear Brother, fulfil my joy, and begin to feek the Lord while He may be found. Forfake the follies of deceiving and vain youth : lay hold upon eternal life. Whoring, night-drinking, and the miffpending of the Sabbath, and neglecting of prayer in your houfe, and refufing of an offered falvation, will burn up your foul with the terrors of the Almighty, when your awakened confcience fhall flee in your face. Be kind and loving to your wife : make confcience of cherifhing her, and not being rigidly auftere. Sir, I have not a tongue to exprefs the glory that is laid up for you in your Father’s houfe, if ye reform your doings, and frame your heart to return to the Lord. Ye know that this world is but a fhadow, a fhort-living creature, under the law of time. Within lefs than fifty years, when ye look back to it, ye fhall laugh at the evanifhing vanities thereof, as feathers flying in the air, and as the houfes of fand within the fea-mark, which the children of men are building. Give up with courting of this vain world : feek not the baftard’s moveables, but the fon’s heritage in heaven. Take a trial of Chrift. Look unto Him, and His love will fo change you, that ye fhall be taken with Him, and never choofe to go from Him. I have experience of His fweetnefs, in this houfe of my pilgrimage here. My Witnefs, who is above, knoweth that I would not exchange my fighs and tears with the laughing of the fourteen prelates. There is nothing that will make you a Chriftian indeed, but a tafte of the fweetnefs of Chrift. “ Come and fee,” will fpeak beft to your foul. I would fain hope good of you. Be not difcouraged at broken and fpilled† refolutions ; but to it, and to it again ! Woo about Chrift, till ye get your foul efpoufed as a chafte virgin to Him. Ufe the means of profit-

* Put your name to a paper containing articles of agreement. † Marred.

ing with your conscience, pray in your family, and read the word. Remember how our Lord's day was spent when I was among you. It will be a great challenge* to you before God, if ye forget the good that was done within the walls of your house on the Lord's day ; and if ye turn aside after the fashions of this world, and if ye go not in time to the kirk, to wait on the public worship of God, and if ye tarry not at it, till all the exercises of religion be ended. Give God some of your time both morning and evening, and afternoon ; and in so doing, rejoice the heart of a poor oppressed prisoner. Rue upon† your own soul, and from your heart fear the Lord.

Now He that brought again from the dead the great Shepherd of His sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, establish your heart with His grace, and present you before His presence with joy.

Your affectionate and loving pastor,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, 1637.

CLXXIV.—*To my LORD CRAIGHALL.* [Let. 86.]

(*IDOLATRY CONDEMNED.*)

MY LORD,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you. I am not only content, but I exceedingly rejoice, that I find any of the rulers of this land, and especially your Lordship, so to affect‡ Christ and His truth, as that ye dare, for His name, come to yea and nay with monarchs in their face. I hope that He who hath enabled you for that, will give more, if ye show yourself courageous, and (as His word speaketh), “a man in the streets,” for the Lord.§ But I pray your Lordship, give me leave to be plain with you, as one who loveth both your honour and your soul. I verily believe that there was never idolatry at Rome, never idolatry condemned in God's word by the prophets, if religious

* Cause of self-upbraiding. † Have pity upon. ‡ Love. § Jerem. v. 1.

kneeling before a consecrated creature, standing in room of Christ crucified in that very act, and that for reverence of the elements, (as our Act cleareth), be not idolatry.* Neither will your *intention* help, which is not of the essence of worship ; for then, Aaron saying, “ To-morrow shall be a feast for Jehovah,” that is, for the golden calf, should not have been guilty of idolatry : for he *intended* only to decline the lash of the people’s fury, not to honour the calf. Your intention to honour Christ is nothing, seeing that religious kneeling, by God’s institution, doth necessarily import religious and divine adoration, suppose that our intention were both dead and sleeping ; otherwise, kneeling before the image of God and directing prayer to God were lawful, if our intention go right. My Lord, I cannot in these bounds dispute ; but if Cambridge and Oxford, and the learning of Britain, will answer this argument, and the argument from active scandal, which your Lordship seemeth to stand upon, I will turn a formalist, and call myself an arrant fool (by doing what I have done) in my suffering for this truth. I do much reverence Mr L.’s† learning ; but, my Lord, I will answer what he writeth in that, to pervert you from the truth ; else repute me, beside an hypocrite, an ass also. I hope ye shall see something upon that subject (if the Lord permit), that no sophistry in Britain shall answer. Courtiers’ arguments, for the most part, are drawn from their own skin, and are not worth a straw for your conscience. A Marquis’ or a King’s word, when ye stand before Christ’s tribunal, shall be lighter than the wind. The Lord knoweth that I love your true honour, and the standing of your house ; but I would not that your honour or house were established upon sand, and hay, and stubble.

But let me, my very dear and worthy Lord, most humbly beseech you, by the mercies of God, by the consolations of His Spirit, by the dear blood and wounds of your lovely Redeemer, by the salvation of your soul, by your compearance before the awful face of a sin-revenging and dreadful Judge, not to set in comparison together your soul’s peace, Christ’s love, and His kingly honour

* See Let. xcii.

† Probably Mr Loudian. Let. 86, note.

now called in question, with your place, honour, house, or ease, that an inch of time will make out of the way. I verily believe that Christ is now begging a testimony of you, and is saying, “And will ye also leave Me?” It is possible that the wind shall not blow so fair for you all your life, for coming out and appearing before others to back and countenance Christ, the fairest among the sons of men, the Prince of the kings of the earth, “Fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be afraid of their revilings: for the moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool.”* When the Lord will begin, He will make an end, and mow down His adversaries; and they shall lie before Him like withered hay, and their bloom be shaken off them. Consider how many thousands in this kingdom ye shall cause to fall and stumble, if ye go with them; and that ye shall be out of the prayers of many who do now stand before the Lord for you and your house. And further; when the time of your accounts cometh, and your one foot shall be within the border of eternity, and the eyestrings shall break, and the face wax pale, and the poor soul shall look out at the windows of the house of clay, longing to be out, and ye shall find yourself arraigned before the Judge of quick and dead, to answer for your putting to your hand, with the rest confederated against Christ, to the overturning of His ark, and the loosing of the pins of Christ’s tabernacle in this land, and shall certainly see yourself mired† in a course of apostasy—then, then, a king’s favour and your worm-eaten honour shall be miserable comforters to you! The Lord hath enlightened you with the knowledge of His will; and as the Lord liveth, they lead you and others to a communion with great Babel, the mother of fornications. God said of old, and continueth to say the same to you, “Come out of her, My people, lest ye be partakers of her plagues.” Will ye, then, go with them, and set your lip to the whore’s golden cup, and drink of the wine of the wrath of God Almighty with them? Oh, poor hungry honour! Oh! cursed pleasure! and, oh, damnable ease, bought with the loss of God!

* Isa. li. 7, 8.

† Plunged in mire.

How many will pray for you ! what a sweet prefence fhall ye find of Chrift under your fufferings, if ye will lay down your honours and place at the feet of Chrift. What a fair recompence of reward ! I avouch before the Lord that I am now showing you a way how the houfe of Craighall may ftand on fure pillars. If ye will fet it on rotten pillars, ye cruelly wrong your pofterity. Ye have the word of a King for an hundred-fold more in this life (if it be good for you), and for life everlafting alfo. Make not Chrift a liar, in diftrufing His promife. Kings of clay cannot back you when you ftand before Him. A ftaw for them and their hungry heaven, that ftandeth on this fide of time ! A fig for the day's fmile of a worm ! Confider who have gone before you to eternity, and would have given a world for a new occafion of avouching that truth. It is true they call it not fubftantial, and we are made a fcorn to thofe that are at eafe, for fuffering thefe things for it. But it is not time to judge of our loffes by the morning ; ftay till the evening, and we will count with the beft of them.

I have found by experience, fince the time of my imprifonment (my witnefs is above), that Chrift is fealing this honourable caufe with another and a nearer fellowship than ever I knew before ; and let God weigh me in an even balance in this, if I would exchange the cross of Chrift or His truth, with the fourteen prelaties, or what elfe a King can give. My dear Lord, venture to take the wind on your face for Chrift. I believe that if He fhould come from heaven in His own perfon, and feek the charters of Craighall from you, and a difmiffion of your place, and ye faw His face, ye would fall down at His feet and fay, “ Lord Jefus, it is too little for Thee.” If any man think it not a truth to die for, I am againft him. I dare go to eternity with it, that this day the honour of our Lawgiver and King, in the government of His own free kingdom (who fhould pay tribute to no dying king), is the true ftate of the queftion. My Lord, be ye upon Chrift's fide of it, and take the word of a poor prifoner, nay, the Lord Jefus be furety for it, that ye have incomparably made the wifeft choice. For my own part, I have fo been in this prifon, that I would be half-afhamed to feek

more till I be up at the Well-head. Few know in this world the sweetnes of Christ's breath, the excellency of His love, which hath neither brim nor bottom. The world hath raised a slander upon the cros of Christ, because they love to go to heaven by dry land, and love not sea-storms. But I write it under my hand (and would say more, if possibly a reader would not deem it hypocrisy), that my obligation to Christ for the smell of His garments, for His love-kisses these thirty weeks, standeth so great, that I should (and I desire also to choose to), suspend my salvation, to have many tongues loosed in my behalf to praise Him. And, suppose in person I never entered within the gates of the New Jerusalem, yet so being Christ may be set on high, and I had the liberty to cast my love and praises for ever over the wall to Christ, I would be silent and content. But oh, He is more than my narrow praises! Oh time, time, flee swiftly, that our communion with Jesus may be perfected!

I wish that your Lordship would urge Mr L. to give his mind in the ceremonies; and be pleased to let me see it as quickly as can be, and it shall be answered.


To His rich grace I recommend your Lordship, and shall remain,
Yours, at all respectful obedience in Christ,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, *June 8, 1637.*

CLXXV.—*To* JOHN LAURIE.

(CHRIST'S LOVE—A RIGHT ESTIMATE OF HIM—HIS GRACE.)

EAR BROTHER,—I am sorry that ye, or so many in this kingdom, should expect so much of me, an empty reed. Verily I am a noughty* and poor body; but if the tinkling of the iron chains of my Lord Jesus on legs and arms could sound the high praises of my royal King, whose prisoner I

* Some understand this as meaning, “Being nought,” or nothing. It is, however, written “naughty,” evil, in old editions.

am, oh, how would my joy run over ! If my Lord would bring edification to one soul by my bonds, I am satisfied. But I know not what I can do to such a princely and beautiful Well-beloved ; He is far behind with me.* Little thanks to me, to say to others that His wind bloweth on me, who am but withered and dry bones ; but, since ye desire me to write to you, either help me to set Christ on high, for His running-over love, in that the heat of His sweet breath hath melted a frozen heart ; else† I think that ye do nothing for a prisoner.

I am fully confirmed, that it is the honour of our Lawgiver which I suffer for now. I am not ashamed to give out letters of recommendation of Christ's love to as many as will extol the Lord Jesus and His Cross. If I had not failed this sea-way to heaven, but had taken the land-way, as many do, I should not have known Christ's sweetness in such a measure. But the truth is, let no man thank me, for I caused not Christ's wind to blow upon me. His love came upon a withered creature, whether I would or not ; and yet by coming it procured from me a welcome. A heart of iron, and iron doors, will not hold Christ out. I give Him leave to break iron locks and come in, and that is all. And now I know not whether pain of love for want of possession, or sorrow that I do not thank Him, paineth me the most ; but both work upon me. For the first : oh that He would come and satisfy the longing soul, and fill the hungry soul with these good things ! I know indeed that my guiltiness may be a bar in His way ; but He is God, and ready to forgive. And for the other : woe, woe is me, that I cannot find a heart to give back again my unworthy little love for His great sea-full of love to me ! Oh that He would learn§ me this piece of gratitude ! Oh that I could have leave to look in through the hole of the door, to see His face and sing His praises ! or could break up one of His chamber-windows, to look in upon His delighting beauty, till my Lord send more ! Any little communion with Him,

* He has so fully paid me.

† Cannot.

‡ Unless ye do this.

§ Teach. It is the German, *lehren*.

one of His love-looks, should be my begun heaven. I know that He is not lordly, neither is the Bridegroom's love proud, though I be black, and unlovely, and unworthy of Him. I would seek but leave, and withal grace, to spend my love upon Him. I counsel you to think highly of Christ, and of free, free grace, more than ye did before ; for I know that Christ is not known amongst us. I think that I see more of Christ than ever I saw ; and yet I see but little of what may be seen. Oh that He would draw by* the curtains, and that the King would come out of His gallery and His palace, that I might see Him ! Christ's love is young glory and young heaven ; it would soften hell's pain to be filled with it. What would I refuse to suffer, if I could get but a draught of love at my heart's desire ! Oh, what price can be given for Him ? Angels cannot weigh Him. Oh, His weight, His worth, His sweetness, His overpassing beauty ! If men and angels would come and look to that great and princely One, their ebbness† could never take up His depth, their narrowness could never comprehend His breadth, height, and length. If ten thousand thousand worlds of angels were created, they might all tire themselves in wondering at His beauty, and begin again to wonder of new. Oh that I could win‡ nigh Him, to kiss His feet, to hear His voice, to feel the smell of His ointments ! But oh, alas, I have little, little of Him ! Yet I long for more.

Remember my bonds, and help me with your prayers ; for I would not suffer § or exchange my sad hours with the joy of my velvet adversaries. Grace be with you.

Yours in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, June 10, 1637.

* Aside.

† Shallowness.

‡ Get near.

§ Barter. Perhaps “*or exchange*” have been put into the text from the margin.

CLXXVI.—To CARLETON.

(A CHRISTIAN'S CONFESSION OF UNWORTHINESS—DESIRE
FOR CHRIST'S HONOUR—PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES.)



WORTHY AND MUCH HONOURED,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you. I received your letter from my brother, to which I now answer particularly.

I confesse two things of myself: 1st, Woe, woe is me, that men should think there is anything in me! He is my witness, before whom I am as crystal, that the secret house-devils that bear me too often company, and that this sink of corruption which I find within, make me go with low sails. And if others saw what I see, they would look by* me, but not to me.

2^{dly}, I know that this shower of His free grace behoved to be on me, otherwise I should have withered. I know, also, that I have need of a buffeting tempter, that grace may be put to exercise, and I kept low.

Worthy and dear brother in the Lord Jesus, I write that from my heart which ye now read. 1st, I avouch that Christ, and sweating and fighting under His cross, is sweeter to me by far, than all the kingdoms in the world could possibly be. 2^{dly}, If you, and my dearest acquaintance in Christ, reap any fruit by my suffering, let me be weighed in God's even balance, if my joy be not fulfilled. What am I, to carry the marks of such a great King! But, howbeit I am a sink and sinful mass, a wretched captive of sin, my Lord Jesus can hew heaven out of worse timber than I am; if worse can be. 3^{dly}, I now rejoice with joy unspeakable and glorious, that I never purposed to bring Christ, or the least hoof or hair-breadth of truth, under trying.† I desired to have and keep Christ all alone;

* Past; as Paul "failed by Ephesus," i.e., past; Acts xx. 16.

† To bring under man's arrangement the smallest part of Christ's truth.

and that He should never rub clothes with that black-skinned harlot of Rome. I am now fully paid home, so that nothing aileth me for the present, but love-sickness for a real possession of my fairest Well-beloved. I would give Him my bond under my faith and hand, to frist* heaven an hundred years longer, so being He would lay His holy face to my sometimes wet cheeks. Oh, who would not pity me, to know how fain I would have the King shaking the tree of life upon me, or letting me into the well of life with my old dish, that I might be drunken with the fountain here in the house of my pilgrimage! I cannot, nay, I would not, be quit of Christ's love. He hath left the mark behind where he gripped.† He goeth away and leaveth me and His burning love to wrestle together, and I can scarce win‡ my meat of His love, because of His absence. My Lord giveth me but hungry half-kisses, which serve to feed pain and increase hunger, but do not satisfy my desires; His dieting of my soul for this race maketh me lean. I have gotten the wale§ and choice of Christ's crosses, even the tythe and the flower of the gold of all crosses, to bear witness to the truth; and herein find I liberty, joy, access, life, comfort, love, faith, submission, patience, and resolution to take delight in on-waiting. And withal, in my race, He hath come near me, and let me see the gold and crown. What, then, want I but fruition and real enjoyment, which is reserved to my country?|| Let no man think he shall lose at Christ's hands in suffering for Him. *4thly*, As for these present trials, they are most dangerous; for people are stolen off their feet with well-washen¶ and white-skinned pretences of indifferency. But it is the power of the great antichrist working in this land. Woe, woe, woe be to apostate Scotland! There is wrath, and a cup of the red wine of the wrath of God Almighty in the Lord's hand, that they shall drink and spue, and fall and not rise again. The star called "Wormwood and gall," is fallen into the fountains and

* Defer. † Grasp. ‡ Get enough out of His love to feed me.

§ Selectest part.

|| Till I reach the heavenly country.

¶ Washed, in order that their blackness may not appear.

rivers, and hath made them bitter. The sword of the Lord is furnished against the idol-shepherds of the land. Women shall bless the barren womb and miscarrying breast ; all hearts shall be faint, and all knees shall tremble. An end is coming ; the leopard and the lion shall watch over our cities ; houses great and fair shall be desolate without an inhabitant. The Lord hath said, " Pray not for this people, for I have taken My peace from them." Yet the Lord's third part shall come through the fire, as refined gold for the treasure of the Lord, and the outcasts of Scotland shall be gathered together again, and the wilderness shall blossom as the flower, and bud, and grow as the rose of Sharon ; and great shall be the glory of the Lord upon Scotland. *5thly*, I am here assaulted with the learned and pregnant wits of this kingdom. But, all honour be to my Lord, truth but laughs at bemisted* and blind scribes, and disputers of this world ; and God's wisdom confoundeth them, and Christ triumpheth in His own strong truth, that speaketh for itself. *6thly*, I doubt not but my Lord is preparing me for heavier trials. I am most ready at the good pleasure of my Lord, in the strength of His grace, for anything He will be pleased to call me to ; neither shall the black-faced messenger, Death, be holden at the door, when it shall knock. If my Lord will take honour of the like of me, how glad and joyful will my soul be ! Let Christ come out with me to a hotter battle than this, and I will fear no flesh. I know that my Master shall win the day, and that He hath taken the ordering of my sufferings into His own hand. *7thly*, As for my deliverance that miscarrieth ; I am here, by my Lord's grace, to lay my hand on my mouth, to be silent, and wait on. My Lord Jesus is on His journey for my deliverance ; I will not grudge that He runneth not so fast as I would have Him. On-waiting till the swelling rivers fall, and till my Lord arise as a mighty man after strong wine, will be my best. I have not yet resisted to blood. *8thly*, Oh, how often am I laid in the dust, and urged by the tempter (who can ride his own errands upon our lying apprehensions) to sin against the unchangeable

* Bewildered in mist.

love of my Lord ! When I think upon the sparrows and swallows that build their nests in the kirk of Anwoth, and of my dumb Sabbaths, my sorrowful, bleared eyes look askint upon Christ, and present Him as angry. But in this trial (all honour to our princely and royal King !) faith faileth fair before the wind, with topsail up, and carrieth the passenger through. I lay inhibitions upon my thoughts, that they receive no scandals of my only, only Beloved. Let Him even say out of His own mouth, “ There is no hope ; ” yet I will die in that sweet beguile,* “ It is not so, I shall see the salvation of God.” Let me be deceived really, and never win to dry land ; it is my joy to believe under the water, and to die with faith in my hand, gripping† Christ. Let my conceptions of Christ’s love go to the grave with me, and to hell with me ; I may not, I dare not quit them. I hope to keep Christ’s pawn : if He never come to loose it, let Him see to His own promise. I know that presumption, howbeit it be made of stoutness, will not thus be wilful in heavy trials.

Now my dearest in Christ, the great Messenger of the Covenant, the only wife and all-sufficient Jehovah, establish you to the end. I hear that the Lord hath been at your house, and hath called home your wife to her rest. I know, Sir, that ye see the Lord loosing the pins of your tabernacle, and wooing your love from this plastered and over-gilded world, and calling upon you to be making yourself ready to go to your Father’s country, which shall be a sweet fruit of that visitation. Ye know, “ to send the Comforter,” was the King’s word when He ascended on high. Ye have claim to, and interest in, that promise.

Remember my love in Christ to your father. Show him that it is late and black night with him. His long lying at the water-side is that he may look his papers ere he take shipping, and be at a point for his last answer before his Judge and Lord.

All love, all mercy, all grace and peace, all multiplied saving consolations, all joy and faith in Christ, all stability and confirm-

* Delusion.

† Grasping.

ing strength of grace, and the good-will of Him that dwelt in The Bush, be with you.

Your unworthy brother, in his sweet Lord Jesus,

ABERDEEN, June 15, 1637.

S. R.

CLXXVII.—To MARION M'NAUGHT.

(CHRIST SUFFERING IN HIS CHURCH—HIS COMING—OUT-
POURINGS OF LOVE FROM HIM.)



WORTHY AND DEAREST IN THE LORD,—I ever loved (since I knew you) that little vineyard of the Lord's planting in Galloway; but now much more, since I have heard that He who hath His fire in Zion, and His furnace in Jerusalem, hath been pleased to set up a furnace amongst you with the first in this kingdom. He who maketh old things new, seeing Scotland an old, droffy, and rusted Kirk, is beginning to make a new, clean bride of her, and to bring a young, chaste wife to Himself out of the fire. This fire shall be quenched, so soon as Christ has brought a clean spouse through the fire! Therefore, my dearly beloved in the Lord, fear not a worm. "Fear not, worm Jacob."* Christ is in that plea, and shall win the plea. Charge an unbelieving heart, under the pain of treason against our great and royal King Jesus, to dependence by faith, and quiet on-waiting on our Lord. Get you into your chambers, and shut the doors about you. In, in with speed to your stronghold, ye prisoners of hope. Ye doves, fly into Christ's windows till the indignation be over, and the storm be past. Glorify the Lord in your sufferings, and take His banner of love, and spread it over you. Others will follow you, if they see you strong in the Lord. Their courage will take life from your Christian carriage. Look up and see who is coming! Lift up your head, He is coming to save, in garments dyed in blood, and travelling in the greatness of His strength. I laugh, I smile, I leap for joy, to see Christ coming to

* Job xxv. 6, and Isaiah xli. 14.

save you so quickly. Oh, such wide steps Christ taketh! Three or four hills are but a step to Him; He skippeth over the mountains. Christ hath set a battle betwixt His poor weak faints and His enemies. He waleth* the weapons for both parties, and saith to the enemies, "Take you a sword† of steel, law, authority, parliaments, and kings upon your side; that is your armour." And He saith to His faints, "I give you a feckless tree-sword in your hand, and that is suffering, receiving of strokes, spoiling of your goods; and with your tree-sword ye shall get and gain the victory." Was not Christ dragged through the ditches of deep distresses and great straits? And yet Christ, who is your Head, hath won‡ through with His life, howbeit not with a whole skin. Ye are Christ's members, and He is drawing His members through the thorny hedge up to heaven after Him. Christ one day will not have so much as a pained toe; but there are great pieces and portions of Christ's mystical body not yet within the gates of the great high city, the New Jerusalem; and the dragon will strike at Christ, so long as there is one bit or member of Christ's body out of heaven. I tell you, Christ will make new work out of old, forcasten§ Scotland, and gather the old broken boards of His tabernacle, and pin them and nail them together. Our bills and supplications are up in heaven; Christ hath coffers full of them. There is mercy on the other side of this His cross; a good answer to all our bills is agreed upon.

I must tell you what lovely Jesus, fair Jesus, King Jesus hath done to my soul. Sometimes He sendeth me out a standing drink,|| and whispereth a word through the wall; and I am well content of kindness at the second hand: His bode¶ is ever welcome to me, be what it will. But at other times He will be messenger Himself, and

* Selecteth.

† In old editions, "*word*;" but the contrast, "*tree-sword*," sword of *wood*, instead of *steel*, shows the true reading.

‡ Get.

§ Cast off.

|| A cup handed to one as he stood at the door of a friend without dismounting. It is like the stirrup-cup.

¶ Offer made in order to bargain.

I get the cup of falvation out of His own hand (He drinking to me), and we cannot rest till we be in other's arms. And oh, how sweet is a fresh kifs from His holy mouth ! His breathing that goeth before a kifs upon my poor soul is sweet, and hath no fault but that it is too short. I am careles, and stand not much on this, howbeit loins, and back, and shoulders, and head should rive* in pieces in stepping up to my Father's house. I know that my Lord can make long, and broad, and high, and deep glory to His name, out of this bit feckles† body ; for Christ looketh not what stuff He maketh glory out of.

My dearly beloved, ye have often refreshed me. But this is put up in my Master's account ; ye have Him debtor for me. But if ye will do anything for me (as I know ye will) now in my extremity, tell all my dear friends that a prisoner is fettered and chained in Christ's love (Lord, never loose the fetters !); and ye and they together take my heartiest commendations to my Lord Jesus, and thank Him for a poor friend.

I desire your husband to read this letter. I send him a prisoner's blessing. I will be obliged to him, if he will be willing to suffer for my dear Master. Suffering is the professor's golden garment ; there shall be no losses on Christ's side of it. Ye have been witnessers of much joy betwixt Christ and me at communion feasts, the remembrance whereof (howbeit I be feasted in secret) holeth‡ my heart ; for I am put from the board-head‡ and the King's first mefs to His by-board.§ And His broken meat is sweet unto me ; I thank my Lord for borrowed crumbs, no less than when I feasted at the communion table at Anwoth and Kirkcudbright. Pray that I may get one day of Christ in public, such as I have had long since, before my eyes be closed. Oh that my Master would take up

* Be rent in pieces.

† Worthless.

‡ "Holleth." It is properly "*holeth*," makes a hole in my heart. It is used for making a hole for inserting railings or bars. So in Let. 197, and in a sermon preached before the House of Commons, 1644, on Dan. vi. 26, he speaks of "a threadbare cloak, ragged and holed," p. 45.

§ Head of the table, the place of honour. The by-board, or side-table, for children or the like.

houfe again, and lend me the keys of His wine-cellar again, and God fend me borrowed drink till then !

Remember my love to Chrif's kinfmen with you. I pray for Chrif's Father's bleffing to them all. Grace be with you ; a prifoner's bleffing be with you. I write it and abide by it, God will be glorious in Marion M'Naught, when this ftormy blaft fhall be over. O woman beloved of God, believe, rejoice, be ftong in the Lord ! Grace is thy portion.

Your brother, in his fweet Lord Jefus,

ABERDEEN, *June 15, 1637.*

S. R.

CLXXVIII.—*To* LADY CULROSS. [Let. 74.]

(CHRIST'S MANAGEMENT OF TRIALS—WHAT FAITH CAN DO—
CHRIST NOT EXPERIENCE—PRAYERS.)



ADAM,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you. I dare not fay that I wonder that ye have never written to me in my bonds, becaufe I am not ignorant of the caufe ; yet I could not but write to you.

I know not whether joy or heavinefs in my foul carrieth it away. Sorrow, without any mixture of fweetnefs, hath not often love-thoughts of Chrif ; but I fee that the devil can infinuate himfelf, and ride his errands upon the thoughts of a poor diftrefsed prifoner. I am woe* that I am making Chrif my unfriend,† by feeking pleas‡ againft Him, becaufe I am the firft in the kingdom put to utter f Silence, and becaufe I cannot preach my Lord's righteoufnefs in the great congregation. I am, notwithstanding, the lefs folicitous how it go, if there be not wrath in my cup. But I know that I but claw my wounds when my Phyfician hath forbidden me. I would believe in the dark upon luck's head,§ and take my hazard of Chrif's good-will, and reft on this, that in my fever my Phyfician

* Sorry.

‡ Occafions of quarrel.

† Lefs than friend.

§ On the chance of winning.

is at my bedside, and that He sympathizeth with me when I sigh. My borrowed house, and another man's bed and fireside, and other losses, have no room in my sorrow ; a greater heat to eat out a less fire, is a good remedy for some burning. I believe that when Christ draweth blood, He hath skill to cut the right vein ; and that He hath taken the whole ordering and disposing of my sufferings. Let Him tutor me, and tutor my crosses, as He thinketh good. There is no danger nor hazard in following such a guide, howbeit He should lead me through hell, if I could put faith foremost, and fill the field with a quiet on-waiting, and believing to see the salvation of God. I know that Christ is not obliged to let me see both the sides of my cross, and turn it over and over that I may see all. My faith is richer to live upon credit, and Christ's borrowed money, than to have much on hand. Alas ! I have forgotten that faith in times past hath stopped a leak in my crazed bark, and hath filled my sails with a fair wind. I see it a work of God that experiences are all lost, when summons of improbation,* to prove our charters of Christ to be counterfeits, are raised against poor souls in their heavy trials.

But let me be a sinner, and worse than the chief of sinners, yea, a guilty devil, I am sure that my Well-beloved is God. And when I say that Christ is God, and that my Christ is God, I have said all things, I can say no more. I would that I could build as much on this, "My Christ is God," as it would bear ; I might lay all the world upon it. I am sure, that Christ untried, and untaken-up in the power of His love, kindness, mercies, goodness, wisdom, long-suffering, and greatness, is the rock that dim-sighted travellers dash their foot against, and so stumble fearfully. But my wounds are sorest, and pain me most, when I sin against His love and mercy. And if He would set me and my conscience by the ears together, and resolve not to red the plea, but let us deal it betwixt us, my spitting upon the fair face of Christ's love and mercies by my jealousies,†

* Actions raised with the view of showing that the persons had no right to what they claimed.

† Suspicions.

unbelief, and doubting, would be enough to sink me. Oh, oh, I am convinced! O Lord, I stand dumb before Thee for this! Let me be mine own judge in this, and I take a dreadful doom upon me for it. For I still misbelieve, though I have seen that my Lord hath made my crofs as if it were all cryftal, fo as I can fee through it Chrift's fair face and heaven; and that God hath honoured a lump of finful flefh and blood the like of me,* to be Chrift's honourable lord-prifoner. I ought to efteem the walls of the thieves' hole† (if I were shut up in it), or any flinking dungeon, all hung with tapeftry, and moft beautiful, for my Lord Jefus; and yet, I am not fo shut up but that the fun shineth upon my prifon, and the fair wide heaven is the covering of it. But my Lord, in His fweet vifits, hath done more; for He maketh me to find that He will be a confined prifoner with me. He lieth down and rifeth up with me; when I figh, He figheth; when I weep, He fuffereth with me; and I confefs that here is the blessed iffue of my fufferings already begun, that my heart is filled with hunger and defire to have Him glorified in my fufferings.

Blessed be ye of the Lord, Madam, if ye would help a poor dyvour, and caufe others of your acquaintance in Chrift to help me to pay my debt of love, even real praifes to Chrift my Lord. Madam, let me charge you in the Lord, as ye shall answer to Him, to help me in this duty (which He hath tied about my neck with a chain of fuch fingular expreffions of His loving-kindnefs), to fet on high Chrift; to hold in my honefty at His hands,‡ for I have nothing to give to Him. Oh that He would arreft and comprife§ my love and my heart for all! I am a dyvour, who have no more free goods in the world for Chrift fave that; it is both the whole heritage I have, and all my moveables besides. Lord, give the thirfty man a drink. Oh, to be over the ears in the well! Oh, to be fwatting|| and fwimming over head and ears in Chrift's love! I

* A man fuch as I am.

† Prifon.

‡ In order hereby to keep up my character with Him.

§ *Arreft*, is apprehended by force; *comprife*, is doing fo by writ of law.

|| Fluttering and moving awkwardly in water, as ducks do.

would not have Christ's love entering into me, but I would enter into it, and be swallowed up of that love. But I see not myself here; for I fear I make more of His love than of Himself; whereas Himself is far beyond and much better than His love. Oh, if I had my sinful arms filled with that lovely one Christ! Blessed be my rich Lord Jesus, who sendeth not away beggars from His house with a toom* dish. He filleth the vessels of such as will come and seek. We might beg ourselves rich (if we were wise) if we could hold out our withered hands to Christ, and learn to suit† and seek, ask and knock. I owe my salvation for Christ's glory, I owe it to Christ; and desire that my hell, yea, a new hell, seven times hotter than the old hell, might buy praises before men and angels to my Lord Jesus; providing always that I were free of Christ's hatred and displeasure. What am I, to be forfeited and sold in soul and body, to have my great and royal King set on high and extolled above all? Oh, if I knew how high to have Him set, and all the world far, far beneath the soles of His feet? Nay, I deserve not to be the matter of His praises, far less to be an agent in praising of Him. But He can win His own glory out of me, and out of worse than I (if any such be), if it please His holy majesty so to do. He knoweth that I am not now flattering Him.

Madam, let me have your prayers, as ye have the prayers and blessing of him that is separated from His brethren. Grace, grace be with you.

Your own, in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, June 15, 1637.

CLXXIX.—*To his reverend and loving Brother, MR JOHN NEVAY.*

[MR JOHN NEVAY, or NEAVE, as he spelt his name, was minister of Newmills, in the parish of Loudon, and chaplain to the Earl of Loudon. In all the questions which divided the Covenanters in his day, he adhered to what

* Empty.

† Urge a request.

may be called the strict party, being opposed to the Public Resolutions. After the restoration of Charles II., Nevay, in 1662, was obliged to subscribe an engagement to remove forth of the king's dominions before the 1st of February, and not to return under pain of death. He reached Holland, and lived for some time in Rotterdam. But, on the 26th of July 1670, a letter of Charles II. was laid before the assembled States of Holland, accusing Nevay and other two ministers, Mr Robert Trail and Mr Robert M'Ward (who was secretary to Rutherford at the Westminster Assembly, and who first edited his "Letters"), all residing within the jurisdiction of the States, of writing and publishing *pasquils* against his Majesty's Government. It would, however; appear that he still continued at Rotterdam, and died there. Wodrow describes him as "a person of very considerable parts, and bright piety." Robert M'Ward, in 1677, thus writes: "Oh! when I remember that burning and shining light, worthy and warm Mr Livingstone, who used to preach as within the sight of Christ, and the glory to be revealed; *acute and distinct Nevay*; judicious and neat Simson; fervent, serious, and zealous Trail;—when I remember, I say, that all these great luminaries are now set and removed by death from our people, and out of our pulpit, in so short a time, what matter of sorrow presents itself to my eye!" Nevay cultivated the art of poetry, and is the author of a paraphrase (called by Wodrow "a handsome paraphrase") of the Song of Solomon in Latin verse. The General Assembly entertained so high an opinion of his poetical talents, that they appointed him, in August 1647, along with three other ministers, to revise Rous' metrical version of the Psalms. The portion assigned to him for revision was the last thirty psalms of that version. After his death, a volume of sermons, preached by him on the Covenant of Grace, was published. His son married Sarah Van Brakel, whose poetical compositions are favourably exhibited in her elegy upon a popular preacher, and who was a kind friend to the British refugees.]

(CHRIST'S LOVE SHARPENED IN SUFFERING—KNEELING AT
THE COMMUNION—POSTURES AT ORDINANCES.)



EVEREND AND DEAR BROTHER, — Grace, mercy, and peace be to you. I received yours of April 11, as I did another of March 25, and a letter for Mr Andrew Cant.*

* Mr Andrew Cant was at this time minister of Pitlligo, in Buchan, Aberdeenshire. He had been previously minister of Alford. In 1639, he was removed from Pitlligo to Newbottle; and in 1640, to the New Town of Aber-

I am not a little grieved that our mother Church is running so quickly to the brothel-house, and that we are hiring lovers, and giving gifts to the Great Mother of Fornications.* Alas, that our husband is like to quit us so shortly ! It were my part (if I were able), when our Husband is departing, to stir up myself to take hold of Him, and keep Him in this land ; for I know Him to be a sweet second,† and a lovely companion to a poor prisoner.

I find that my extremity hath sharpened the edge of His love and kindness, so that He seemeth to devise new ways of expressing the sweetness of His love to my soul. Suffering for Christ is the very element wherein Christ's love liveth, and exerciseth itself, in casting out flames of fire, and sparks of heat, to warm such a frozen heart as I have. And if Christ weeping in sackcloth be so sweet, I cannot find any imaginable thoughts to think what He will be, when we clay-bodies (having put off mortality) shall come up to the marriage-hall and great palace, and behold the King clothed in His robes royal, sitting on His throne. I would desire no more for my heaven beneath the moon, while I am fighting in this house of clay, but daily renewed feasts of love with Christ, and liberty now and then to feed my hunger with a kiss of that fairest face, that is like the sun in his strength at noon-day. I would willingly subscribe an ample resignation to Christ of the fourteen prelaties of this land, and of all the most delightful pleasures on earth, and forfeit my part of this clay god, this earth, which Adam's foolish children worship, to have no other exercise than to lie on a love-bed with Christ,

deen, where he became Professor of Theology in Marischal College. In this situation he continued till the year after the restoration of Charles II. Rutherford's *Lex Rex* having then, by the orders of the State, been publicly burnt, and the author himself summoned before Parliament to answer an accusation of high treason, Cant, indignant at such ungenerous treatment of a great and good man, condemned it in one of his sermons. Being accused of treason for this, before the magistrates, he demitted his charge, and came to dwell with his son at Liberton. In 1663, he was formally deposed from his charge by the Bishop and Synod of Aberdeen, and died not long after, aged seventy-nine. He is the author of a treatise on "The Titles of our Blessed Saviour."

* Rev. xvii. 5.

† Helper.

and fill this hungered and famished soul with kissing, embracing, and real enjoying of the Son of God ; and I think that then I might write to my friends, that I had found the Golden World, and look out and laugh at the poor bodies who are slaying one another for feathers. For verily, brother, since I came to this prison, I have conceived a new and extraordinary opinion of Christ, which I had not before. For, I perceive, we frist* all our joys to Christ, till He and we be in our own house above, as married parties, thinking that there is nothing of it here to be fought or found, but only hope and fair promises ; and that Christ will give us nothing here but tears, sadness, and crosses ; and that we shall never feel the smell of the flowers of that high garden of paradise above, till we come there. Nay, but I find that it is possible to find young glory, and a young green paradise of joy, even here. I know that Christ's kisses will cast a more strong and refreshful smell of incomparable glory and joy in heaven than they do here ; because a drink of the well of life, up at the well's head, is more sweet and fresh by far than that which we get in our borrowed, old, running-out vessels, and our wooden dishes here. Yet I am now persuaded it is our folly to frist* all till the term-day, seeing abundance of earnest† will not diminish anything of our principal sum. We dream of hunger in Christ's house while we are here, although he alloweth feasts to all the bairns within God's household. It were good, then, to store ourselves with more borrowed kisses of Christ, and with more borrowed visits, till we enter heirs to our new inheritance, and our Tutor put us in possession of our own when we are past minority. O that all the young heirs would seek more, and a greater, and a nearer communion with my Lord Tutor, the prime heir of all, Christ ! I wish that, for my part, I could send you, and that gentleman who wrote his commendations to me, into the King's innermost cellar and house of wine, to be filled with love. A drink of this love is worth the having indeed. We carry ourselves but too nicely with Christ our Lord ; and our Lord loveth not niceness, and

* Defer to another time.

† Foretaste of what is to be got.

dryness, and uncones,* in friends. Since need-force† that we must be in Christ's common,‡ then let us be in His common ; for it will be no otherwife.

Now, for my present case in my imprisonment : deliverance (for any appearance that I see) looketh cold-like.§ My hope, if it looked to or leaned upon men, would wither soon at the root, like a May flower. Yet I resolve to ease myself with on-waiting on my Lord, and to let my faith swim where it loseth ground. I am under a necessity either of fainting (which I hope my Master, of whom I boast all the day, will avert), or then|| to lay my faith upon Omnipotency, and to wink and stick by my grip.¶ And I hope that my ship shall ride it out, seeing Christ is willing to blow His sweet wind in my sails, and mendeth and closeth the leaks in my ship, and ruleth all. It will be strange if a believing passenger be casten overboard.

As for your master, my lord and my lady,** I shall be loath to forget them. I think my prayers (such as they are) are debt due to him ; and I shall be far more engaged to his Lordship, if he be fast for Christ (as I hope he will) now when so many of his coat and quality slip from Christ's back, and leave Him to fend†† for Himself.

I entreat you to remember my love to that worthy gentleman, A. C., who saluted me in your letter : I have heard that he is one of my Master's friends, for the which cause I am tied to him. I wish that he may more and more fall in love with Christ.

Now for your question :—As far as I rawly conceive, I think that God is praised two ways : 1st. By a *concional* profession of His highness before men, such as is the very hearing of the word, and receiving of either of the sacraments ; in which acts by profession, we give out to men, that He is our God with whom we are in

* Reserve ; behaving as if strangers.

† Of pure necessity.

‡ Under obligation to.

§ The fire gone out, hopeless.

|| Or, as an alternative. ¶ Shut the eyes, and keep firm hold, in spite of peril.

** John Campbell, first Earl of Loudon, and his lady, Margaret Campbell, Baroness of Loudon, daughter of George Campbell, master of Loudon.

†† Shift for, provide.

covenant, and our Lawgiver. Thus eating and drinking in the Lord's Supper, is an annunciation and profession before men, that Christ is our slain Redeemer. Here, because God speaketh to us, not we to Him, it is not a formal thanksgiving, but an annunciation or predication of Christ's death—*concional*,* not *adorative*—neither hath it God for the immediate object, and therefore no kneeling can be here.

2dly. There is another praising of God, *formal*, when we are either formally blessing God, or speaking His praises. And this I take to be twofold:—1. When we directly and formally direct praises and thanksgiving to God. This may well be done kneeling, in token of our recognizance of His highness; yet not so but that it may be done standing or sitting, especially seeing joyful elevation (which should be in praising) is not formally signified by kneeling. 2. When we speak good of God, and declare His glorious nature and attributes, extolling Him before men, to excite men to conceive highly of Him. The former I hold to be worship every way immediate, else I know not any immediate worship at all; the latter hath God for the subject, not properly the object, seeing the predication is directed to men immediately, rather than to God; for here we speak *of* God by way of praising, rather than *to* God. And, for my own part, as I am for the present minded, I see not how this can be done kneeling, seeing it is *prædicatio Dei et Christi, non laudatio aut benedictio Dei*. [A preaching of God and Christ, and not of praising or blessing of God.] But observe, that it is formal praising of God, and not merely concional, as I distinguished in the first member; for, in the first member, any speaking of God, or of His works of creation, providence, and redemption, is indirect and concional* praising of Him, and formally preaching, or an act of teaching, not an act of predication of His praises. For there is a difference betwixt the simple relation of the virtues of a thing (which is formally teaching), and the extolling of the worth of a thing by way of commendation, to cause others to praise with us.

* An act in which we address men, not one in which we adore.

Thus recommending you to God's grace,* I rest, yours, in his sweet Lord Jesus,

ABERDEEN, June 15, 1637.

S. R.

CLXXX.—*To the much Honoured JOHN GORDON of Cardonefs, the Elder.*

(LONGINGS FOR THOSE UNDER HIS FORMER MINISTRY—DELIGHT IN CHRIST AND HIS APPEARING—PLEADING WITH HIS FLOCK.)



MUCH HONOURED, AND DEAREST IN MY LORD,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you. My soul longeth exceedingly to hear how matters go betwixt you and Christ; and whether or not there be any work of Christ in that parish, that will bide the trial of fire and water. Let me be weighed of my Lord in a just balance, if your souls lie not weighty upon me. Ye go to bed and ye rise with me: thoughts of your soul, my dearest in our Lord, depart not from me in my sleep. Ye have a great part of my tears, sighs, supplications, and prayers. Oh, if I could buy your soul's salvation with any suffering whatsoever, and that ye and I might meet with joy up in the rainbow, when we shall stand before our Judge! Oh, my Lord, forbid that I have any hard thing to depone† against you in that day! Oh that He who quickeneth the dead would give life to my sowing among you! What joy is there (next to Christ) that standeth on this side of death, which would comfort me more, than that the souls of that poor people were in safety, and beyond all hazard of being lost!

Sir, show the people this; for when I write to you, I think I write to you all, old and young. Fulfil my joy, and seek the Lord. Sure I am, that once I discovered my lovely, royal, princely Lord

* In some modern editions, it is "sweet grace;" but not so in the earliest.

† To state as a witness does.

Jefus to you all. Woe, woe, woe fhall be your part of it for evermore, if the Gofpel be not the favour of life to you. As many fermons as I preached, as many fentences as I uttered, as many points of dittay* fhall there be, when the Lord fhall plead with the world, for the evil of their doings. Believe me, I find heaven a city hard to be won. "The righteous fhall fcarcely be faved." Oh, what violence of thronging† will heaven take ! Alas ! I fee many deceiving themfelves ; for we will all to heaven now ! Every foul dog, with his foul feet, will in at the neareft, to the new and clean Jerufalem. All fay they have faith ; and the greateft part in the world know not, and will not confider, that a flip in the matter of their falvation is the moft pitiable flip that can be ; and that no lofs is comparable to this lofs. Oh, then, fee that there be not a loofe pin in the work of your falvation ; for ye will not believe how quickly the Judge will come. And for yourfelf, I know that death is waiting, and hovering, and lingering at God's command. That ye may be prepared, then, ye had need to ftir your time, and to take eternity and death to your riper advifement. A wrong ftep, or a wrong ftot,‡ in going out of this life, in one property, is like the fin againft the Holy Ghof, and can never be forgiven, becaufe ye cannot come back again through the laft water to mourn for it. I know your accounts are many, and will take telling and laying, and reckoning betwixt you and your Lord. Fit your accounts, and order them. Lofe not the laft play, whatever ye do, for in that play with death your precious foul is the prize : for the Lord's fake fpill§ not the play, and lofe not fuch a treafure. Ye know that, out of love which I had to your foul, and out of defire which I had to make an honeft account of you, I testified my difpleafure and difliking of your ways very often, both in private and public. I am not now a witnefs of your doings, but your Judge is always your witnefs. I befecch you by the mercies of God, by the falva-

* Indiétment. "Your *dittay* is burnt," (*i.e.* there is now no charge againft you), occurs in Kenmure's Dying Speeches.

† Preffing in, as is done in a crowd. ‡ Rebound, fumble. § Spoil, mar.

tion of your soul, by your comfort when your eye-strings shall break, and the face wax pale, and the soul shall tremble to be out of the lodging of clay, and by your compearance before your awful Judge, after the sight of this letter to take a new course with your ways, and now, in the end of your day, make sure of heaven. Examine yourself if ye be in good earnest in Christ ; for some are partakers of the Holy Ghost, and taste of the good word of God, and of the powers of the life to come, and yet have no part in Christ at all.* Many think they believe, but never tremble : the devils are farther on than these.† Make sure to yourself that ye are above ordinary professors. The sixth part of your span-length and hand-breadth of days is scarcely before you. Hasten, hasten, for the tide will not bide.‡ Put Christ upon all your accounts and your secrets. Better it is that you give Him your accounts in this life, out of your own hand, than that, after this life, He take them from you. I never knew so well what sin was as since I came to Aberdeen, howbeit I was preaching of it to you. To feel the smoke of hell's fire in the throat for half-an-hour ; to stand beside a river of fire and brimstone broader than the earth ; and to think to be bound hand and foot, and casten into the midst of it quick, and then to have God locking the prison-door, never to be opened for all eternity ! Oh how it will shake a conscience that hath any life in it ! I find the fruits of my pains to have Christ and that people once§ fairly met, now meet my soul in my sad hours. And I rejoice that I gave fair warning of all the corruptions now entering into Christ's house ; and now many a sweet, sweet, soft kiss, many perfumed, well-smelled kisses, and embracements have I received of my royal Master. He and I have had much love together. I have for the present a sick dwinning life, with much pain, and much love-sickness for Christ. Oh, what would I give to have a bed made to my wearied soul in His bosom ! I would frist¶ heaven for many years, to have my fill of Jesus in this life, and to have occasion to offer Christ to my people, and to

* Heb. vi. 4, 5.

§ One time or other ; or, once for all.

† James ii. 19.

|| Pining.

‡ Wait.

¶ Defer.

woo many people to Christ. I cannot tell you what sweet pain and delightful torments are in Christ's love ; I often challenge* time, that holdeth us fundry. I profess to you, I have no rest, I have no ease, whill† I be over head and ears in love's ocean. If Christ's love (that fountain of delight) were laid as open to me as I would wish, oh, how I would drink, and drink abundantly ! oh, how drunken would this my soul be ! I half call His absence cruel ; and the mask and vail on Christ's face a cruel covering, that hideth such a fair, fair face from a sick soul. I dare not challenge* Himself, but His absence is a mountain of iron upon my heavy heart. Oh, when shall we meet ? Oh, how long is it to the dawning of the marriage-day ! O sweet Lord Jesus, take wide steps ; O my Lord, come over mountains at one stride ! O my Beloved, be like a roe or a young hart on the mountains of Separation.‡ Oh, if He would fold the heavens together like an old cloak, and shovel time and days out of the way, and make ready in haste the Lamb's wife for her Husband ! Since He looked upon me, my heart is not mine own ; He hath run away to heaven with it. I know that it was not for nothing that I spake so meikle§ good of Christ to you in public. Oh, if the heaven, and the heaven of heavens, were paper, and the sea ink, and the multitude of mountains pens of brasse, and I able to write that paper, within and without, full of the praises of my fairest, my dearest, my loveliest, my sweetest, my matchless, and my most marrowless|| and marvellous Well-beloved ! Woe is me, I cannot set Him out to men and angels ! Oh, there are few tongues to sing love-songs of His incomparable excellency ! What can I, poor prisoner, do to exalt Him ? or what course can I take to extol my lofty and lovely Lord Jesus ? I am put to my wits' end, how to get His name made great. Blessed they who would help me in this ! How sweet are Christ's back parts ? Oh, what then is His face ? Those that see His face, how dow¶ they get their eye plucked off Him again ! Look up to Him and love Him. Oh,

* Rebuke, upbraid. † Till. ‡ “ *Bether*” means “ separation,” Song ii. 17.

§ Much. || Unequalled, peerless.

¶ Can they.

love and live ! It were life to me if you would read this letter to that people, and if they did profit by it. Oh, if I could cause them to die of love for Jesus ! Charge them, by the salvation of their souls, to hang about Christ's neck, and take their fill of His love, and follow Him as I taught them. Part by no means with Christ. Hold fast what ye have received. Keep the truth once delivered. If ye or that people quit it in an hair, or in a hoof, ye break your conscience in twain ; and who then can mend it, and cast a knot* on it ? My dearest in the Lord, stand fast in Christ ; keep the faith ; contend for Christ. Wrestle for Him, and take men's feud for God's favour ; there is no comparison betwixt these. O that the Lord would fulfil my joy, and keep the young bride that is at Anwoth to Christ.

And now, whoever they be that have returned to the old vomit since my departure, I bind upon their back, in my Master's name and authority, the long-lasting, weighty vengeance and curse of God. In my Lord's name I give them a doom of black, unmixed, pure wrath, which my Master will ratify and make good, when we stand together before Him, except they timeously† repent and turn to the Lord. And I write to thee, poor mourning and broken-hearted believer, be thou who thou wilt, of the free salvation, Christ's sweet balm for thy wounds, O poor humble believer ! Christ's kisses for thy watery cheeks ! Christ's blood of atonement for thy guilty soul ! Christ's heaven for thy poor soul, though once banished out of paradise ! And my Master will make good my word ere long. Oh that people were wise ! Oh that people were wise ! Oh that people would speer‡ out Christ, and never rest whill§ they find Him. Oh, how my soul will mourn in secret, if my nine years' pained head, and sore breast, and pained back, and grieved heart, and private and public prayers to God, will all be for nothing among that people ! Did my Lord Jesus send me but to summon you

* Tie, to keep from slipping.

† In good time, soon. See the metre version of Ps. cxix. 148.

‡ Ask questions about.

§ Till.

before your Judge, and to leave your summons at your houses? Was I sent as a witness only to gather your dittays? * Oh, may God forbid! Often did I tell you of a fan of God's word † to come among you, for the contempt of it. I told you often of wrath, wrath from the Lord, to come upon Scotland; and yet I bide by my Master's word. It is quickly coming! desolation for Scotland, because of the quarrel of a broken covenant.

Now, worthy Sir, now my dear people, my joy, and my crown in the Lord, let Him be your fear. Seek the Lord, and His face: save your souls. Doves! flee to Christ's windows. Pray for me, and praise for me. The blessing of my God, the prayers and blessing of a poor prisoner, and your lawful pastor, be upon you.

Your lawful and loving pastor,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, June 16, 1637.

CLXXXI.—To EARLSTON, *the younger*.

DANGERS OF YOUTH—CHRIST THE BEST PHYSICIAN—FOUR
REMEDIES AGAINST DOUBTING—BREATHINGS AFTER
CHRIST'S HONOUR.



MUCH HONOURED AND WELL-BELOVED IN
THE LORD,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you.
Your letters give a dash to my laziness in writing.

I must first tell you, that there is not such a glassy, icy, and slippery piece of way betwixt you and heaven, as Youth; and I have experience to say with me here, and to seal what I assert. The old ashes of the sins of my youth are new fire of sorrow to me. I have seen the devil, as it were, dead and buried, and yet rise again, and be a worse devil than ever he was; therefore, my brother, beware of a green young devil, that hath never been buried. The devil in

* Indictments.

† Should not this be *wind*, not "*word*;" alluding to Jer. iv. 12?

his flowers (I mean the hot, fiery lusts and passions of youth) is much to be feared : better yoke* with an old grey-haired, withered, dry devil. For in youth he findeth dry sticks, and dry coals, and a hot hearth-stone ; and how soon can he with his flint cast† fire, and with his bellows blow it up, and fire the house ! Sanctified thoughts, thoughts made conscience of, and called in, and kept in awe, are green fuel that burn not, and are a water for Satan's coal. Yet I must tell you, that the whole faints now triumphant in heaven, and standing before the throne, are nothing but Christ's forlorn‡ and beggarly dyvours. What are they but a pack of redeemed sinners ? But their redemption is not only past the seals, but completed ; and yours is on the wheels, and in doing.

All Christ's good bairns go to heaven with a broken brow, and with a crooked leg. Christ hath an advantage of you, and I pray you to let Him have it ; He will find employment for His calling in you. If it were not with you as ye write, grace should find no sale nor market in you ; but ye must be content to give Christ somewhat to do. I am glad that He is employed that way. Let your bleeding foul and your sores be put in the hand of this expert Physician ; let young and strong corruptions and His free grace be yoked together, and let Christ and your sins deal it betwixt them. I shall be loath to put you off your fears, and your sense of deadness : I wish it were more. There be some wounds of that nature, that their bleeding should not be soon stopped. Ye must take a house beside the Physician. It will be a miracle if ye be the first sick man whom He put away uncured, and worse than He found you. Nay, nay, Christ is honest, and in that is flying-free§ with sinners. " Him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out."|| Take ye that. It cannot be presumption to take that as your own, when you find that your wounds found¶ you. Presumption is ever whole at the

* Set to, enter into conflict. † Strike. ‡ Lost, prodigal debtors.

§ " I am flying free with him," is a proverb ; *q. d.*, He has nothing to say to me, and I am free to chide with him for his faults.

|| John vi. 37.

¶ Shoot pain through you.

heart, and hath but the truant* sicknefs, and groaneth only for the fashion. Faith hath fenfe of ficknefs, and looketh, like a friend, to the promifes ; and, looking to Chrift therein, is glad to fee a known face. Chrift is as full a feaft as ye can have to hunger. Nay, Chrift, I fay, is not a full man's leavings. His mercy fendeth always a letter of defiance to all your fins, if there were ten thoufand more of them.

I grant you that it is a hard matter for a poor hungry man to win his meat† upon hidden Chrift : for then the key of His pantry-door, and of the houfe of wine, is a-seeking and cannot be had. But hunger muft break through iron locks. I bemoan them not who can make a din, and all the fields ado,‡ for a loft Saviour. Ye muft let Him hear it (to fay fo) upon both fides of His head, when He hideth Himfelf ; it is no time then to be bird-mouthed§ and patient. Chrift is rare indeed, and a delicacy to a finner. He is a miracle, and a world's wonder, to a seeking and a weeping finner ; but yet fuch a miracle as fhall be feen by them who will come and fee. The feeker and figher, is at laft a figner and enjoyer ; nay, I have feen a dumb man get alms from Chrift. He that can tell his tale, and fend fuch a letter to heaven as he hath fent to Aberdeen, it is very like he will come fpeed|| with Chrift. It bodeth God's mercy to complain heartily for fin. Let wreftling be with Chrift till He fay, “ How is it, fir, that I cannot be quit of your bills, and your mifleared¶ cries ? ” and then hope for Chrift's bleffing ; and His bleffing is better than ten other bleffings. Think not fhame becaufe of your guiltinefs ; neceffity muft not blufh to beg. It ftandeth you hard to want Chrift ; and, therefore, that which idle on-waiting cannot do, mifnurtured** crying and knocking will do.

* Pretended, like fchoolboys' pretences for play. † Earn his livelihood.

‡ In a fermon preached at Kirkcudbright, on Rev. xix. 11, he fupposes the courtiers faying to Daniel, “ *What need ye make all the fields ado with your prayers ?* ” The word means “ *after* .” Cattle are faid to do this when bel-
lowing for their mates.

§ Mealy-mouthed.

¶ Ill-taught ; unmannerly.

|| Succeed.

** Undisciplined, unftudied.

And for doubtings, because you are not as you were long since with your Master : consider three things. *1st*, What if Christ had such tottering thoughts of the bargain of the new covenant betwixt you and Him, as you have? *2^{dly}*, Your heart is not the compass which Christ faileth by. He will give you leave to sing as you please, but He will not dance to your daft* spring. It is not referred to you and your thoughts, what Christ will do with the charters betwixt you and Him. Your own misbelief hath torn them ; but He hath the principal in heaven with Himself. Your thoughts are no parts of the new covenant ; dreams change not Christ. *3^{dly}*, Doubtings are your sins ; but they are Christ's drugs, and ingredients that the Physician maketh use of for the curing of your pride. Is it not suitable for a beggar to say at meat, " God reward the winners?"† for then he saith that he knoweth who beareth the charges of the house. It is also meet that ye should know, by experience, that faith is not nature's ill-gotten bastard, but your Lord's free gift, that lay in the womb of God's free grace. Praised be the Winner!‡ I may add a *4^{thly}*, In the passing of your bill and your charters, when they went through the Mediator's great seal, and were concluded, faith's advice was not sought. Faith hath not a vote beside Christ's merits : blood, blood, dear blood, that came from your Cautioner's§ holy body, maketh that sure work. The use, then, which ye have of faith now (having already closed with Jesus Christ for justification) is, to take out a copy of your pardon ; and so ye have peace with God upon the account of Christ. For, since faith apprehendeth pardon, but never payeth a penny for it, no marvel that salvation doth not die and live, ebb or flow, with the working of faith. But because it is your Lord's honour to believe His mercy and His fidelity, it is infinite goodness in our Lord, that misbelief giveth a dash to our Lord's glory, and not to our salvation. And so, whoever want (yea, howbeit God here bear with the want of what we are obliged to

* Foolish sprightly air ; or tune.

† He who got it for us.

‡ Those who got this for us.

§ The surety.

give Him, even the glory of His grace by believing), yet a poor covenanted sinner wanteth not. But if guiltiness were removed, doubtings would find no friend, nor life; and yet faith is to believe the removal of guiltiness in Christ. A reason why ye get less now (as ye think) than before, as I take it, is, because, at our first conversion, our Lord putteth the meat in young bairns' mouths with His own hand; but when we grow to some further perfection, we must take heaven by violence, and take by violence from Christ what we get. And He can, and doth hold, because He will have us to draw. Remember now that ye must live upon violent plucking. Laziness is a greater fault now than long since. We love always to have the pap put in our mouth.

Now for myself; alas! I am not the man I go for in this nation; men have not just weights to weigh me in. Oh, but I am a silly, feckless* body, and overgrown with weeds; corruption is rank and fat in me. Oh, if I were answerable to this holy cause, and to that honourable Prince's love for whom I now suffer! If Christ should refer the matter to me (in His presence I speak it), I might think shame to vote my own salvation. I think Christ might say, "Thinkest thou not shame to claim heaven, who doest so little for it?" I am very often so, that I know not whether I sink or swim in the water. I find myself a bag of light froth. I would bear no weight (but vanities and nothings weigh in Christ's balance) if my Lord cast not in borrowed weight and metal, even Christ's righteousness, to weigh for me. The stock I have is not mine own; I am but the merchant that trafficketh with other folks' goods. If my creditor, Christ, should take from me what He hath lent, I should not long keep the causeway;† but Christ hath made it mine and His. I think it manhood to play the coward, and jouk‡ in the lee-side of Christ; and thus I am not only saved from my enemies, but I obtain the victory. I am so empty, that I think it were an alms-deed in Christ, if He would win a poor prisoner's blessing for evermore, and fill me with

* Pithless, worthless.

† Appear in open street unabashed.

‡ Bend my body on the side where there is shelter from the wind.

His love. I complain that when Christ cometh, He cometh always to fetch fire;* He is ever in haste, He may not tarry; and poor I (a beggarly dyvour†) get but a standing visit and a standing kiss, and but, “How doest thou?” in the by-going.‡ I dare not say He is lordly, because He is made a King now at the right hand of God; or is grown miskenning§ and dry|| to His poor friends: for He cannot make more of His kisses than they are worth. But I think it my happiness to love the love of Christ: and when He goeth away, the memory of His sweet presence is like a feast in a dear summer. I have comfort in this, that my soul desireth that every hour of my imprisonment were a company of heavenly tongues to praise Him on my behalf, howbeit my bonds were prolonged for many hundred years. Oh that I could be the man who could procure my Lord’s glory to flow like a full sea, and blow like a mighty wind upon all the four airths¶ of Scotland, England, and Ireland! Oh, if I could write a book of His praises! O Fairest among the sons of men, why stayest thou so long away? O heavens, move fast! O time, run, run, and hasten the marriage-day! for love is tormented with delays. O angels, O seraphims, who stand before Him, O blessed spirits who now see His face, set Him on high! for when ye have worn your harps in His praises, all is too little, and is nothing, to cast the smell of the praise of that fair Flower, the fragrant Rose of Sharon, through many worlds!

Sir, take my hearty commendations to Him, and tell Him that I am sick of love.

Grace be with you.

Yours in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, *June 16, 1637.*

* As steel from flint?

† Debtor.

‡ In passing by.

§ Apt to overlook, as if not knowing.

|| Reserved.

¶ Quarters.

CLXXXII.—*To his honoured and dear Brother, ALEXANDER GORDON
of Knockgray.*

(JOY IN GOD—TRIALS WORK OUT GLORY TO CHRIST.)

DEAREST AND TRULY HONOURED BROTHER,
—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you. I have seen no letter from you since I came to Aberdeen. I will not interpret it to be forgetfulness. I am here in a fair prison: Christ is my sweet and honourable fellow-prisoner, and I His sad and joyful lord-prisoner,* if I may speak so. I think this cross becometh me well, and is fuitable to me in respect of my duty to suffer for Christ, howbeit not in regard of my deserving to be thus honoured. However it be, I see that Christ is strong, even lying in the dust, in prison, and in banishment. Losses and disgraces are the wheels of Christ's triumphant chariot. In the sufferings of His own saints, as He intendeth their good, so He intendeth His own glory, and that is the butt His arrows shoot at. And Christ shooteth not at rovers,† He hitteth what He purposeth to hit; therefore He doth make His own feckles‡ and weak nothings, and those who are the contempt of men, “a new sharp threshing instrument, having teeth, to thresh the mountains, and beat them small, and to make the hills as chaff, and to fan them.”§ What harder stuff, or harder grain for threshing out, than high and rocky mountains? But the saints are God's threshing instruments, to beat them all into chaff. Are we not God's leem|| vessels? and yet when they cast us over a house we are not broken into sherds. We creep in under our Lord's wings in the great shower, and the water cannot come

* In Luther's style, he playfully speaks of himself as if raised to nobility among prisoners.

† At random.

‡ Worthless.

§ Isa. xli. 15, 16.

|| Earthen; from *limus*? He speaks of “the potter having the dominion of art over the leamy pot,” in a sermon on Dan. vi. 26. It is connected with “loam.”

through those wings. It is folly then for men to say, "This is not Christ's plea, He will lose the wad-fee;* men are like to beguile Him:" that were indeed a strange play. Nay, I dare pledge my soul, and lay it in pawn on Christ's side of it, and be half-tiner,† half-winner with my Master! Let fools laugh the fool's laughter, and scorn Christ, and bid the weeping captives in Babylon "sing us one of the songs of Zion, play a spring‡ to cheer up your sad-hearted God!" We may sing upon luck's-head§ beforehand, even in our winter-storm, in the expectation of a summer sun, at the turn of the year. No created powers in hell, or out of hell, can mar the music of our Lord Jesus, nor spoil our song of joy. Let us then be glad, and rejoice in the salvation of our Lord; for faith had never yet cause to have wet cheeks, and hanging down brows, or to droop or die. What can ail faith, seeing Christ suffereth Himself (with reverence to Him be it spoken) to be commanded by it, and Christ commandeth all things? Faith may dance because Christ singeth; and we may come into the choir, and lift our hoarse and rough voices, and chirp, and sing, and shout for joy with our Lord Jesus. We see oxen go to the shambles, leaping and startling;|| we see God's fed oxen, prepared for the day of slaughter, go dancing and singing down to the black chambers of hell; and why should we go to heaven weeping, as if we were like to fall down through the earth for sorrow? If God were dead (if I may speak so, with reverence of Him who liveth for ever and ever), and Christ buried, and rotten among the worms, we might have cause to look like dead folks; but "the Lord liveth, and blessed be the Rock of our salvation."¶ None have right to joy but we; for joy is sown for us, and an ill summer or harvest will not spill** the crop. The children of this world have much robbed joy that is not well-come.†† It is no good sport they laugh at: they steal joy, as it were, from

* Pledge; the sum paid in hiring, as a pledge of engagement.

† Half-loser.

‡ A sprightly air.

§ On the chance of winning.

|| Running to and fro in an excited manner.

¶ Ps. xviii. 46.

** Mar.

†† Got in a right way.

God ; for He commandeth them to mourn and howl.* Then let us claim our leel-come† and lawfully conquered‡ joy.

My dear brother, I cannot but speak what I have felt ; seeing my Lord Jesus hath broken a box of spikenard upon the head of His poor prisoner, and it is hard to hide a sweet smell. It is a pain to smother Christ's love ; it will be out whether we will or not. If we did but speak according to the matter, a cross for Christ should have another name ; yea, a cross, especially when He cometh with His arms full of joys, is the happiest hard tree that ever was laid upon my weak shoulder. Christ and His cross together are sweet company, and a blessed couple. My prison is my palace, my sorrow is with child of joy, my losses are rich losses, my pain easy pain, my heavy days are holy and happy days. I may tell a new tale of Christ to my friends. Oh, if I could make a love song of Him, and could commend Christ, and tune His praises aright ! Oh, if I could set all tongues in Great Britain and Ireland to work, to help me to sing a new song of my Well-beloved ! Oh, if I could be a bridge over a water for my Lord Jesus to walk upon, and keep His feet dry ! Oh, if my poor bit heaven could go betwixt my Lord and blasphemy, and dishonour ! (Upon condition He loved me). Oh that my heart could say this word, and abide by it for ever ! Is it not great art and incomparable wisdom in my Lord, who can bring forth such fair apples out of this crabbed tree of the cross ? Nay, my Father's never-enough admired providence can make a fair face‡ out of a black devil. Nothing can come wrong to my Lord in His sweet working. I would even fall sound asleep in Christ's arms, and my sinful head on His holy breast, while He kisseth me ; were it not that often the wind turneth to the north, and whiles § my sweet Lord Jesus is so that He will neither give nor

* James v. i.

† Purchased, or obtained by industry, not inherited. *Leel-come*, is what has come to us in a sound way, honest and true.

‡ This seems the true reading, though "feast" is in other editions.

§ At times.

take, borrow nor lend with me. I complain that He is not social ; I half call Him proud and lordly of His company, and nice of His looks, which yet is not true. It would content me to give, howbeit He should not take. I should be content to want His kisses at such times, providing He would be content to come near-hand, and take my wersh,* dry, and feckles† kisses. But at that time He will not be entreated, but let a poor soul stand still and knock, and never let-on‡ him that He heareth ; and then the old leavings, and broken meat, and dry sighs, are greater cheer than I can tell. All I have then is, that howbeit the law and wrath have gotten a decreet§ against me, I can yet lippen|| that meikle good in Christ as to get a suspension,¶ and to bring my cause in reasoning again before my Well-beloved. I desire but to be heard, and at last He is content to come and agree the matter with a fool, and forgive freely, because He is God. Oh, if men would glorify Him, and taste of Christ's sweetness !

Brother, ye have need to be busy with Christ for this whorish Kirk ; I fear lest Christ cast water upon Scotland's coal. Nay, I know that Christ and His wife will be heard : He will plead for the broken covenant. Arm you against that time.

Grace be with you.

Yours, in his sweet Lord Jesus,

ABERDEEN, *June 16, 1637.*

S. R.

CLXXXIII.—To MR J—— R——.

[It is highly probable that the individual to whom this letter is addressed was John Row, son of John Row, minister of Carnock, and grandson of John Row the reformer, and contemporary of Knox. In 1632 he was appointed master of the Grammar School of Perth, in which situation he continued for some years. The year after his appointment, he was in some danger of expulsion, for refusing to join in the observance of the Lord's Supper after the man-

* Insipid, no salt in them. † No worth in them. ‡ Seem to notice.

§ Sentence of court.

|| Trust that there is so much good.

¶ An act suspending final execution of sentence.

ner enjoined by the Perth Articles. At the time when this letter was written, he appears to have been exposed to a similar danger. In 1641 he was ordained minister of St Nicholas Church, Aberdeen; and in 1652 was elevated to be Principal of King's College. Row was a man of learning, and was the author of the first Hebrew grammar printed in Scotland. He died in 1646.]

(CHRIST THE PURIFIER OF HIS CHURCH—SUBMISSION TO HIS
WAYS.)



DEAR BROTHER,—Grace, mercy, and peace be unto you. Upon the report which I hear of you, without any further acquaintance, except our straitest bonds in our Lord Jesus, I thought good to write unto you, hearing of your danger to be thrust out of the Lord's house for His name's sake. Therefore, my earnest and humble desire to God is, that ye may be strengthened in the grace of God, and, by the power of His might, to go on for Christ, not standing in awe of a worm that shall die. I hope that ye will not put your hand to the ark to give it a wrong touch,* and to overturn it, as many now do, when the archers are shooting fore at Joseph, whose bow shall abide in its strength. We owe to our royal King and princely Master a testimony. Oh, how blessed are they who can ward a blow off Christ, and His borne-down truth! Men think Christ a gone† man now, and that He shall never get up His head again; and they believe that His court‡ is failed, because He suffereth men to break their spears and swords upon Him, and the enemies to plough Zion, and make long and deep their furrows on her back. But it would not be so, if the Lord had not a sowing for His ploughing. What can He do, but melt an old drossy Kirk, that He may bring out a new bride out of the fire again? I think that Christ is just now repairing His house, and exchanging His old vessels with new vessels, and is going through this land, and taking up an inventory and a roll of so many of Levi's sons, and good professors, that He may make them

* In old editions, "totch;" and explained to be a sudden push, such a push, too, as sets the object in motion. The allusion is to 2 Sam. vi. 6.

† Whose cause is utterly hopeless, ruined. ‡ His power and influence.

new work * for the Second Temple ; and whatsoever shall be found not to be for the work, shall be casten over the wall. When the house shall be builded, He will lay by † His hammers, as having no more to do with them. It is possible that He may do worse to them than lay them by ; and I think the vengeance of the Lord, and the vengeance of His temple, shall be upon them.

I desire no more than to keep weight when I am past the fire ; ‡ and I can now, in some weak measure, give Christ a testimonial § of a lovely and loving companion under suffering for Him. I saw Him before, but afar off. His beauty, to my eye-sight, groweth. A fig, a straw for a ten worlds' plastered glory, and for childish shadows, the idol of clay (this god, the world) that fools fight for ! If I had a lease of Christ of my own dating (for whoever once cometh nigh-hand, || and taketh a hearty look of Christ's inner side, shall never wring nor wrestle themselves out of His love-grips ¶ again), I would rest contentedly in my prison, yea, in my prison without light of sun or candle, providing Christ and I had a love-bed, not of mine, but of Christ's own making, that we might lie together among the lilies, till the day break and the shadows flee away. Who knoweth how sweet a drink of Christ's love is ! Oh, but to live on Christ's love is a king's life ! The worst things of Christ, even that which seemeth to be the refuse of Christ, His hard cross, His black cross, is white and fair ; and the cross receiveth a beautiful lustre and a perfumed smell from Jesus. My dear brother, scaur ** not at it.

While ye have time to stand upon the watch-tower and speak, contend with this land. Plead with your harlot-mother, who hath been a treacherous half-marrow †† to her husband Jesus. For I would think liberty to preach one day, the root and top of my desires ; and would seek no more of the blessings that are to be had on this

* See p. 456.

† Cast aside.

‡ Lose nothing when I am passed through the fire, even if I should not gain.

§ An attestation, that He is.

|| Near.

¶ Love-grasp.

** Boggle, be afraid.

†† A married partner.

fide of time, till I be over the water, than to spend this my crazy clay-house in His service, and saving of souls. But I hold my peace, because He hath done it. My shallow and ebb* thoughts are not the compass which Christ faileth by. I leave His ways to Himself, for they are far, far above me: only I would contend with Christ for His love, and be bold to make a plea with Jesus, my Lord, for a heart-fill of His love; for there is no more left to me. What standeth beyond the far end† of my sufferings, and what shall be the event, He knoweth, and I hope, to my joy, will make me know, when God will unfold His decrees concerning me. For there are windings, and tos and fros, in His ways, which blind bodies like us cannot see.

Thus much for farther acquaintance; so, recommending you, and what is before you, to the grace of God, I rest,

Your very loving brother in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, June 16, 1637.

CLXXXIV.—To MR WILLIAM DALGLEISH. [Let. 117.]

(THE FRAGRANCE OF THE MINISTRY—A REVIEW OF HIS PAST AND PRESENT SITUATION, AND OF HIS PROSPECTS.)



REVEREND AND WELL-BELOVED BROTHER,—
Grace, mercy, and peace be unto you. I have heard somewhat of your trials in Galloway. I bless the Lord, who hath begun first in that corner to make you a new kirk to Himself. Christ hath the less ado behind, when He hath refined you.

Let me entreat you, my dearly beloved, to be fast to Christ. My witness is above, my dearest brother, that ye have added much joy to me in my bonds, when I hear that ye grow in the grace and zeal of God for your Master. Our ministry, whether by preaching or suffering, will cast a smell through the world both of heaven and

* Shallow.

† The farther end, the final issue.

hell.* I persuade you, my dear brother, that there is nothing out of heaven, next to Christ, dearer to me than my ministry ; and the worth of it, in my estimation, is swelled, and paineth me exceedingly. Yet I am content, for the honour of my Lord, to surrender it back again to the Lord of the vineyard. Let Him do with it, and me both, what He thinketh good. I think myself too little for Him.

And, let me speak to you, how kind a fellow-prisoner is Christ to me ! Believe me, this kind of cross (that would not go by† my door, but would needs visit me) is still the longer the more welcome to me. It is true, my silent Sabbaths have been, and still are, as glassy ice, whereon my faith can scarce hold its feet, and I am often blown on my back, and off my feet, with a storm of doubting ; yet truly, my bonds all this time cast a mighty and rank smell of high and deep love in Christ. I cannot, indeed, see through my cross to the far end ;‡ yet I believe I am in Christ's books, and in His decree (not yet unfolded to me), a man triumphing, dancing, and singing, on the other side of the Red Sea, and laughing and praising the Lamb, over beyond time, sorrow, deprivation, prelates' indignation, losses, want of friends, and death. Heaven is not a fowl flying in the air (as men use to speak of things that are uncertain) ; nay, it is well paid for. Christ's comprisement§ lieth on|| glory for all the mourners in Zion, and shall never be loosed. Let us be glad and rejoice, that we have blood, losses, and wounds, to show our Master and Captain at His appearance, and what we suffered for His cause.

Woe is me, my dear brother, that I say often, " I am but dry bones, which my Lord will not bring out of the grave again ;" and that my faithless fears say, " Oh, I am a dry tree, that can bear no fruit ; I am a useless body, who can beget no children to the Lord in His house !" Hopes of deliverance look cold and uncertain, and afar off, as if I had done with it. It is much for Christ (if I may

* 2 Cor. ii. 15, 16.

† Pass by.

‡ To the final issue.

§ Apprehending as by legal process.

|| " *To lie on*," is for a thing to be a matter of duty or obligation, or of legal security. Christ has laid His comprisement on glory ; He hath taken care that the mourners in Zion be secured in possession of glory.

say so) to get law-borrows* of my forrow, and of my quarreloust† heart. Christ's love playeth me fair play. I am not wronged at all ; but there is a tricking and false heart within me, that still playeth Christ foul play. I am a cumbersome neighbour to Christ : it is a wonder that He dwelleth beside the like of me. Yet I often get the advantage of the hill above my temptations, and then I despise temptation, even hell itself, and the stink of it, and the instruments of it, and am proud of my honourable Master. And I resolve, whether contrary winds will or not, to fetch‡ Christ's harbour ; and I think a wilful and stiff contention with my Lord Jesus for His love very lawful. It is sometimes hard to me to win my meat§ upon Christ's love, because my faith is sick, and my hope withereth, and my eyes wax dim ; and unkind and comfort-eclipsing clouds go over the fair and bright Sun, Jesus ; and then, when I and temptation tryst|| the matter together, we spill all through unbelief. Sweet, sweet for evermore would my life be, if I could keep faith in exercise ! But I see that my fire cannot always cast light ; I have even a "poor man's hard world,"¶ when He goeth away. But surely, since my entry hither, many a time hath my fair sun shined without a cloud : hot and burning hath Christ's love been to me. I have no vent to the expression of it ; I must be content with stolen and smothered desires of Christ's glory. Oh, how far is His love behind the hand with me !** I am just like a man who hath nothing to pay his thousands of debt : all that can be gotten of him is to seize upon his person. Except Christ would seize upon myself, and make the readiest payment that can be of my heart and love to Himself, I have no other thing to give Him. If my sufferings could do beholders good, and edify His Kirk, and proclaim the incomparable worth of Christ's love to the world, oh, then would my soul be overjoyed, and my sad heart be cheered and calmed !

* Pledge given to the law, that the man will not injure his neighbour.

† Ready to find fault.

‡ Make for.

§ Get a livelihood.

|| As by appointment, bring it to our meeting.

¶ A proverbial saying.

** Far from receiving what I owe to it.

Dear brother, I cannot tell what is become of my labours among that people ! If all that my Lord builded by me be casten down, and the bottom be fallen out of the profession of that parish, and none stand by Christ, whose love I once preached as clearly and plainly as I could (though far below its worth and excellence) to that people ; if so, how can I bear it ! And if another make a foul harvest, where I have made a painful and honest sowing, it will not soon digest with me. But I know that His ways pass finding out. Yet my witness, both within me and above me, knoweth. And my pained breast upon the Lord's day at night, my desire to have had Christ awful, and amiable, and sweet to that people, is now my joy. It was my desire and aim to make Christ and them one ; and, if I see my hopes die in the bud, ere they bloom* a little, and come to no fruit, I die with grief. O my God, seek not an account of the violence done to me by my brethren, whose salvation I love and desire. I pray that they and I be not heard as contrary parties in the day of our compearance† before our Judge, in that process, led by them against my ministry which I received from Christ. I know that a little inch, and less than the third part of this span-length and hand-breadth of time, which is passing away, will put me without the stroke, and above the reach of either brethren or foes ; and it is a short-lasting injury done to me, and to my pains in that part of my Lord's vineyard. Oh, how silly‡ an advantage is my deprivation to men, seeing that my Lord Jesus hath many ways to recover His own losses, and is irresistible to compass His own glorious ends, that His lily may grow amongst thorns, and His little kingdom exalt Himself, even under the swords and spears of contrary powers !

But, my dear brother, go on in the strength of His rich grace, whom ye serve. Stand fast for Christ. Deliver the gospel off your hand, and your ministry to your Master, with a clean and undefiled conscience. Loose not a pin of Christ's tabernacle. Do not so much as pick with your nail at one board or border of the ark.

* Blossom.

† Appearance in obedience to legal citation.

‡ Pitiful.

Have no part or dealing, upon any terms, in a hoof,* in a closed window,† or in a bowing of your knee, in casting down of the temple. But be a mourning and speaking witness against them who now ruin Zion. Our Master will be on us all now in a clap,‡ ere ever we wit.§ That day will discover all our whites and our blacks, concerning this controversy of poor oppressed Zion. Let us make our part of it good, that it may be able to abide the fire, when hay and stubble shall be burned to ashes. Nothing, nothing, I say, nothing, but sound sanctification can abide the Lord's fan. I stand to my testimony that I preached often of Scotland.—“Lamentation, mourning, and woe abideth thee, O Scotland! O Scotland! the fearful quarrel of a broken covenant standeth good with thy Lord!”

Now, remember my love to all my friends, and to my parishioners, as if I named each of them particularly. I recommend you, and God's people, committed by Christ to your trust, to the rich grace of our all-sufficient Lord. Remember my bonds. Praise my Lord, who beareth me up in my sufferings. As ye find occasion, according to the wisdom given you, show our acquaintance what the Lord hath done to my soul. This I seek not, verily, to hunt my own praise, but that my sweetest and dearest Master may be magnified in my sufferings. I rest,

Yours, in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, *June 16, 1637.*

* Referring to Exod. x. 26.

† Referring to Dan. vi. 10.

‡ Suddenly, like a clap of thunder.

§ Know, are aware.



CLXXXV.—To MARION M'NAUGHT.

(LONGING TO BE RESTORED TO HIS CHARGE.)

DEARLY BELOVED IN OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you. Few know the heart of a stranger and prisoner. I am in the hands of mine enemies. I would that honest and lawful means were essayed for bringing me home to my charge, now when Mr A. R. and Mr H. R. are restored. It concerneth you of Galloway most, to use supplications and addresses for this purpose, and try if by fair means I can be brought back again. As for liberty, without I be restored to my flock, it is little to me; for my silence is my greatest prison. However it be, I wait for the Lord; I hope not to rot in my sufferings: Lord, give me submission to wait on. My heart is sad that my days flee away, and I do no service to my Lord in His house, now when His harvest and the souls of perishing people require it. But His ways are not like my ways, neither can I find Him out. Oh that He would shine upon my darknesses, and bring forth my morning light from under the thick cloud that men have spread over me! Oh that the Almighty would lay my cause in a balance and weigh me, if my soul was not taken up,* when others were sleeping, how to have Christ betrothed with a bride, in that part of the land! But that day that my mouth was most unjustly and cruelly closed, the bloom fell off my branches, and my joy did cast the flower. Howbeit, I have been casting myself under God's feet, and wrestling to believe under a hidden and covered Lord; yet my fainting cometh before I eat, and my faith hath bowed with the fore cast,† and under this almost insupportable weight! Oh that it break not! I dare not say that the Lord hath put out my candle, and hath casten water upon my poor coal, and broken the stakes of my tabernacle; but I have tasted bitterness,

* Occupied busily.

† Lot; fate, as we say.

and eaten gall and wormwood, since that day on which my Master laid bonds upon me to speak no more. I speak not this because the Lord is unco* to me, but because beholders, that stand on dry land, see not my sea-storm. The witnesses of my sad cross are but strangers to my sad days and nights. Oh that Christ would let me alone, and speak love to me, and come home to me, and bring summer with Him! Oh that I might preach His beauty and glory, as once I did, before my clay-tent be removed to darkness! and that I might lift Christ off the ground! and my branches might be watered with the dew of God, and my joy in His work might grow green again, and bud, and send out a flower! But I am but a short-sighted creature, and my candle casteth not light afar off. He knoweth all that is done to me; how that when I had but one joy, and no more, and one green flower that I esteemed to be my garland, He came in one hour and dried up my flower at the root, and took away mine only eye, and my one only crown and garland. What can I say? Surely my guiltiness hath been remembered before Him, and He was seeking to take down my sails, and to land the flower of my delights, and to let it lie on the coast, like an old broken ship, that is no more for the sea. But I praise Him for this waled† stroke. I welcome this furnace; God's wisdom made choice of it for me, and it must be best, because it was His choice. Oh that I may wait for Him till the morning of this benighted Kirk break out! This poor, afflicted Kirk had a fair morning, but Her night came upon her before her noon-day, and she was like a traveller, forced to take house in the morning of his journey. And now her adversaries are the chief men in the land; her ways mourn; her gates languish; her children sigh for bread; and there is none to be instant with the Lord, that He would come again to His house, and dry the face of His weeping spouse, and comfort Zion's mourners, who are waiting for Him. I know that He will make corn to grow upon the top of His withered Mount Zion again.

* Strange.

† Selected.

Remember my bonds, and forget me not. Oh that my Lord would bring me again amongst you with abundance of the gospel of Christ! But, oh, that I may set down my desires where my Lord biddeth me! Remember my love in the Lord to your husband; God make him faithful to Christ! and my blessing to your three children. Faint not in prayer for this Kirk. Desire my people not to receive a stranger and intruder upon my ministry. Let me stand in that right and station that my Lord Jesus gave me.

Grace, grace be with you.

Yours, in his sweet Lord and Master,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, 1637.

CLXXXVI.—To ROBERT STUART.

[This ROBERT STUART was probably the son of Provost Stuart of Ayr, to whom several letters are addressed. Allusion is made to his early conversion.]

(CHRIST CHOOSES HIS OWN IN THE FURNACE—NEED OF A DEEP WORK—THE GOD-MAN, A WORLD'S WONDER.)



MY VERY DEAR BROTHER,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you. Ye are heartily welcome to my world of suffering, and heartily welcome to my Master's house. God give you much joy of your new Master. If I have been in the house before you, I were not faithful to give the house an ill name, or to speak evil of the Lord of the family; I rather with God's Holy Spirit (O Lord, breathe upon me with that Spirit!), to tell you the fashions of the house.* One thing I can say, by on-waiting ye will grow a great man with the Lord of the house. Hang on till ye get some good from Christ. Lay

* Ezek. xliii. 11.

all your loads and your weights by faith upon Christ; take ease to yourself, and let Him bear all. He can, He dow,* He will bear you, howbeit hell were upon your back. I rejoyce that He is come, and hath chosen you in the furnace; it was even there where ye and He set tryft.† That is an old gate‡ of Christ's: He keepeth the good old fashion with you, that was in Hosea's days: "Therefore, behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak to her heart."§ There was no talking to her heart, while He and she were in the fair and flourishing city, and at ease; but out in the cold, hungry, waste wilderness, He allureth her, He whispered news into her ear there, and said, "Thou art Mine." What would ye think of such a bode?|| Ye may soon do worse than say, "Lord, hold all; Lord Jesus, a bargain be it, it shall not go back on my side."

Ye have gotten a great advantage in the way of heaven, that ye have started to the gate¶ in the morning. Like a fool, as I was, I suffered my fun to be high in the heaven, and near afternoon, before ever I took the gate by the end. I pray you now keep the advantage ye have. My heart, be not lazy; set quickly up the brae** on hands and feet, as if the last pickle†† of sand were running out of your glass, and death were coming to turn the glass. And be very careful to take heed to your feet, in that slippery and dangerous way of youth that ye are walking in. The devil and temptations now have the advantage of the brae** of you, and are upon your wand-hand,‡‡ and your working-hand.‡‡ Dry timber will soon take fire. Be covetous and greedy of the grace of God, and beware that it be not a holiness which cometh only from the cross; for too many are that way disposed. "When He slew them, then they fought Him,

* Probably inserted from some explanatory margin, "dow" being the same as "can." Should we not read, "*doth?*"

† Made appointment.

‡ Way.

§ Hos. ii. 14; *margin*.

|| Offer made in order to a bargain.

¶ Set out on the road.

** The hill's slope.

†† Small grain.

‡‡ The hand that holds the rod or wand in driving, and the hand that guides the horse.

and they returned and inquired early after God." "Nevertheless, they did flatter Him with their mouth, and they lied unto Him with their tongues."* It is part of our hypocrify, to give God fair, white, words,† when He hath us in His grips‡ (if I may speak so), and to flatter Him till He win to the fair fields again. Try well green godlinefs, and examine what it is that ye love in Christ. If ye love but Christ's funny side, and would have only summer weather and a land-gate,§ not a sea-way, to heaven, your profession will play you a flip, and the winter-well will go dry again in summer.

Make no sports nor bairn's play of Christ; but labour for a found and lively fight of sin, that ye may judge yourself an undone man, a damned slave of hell and of sin, one dying in your own blood, except Christ come and rue upon || you, and take you up; and therefore, make sure and fast work of conversion. Cast the earth deep; and down, down with the old work, the building of confusion, that was there before; and let Christ lay new work, and make a new creation within you. Look if Christ's rain goeth down to the root of your withered plants, and if His love wound your heart whill ¶ it bleed with sorrow for sin, and if ye can pant and fall aswoon,** and be like to die for that lovely one, Jesus. I know that Christ will not be hid where He is; grace will ever speak for itself, and be fruitful in well-doing. The sanctified cross is a fruitful tree; it bringeth forth many apples.

If I should tell you by some weak experience, what I have found in Christ, ye or others could hardly believe me. I thought not the hundredth part of Christ, long since, that I do now, though, alas! my thoughts are still infinitely below His worth. I have a dwinning,†† sickly, and pained life, for a real possession of Him; and am troubled with love-brashest‡‡ and love-fevers; but it is a sweet pain. I would refuse no conditions, not hell excepted (reserving always God's hatred), to buy possession of Jesus. But, alas! I am not a merchant,

* Ps. lxxviii. 34, 36.

§ Way by land.

†† Pining.

† Plausible speeches.

|| Take pity. ¶ Till.

‡‡ Fits, or attacks, of love-sickness.

‡ A hold of us.

** Into a faint.

who have any money to give for Him : I must either come to a good-cheap* market, where wares are had for nothing, else I go home empty. But I have casten this work upon Christ to get me Himself. I have His faith, and truth, and promise, as a pawn of His, all engaged that I shall obtain that which my hungry desires would be at ; and I esteem that the choice of my happiness. And for Christ's cross, especially the garland and flower of all crosses, to suffer for His name, I esteem it more than I can write or speak to you. And I write it under mine own hand to you, that it is one of the steps of the ladder up to our country ; and Christ (whoever be one) is still at the heavy end of this black tree, and so it is but as a feather to me. I need not run at leisure,† because of a burden on my back ; my back never bare the like of it ; the more heavily crossed for Christ, the soul is still the lighter for the journey.

Now, would to God that all cold-blooded, faint-hearted soldiers of Christ would look again to Jesus, and to His love ; and when they look, I would have them to look again and again, and fill themselves with beholding of Christ's beauty ; and I dare say then that Christ would come into great court‡ and request with many. The virgins would flock fast about the Bridegroom ; they would embrace and take hold of Him, and not let Him go. But when I have spoken of Him, till my head rive, I have said just nothing. I may begin again. A Godhead, a Godhead is a world's wonder. Set ten thousand thousand new-made worlds of angels and elect men, and double them in number, ten thousand, thousand, thousand times ; let their heart and tongues be ten thousand thousand times more agile and large, than the heart and tongues of the seraphim that stand with six wings before Him,§ when they have said all for the glorifying and praising of the Lord Jesus, they have but spoken little or nothing ; His love will abide all possible creatures to praise. Oh, if I could wear this tongue to the stump, in extolling His highness ! But it is my daily-growing sorrow, that I am confounded

* Very cheap.

† Favour, influence.

‡ I am not obliged to run slowly.

§ Isa. vi. 2.

with His incomparable love, and that He doeth so great things for my soul, and hath got never yet anything of me worth the speaking of. Sir, I charge you, help me to praise Him; it is a shame to speak of what He hath done for me, and what I do to Him again. I am sure that Christ hath many drowned dyvours* in heaven beside Him; and when we are convened, man and angel, at the great day, in that fair last meeting, we are all but His drowned dyvours: it is hard to say who oweth Him most. If men could do no more, I would have them to wonder: if ye cannot be filled with Christ's love, we may be filled with wondering.

Sir, I would that I could persuade you to grow sick for Christ, and to long after Him, and be pained with love for Himself. But His tongue is in heaven who can do it. To Him and His rich grace I recommend you.

I pray you, pray for me, and forget not to praise.

Yours, in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, *June 17, 1637.*

CLXXXVII.—*To the* LADY GAITGIRTH.

[LADY GAITGIRTH, or ISABEL BLAIR, daughter to John Blair of that ilk, by Grizel his wife, daughter to Robert, Lord Semple, was the wife of James Chalmers of Gaitgirth. To him she had five sons and five daughters. Mr Fergushill of Ochiltree resided in the vicinity; see *Let. 112*. Her husband, to whom Rutherford expresses his obligations in the close of this letter, was a man of worth. He was made Sheriff-principal of Ayrshire in 1632; and in 1633, he and Sir William Cunningham of Cunninghamhead represented Ayrshire in Parliament. Embracing the cause of the Covenant, he zealously promoted the measures adopted for its success. In 1641, he, with Cassilis and Caprington, were sent as commissioners from the Scottish Parliament to Newcastle; in 1646 he was in the Committee of War, and in 1649 he had a troop in Colonel Robert Montgomery's Horse. (*Robertson's Ayrshire Families.*) His

* Debtors, drowned over head and ears in His debt.

great-grandfather, James Chalmers of Gaitgirth, who lived at the time of the Reformation, was a very zealous reformer, and is described by Knox, Calderwood, and Spottiswood, as one of the boldest and most daring men of any who took part in that important revolution.

The name is often written Gathgirth and Gadgirth. It is in the parish of Coynton, about four miles from Monkton. The modern mansion occupies the fine site of the old, on a wooded knoll that overhangs the river Ayr, and at one point commanding a view of Arran and Goatfell. It is a small estate.]

(CHRIST UNCHANGEABLE, THOUGH NOT ALWAYS ENJOYED—
HIS LOVE NEVER YET FULLY POURED OUT—HIMSELF HIS
PEOPLE'S CAUTIONER.)



STRESS,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you. I long to know how matters stand betwixt Christ and your soul. I know that ye find Him still the longer the better; time cannot change Him in His love. Ye may yourself ebb and flow, rise and fall, wax and wane; but your Lord is this day as He was yesterday. And it is your comfort that your salvation is not rolled upon wheels of your own making, neither have ye to do with a Christ of your own shaping. God hath singled out a Mediator,* strong and mighty: if ye and your burdens were as heavy as ten hills or hells, He is able to bear you, and save you to the uttermost. Your often seeking to Him cannot make you a burden to Him. I know that Christ compassionateth you, and maketh a moan for you, in all your dumps, and under your downcastings; but it is good for you that He hideth Himself sometimes. It is not niceness, dryness, nor coldness of love, that causeth Christ to withdraw, and slip in under a curtain and a veil, that ye cannot see Him; but He knoweth that ye could not bear with upfalls, a fair gale, a full moon, and a high spring-tide of His felt love, and always a fair summer-day and a summer-sun of a felt and possessed and embracing Lord Jesus. His kisses and His visits to His dearest ones are thin-fown. He could not let out His rivers of love upon His own, but these rivers would be in hazard of loofening a young plant

* Psa. lxxxix. 19.

at the root ; * and He knoweth this of you. Ye should, therefore, frist† Christ's kindness, as to its sensible and full manifestations, till ye and He be above sun and moon. That is the country where ye will be enlarged for that love which ye dow‡ not now contain.

Cast the burden of your sweet babes upon Christ, and lighten your heart, by laying your all upon Him : He will be their God. I hope to see you up the mountain yet, and glad in the salvation of God. Frame§ yourself for Christ, and gloom || not upon His cros. I find Him so sweet, that my love, suppose I would charge it to remove from Christ, would not obey me : His love hath stronger fingers than to let go its grips¶ of us bairns, who cannot go, but by such a hold as Christ. It is good that we want legs of our own, since we may borrow from Christ ; and it is our happiness that Christ is under an act of cautionary ** for heaven, and that Christ is booked in heaven as the principal debtor for such poor bodies as we are.

I request you to give the laird, your husband, thanks for his care of me, in that he hath appeared in public for a prisoner of Christ. I pray and write mercy, and peace, and blessings to him and his.

Grace, grace be with you for ever.

Yours, in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, 1637.

* The river Ayr flows close to Gaitgirth ; so that, in time of flood, Lady Gaitgirth would often see an exemplification of what is alluded to,—the water loosening the tree's roots.

† Defer till another time.

‡ Ye are not able to.

§ Set yourself in a fit attitude, as Hos. v. 4. See Let. 32.

|| Frown, be sulky.

¶ Firm hold.

** Suretyship.



CLXXXVIII.—*To* MR JOHN FERGUSHILL *of Ochiltree.*

(*DESPONDING VIEWS OF HIS OWN STATE—MINISTERIAL DILIGENCE—CHRIST'S WORTH—SELF-SEEKING.*)

REVEREND AND DEAR BROTHER,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you. My longings and desires for a sight of the new-builted tabernacle of Christ again in Scotland, that tabernacle that came down from heaven, hath now taken some life again, when I see Christ making a mint* to sow vengeance among His enemies. I care not, if this land be ripe for such a great, wonderful mercy; but I know He must do it, whenever it is done, without hire. I find the grief of my silence, and my fear to be holden at the door of Christ's house, swelling upon me; and the truth is, were it not that I am dawted† now and then with pieces of Christ's sweet love and comforts, I fear I should have made an ill browst‡ of this honourable cross, that I know such a soft and silly-minded body as I am is not worthy of. For I have little in me but softness, and superlative and excessive apprehensions of fear, and sadness, and sorrow; and often God's terrors do surround me, because Christ looketh not so favourably upon me as a poor witness would have Him. And I wonder how I have past a year and a quarter's imprisonment without shaming my sweet Lord, to whom I desire to be faithful; and I think I shall die but§ even minting* and aiming to serve and honour my Lord Jesus. Few know how toom|| and empty I am at home; but it is a part of marriage-love and husband-love, that my Lord Jesus goeth not to the streets with His chiding against me. It is but stolen and concealed anger that I find and feel, and His glooms¶ to me are kept

* An effort made; a putting forth of what is in one's power.

† Treated as a fondled child.

‡ An ill-brewed quantity of malt, an ill-managed matter.

§ Only; not attaining further than the attempt. || Empty. ¶ Frowns.

under roof, that He will not have mine enemies hear what is betwixt me and Him. And, believe me, I say the truth in Christ, that the only gall and wormwood in my cup, and that which hath filled me with fear, hath been, left my sins, that sun and moon and the Lord's children were never witnesses to, should have moved my Lord to strike me with dumb Sabbaths. Lord, pardon my soft and weak jealousies,* if I be here in an error.

My very dear brother, I would have looked for larger and more particular letters from you, for my comfort in this; for your words before have strengthened me. I pray you to mend this; and be thankful and painful,† while ye have a piece or corner of the Lord's vineyard to dress. Oh, would to God that I could have leave to follow you, to break the clods! But I wish I could command my soul to be silent, and to wait upon the Lord. I am sure that while Christ lives, I am well enough friend-stead.‡ I hope that He will extend His kindness and power for me; but God be thanked it is not worse with me than a cross for Christ and His truth. I know that He might have pitched upon many more choice and worthy witnesses, if He had pleased; but I seek no more (be what timber I will, suppose I were made of a piece of hell) than that my Lord, in His infinite art, hew glory to His name, and enlargement to Christ's kingdom, out of me. Oh that I could attain to this, to desire that my part of Christ might be laid in pledge for the heightening of Christ's throne in Britain! Let my Lord redeem the pledge; or, if He please, let it sink and drown unredeemed. But what can I add to Him? or what way can a smothered and borne-down prisoner set out Christ in open market, as a lovely and desirable Lord to many souls? I know that He seeth to His own glory better than my ebb§ thoughts can dream of; and that the wheels and paces|| of this poor distempered Kirk are in His hands;

* Suspicions.

† Pains-taking.

‡ Befriended.

§ Shallow.

|| The weights of a clock. In a sermon at Anwoth, we find him using the same figure when preaching on Song vi. 1. The word is from the French, "pefer," to weigh.

and that things shall roll as Christ will have them :—only, Lord, tryſt* the matter ſo, as Chriſt may be made a houſholder and lord again in Scotland, and wet faces for His departure may be dried at His ſweet and much-deſired welcome-home ! I ſee that, in all our trials, our Lord will not mix our wares and His grace overhead through other ;† but He will have each man to know his own, that the like of me may ſay in my ſufferings, “ This is Chriſt’s grace, and this is but my coarſe ſtuff : this is free grace, and this is but nature and reaſon.” We know what our legs would play us, if they ſhould carry us through all our waters. And the leaſt thing our Lord can have of us, is to know we are grace’s dyvours,‡ and that nature is of a baſe houſe and blood, and grace is better born, and of kin and blood to Chriſt, and of § a better houſe. Oh that I were free of that idol which they call *myſelf* ; and that Chriſt were for *myſelf* ; and myſelf a decourted || cypher, and a denied and forſworn thing ! But that proud thing, *myſelf*, will not play, except it ride up ſide for ſide with Chriſt, or rather have place before Him. O *myſelf* (another devil, as evil as the prince of devils !), if thou couldſt give Chriſt the way, and take thine own room, which is to ſit as low as nothing or corruption ! Oh, but we have much need to be ranſomed and redeemed by Chriſt from that maſter-tyrant, that cruel and lawleſs lord, ourſelf. Nay, when I am ſeeking Chriſt, and am out of myſelf, I have the third part of a ſquint eye upon that vain, vain thing, *myſelf*, *myſelf*, and ſomething of mine own. But I muſt hold here.

I deſire you to contribute your help, to ſee if I can be reſtored to my waſted and loſt flock. I ſee not how it can be, except the lords would procure me a liberty to preach ; and they have reaſon. 1. Becauſe the oppoſers and my adverſaries have practiſed their new canons upon me, whereof one is, that no deprived miniſter preach, under the pain of excommunication. 2. Becauſe my oppoſing of theſe canons was a ſpecial thing that incenſed Sydſerff againſt

* Appoint.

‡ Debtors.

§ Deſcended from.

† One with the other, promiſcuouſly.

|| Diſcarded, out of court.

me.* 3. Because I was judicially accused for my book against the Arminians, and commanded by the Chancellor to acknowledge that I had done a fault in writing against Dr Jackson, a wicked Arminian.† Pray for a room in the house to me.

Grace, grace be (as it is) your portion.

Yours, in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

ABERDEEN, 1637.

* Thomas Sydferff, now Bishop of Galloway, was the chief instrument in procuring Rutherford's banishment to Aberdeen. He was first minister of the College Church, Edinburgh; and afterwards successively Bishop of Brechin, Galloway, and Orkney. He had early imbibed Arminian principles, and promoted the measures of Archbishop Laud. He was supposed to lean to Popery; and it was generally believed that he wore under his coat, upon his breast, a crucifix of gold, which rendered him so unpopular, that, on appearing in the streets of Edinburgh in 1637, when great excitement existed on account of the Service Book, he was attacked by the matrons of the city. He had equal reason to "cry to the gentlemen for help" under similar attacks in other places. At the Restoration of Charles II., he was the only surviving bishop in Scotland. He was then nominated to the see of Orkney, but survived his promotion little more than a year.

† Dr Thomas Jackson, Dean of Peterborough, first held Calvinistic sentiments, but afterwards became an Arminian,—a change which recommended him to the favour and patronage of Archbishop Laud. He was a man of talent, and the author of various theological works, of which his "Commentary on the Apostles' Creed" is the most important. Rutherford's book against the Arminians, here referred to, in which he treated Jackson with little ceremony, and which was one cause of his banishment by the High Commission Court, is entitled, "*Exercitationes Apologeticæ pro Divina Gratia.*" It was published at Amsterdam in the beginning of the year 1636, and gained the author no small reputation abroad. Baillie, in giving an account of Rutherford's trial before the High Commission Court, says; "They were animate also against him for taxing Cameron in his book, and most for his indiscreet railing at Jackson."—(*Letters and Journals.*)

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