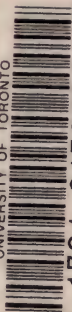


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SKETCHES
OF
THE LIFE AND LABOURS
OF
THE REV. GEORGE WHITEFIELD.

TO WHICH ARE ADDED,
TWO DISCOURSES,
PREACHED IN THE YEAR 1739.

ISSUED BY THE COMMITTEE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF
THE FREE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND, FOR THE PUBLICATION OF THE WORKS
OF SCOTTISH REFORMERS AND DIVINES.

JOHN JOHNSTONE,
LONDON AND EDINBURGH.

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PREFACE.

THE name of WHITEFIELD exhibits an anomaly in the biographical range of literature. He lived at a period comparatively so recent, that several who died in our own days had sat at his feet and listened to his wonderful eloquence. His labours were not confined to one flock, or even to a single nation, but expanded over both hemispheres, wherever the English language was spoken; so that, had he possessed the gift of tongues, we cannot imagine a single country from which his visits would have been withheld. And these labours, which, while he lived, electrified, delighted, and enlightened the noblest, the most eloquent, and accomplished of society, sent a new spirit through the Christian Churches, however separated from each other by their peculiar distinctions, so that the very echoes of his voice still seem to linger among the walls of our national Zion, and give fresh impulses to Christian piety and Christian brotherhood. A hundred years before its day, he was a living type of that illustrious association of Christendom—the Evangelical Alliance. And his, in fine, was a life and a work such as the world has scarcely ever witnessed since the close of the first century. But where are the voluminous narratives that should have been written to record the deeds of such a man? the statues and monuments erected to honour them? The pen of the ready writer, and the graving tool of the cunning

workman, have been otherwise employed. The Life of Whitefield is chiefly to be gleaned, as yet, from isolated and wide-scattered notices in the ecclesiastical history of the last century; and the fruits of his heaven-directed mission are to be traced, not in the existence of a single sect or party in the Church, but in the spirit of almost every sect and party, whose dormant activities he roused, and whose expiring zeal he kindled. It is there that you read his history, in what may be truly called hieroglyphics—sacred symbols, in which every action is portrayed by a correspondent picture or figure, rather than by the letters of the common and every-day alphabet.

But is it not desirable that these symbols should now be reduced to intelligible words, so that the multitude at large may read and understand? The Life of Whitefield, the common benefactor, should be accessible to the common capacity. His own earnest wish, indeed, was, “Let the name of Whitefield perish, if the name of God be but exalted;”—and it was in this spirit that he lived, laboured, and died, neither seeking to advance his own reputation, nor to form a party that should be called by his name, but only earnest that the Redeemer might be all in all. But these are the very men whom God most highly honours, and whose history the world ought chiefly to study. And the time, we trust, is at hand, when Whitefield will be the revered and honoured of men, as well as the approved servant of his heavenly Master. Every succeeding generation since his own day has more sensibly felt and more distinctly appreciated the blessing which his mission has conferred; and soon, we trust, the desire will be universal, of having before our eyes the movements and the example of that bright evangelist of modern Christendom, by whose labours our fathers were so highly blessed, and the fruits of which we have so happily inherited.

To write such a work as we desire, and which would be truly worthy of the title of a "LIFE of Whitefield," would require talent of no ordinary character, combined with the study and research of years. For only think of the districts and lands he traversed, the sermons he preached, the impressions he produced. Within the short space of thirty years, the toils and events of three ages of common life seem to be comprised. England should furnish one Life of him, in which a long detail would be given of his apostolic range through all her diversified classes, from the glittering ornaments of the court of George II., to the mob of Moorfields, and the colliers of Kingswood. The principality of Wales would have another, in which she would tell of his welcome visits among her mountains, and the awakenings his sermons occasioned upon her benighted, but susceptible, population. Scotland could furnish the entire of a third Life, and not the least remarkable or interesting, telling of effects he had wrought upon her strong hard intellect and iron nerves, such as no Englishman had produced since the days of Edward I. And America—the land of his last labours and his tomb—how much he toiled for her, and how much these toils were blessed, before she boldly plunged into her perilous conflict for independence, and raised aloft her star-spangled banner! So many lands to be consulted; so many narratives to be woven into one whole; so many effects to be traced in the subsequent history, not only of the Church, but the sects of every country to which his energies were successively devoted;—in all this, there is work for the whole life-time of some future able and laborious biographer; and O, that he may address himself to the task in the spirit of him whom he seeks to commemorate, and write as Whitefield preached!

At what have we, then, been aiming by this our limited

publication? Let us not be mistaken in our attempt. In the absence of that biography which has yet to be written, we have sought rather to give a few notices of Whitefield, than a full memoir—to excite a general desire for such a life, rather than to gratify it. And this is the utmost that could rightly be accomplished within such narrow limits. To effect such a purpose, it was thought that the chief episodes in Whitefield's eventful career would be best delivered in his own language, extracted from his voluminous correspondence, his journals, and the autobiography of his early days; and this accordingly has been done, so that the extracts are connected and held together only by a slight thread of original narrative. With this explanation, the volume is committed to the Christian public, accompanied with the earnest desire that it may not prove an unfruitful experiment. May it excite among those into whose hands it comes, a more eager, a more affectionate, a more Christian longing to know all that can be learned of the character and career of Christianity's most distinguished modern Evangelist!

AUTOBIOGRAPHY
OF
MR. GEORGE WHITEFIELD.

PART I.

SECT. I.—FROM MY INFANCY, TILL MY BEING FOR SOME
TIME AT THE UNIVERSITY.

I WAS born in Gloucester, in the month of December 1714. My father and mother kept the Bell Inn. The former died when I was two years old; the latter is now alive, and has often told me how she endured fourteen weeks' sickness after she brought me into the world; but was used to say, even when I was an infant, that she expected more comfort from me than any other of her children. This, with the circumstance of my being born in an inn, has been often of service to me, in exciting my endeavours to make good my mother's expectations, and to follow the example of my dear Saviour, who was born in a manger belonging to an inn.

My very infant years must necessarily not be mentioned; yet I can remember such early stirrings of corruption in my heart, as abundantly convinces me that I was conceived and born in sin; that in me dwelleth no good thing by nature; and that, if God had not freely prevented me by his grace, I must have been for ever banished from his divine presence.

I can truly say, I was froward from my mother's womb. I was so brutish as to hate instruction, and used purposely to shun all opportunities of receiving it. I soon gave pregnant proofs of an impudent temper. Lying, filthy talking, and foolish jesting, I was much addicted to, even when very young. Sometimes I used to curse, if not swear. Stealing from my mother I thought no theft at all, and used to make no scruple of taking money out of her pocket before she was up. I have frequently betrayed my trust, and have more than once spent money I took in the house, in buying fruits, tarts, &c., to satisfy my sensual appetite. Numbers of Sabbaths have I broken, and generally used to behave myself very irreverently in God's sanctuary. Much money have I spent in plays, and in the common entertainments of the age. Cards, and reading romances, were my heart's delight. Often have I joined with others in playing roguish tricks, but was generally, if not always, happily detected. For this I have often since, and do now, bless and praise God.

It would be endless to recount the sins and offences of my younger days. They are more in number than the hairs of my head. My heart would fail me at the remembrance of them, were I not assured that my Redeemer liveth, ever to make intercession for me. However the young man in the Gospel might boast how he had kept the commandments from his youth, with shame and confusion of face I confess I have broken them all from my youth. Whatever foreseen fitness for salvation others may talk of and glory in, I disclaim any such thing; if I trace myself from my cradle to my manhood, I can see nothing in me but a fitness to be damned. I speak the truth in Christ, I lie not. If the Almighty had not prevented me by his grace, and wrought most powerfully upon my soul, quickening me

by his free Spirit when dead in trespasses and sins, I had now been either sitting in darkness, and in the shadow of death, or condemned, as the due reward of my crimes, to be for ever lifting up my eyes in torments.

But such was the free grace of God to me, that though corruption worked so strongly in my soul, and produced such early and bitter fruits, yet I can recollect very early movings of the blessed Spirit upon my heart, sufficient to satisfy me that God loved me with an everlasting love, and separated me even from my mother's womb for the work to which he afterwards was pleased to call me.

I had early some convictions of sin, and once I remember, when some persons (as they frequently did) made it their business to teaze me, I immediately retired to my room, and, kneeling down, with many tears prayed over that psalm wherein David so often repeats these words: "But in the name of the Lord will I destroy them." I was always fond of being a clergyman, used frequently to imitate the minister's reading prayers, &c. Part of the money I used to steal from my parent I gave to the poor, and some books I privately took from others (for which I have since restored fourfold) I remember were books of devotion.

My mother was very careful of my education, and always kept me, in my tender years (for which I never can sufficiently thank her), from intermeddling in the least with the public business.

About the tenth year of my age, it pleased God to permit my mother to marry a second time. It proved what the world would call an unhappy match as for temporals, but God over-ruled it for good. It set my brethren upon thinking more than otherwise they would have done, and made an uncommon impression upon my own heart in particular.

When I was about twelve, I was placed at a school called St. Mary de Crypt, in Gloucester, the last grammar-school I ever went to. Having a good elocution and memory, I was remarked for making speeches before the Corporation at their annual visitation. But I cannot say I felt any drawings of God upon my soul for a year or two, saving that I laid out some of the money that was given me on one of those forementioned occasions, in buying Ken's Manual for Winchester Scholars, a book that had much affected me when my brother used to read it in my mother's troubles, and which, for some time after I bought it, was of great benefit to my soul.

During the time of my being at school, I was very fond of reading plays, and have kept from school for days together to prepare myself for acting them. My master seeing how mine and my school-fellows' vein ran, composed something of this kind for us himself, and caused me to dress myself in girl's clothes (which I had often done), to act a part before the Corporation. The remembrance of this hath often filled me with confusion of face, and I hope will do so, even to the end of my life.

And I cannot but here observe, with much concern of mind, how this way of training up youth has a natural tendency to debauch the mind, to raise ill passions, and to stuff the memory with things as contrary to the gospel of Jesus Christ, as light to darkness, heaven to hell. However, though the first thing I had to repent of was my education in general, yet I must always acknowledge that my particular thanks are due to my master, for the great pains he took with me and his other scholars, in teaching us to speak and write correctly.

Before I was fifteen, having, as I thought, made a

sufficient progress in the classics, and, at the bottom, longing to be set at liberty from the confinement of a school, I one day told my mother, "Since her circumstances would not permit her to give me a university education, more learning, I thought, would spoil me for a tradesman; and, therefore, I judged it best not to learn Latin any longer." She at first refused to consent, but my corruptions soon got the better of her good nature. Hereupon, for some time, I went to learn to write only. But my mother's circumstances being much on the decline, and being tractable that way, I from time to time began to assist her occasionally in the public-house, till at length I put on my blue apron and my snuffers, washed mops, cleaned rooms, and, in one word, became a professed and common drawer for nigh a year and a-half.

But He who was with David when he was following the sheep big with young, was with me even here. For, notwithstanding I was thus employed in a common inn, and had sometimes the care of the whole house upon my hands, yet I composed two or three sermons, and dedicated one of them in particular to my elder brother. One time I remember, I was much pressed to self-examination, and found myself very unwilling to look into my heart. Frequently I read the Bible when sitting up at night. Seeing the boys go by to school has often cut me to the heart. And a dear youth (now with God) would often come entreating me, when serving at the bar, to go to Oxford; my general answer was, "I wish I could."

After I had continued about a year in this servile employment, my mother was obliged to leave the inn. My brother, who had been bred up for the business, married; whereupon all was made over to him; and I being accustomed to the house, it was agreed that I

should continue there as an assistant. But God's thoughts were not as our thoughts.

By His good providence, it happened that my sister-in-law and I could by no means agree; and at length the resentment grew to such a height, that my proud heart would scarce suffer me to speak to her for three weeks together. But, notwithstanding I was much to blame, yet I used to retire and weep before the Lord, as Hagar, when fleeing from her mistress, Sarah; little thinking that God by this means was forcing me out of the public business, and calling me from drawing wine for drunkards, to draw water out of the wells of salvation for the refreshment of his spiritual Israel.

After continuing for a long while under this burden of mind, I at length resolved (thinking my absence would make all things easy) to go away. Accordingly, by the advice of my brother, and consent of my mother, I went to see my elder brother, then settled at Bristol.

Here God was pleased to give me great foretastes of his love, and fill me with such unspeakable raptures, particularly once in St. John's Church, that I was carried beyond myself. I felt great hungerings and thirstings after the blessed sacrament, and wrote many letters to my mother, telling her I would never go into the public employment again. Thomas à Kempis was my great delight; and I was always impatient till the bell rung to call me to tread the courts of the Lord's house. But in the midst of these illuminations, something surely whispered, "This would not last."

And, indeed, so it happened: for (oh that I could write in tears of blood!) when I left Bristol (as I did in about two months), and returned to Gloucester, I changed my devotion with my place. Alas! all my fervour went off. I had no inclination to go to church, or draw nigh unto God. In short, my heart

(though I had so lately tasted of his love) was far from him.

However, I had so much religion left as to persist in my resolution not to live in the inn; and, therefore, my mother gave me leave—though she had but a little income—to have a bed upon the ground, and live at her house, till Providence should point out a place for me.

Having now, as I thought, nothing to do, it was a proper season for Satan to tempt me. Much of my time I spent in reading plays, and in sauntering from place to place. I was careful to adorn my body, but took little pains to deck and beautify my soul. Evil communication with my old school-fellows soon corrupted my good manners. By seeing their evil practices, the sense of the divine presence I had vouchsafed unto me insensibly wore off my mind. But God, whose gifts and callings are without repentance, would let nothing pluck me out of his hands, though I was continually doing despite to the Spirit of grace. He saw me with pity and compassion, when lying in my blood. He passed by me; he said unto me, “Live,” and even gave me some foresight of his providing for me.

One morning, as I was reading a play to my sister, said I, “Sister, God intends something for me which we know not of. As I have been diligent in business, I believe many would gladly have me for an apprentice; but every way seems to be barred up, so that I think God will provide for me some way or other that we cannot apprehend.”

How I came to say these words I knew not. God afterwards showed me that they came from him. Having thus lived with my mother for some considerable time, a young student, who was once my school-fellow, and

then a servitor of Pembroke College, Oxford, came to pay my mother a visit. Amongst other conversation, he told her how he had discharged all college expenses that quarter, and received a penny. Upon that my mother immediately cried out, "This will do for my son." Then, turning to me, she said, "Will you go to Oxford, George?" I replied, "With all my heart." Whereupon, having the same friends that this young student had, my mother, without delay, waited on them. They promised their interest to get me a servitor's place in the same college. She then applied to my old master, who much approved of my coming to school again.

In about a week I went and re-entered myself; and, being grown much in stature, my master addressed me thus: "I see, George, you are advanced in stature; but your better part must needs have gone backwards." This made me blush. He set me something to translate into Latin, and though I had made no application to my classics for so long a time, yet I had but one inconsiderable fault in my exercises. This, I believe, somewhat surprised my master then, and has afforded me matter of thanks and praise ever since.

Being re-settled at school, I spared no pains to go forward in my book. God was pleased to give me his blessing, and I learned much faster than I did before. But at length I got acquainted with such a set of debauched, abandoned, atheistical youths, that if God, by his free, unmerited, and especial grace, had not delivered me out of their hands, I should long since have sat in the scorner's chair, and made a mock at sin. By keeping company with them, my thoughts of religion grew more and more like theirs. I went to public service only to make sport and walk about. I took pleasure in their lewd conversation. I began to

reason as they did, and to ask why God had given me passions, and not permitted me to gratify them?—not considering that God did not originally give us these corrupt passions, and that he had promised help to withstand them, if we would ask it of him. In short, I soon made a great proficiency in the school of the devil. I affected to look rakish, and was in a fair way of being as infamous as the worst of them.

But (oh, stupendous love!) God even here stopped me, when running on in a full career to hell. For, just as I was upon the brink of ruin, he gave me such a distaste of their principles and practices, that I discovered them to my master, who soon put a stop to their proceedings.

Being thus delivered out of the snare of the devil, I began to be more and more serious, and felt God at different times working powerfully and convincingly on my soul. One day in particular, as I was coming down stairs, and overheard my friends speaking well of me, God so deeply convicted me of hypocrisy, that though I had formed frequent but ineffectual resolutions before, yet I had then power given me over my secret and darling sin. Notwithstanding, some time after being overtaken in liquor (as I have been twice or thrice in my lifetime), Satan gained his usual advantage over me again — an experimental proof to my poor soul, how that wicked one makes use of men as machines, working them up to just what he pleases, when by intemperance they have chased away the Spirit of God from them!

Being now near the seventeenth year of my age, I was resolved to prepare myself for the holy sacrament, which I received on Christmas-day. I began now to be more and more watchful over my thoughts, words, and actions. I kept the following Lent, fasting Wednesday

and Friday, thirty-six hours together. My evenings, when I had done waiting upon my mother, were generally spent in acts of devotion, reading Drelincourt upon Death, and other practical books; and I constantly went to public worship twice a-day. Being now upper boy, by God's help I made some reformation amongst my school-fellows. I was very diligent in reading and learning the classics, and in studying my Greek Testament, but was not yet convinced of the absolute unlawfulness of playing at cards, and of reading and seeing plays, though I had some scruples about it.

Near this time I dreamed that I was to see God on Mount Sinai, but was afraid to meet him. This made a great impression upon me; and a gentlewoman, to whom I told it, said, "George, this is a call from God."

Still I grew more serious after this dream, but yet hypocrisy crept into every action. As once I affected to look more rakish, I strove to appear more grave than I really was. However, an uncommon concern and alteration was visible in my behaviour, and I often used to find fault with the lightness of others.

One night, as I was going on an errand for my mother, an unaccountable but very strong impression was made upon my heart, that I should preach quickly. When I came home, I innocently told my mother what had befallen me; but she (like Joseph's parents, when he told them his dream) turned short upon me, crying out, "What does the boy mean? prithee hold thy tongue," or something to that purpose. God has since shown her from whom that impression came.

For a twelvemonth I went on in a round of duties, receiving the sacrament monthly, fasting frequently, attending constantly on public worship, and praying often more than twice a-day in private. One of my

brothers used to tell me, he feared this would not hold long, and that I should forget all when I came to Oxford. This caution did me much service, for it set me upon praying for perseverance; and, under God, the preparation I made in the country was a preservative against the manifold temptations which beset me at my first coming to that seat of learning.

Being now near eighteen years old, it was judged proper for me to go to the university. God had sweetly prepared my way. The friends before applied to recommended me to the master of Pembroke College. Another friend took up ten pounds upon bond (which I have since repaid) to defray the first expense of entering; and the master, contrary to all expectations, admitted me servitor immediately.

Soon after my admission, I went and resided, and found my having been used to a public-house was now of service to me. For many of the servitors being sick at my first coming up, by my diligent and ready attendance, I ingratiated myself into the gentlemen's favour so far, that many, who had it in their power, chose me to be their servitor.

This much lessened my expense; and, indeed, God was so gracious, that with the profits of my place, and some little presents made me by my kind tutors, for almost the first three years I did not put all my relations together to above £24 expense. And it has often grieved my soul to see many young students spending their substance in extravagant living, and thereby entirely unfitting themselves for the prosecution of their proper studies.

I had not been long at the university, before I found the benefit of the foundation I had laid in the country for a holy life. I was quickly solicited to join in their excess of riot with several who lay in the same room.

God, in answer to prayers before put up, gave me grace to withstand them: and once, in particular, it being cold, my limbs were so benumbed by sitting alone in my study, because I would not go out amongst them, that I could scarcely sleep all night. But I soon found the benefit of not yielding; for, when they perceived they could not prevail, they let me alone as a singular odd fellow.

All this while I was not fully satisfied of the sin of playing at cards and reading plays, till God, upon a fast-day, was pleased to convince me; for, taking a play to read a passage out of it to a friend, God struck my heart with such power, that I was obliged to lay it down again; and, blessed be his name, I have never read any such book since.

Before I went to the university, I met with Mr. Law's *Serious Call to a Devout Life*, but had not then money to purchase it. Soon after my coming up to the university, seeing a small edition of it in a friend's hand, I soon procured it. God worked powerfully upon my soul, as he has since upon many others, by that and his other excellent treatise upon *Christian Perfection*.

I now began to pray and sing psalms thrice every day, besides morning and evening, and to fast every Friday, and to receive the sacrament at a parish church near our college, and at the castle where the despised Methodists used to receive it once a-month.

The young men so called were then much talked of at Oxford. I had heard of and loved them before I came to the university, and so strenuously defended them when I heard them reviled by the students, that they began to think that I also in time should become one of them.

For above a twelvemonth my soul longed to be ac-

quainted with some of them, and I was strongly pressed to follow their good example, when I saw them go through a ridiculing crowd to receive the holy eucharist at St. Mary's. At length God was pleased to open a door. It happened that a poor woman in one of the work-houses had attempted to cut her throat, but was happily prevented. Upon hearing of this, and knowing that both the Mr. Wesleys were ready to every good work, I sent a poor aged apple woman of our college to inform Mr. Charles Wesley of it, charging her not to discover who sent her. She went; but contrary to my orders, told my name. He having heard of my coming to the castle and a parish church sacrament, and having met me frequently walking by myself, followed the woman when she was gone away, and sent an invitation to me, by her, to come to breakfast with him the next morning.

I thankfully embraced the opportunity; and, blessed be God, it was one of the most profitable visits I ever made in my life. My soul at that time was athirst for some spiritual friend to lift up my hands when they hung down, and to strengthen my feeble knees. He soon discovered it, and, like a wise winner of souls, made all his discourses tend that way. And when he had put into my hands Professor Frank's Treatise against the Fear of Man, and a book entitled the Country Parson's Advice to his Parishioners (the last of which was wonderfully blessed to my soul), I took my leave.

In a short time he let me have another book, entitled the Life of God in the Soul of Man; and, though I had fasted, watched, and prayed, and received the sacrament so long, yet I never knew what true religion was, till God sent me that excellent treatise by the hands of my never-to-be-forgotten friend.

At my first reading it, I wondered what the author

meant by saying, "That some falsely placed religion in going to church, doing hurt to no one, being constant in the duties of the closet, and now and then reaching out their hands to give alms to their poor neighbours." "Alas!" thought I, "if this be not religion, what is?" God soon showed me; for in reading a few lines further, that "true religion was a union of the soul with God, and Christ formed within us," a ray of divine light was instantaneously darted in upon my soul, and from that moment, but not till then, did I know that I must be a new creature.

Upon this (like the woman of Samaria, when Christ revealed himself to her at the well), I had no rest in my soul till I wrote letters to my relations, telling them there was such a thing as the new birth. I imagined they would have gladly received it. But, alas! my words seemed to them as idle tales. They thought that I was going beside myself, and by their letters confirmed me in the resolutions I had taken not to go down into the country, but continue where I was, lest that by any means the good work which God had begun in my soul might be made of none effect.

From time to time Mr. Wesley permitted me to come to him, and instructed me as I was able to bear it. By degrees he introduced me to the rest of his Christian brethren. They built me up daily in the knowledge and fear of God, and taught me to endure hardness like a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

I now began, like them, to live by rule, and to pick up the very fragments of my time, that not a moment of it might be lost. Whether I ate or drank, or whatsoever I did, I endeavoured to do all to the glory of God. Like them, having no weekly sacrament (although the rubric required it) at our own college, I received it every Sunday at Christ's Church. I joined

with them in keeping the stations for fasting Wednesdays and Fridays, and left no means unused which I thought would lead me nearer to Jesus Christ.

Regular retirement, morning and evening, at first I found some difficulty in submitting to; but it soon grew profitable and delightful. As I grew ripe for such exercises, I was from time to time engaged to visit the sick and the prisoners, and to read to poor people, till I made it a custom, as most of us did, to spend an hour every day in doing acts of charity.

The course of my studies I soon entirely changed: whereas before I was busied in studying the dry sciences, and books that went no farther than the surface, I now resolved to read only such as entered into the heart of religion, and which led me directly to an experimental knowledge of Jesus Christ, and him crucified. The lively oracles of God were my soul's delight. The book of the divine laws was seldom out of my hands; I meditated therein day and night; and, ever since that, God has made my way signally prosperous, and given me abundant success.

God enabled me to do much good to many, as well as to receive much from the despised Methodists, and made me instrumental in converting one who is lately come out into the Church, and I trust will prove a burning and shining light.

Several short fits of illness was God pleased to visit and to try me with, after my first acquaintance with Mr. Wesley. My new convert was a help meet for me in those and in all other circumstances; and in company with him, and several other Christian friends, did I spend many sweet and delightful hours. Never did persons, I believe, strive more earnestly to enter in at the strait gate. They kept their bodies under even to an extreme. They were dead to the world, and willing

to be accounted as the dung and offscouring of all things, so that they might win Christ. Their hearts glowed with the love of God, and they never prospered so much in the inward man, as when they had all manner of evil spoken against them falsely without.

Many came amongst them for a while, who in time of temptation fell away. The displeasure of a tutor or head of a college—the changing of a gown from a lower to a higher degree—above all, a thirst for the praise of men, more than that which cometh from God, and a servile fear of contempt, caused numbers that set their hands to the plough, shamefully to look back. The world, and not themselves, gave them the title of Methodists—I suppose from their custom of regulating their time, and planning the business of the day every morning. Mr. John and Charles Wesley were two of the first that thus openly dared to confess Christ; and they, under God, were the spiritual fathers of most of them. They had the pleasure of seeing the work of the Lord prosper in their hands before they went to Georgia. Since their return, the small grain of mustard-seed has sprung up apace. It has taken deep root. It is growing into a great tree. Ere long I trust it will fill the whole land, and numbers of souls will come from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south, and lodge under the branches of it.

But to return. Whilst I was thus comforted on every side, by daily conversing with so many Christian friends, God was pleased to permit Satan to sift me like wheat. A general account of which I shall, by the divine assistance, give in the following section.

SECT. II.—A BRIEF AND SUMMARY ACCOUNT OF MY
TEMPTATIONS.

AT my first setting out, in compassion to my weakness, I grew in favour both with God and man, and used to be much lifted up with sensible devotion, especially at the blessed sacrament. But when religion began to take root in my heart, and I was fully convinced that my soul must totally be renewed ere it could see God, I was visited with outward and inward trials.

The first thing I was called to give up for God, was what the world calls my fair reputation. I had no sooner received the sacrament publicly on a week-day at St. Mary's, but I was set up as a mark for all the polite students that knew me to shoot at. By this they knew that I was commenced Methodist. For though there is a sacrament at the beginning of every term, at which all, especially the seniors, are, by statute, obliged to be present; yet so dreadfully has that once faithful city played the harlot, that very few masters, and no undergraduates (but the Methodists), attend upon it.

Mr. Charles Wesley (whom I must always mention with the greatest deference and respect) walked with me from the church even to the college. I confess to my shame I would gladly have excused him; and the next day going to his room, one of our fellows passing by, I was ashamed to be seen to knock at his door. But, blessed be God, this fear of man gradually wore off. As I had imitated Nicodemus in his cowardice, so, by the divine assistance, I followed him in his courage. I confessed the Methodists more and more publicly every day. I walked openly with them, and chose rather to bear contempt with those people of God, than to enjoy the applause of almost-Christians for a season.

Soon after this I incurred the displeasure of the master of the college, who frequently chid, and once threatened to expel me, if ever I visited the poor again. Being surprised by this treatment, and overawed by his authority, I spake unadvisedly with my lips, and said, if it displeased him, I would not. My conscience soon pricked me for this sinful compliance. I immediately repented, and visited the poor the first opportunity, and told my companions, "If ever I was called to a stake for Christ's sake, I would serve my tongue as Archbishop Cranmer served his hand, viz., make that burn first."

My tutor, being a moderate man, did not oppose me much, but thought, I believe, that I went a little too far. He lent me books, gave me money, visited me, and furnished me with a physician when sick. In short, he behaved in all respects like a father: and I trust God will remember him for good, in answer to the many prayers I have put up in his behalf.

My relations were quickly alarmed at the alteration of my behaviour, conceived strong prejudices against me, and for some time counted my life madness. I daily underwent some contempt at college. Some have thrown dirt at me; others, by degrees, took away their pay from me. And two friends, that were dear unto me, grew shy of, and forsook me, when they saw me resolved to deny myself, take up my cross daily, and follow Jesus Christ. But our Lord, by his Spirit, soon convinced me that I must know no one after the flesh; and I soon found that promise literally fulfilled: "That no one hath left father or mother, brethren or sisters, houses or lands, for Christ's sake and the gospel's, but he shall receive a hundred-fold in this life, with persecution, as well as eternal life in the world to come."

These, though little, were useful trials. They inured me to contempt, lessened self-love, and taught me to die

daily. My inward sufferings were of a more uncommon nature. Satan seemed to have desired me in particular, to sift me as wheat. God permitted him, for wise reasons I have seen already, viz., that his future blessings might not prove my ruin.

From my first awakening to the divine life, I felt a particular hungering and thirsting after the humility of Jesus Christ. Night and day I prayed to be a partaker of that grace, imagining that the habit of humility would be instantaneously infused into my soul. But as Gideon taught the men of Succoth with thorns, so God (if I am yet in any measure blessed with poverty of spirit) taught it me by the exercise of true, strong temptations.

I observed before how I used to be favoured with sensible devotion: those comforts were soon withdrawn, and a horrible fearfulness and dread permitted to overwhelm my soul. One morning, in particular, rising from my bed, I felt an unusual weight and impression upon my breast, attended with inward darkness. I applied to my friend Mr. Charles Wesley; he advised me to keep upon my watch, and referred me to a chapter in Kempis.

In a short time I perceived this load gradually increase, till it almost weighed me down, and fully convinced me that Satan had as real possession of, and power given over, my body, as he had once over Job's. All power of meditating, or even thinking, was taken from me. My memory quite failed me. My whole soul was barren and dry, and I could fancy myself to be like nothing so much as a man locked up in iron armour.

Whenever I kneeled down, I felt great heavings in my body, and have often prayed under the weight of them till the sweat came through me. At this time Satan used to terrify me much, and threatened to punish

me if I discovered his wiles. It being my duty, as servitor, in my turn to knock at the gentlemen's rooms by ten at night, to see who were in their rooms, I thought the devil would appear to me every stair I went up. And he so troubled me when I lay down to rest, that for some weeks I scarce slept above three hours at a time.

God only knows how many nights I have lain upon my bed groaning under the weight I felt, and bidding Satan depart from me in the name of Jesus. Whole days and weeks have I spent in lying prostrate on the ground, and begging freedom from those proud, hellish thoughts that used to crowd in upon and distract my soul. But God made Satan drive out Satan. For these thoughts and suggestions created such a self-abhorrence within me, that I never ceased wrestling with God, till he blessed me with a victory over them. Self-love, self-will, pride, and envy, buffeted me in their turns, that I was resolved either to die or conquer. I wanted to see sin as it was, but feared, at the same time, lest the sight of it should terrify me to death.

Whilst my inward man was thus exercised, my outward man was not unemployed. I soon found what a slave I had been to my sensual appetite, and now resolved to get the mastery over it by the help of Jesus Christ. Accordingly, by degrees, I began to leave off eating fruits, and such like, and gave the money I usually spent in that way to the poor. Afterwards I always chose the worst sort of food, though my place furnished me with variety. I fasted twice a-week. My apparel was mean. I thought it unbecoming a penitent to have his hair powdered. I wore woollen gloves, a patched gown, and dirty shoes; and though I was then convinced that the kingdom of God did not consist in meats and drinks, yet I resolutely persisted in these voluntary acts of self-

denial, because I found them great promoters of the spiritual life.

For many months I went on in this state, faint, yet pursuing, and travelling alone in the dark, in hope that the star I had before once seen, would hereafter appear again. During this season I was very active; but finding pride creeping in at the end of almost every thought, word, and action, and meeting with Castaniza's "Spiritual Combat," in which he says, "That he who is employed in mortifying his will, was as well employed as though he was converting Indians," or words to that effect, Satan so imposed upon my understanding, that he persuaded me to shut up myself in my study, till I could do good with a single eye, lest in endeavouring to save others as I did now, I should at last, by pride and self-complaisance, lose myself.

Henceforward he transformed himself into an angel of light, and worked so artfully, that I imagined the good, and not the evil spirit suggested to me every thing that I did.

His main drift was to lead me into a state of quietism (he generally ploughed with God's heifer); and when the Holy Spirit put into my heart good thoughts or convictions, he always drove them to extremes. For instance, having, out of pride, put down in my diary what I gave away, Satan tempted me to lay my diary quite aside. When Castaniza advised to talk but little, Satan said I must not talk at all. So that I, who used to be the most forward in exhorting my companions, have sat whole nights almost without speaking at all. Again, when Castaniza advised to endeavour after a silent recollection and waiting upon God, Satan told me I must leave off all forms, and not use my voice in prayer at all. The time would fail me to recount all the instances of this kind in which he deceived me.

But, when matters came to an extreme, God always showed me my error, and by his Spirit pointed out a way for me to escape.

The devil also sadly imposed upon me in the matter of my college exercises. Whenever I endeavoured to compose my theme, I had no power to write a word, nor so much as tell my Christian friends of my inability to do it. Saturday being come (which is the day the students give up their compositions) it was suggested to me that I must go down into the hall, and confess I could not make a theme, and so publicly suffer, as if it were for my Master's sake. When the bell rung to call us, I went to open the door to go down stairs; but, feeling something give me a violent inward check, I entered my study, and continued instant in prayer, waiting the event. For this my tutor fined me half-a-crown. The next week, Satan served me in like manner; but having now got more strength, and perceiving no inward check, I went into the hall. My name being called, I stood up, and told my tutor I could not make a theme. I think he fined me a second time; but imagining that I would not willingly neglect my exercise, he afterwards called me into the common room, and kindly inquired whether any misfortune had befallen me, or what was the reason I could not make a theme? I burst into tears, and assured him it was not out of contempt of authority, but that I could not act otherwise. Then at length he said he believed I could not; and, when he left me, told a friend, as he very well might, that he took me to be really mad. This friend, hearing from my tutor what had happened, came to me, urging the command in Scripture, to be subject to the higher powers. I answered, "Yes; but I had a new revelation." Lord, what is man!

As I daily got strength, by continued, though almost

silent prayer, in my study, my temptations grew stronger also, particularly for two or three days before deliverance came. Near five or six weeks I had now spent in my study, except when I was obliged to go out. During this time I was fighting with my corruptions, and did little else besides kneeling down by my bed-side, feeling, as it were, a heavy pressure upon my body, as well as an unspeakable oppression of mind, yet offering up my soul to God, to do with me as it pleased him. It was now suggested to me, that Jesus Christ was among the wild beasts when he was tempted, and that I ought to follow his example; and being willing, as I thought, to imitate Jesus Christ, after supper I went into Christ's Church Walk, near our college, and continued in silent prayer under one of the trees for near two hours, sometimes kneeling upon my knees, all the while filled with fear and concern lest some of my brethren should be overwhelmed with pride. The night being stormy, it gave me awful thoughts of the day of judgment. I continued, I think, till the great bell rung for retirement to the college, not without finding some reluctance in the natural man against staying so long in the cold.

The next night I repeated the same exercise at the same place. But the hour of extremity being now come, God was pleased to make an open show of those diabolical devices by which I had been deceived.

By this time I had left off keeping my diary, using my forms, or scarce my voice in prayer, visiting the prisoners, &c. Nothing remained for me to leave, unless I forsook public worship, but my religious friends. Now it was suggested, that I must leave them also for Christ's sake. This was a sore trial; but rather than not be, as I fancied, Christ's disciple, I resolved to renounce them, though as dear to me as my own soul. Accord-

ingly, the next day being Wednesday, whereon we kept one of our weekly fasts, instead of meeting with my brethren as usual, I went out into the fields and prayed silently by myself. Our evening meeting I neglected also; and went not to breakfast, according to appointment, with Mr. Charles Wesley, the day following. This, with many other concurring circumstances, made my honoured friend, Mr. Charles Wesley, suspect something more than ordinary was the matter. He came to my room, soon found out my case, apprized me of my danger if I would not take advice; and recommended me to his brother John, Fellow of Lincoln College, as more experienced in the spiritual life. God gave me (blessed be his holy name!) a teachable temper; I waited upon his brother, with whom from that time I had the honour of growing intimate. He advised me to resume all my externals, though not to depend upon them in the least. From time to time he gave me directions as my various and pitiable state required; and at length, by his excellent advice and management of me, under God, I was delivered from those wiles of Satan. "Praise the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me praise his holy name."

During this, and all other seasons of temptation, my soul was inwardly supported with great courage and resolution from above. Every day God made me willing to renew the combat; and though my soul, when quite empty of God, was very prone to seek satisfaction in the creature, and sometimes I fell into sensuality, yet I was generally enabled to wait in silence for the salvation of God, or to persist in prayer, till some beams of spiritual light and comfort were vouchsafed me from on high. "Thomas à Kempis" (since translated and published by Mr. John Wesley), "Castaniza's Combat," and the Greek Testament, every reading of which

I endeavoured to turn into a prayer, were of great help and furtherance to me. On receiving the holy sacrament, especially before trials, I have found grace in a very affecting manner, and in abundant measure, sometimes imparted to my soul—an irrefragable proof to me of the miserable delusion of the author of that called "The Plain Account of the Sacrament," which sinks that holy ordinance into a bare memorial; who, if he obstinately refuse the instruction of the Most High, will doubtless, without repentance, bear his punishment, whosoever he be.

To proceed. I had now taken up my externals again; and though Satan for some weeks had been biting my heel, God was pleased to show me that I should soon bruise his head. A few days after, as I was walking along, I met with a poor woman, whose husband was then in Bocardo or Oxford town-jail, which I constantly visited. Seeing her much discomposed, I inquired the cause; she told me, not being able to hear the crying of her children, ready to perish with hunger, and having nothing to relieve them, she had been to drown herself, but was mercifully prevented, and said she was coming to my room to inform me of it. I gave her some immediate relief, and desired her to meet me at the prison with her husband in the afternoon. She came, and there God visited them both by his free grace; she was powerfully quickened from above. And, when I had done reading, he came to me like the trembling jailer, and, grasping my hand, cried out: "I am upon the brink of hell!" From this time forward both of them grew in grace. God, by his providence, soon delivered him from his confinement. Though notorious offenders against God and one another before, yet now they became helps meet for each other in the great work of their salvation. They are

both now living, and I trust will be my joy and crown of rejoicing in the great day of our Lord Jesus.

Soon after this the holy season of Lent came on, which our friends kept very strictly, eating no flesh during the six weeks, except on Saturdays and Sundays. I abstained frequently on Saturdays also, and ate nothing on the other days (except on Sabbath), but sage-tea without sugar, and coarse bread. I constantly walked out in the cold mornings, till part of one of my hands was quite black. This, with my continued abstinence and inward conflicts, at length so emaciated my body, that at Passion-week, finding I could scarce creep up stairs, I was obliged to inform my kind tutor of my condition, who immediately sent for a physician to me.

This caused no small triumph amongst the collegians, who began to cry out, "What is his fasting come to now?" But I rejoiced in this reproach, knowing that though I had been imprudent, and lost much of my flesh, yet I had nevertheless increased in the Spirit.

This fit of sickness continued upon me for seven weeks, and a glorious visitation it was. The blessed Spirit was all this time purifying my soul. All my former gross and notorious, and even my heart sins also, were now set home upon me, of which I wrote down some remembrance immediately, and confessed them before God morning and evening. Though weak, I often spent two hours in my evening retirements, and prayed over my Greek Testament, and Bishop Hall's most excellent Contemplations, every hour that my health would permit. About the end of the seven weeks, and after I had been groaning under an unspeakable pressure both of body and mind for above a twelvemonth, God was pleased to set me free in the following manner: One day, perceiving an uncommon drought, and a disagreeable clamminess in my mouth,

and using things to allay my thirst, but in vain, it was suggested to me, that when Jesus cried out: "I thirst," his sufferings were near an end. Upon which I cast myself down on the bed, crying out: "I thirst, I thirst." Soon after this, I found and felt in myself that I was delivered from the burden that had so heavily oppressed me! The spirit of mourning was taken from me, and I knew what it was truly to rejoice in God my Saviour, and for some time could not avoid singing psalms wherever I was; but my joy gradually became more settled, and, blessed be God, has abode and increased in my soul (saving a few casual intermissions) ever since.

Thus were the days of my mourning ended. After a long night of desertion and temptation, the star which I had seen at a distance before began to appear again, and the Day-star arose in my heart. Now did the Spirit of God take possession of my soul, and, as I humbly hope, seal me unto the day of redemption.

SECT. III.—FROM THE TIME OF MY FIRST LEAVING THE
UNIVERSITY TO GO TO GLOUCESTER, TILL THE TIME OF
MY ORDINATION.

As fast as I got strength after my sickness, my tutor, physician, and some others, were still urging me to go into the country, hoping thereby to divert me, as they thought, from a too intense application to religion. I had for some time been aware of their design, and wrote letters beseeching my mother, if she valued my soul, not to lay her commands on me to come down. She was pleased to leave me to my choice; but finding at last it was necessary for my health, and many other providential circumstances pointing out my way, after

earnest prayer for support, by the advice of my friends, I left my sweet retirement at Oxford, and went to Gloucester, the place of my nativity.

Having now obtained mercy from God, and received the Spirit of adoption in my heart, my friends were surprised to see me look and behave so cheerfully, after the many reports they had heard concerning me. However, I soon found myself to be as a sheep sent forth among wolves in sheep's clothing; for they immediately endeavoured to dissuade me (as they had lately done a friend that began with me), from a constant use of the means of grace, especially from weekly abstinence, and receiving the blessed sacrament. But God enabled me to resist them stedfast in the faith; and, by keeping close to him in his holy ordinances, I was made to triumph over all.

Being unaccustomed for some time to live without spiritual companions, and finding none that would join heartily with me, no, not one, I watched unto prayer all the day long, beseeching God to raise me some religious associates in his own way and time.

“I will endeavour either to find or make a friend,” had been my resolution now for some time; and, therefore, after importunate prayer one day, I resolved to go to the house of one Mrs. W——, to whom I had formerly read plays, Spectators, Pope's Homers, and such like trifling books, hoping the alteration she now would find in my sentiments might, under God, influence her soul. God was pleased to bless the visit with the desired effect. She received the word gladly. She wanted to be taught the way of God more perfectly, and soon became a fool for Christ's sake. Not long after, God made me instrumental to awaken several young persons, who soon formed themselves into a little society, and had quickly the honour of being despised at Gloucester, as we had

been before them at Oxford. Thus all that will live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution.

My mind being now more opened and enlarged, I began to read the Holy Scriptures (upon my knees), laying aside all other books, and praying over, if possible, every line and word. This proved meat indeed and drink indeed to my soul. I daily received fresh life, light, and power from above. I got more true knowledge from reading the Book of God in one month than I could ever have acquired from all the writings of men. In one word, "I found it profitable for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; every way sufficient to make the man of God perfect, thoroughly furnished unto every good word and work."

During my absence from Oxford, I spent three weeks at Bristol, whither I went to see some relations; but could not do them much good, because of the prejudices they had conceived against me. However, I daily walked with God; and going to visit an aunt then in an alms-house there, God brought in my way a young woman who was hungering and thirsting after righteousness. She received the word into an honest and good heart, and since has proved a true follower of Jesus Christ. So gracious was the Lord, even in these my very early days, not to leave himself without witness, in that he thus vouchsafed to bless my poor endeavours in every place whereto his providence now sent me.

According to his abundant mercy, he also raised me up some temporal supplies. For some considerable time I followed the example of Professor Frank; and, when I wanted any worldly assistance, pleaded the Scripture promises for the things of this life as well as that which is to come, in the name of Jesus Christ. This is still my practice, and I never failed of success. When I came to Oxford, on account of my sickness, and other

extraordinary and unavoidable expenses, I owed, I think, about £12 or £13; and when I went to Bristol, I was so poor that I was obliged to borrow money of my kind hostess, Mrs. H——, with whom I lodged at Gloucester (and whose husband and family I pray God eternally to bless), to bear my charges on the road. This, I bless God, did not dishearten me; but I continued pleading the promises in the name of Christ; and soon after my coming to Bristol I received an answer; for a brother of mine coming from sea, God inclined him to give me four guineas, and some other necessaries. And when I returned to Gloucester (as I did after I had continued a short while at Bristol), those whom I expected to assist me did not; but persons I never spoke to, and who I thought were my enemies, were raised up to supply my wants, and fulfil that promise which I always pleaded, “Seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.”

Oh, what sweet communion had I daily vouchsafed with God in prayer after my coming again to Gloucester! How often have I been carried out beyond myself, when sweetly meditating in the fields! How assuredly have I felt that Christ dwelt in me, and I in him! And how did I daily walk in the comforts of the Holy Ghost, and was edified and refreshed in the multitude of peace! Not that I was always upon the mount. Sometimes a cloud would overshadow me, but the Sun of Righteousness quickly arose and dispelled it, and I knew it was Jesus Christ that revealed himself to my soul.

I always observed, as my inward strength increased, so my outward sphere of action increased proportionably. In a short time, therefore, I began to read to some poor people twice or thrice a-week. I likewise visited two other little societies besides my own; and almost every day, both then and since, have found the benefit of being

tempted myself, because that alone taught me how to give proper advice to those that came to me when tempted.

Occasionally, as business and opportunity permitted, I generally visited one or two sick persons every day; and though silver and gold I had little of my own, yet, in imitation of my Lord's disciples, who entreated in the behalf of the fainting multitude, I used to pray for them; and he from time to time inclined several that were rich in this world to give me money, so that I generally had a little stock for the poor always in my hand. One of the poor whom I visited in this manner was called effectually by God, as at the eleventh hour. She was a woman above threescore years old, and I really believe, died in the true faith of Jesus Christ.

About this time God was pleased to enlighten my soul, and bring me into the knowledge of his free grace, and the necessity of being justified in his sight by faith only. This was more extraordinary, because my friends at Oxford had rather inclined to the mystic divinity. And one of them (a dear servant of the Lord) lately confessed he did not like me so well when at Oxford as the rest of his brethren, because I held justification by faith only; and yet, he observed, I had most success. But, blessed be God, most of us have now been taught this doctrine of Christ, and I hope shall be willing to die in the defence of it. It is the good old doctrine of the Church of England, it is what the holy martyrs in Queen Mary's time sealed with their blood, and which I pray God, if need be, that I and my brethren may seal with ours.

Burkitt's and Henry's Expositions were of admirable use to lead me into this, and all other Gospel truths. For many months have I been almost always upon my knees, to study and pray over these books. The Holy Spirit

from time to time has led me into the knowledge of divine things, and I have been directed, by watching and reading the Scriptures in this manner, even in the minutest circumstances, as plainly as the Jews were, when consulting the Urim and the Thummim at the high priest's breast.

Alliene's Alarm, Baxter's Call to the Unconverted, and Janeway's Life, which I read at leisure hours, much benefited me. I bless God the partition-wall of bigotry and sect-religion was soon broken down in my heart; for, as soon as the love of God was shed abroad in my soul, I loved all, of whatever denomination, that loved the Lord Jesus in sincerity of heart.

During my stay here, God enabled me to give a public testimony of my repentance as to seeing and acting plays. For hearing the strollers were coming to town, and knowing what an egregious offender I had been, I wrestled with God in prayer to put me in a way to manifest my abhorrence of my former sin and folly. In answer to this, I was stirred up to extract Mr. Law's excellent treatise, entitled, "The Absolute Unlawfulness of the Stage Entertainment." God gave me favour in the printer's sight; and, at my request, he put a little of it in the news for six weeks successively, and God was pleased to give it his blessing.

Having been absent for about six months from the university, I thought it time to think of returning thither; but, before I came to a resolution, I was convinced of the contrary.

At my first coming to Gloucester, being used to visit the prisoners at Oxford, I prayed most earnestly that God would open a door for me to visit the prisoners here also. Quickly after, I dreamed that one of the prisoners came to be instructed by me; and it was impressed much upon my heart. In the morning I went

to the door of the county jail; I knocked, but nobody came to open it. I thought the hour was not yet come. I waited still upon God in prayer; and in some months after, came a letter from a friend at Oxford, desiring me to go to one Pebworth, who had broken out of Oxford jail, and was retaken at Gloucester. As soon as I read this letter, it appeared to me that my prayer was now answered. Immediately I went to the prison, assuredly gathering that the Lord called me thither. I met with the person, and finding him and some others willing to hear the Word of God, having gained leave of the keeper and two ordinaries, I constantly read to and prayed with them every day I was in town. I also begged money for them, whereby I was enabled to release some of them, and caused provision to be distributed weekly amongst them, as also to put such books into their hands as I judged most proper. I cannot say any one of the prisoners was effectually wrought upon; however, much evil was prevented, many were convinced, and my own soul was much edified and strengthened in the love of God and man.

Thus employed, I continued in my own city three months longer—despised indeed by man, but highly blessed by the grace of God. My understanding was enlightened, my will broken, and my affections more and more enlivened with a zeal for Christ. Many such, I believe, were added to our little society as shall be saved. Fresh supplies came from unexpected hands to defray my expenses at the university. And at the end of nine months I returned thither, to the mutual joy and comfort of my friends, till I was called to enter into holy orders; the particular circumstances of which I shall relate in the following section.

SECT. IV.—OF MY PREPARATION FOR HOLY ORDERS.

FROM the time I first entered at the university, especially from the time I knew what was true and undefiled Christianity, I entertained high thoughts of the importance of the ministerial office, and was not solicitous what place should be prepared for me, but how I should be prepared for a place. That saying of the apostle: “Not a novice, lest, being puffed up with pride, he fall into the condemnation of the devil;” and that first question of our excellent ordination office: “Do you trust that you are inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost to take upon you this office and administration?” used even to make me tremble whenever I thought of entering into the ministry. The shyness that Moses and some other prophets expressed when God sent them out in a public capacity, I thought was sufficient to teach me not to run till I was called. He who knoweth the hearts of men, is witness, that I never prayed more earnestly against anything, than I did against entering into the service of the Church so soon. Oftentimes I have been in an agony in prayer, when under convictions of my insufficiency for so great a work. With strong cryings and tears I have often said: “Lord, I am a youth of uncircumcised lips”—“Lord, send me not into thy vineyard yet;” and sometimes I had reason to think God was angry with me for resisting his will. However, I was resolved to pray thus as long as I could. If God did not grant my request in keeping me out of it, I knew his grace would be sufficient to support and strengthen me whenever he sent me into the ministry.

To my prayers I added my endeavours, and wrote letters to my friends at Oxford, beseeching them to pray to God to disappoint the designs of my country friends,

who were for my taking orders as soon as possible. Their answer was: "Pray we the Lord of the harvest to send thee and many more labourers into his harvest." Another old and worthy minister of Christ, when I wrote to him about the meaning of the word "novice," answered: "It meant a novice in grace, and not in years;" and he was pleased to add: "If St. Paul were then at Gloucester, he believed St. Paul would ordain me." All this did not persuade me. I still continued instant in prayer against going into holy orders; and was not thoroughly convinced it was the divine will, till God by his providence brought me acquainted with the present Bishop of Gloucester.

Before I conversed with his lordship, God was pleased to give me previous notice of it. Long ere I had the least prospect of being called before the bishop, I dreamed one night I was talking with him in his palace, and that he gave me some gold, which seemed to sound again in my hand. Afterward this dream would often come into my mind; and, whenever I saw the bishop at church, a strong persuasion would arise in my mind that I should very shortly go to him. I always checked it, and prayed to God to preserve me from ever desiring that honour which cometh of man. One afternoon, it happened that the bishop took a solitary walk (as I was told afterwards) to Lady Selwyn's, near Gloucester, who, not long before, had made me a present of a piece of gold. She, I found, recommended me to the bishop; and a few days after, as I was coming from the cathedral prayers, thinking of no such thing, one of the vergers called after me, and said the bishop desired to speak with me. I (forgetful at that time of my dream) immediately turned back, considering within myself what I had done to deserve his lordship's displeasure. When I came to the top of the palace stairs, the bishop

took me by the hand, told me he was glad to see me, and bid me to wait a little till he had put off his habit, and he would return to me again. This gave me opportunity of praying to God for his assistance, and for his providence over me.

At his coming again into the room, the bishop told me he had heard of my character, liked my behaviour at church, and inquiring my age, "Notwithstanding," says he, "I have declared I would not ordain any one under three-and-twenty, yet I shall think it my duty to ordain you whenever you come for holy orders." He then made me a present of five guineas, to buy me a book; which, sounding again in my hand, put me in mind of my dream; whereupon my heart was filled with a sense of God's love.

Before I came home, the news had reached my friends; who, being fond of my having such a great man's favour, were very solicitous to know the event of my visit. Many things I hid from them; but, when they pressed me hard, I was obliged to tell them how the bishop, of his own accord, had offered to give me holy orders whenever I would. On which they, knowing how I had depended on the declaration his lordship had made some time ago, that he would ordain none under three-and-twenty, said—and I then began to think myself—"That, if I held out any longer, I should fight against God." At length I came to a resolution, by God's leave, to offer myself for holy orders the next Ember days.

The only thing now in dispute was, into what part of my Lord's vineyard I should be sent to labour first. God had given me much success in Gloucester; and my friends being desirous of having me near them, I had thoughts of settling amongst them. But when I came to Oxford, my friends urged several reasons for my con-

tinuing at the university. "The Mr. Wesleys had not long been gone abroad, and now no one was left to take care of the prison affairs," &c. They further urged, "That God had blessed my endeavours there as well as at Gloucester; that the university was the fountain-head; that every gownsman's name was Legion; and that, if I should be made instrumental in converting one of them, it would be as much as converting a whole parish." At the same time (unknown to me) some of them sent to that great and good man, the late Sir John Philips, who was a great encourager of the Oxford Methodists; and though he had never seen, but only heard of me, yet he sent word he would allow me £30 a-year, if I would continue at the university. Upon this, finding the care of the prisoners would be no more than, under God, what I could undertake with pleasure, and knowing the university was the best place to prosecute my studies, I resolved, God willing, to wait at Oxford for a blessing on the first-fruits of ministerial labours.

In the meanwhile, having before made some observations on the Thirty-nine Articles, and proved them by Scripture, I strictly examined myself by the qualifications required for a minister, in St. Paul's Epistle to Timothy, and also by every question that I knew was to be publicly put to me at the time of my ordination. This latter I drew out in writing at large, and sealed my approbation of it every Sunday at the blessed sacrament. At length, Trinity Sunday being near at hand, and having my testimonials from the college, I went a fortnight beforehand to Gloucester, intending to compose some sermons, and to give myself more particularly to prayer.

But God's thoughts are not as our thoughts. When I came to Gloucester, notwithstanding I strove and prayed for several days, and had matter enough in my

heart, yet I was so restrained, that I could not compose anything at all. I mentioned my case to one clergyman. He said, "I was an enthusiast." I wrote to another, who was experienced in the divine life. He gave me some reasons why God might deal with me in that manner, and withal promised me his prayers. I joined with him in importunate supplication, to know whether this restraint was of God or not. At last, in reading Mr. Henry upon the Acts of the Apostles, this passage was much pressed upon my heart: "We assayed to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit suffered us not." Looking a little farther, I found a quotation out of Ezekiel, wherein God said to that young prophet, just after he had given him a divine and public commission: "Thou shalt be dumb; but when I speak unto thee, then shalt thou speak." This made me quite easy. The remainder of the fortnight I spent in reading several missions of the prophets and apostles, and wrestling with God to give me grace to follow their good examples.

About three days before the time appointed for ordination, the bishop came to town. The next evening I sent his lordship an abstract of my private examination upon these two questions: "Do you trust that you are inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost to take upon you this office and administration?" and, "Are you called according to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the laws of this realm?" The next morning I waited on the bishop. He received me with much love, telling me he was glad I was come; that he was satisfied with the preparation I had made, and with the allowance given me by Sir John Philips. "I had myself," said he, "made provision for you of two little parishes: but, since you choose to be in Oxford, I am very well pleased. I doubt not but you will do much good." Upon this I took my leave, abashed with God's goodness to such a

wretch; but withal exceedingly rejoiced, that in every circumstance he made my way into the ministry so very plain before my face.

This, I think, was on Friday. The day following I continued in abstinence and prayer. In the evening, I retired to a hill near the town, and prayed fervently for about two hours, in behalf of myself and those that were to be ordained with me.

On Sunday morning I rose early, and prayed over St. Paul's Epistle to Timothy, and more particularly over that precept, "Let no man despise thy youth." When I went up to the altar, I could think of nothing but Samuel's standing a little child before the Lord with a linen ephod. When the bishop laid his hands upon my head, my heart was melted down, and I offered up my whole spirit, soul and body, to the service of God's sanctuary! I read the Gospel, at the bishop's command, with power; and afterwards sealed the good confession I had made before many witnesses, by partaking of the holy sacrament of our Lord's most blessed body and blood!

Being restrained from writing, as was before observed, I could not preach in the afternoon, though much solicited thereto. But I read prayers to the poor prisoners, being willing to let the first act of my ministerial office be an act of charity.

The next morning, waiting upon God in prayer, to know what he would have me to do, these words, "Speak out" (Paul) came with great power to my soul. Immediately my heart was enlarged: God spake to me by his Spirit, and I was no longer dumb. I finished a sermon I had in hand some time before. I began another, and preached the Sunday following to a very crowded audience, with as much freedom as though I had been a preacher for some years.

Oh, the unspeakable benefit of reading to the poor, and exercising our talent while students at the university! Such previous acts are very proper to prepare us for the work of our Lord, and make us not unapt to teach in a more public manner. It is remarkable, that our Lord sent out his apostles on short missions, before they were so solemnly authorized at the day of Pentecost. Would the heads and tutors of our universities follow his example, and instead of discouraging their pupils from doing anything of this nature, send them to visit the sick, and prisoners, and to pray with and read practical books of religion to the poor, they would find such exercises of more service to them, and to the Church of God, than all their private and public lectures put together.

Thus God dealt with my soul. At the same time, by his gracious providence, he supplied me with all things needful for my body also. For he inclined the bishop's heart to give me five guineas more; and by this time a quarter's allowance was due to me from Sir John Philips; both which sums put together, fully served to defray the expense of my ordination, and taking my bachelor's degree—which was conferred on me at Oxford the week after my being ordained, when I was about one-and-twenty years of age.

These changes, from a servitor to a bachelor of arts, from a common drawer to a clergyman, were, no doubt, temptations to think more highly of myself than I ought to think; and some were therefore jealous over me, as I trust they always will be, with a godly jealousy. God, who is rich in mercy, thereby forewarned me of my danger, stirred up my heart to pray against spiritual pride, and kept me, as I hope he will to the end, in some measure always humbled before him.

Thus did God, by a variety of unforeseen acts of pro-

vidence and grace, train me up for, and at length introduce me into, the service of the Church.

What has happened to me since that time, especially for these last two years, is so known as to need no repetition; however, as I find freedom in myself, and leisure from my ministerial employ, I shall hereafter relate God's further dealings with my soul, and how he led me into my present way of acting.

In the meanwhile, my dear reader, whosoever thou art, I pray God that what I have now written may not prove a savour of death unto death, but a savour of life unto life unto thy soul! Many, I fear, through ignorance, prejudice, and unbelief, when they read this, will contradict and blaspheme. Be not thou of this number; but, if thou art yet unaffected with the contagion of the world, I pray God to keep thee so: for, believe me, innocence is better than repentance; and though sin may afford thee some brutish present pleasure, yet the remembrance of it afterwards is exceeding bitter. If thou art immersed in sin as I was, take no encouragement from me to continue in it on the one hand, nor despair of mercy on the other. Let God's goodness to me lead thee also to repentance. The same Lord is rich unto all that call upon him through faith in Christ Jesus. If, through divine grace, I have done anything praise-worthy, not unto me, but unto God give all the glory! If thou art awakened to a sense of the divine life, and art hungering and thirsting after that righteousness which is by faith only in Christ Jesus, and the indwelling of the Spirit in thy heart, think it not absolutely necessary to pass through all the temptations that have beset me round about on every side. It is in the spiritual as in the natural life—some feel more, others less, but all experience some pangs and travails of soul, before the

Man Christ Jesus is formed within them, and brought forth and arrived unto the measure of his fulness who filleth all in all! If God deals with thee in a most gentle way, yet so as that a thorough work of conversion is effected in thy heart, thou oughtest to be exceedingly thankful; or if he should lead thee through a longer wilderness than I have passed through, thou needest not complain. The more thou art humbled now, the more thou shalt be exalted hereafter. One taste of Christ's love in thy heart will make amends for all. And if thou hast felt the powers of the world to come, and been made partaker of the Holy Ghost, know thou wilt rejoice, and give thanks for what God hath done for my soul. To conclude: May all that peruse these few sheets be as much affected alternately with grief and joy in reading as I have been in writing them! They will then have the desired effect, and cause many thanksgivings to be offered in my behalf to that God who has called me out of darkness into his marvellous light! And that thou, oh, reader, whoever thou art, mayst experience the like and greater blessings, is the hearty prayer of

Thy soul's friend and servant,

GEO. WHITEFIELD.

PART II.

FROM HIS BEING LICENSED TO PREACH TILL HIS FIRST
VISIT TO SCOTLAND IN 1741.

THUS far had Whitefield carried his narrative, with the purpose of continuing it, but for which continuation his busy and eventful life furnished no opportunity. From that period his whole time was occupied in proclaiming another than himself; so that the rest of his biography, as delivered in his own language, is to be gleaned from the hurried letters which he wrote not only during his transitions from town to town, but from one hemisphere to another. And these letters were not written in slippers, and at a literary table, in the midst of those leisure moments which even the busiest can command; but among the interest he had created, the inquiries he excited, and above all by the question, "What shall we do?" which was uttered by multitudes of converts whom his preaching had alarmed into terror and inquiry. But here we anticipate his own intimations of the commencement and progress of his first labours as a preacher of the gospel, and his success in the work towards which the whole man—and it was no ordinary man—had been devoted at so early an age, and by such a course of training. Let us, then, turn to his own account, in which he informs us of the small amount of sermons with which he commenced his public career as a preacher—little aware of that singular facility which he

should afterwards acquire in preaching not merely daily, but almost hourly. "Never," he says, "did a poor creature set up with so small a stock. When the good bishop, who ordained me on Sunday, gave out last year in his visitation charge, that he would ordain none under full three-and-twenty, my heart leaped for joy; for then I thought my friends would not only be disappointed in their hope of having me enter into orders so soon, but that I should also have time (as was my intention) to make at least a hundred sermons, with which to begin my ministry; but this is so far from being the case, that I have not a single one by me, except that which I made for a small Christian society, and which I sent to a neighbouring clergyman, to convince him how unfit I was to take upon me the important work of preaching. He kept it for a fortnight, and then sent it back with a guinea for the loan of it; telling me he had divided it into two, and had preached it morning and evening to his congregation. With this sermon I intend to begin, God willing, next Sunday; not doubting but that He who increased a little lad's loaves and fishes for the feeding of a great multitude, will from time to time, in the proper use of appointed means, supply me with spiritual food for whatever congregation he in his all-wise providence shall be pleased to call me to."

The first sermon that Whitefield preached was attended with some of those striking effects which afterwards characterized his evangelical labours. It was delivered at Gloucester in June, 1736:—"Last Sunday, in the afternoon, I preached my first sermon in the church of St. Mary de Crypt, where I was baptized, and also first received the sacrament of the Lord's supper. Curiosity, as you may easily guess, drew a large congregation together upon the occasion. The sight at

first a little awed me; but I was comforted with a heartfelt sense of the divine presence, and soon found the unspeakable advantage of having been accustomed to public speaking when a boy at school, and of exhorting and teaching the prisoners and poor people at their private houses whilst at the university. By these means, I was kept from being daunted over much. As I proceeded, I perceived the fire kindled, till at last, though so young, and amidst a crowd of those who knew me in my infant, childish days, I trust I was enabled to speak with some degree of gospel authority. Some few mocked, but most for the present seemed struck; and I have since heard, that a complaint had been made to the bishop, that I drove fifteen mad the first sermon. The worthy prelate, as I am informed, wished that the madness might not be forgotten before next Sunday. Before then, I hope, my sermon upon 'He that is in Christ is a new creature,' will be completed. Blessed be God, I now find freedom in writing."

After remaining a few days longer at Gloucester, Whitefield returned to Oxford, where he took his bachelor's degree. But in consequence of an invitation to officiate for some time in the chapel of the Tower of London, he repaired to the metropolis, where the first sermon he preached was in Bishopsgate Church. His juvenile appearance—for he looked considerably younger than he actually was—at first excited a smile of wonder and contempt among the auditory, but which soon gave place to very different feelings, as he proceeded in his discourse. They were thunderstruck and delighted. The result of the popularity which he soon acquired in London was the offer of a valuable curacy, but which he declined from the most disinterested of motives. He had received an earnest invitation from the Wesleys, now labouring as evangelists in America, to come to

their aid; and he resolved to go thither, at the sacrifice not only of preferment in the Church, but against the earnest wishes of his relatives. Previous to his departure, he had laboured in several towns with such acceptance, that the wonderful effects produced by his preaching began to be blazed abroad in the public prints with the most flattering commendations. But it was not upon this that he had set his heart; and his feelings on the subject may be seen from the following extract :

“ I suppose you have heard of my *mighty deeds*, falsely so called, by reading the newspapers; for I find some hack friend has published abroad my preaching four times in a day; but I beseech Mr. Raikes, the printer, never to put me into his news upon any such account again, for it is quite contrary to my inclinations and positive orders. Oh, praise the Lord, dear sir, and pray that I may not be self-sufficient, but humble.” Even already, too, he had commenced that practice of every-day preaching, which he more or less continued to the end of his career. Take the following specimen: “ Last week, save one, I preached ten times in different churches; and the last week, seven; and yesterday, four times, and read prayers twice, though I slept not above an hour the night before, which was spent in religious conversation.”

His stay during this, his first visit to America, was brief; and the general result of it may be learned from the following letter, dated from Savannah, June 10, 1738: “ About five weeks I have been at Savannah, where Providence seems to intend continuing me for some time. God has graciously visited me with a fit of sickness; but now I am lively as a young eagle. All things have happened better than expectation. America is not so horrid a place as it is represented to be. . . . The heat of the weather, lying on the ground, &c., are mere

painted lions in the way, and to a soul filled with divine love, not worth mentioning. The country, mornings and evenings, is exceeding pleasant, and there are uncommon improvements made (considering the indifference of the soil) in divers places. With a little assistance, the country people would do very well. As for my ministerial office, I can inform you that God (such is his goodness) sets his seal to it here, as at other places. We have an excellent Christian school, and near a hundred constantly attend at evening prayers. The people receive me gladly, as yet, into their houses, and seem to be most kindly affected towards me. I have a pretty little family, and find it possible to manage a house without distraction. Provisions we do not want to feed on, though we are cut off from all occasions to pamper our bodies. Blessed be God, I visit from house to house, catechise, read prayers twice, and expound the two second lessons every day; read to a houseful of people three times a-week; expound the two lessons at five in the morning, read prayers and preach twice, and expound the catechism to servants, &c., at seven in the evening every Sunday. What I have most at heart is the building an orphan house; which I trust will be effected at my return to England. In the meanwhile, I am settling little schools in and about Savannah, that the rising generation may be bred up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. The Lord prosper my weak endeavours for promoting his glory and his people's good. Oh, dear Mr. H——, pray for me; for I do, indeed I do, pray for you and yours. Remember me to dear Mrs. H——, and exhort her to perfect holiness in the fear of God. Remind Mr. W—— (since he will not hearken to me) to work out his salvation with fear and trembling, and beg him to pray for, though he will not write to, dear Mr. H——," &c.

To this general statement we gladly subjoin the following particulars extracted from his journal:—

“*Sunday, May 7.*—Arrived at Savannah Town about seven this evening, and joined in prayer and a psalm of thanksgiving with Mr. Delamotte, and some pious souls that were rejoiced at my arrival. The good Lord sanctify our meeting to his glory and his people’s welfare.

“Spent the remainder of the evening in taking sweet counsel with Mr. Delamotte, who seems providentially left behind at Savannah against my coming. How sweetly does providence order things for us! Oh, may I constantly follow it, as the wise men did the star in the East.

“*Monday, May 8.*—Began to read public prayers, and expound the second lesson at five in the morning, to seventeen adults and twenty-five children. May God open their hearts that they may attend to the things that were spoken!

“In the afternoon, Mr. Causton sent word that he and the magistrates would wait upon me; but I chose rather to wait upon them. I was received with great civility, and our chief conversation ran upon the place of my settlement; at last it was resolved that I should have a house and tabernacle built at Frederica, and serve at Savannah, when and as long as I pleased. I find there are many divisions amongst the inhabitants; but God, I hope, will make me an instrument of composing them. Grant this, O Lord, for thy dear Son’s sake.

“*Sunday, May 14.*—After another week’s confinement, by the return of my fever, under which God showed me great mercies, and which went off with a fit of the ague, I attempted to read prayers, but was so exceeding faint and weak, that I was obliged to leave off before I began the second service. Oh, that my friends had seen me at that hour, they then might have learned not to have

any man's person in admiration, and not to think more highly of me than they ought to think.

“ *Friday, May 19.*—God still strengthening me more and more, I went this morning to two little villages, Hampstead and Highgate, about five miles off Savannah. The former consists of three families, making in all eleven souls—one man, a Jew; two women, one woman, and seven children, Switzers. I was much delighted with seeing the improvements a few pair of hands had made in their respective plantations, and was surprised to see what industry will do. Surely they speak not truth, who say that the Georgia people have been idle; for I never saw more laborious people than are in these villages. They live exceeding hard, but with a little assistance may do very well. I was at a loss, because I could not talk French; but, however, I resolved, under God, to follow my worthy predecessor's example, and to visit them once a-week, and read prayers to as many as could understand me. I also inquired into the state of their children, and found there were many who might prove useful members of the colony, if there were a proper place provided for their maintenance and education. Nothing can effect this but an orphan-house, which might easily be erected at Savannah, if some of those that are rich in this world's good would contribute towards it. May God in his due time stir up the wills of his faithful people to be ready to distribute, and willing to communicate on this commendable occasion!

“ *Wednesday, May 24.*—Went to-day to Thunderbolt, a village about six miles off Savannah, situated very pleasantly near the river, and consisting of three families—four men and two women, and ten servants. I was kindly received, expounded a chapter, used a few collects, called on a family or two that lay near our way, and returned home to Savannah very comfortably, with

my friend Delamotte, about six o'clock in the evening. Blessed be God for strengthening my weak body!

“*Monday, June 11.*—Opened a school to-day for the girls of Savannah; a friend, whose heart God was pleased to touch on board the ship, having, at my request, undertaken to teach them. The work is for my Master, and therefore I doubt not of being supplied, some way or other, with a sufficient fund for the support of it. May God enable him who is set over them, to feed them with the sincere milk of the Word, and give them grace to grow thereby!

“*Friday, June 24.*—To the great surprise of myself and people, was enabled to read prayers, and preach with power before the Freemasons, with whom I afterwards dined, and was used with the utmost civility. May God make them servants of Christ, and then, and not till then, will they be free indeed.

“*Friday, July 7.*—Being the anniversary for opening the Court, I preached in the morning at the magistrates' request, and endeavoured with all plainness and humility to show both them and the people what they ought to do to promote their temporal and eternal welfare. O God, do thou bless it, and it shall be blessed, through Jesus Christ.

“*Tuesday, July 18.*—About ten o'clock this evening returned to Savannah, having set out from thence yesterday, to visit four or five families that live at some of the outward settlements about twelve miles off. Their beginnings as yet are but small; but I cannot help thinking there are foundations laying for great temporal and spiritual blessings in Georgia, when the inhabitants are found worthy. Blessed be God, in Savannah they will hear the Word gladly, and people everywhere receive me with the utmost civility, and are not angry when I reprove them. May God keep them always thus

mind, and prepare me for whatever sufferings he shall permit to fall upon me for doing my duty.

“On Sunday morning at five o’clock, I publicly expound the second lesson for the morning or evening service, as I see most suited to the people’s edification; at ten I preach and read prayers; at three in the afternoon I do the same; and at seven expound part of the Church Catechism, at which great numbers are usually present. I visit from house to house, read public prayers, and expound twice and catechise (unless something extraordinary happens); visit the sick every day, and read to as many of my parishioners as will come thrice a-week: and, blessed be God, my labours have not been altogether vain in the Lord; for he has been pleased to set his seal to my ministry in a manner I could not, I dared not, in America expect. ‘Not unto me, O Lord, not unto me, but unto thy name be the glory.’

“*Wednesday, August 23.*—A necessity was laid on me to-day to express my resentment against infidelity, by refusing to read the burial office over the most professed unbeliever I ever yet met with. God was pleased to visit him with a lingering illness; in which time I went to see him frequently. . . . Particularly, about five weeks ago, I asked him what religion he was of? He answered: ‘Religion was divided into so many sects, he knew not which to choose.’ Another time I offered to pray with him, but he would not accept it; upon which I resolved to go see him no more; but being told two days before he died, that he had an inclination to see me, I went to him again; and, after a little conversation, I put to him the following questions: ‘Do you believe Jesus Christ to be God, the one Mediator between God and man?’ He said: ‘I believe Christ was a good man.’ ‘Do you believe the Holy Scriptures?’ ‘I believe,’ replied he, ‘something of the Old Testament; the New I do

not believe at all.' 'Do you believe, sir, a judgment to come?' He turned himself about and replied: 'I know not what to say to that.' 'Alas,' said I, 'sir, if all these things should be true;' which words, I believe, gave him concern, for he seemed after to be very uneasy, grew delirious, and departed in a day or two. Unhappy man, how quickly was he convinced that all I said was true! Now he and I are of one mind. The day after his decease he was carried to the ground, and I refused to read the office over him, but went to the grave, and told the people what had passed between him and me, warned them against infidelity, and asked them whether I could safely say, 'As our hope is this our brother doth;' upon which I believe they were thoroughly satisfied that I had done right. God grant this may be a warning to surviving unbelievers!

"*Sunday, August 27.*—God having now shown both me and my friends, that it was his will I should return for a while to England, this afternoon I preached my farewell sermon, to the great grief of my dear parishioners; for their hearts, I found, were very full as well as mine—which they expressed by shedding many tears. But a sensible alteration appeared in their countenances, when I promised them, solemnly before God, to return as soon as possible. May God enable me to perform my promise, and prepare my way before me!"

These extracts, scanty as they necessarily are, will convey but a faint idea of Whitefield's incessant and successful exertions in Georgia. Besides visiting the sick, he read prayers, and expounded Scripture twice a day, and on Sabbath had four public religious services.

The voyage home was tedious, his health was indifferent, and the privations which he had to endure from want of provisions, the whole ship's company being put upon short allowance, were particularly trying. Still,

however, at sea as upon land, in health and in sickness, he was indefatigable in the service of his Divine Master. The following is a summary of it, which he entered in his journal :—“ Why God dealeth thus with me, I know not now ; but I shall know hereafter. However, this I know, that this voyage has been greatly for my good. For I have had a glorious opportunity of searching the Scriptures, composing discourses, writing letters, and communing with my own heart. We have been on board just nine weeks and three days. A long and perilous, but profitable voyage to my soul ; for I hope it has learnt me in some measure to endure hardships, as becometh a minister of Christ. My clothes have not been off (except to change me) all the passage : part of the time I lay on open deck, part on a chest, and the remainder on a bed-stead covered with my buffalo's skin. These things, though little in themselves, yet are great in their consequences ; and whosoever despiseth small acts of bodily discipline, it is to be feared will insensibly lose his spiritual life by little and little. Many inward trials also God has been pleased to send me, which I believe he has sanctified to my great good.

“As for the success of my ministry whilst on board, I shall only say, that I hope much sin has been prevented, and one, I hope, effectually converted, who is to be my fellow-traveller to England. Lord, if I can but be made instrumental to save one soul, I care not if I am tossed on the ocean through my whole life. Glory be to God on high !”

Whitefield returned to London towards the close of 1738. Two purposes occasioned his return so speedily : the one was the obtaining of priest's orders, and the other, the founding of the orphan-house in America ; and but for these important objects, he would have been contented to have lived and died in America. What might have

been the effect upon these infant colonies, then and afterwards, of having George Whitefield permanently among them, would form the basis of much curious speculation. He was reserved, however, for a wider and more important field. No sooner did he land in London than he resumed his sacred work, as if no interruption had occurred; which the following gleanings from his journal will show:

“*Friday, December 8.*—About noon I reached London, was received with much joy by my Christian friends, and joined with them in psalms and thanksgiving for my safe arrival. My heart was greatly enlarged thereby.

“In the evening, went to a truly Christian society in Fetter Lane, and perceived that God had greatly watered the seed sown by my ministry, when last at London. The Lord increase it more and more!

“*Saturday, December 9.*—Waited this morning on the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the Bishop of London, and met with a favourable reception.

“*Sunday, December 10.*—When I was on board the Mary, those particular parts of the Book of Jeremiah, which relate to the opposition he met with from the false prophets, were deeply impressed upon my soul. And now I begin to see the wisdom of God in it. For five churches have been already denied me; and some of the clergy, if possible, would oblige me to depart out of these coasts. But I rejoice in this opposition, it being a certain sign that a more effectual door will be opened, since there are so many adversaries.

“However, I had an opportunity of preaching in the morning at St. Helen’s, and at Islington in the afternoon, to large congregations indeed, with great demonstration of the Spirit, and with power.

“Here seems to be a great pouring out of the Spirit; and many, who were awakened by my preaching a year

ago, are now grown strong men in Christ, by the ministrations of my dear friends and fellow-labourers, John and Charles Wesley. Blessed be God, I rejoice in the coming of the kingdom of his dear Son.

“In the evening, I went to Fetter Lane Society, where we had what might not improperly be called a love-feast, eating a little bread and water, and spending about two hours in singing and prayers; and I found my heart greatly united with the brethren. Surely a primitive spirit is reviving amongst us. May God knit my heart to theirs more and more !

“*Sunday, December 24.*—Preached twice, and went in the evening to Crooked Lane Society, where God enabled me to withstand several persons, who cavilled against the doctrine of the new birth. But the passion wherewith they oppose is a demonstration that they themselves have not experienced it. Lord, make them partakers of it, for thy dear Son’s sake !

“After I left Crooked Lane, I went and expounded to a company at Mr. B——’s, in Little Britain; then I went to another love-feast at Fetter Lane; and, it being Christmas eve, continued till near four in the morning in prayer, psalms, and thanksgiving, with many truly Christian brethren; and my heart was much enlarged and full of love. God gave me a great spirit of supplication. Adored be his free grace in Christ Jesus ! Amen and amen.

“*Monday, December 25.*—About four went and prayed, and expounded to another society in Redcross Street, consisting of near two or three hundred people, and the room was exceeding hot. I had been watching unto prayer all night, yet God vouchsafed so to fill me with his blessed Spirit, that I spoke with as great power as ever I did in my life. My body was weak, but I found a supernatural strength, and the truth of that saying, ‘When I am weak, then I am strong.’

“ At six, I went to Crutched Friars’ Society, and expounded as well as I could, but perceived myself a little oppressed with drowsiness. How does the corruptible body weigh down the soul! When shall I be delivered from the burden of this flesh?

“ Preached thrice, and assisted in administering the sacrament the same day, without going to sleep. God will make his power to be known in me. This day twenty-four years was I baptized. Lord, to what little purpose have I lived! However, I sealed my baptismal covenant with my dear Saviour’s most blessed body and blood, and trust in his strength I shall keep and perform it. Amen, amen.

“ *Saturday, December 30.*—Preached nine times this week, and expounded near eighteen times, with great power and enlargement. Blessed be God! I am every moment employed from morning till midnight. There’s no end of people’s coming and sending to me; and they seem more and more desirous, like new-born babes, to be fed with the sincere milk of the Word. What a great work has been wrought in the hearts of many within this twelvemonth! Now know I, that though thousands might come at first out of curiosity, yet God has prevented and quickened them by his free grace. Oh that I could be humble and thankful!

“ Glory be to God, that he fills me continually, not only with peace, but also joy in the Holy Ghost. Before my arrival, I thought I should envy my brethren’s success in the ministry; but, blessed be God, I rejoice in it, and am glad to see Christ’s kingdom come, whatsoever instruments God shall make use of to bring it about. Sometimes I perceive myself deserted for a little while, and much oppressed, especially before preaching; but comfort soon after flows in. The kingdom of God is within me. Oh! free grace in Christ!”

While thus labouring for the salvation of others, he was equally anxious about his own; and the following entry of his humility and self-examination perhaps reveals the secret wherein his strength lay :—

“ Did not find the pity I ought, upon seeing a brother full of self-love. Lord, enlarge my narrow heart, and give me that charity which rejoices not in iniquity, but in the truth. Perceived something a little bordering on envy towards my brother H——. I find more and more that true humility consists in being submissive to those who are a little above or a little below us. Oh, when shall I come to rejoice in others' gifts and graces as much as in my own ! I am resolved to wrestle with Jesus Christ, by faith and prayer, till he thus bless me.”

Such was but a specimen of his usual labours, not only in the metropolis, but those various towns into which he itinerated at this period; and so great was not only his growing fame as a preacher, but the effects he produced by his ministry in the conversion of many, that while the churches in which he officiated were crowded, not only hundreds, but even thousands, were unable to obtain admission. This suggested to him the idea of preaching in the open air; and that resolution, which he adopted, constitutes the most important epoch of his public life. It was, however, a daring step, and totally at variance with those ideas of order and decorum which his Church at that period so carefully cherished. “ To-day,” he says, in a letter dated April 27, 1739—“ to-day my Master, by his providence and Spirit, compelled me to preach in the church-yard at Islington. To-morrow, I am to repeat that mad trick; and on Sunday, to go out into Moorfields. The word of the Lord runs and is glorified.” His expression, “ That mad trick,” fully explains the feeling with which this bold innovation was regarded. The following is his own account of the cir-

cumstances under which it was commenced in Islington church-yard:—

“*Friday, April 27.*—Went this morning to Islington to preach, according to the appointment of my dear brother in Christ, the Rev. Mr. Stonehouse; but in the midst of the prayers, the church-warden came, demanding me to produce my license, or otherwise he forbade my preaching in that pulpit. I believe I might have insisted upon my right to preach, being in priest’s orders, and having the presentation of the living at Savannah, which is in the Bishop of London’s diocese, a stronger license than that implicit one by which hundreds of the inferior clergy are by his lordship permitted to preach: however, for peace’s sake, I declined preaching in the church; but after the communion service was over, I preached in the church-yard; being assured my Master now called me out here as well as in Bristol. The second lesson was Acts the 24th, which contained the plausible speech Tertullus made against Paul, a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes; which God applied closely to my heart. And he was pleased so to assist me in preaching, and so wonderfully to affect the hearers, that I believe we could have went singing of hymns to prison. Let not the adversaries say, I have thrust myself out of their synagogues. No; *they* have thrust *me* out. And since the self-righteous men of this generation count themselves unworthy, I go out into the highways and hedges, and compel harlots, publicans, and sinners, to come in, that my Master’s house may be filled. They who are sincere will follow after me to hear the word of God.”

The notices which now occur in his journal of these out-of-door ministrations come in rapid succession. For example: “*Saturday, April 28.*—Preached this morning again in Islington church-yard.” “*Sunday, April 29.*—

Preached in the morning at Moorfields to an exceeding great multitude. Being weakened by my morning's preaching, in the afternoon I refreshed myself by a little sleep; and at five, went and preached at Kennington Common, about two miles from London, where no less than thirty thousand people were supposed to be present." " *Tuesday, May 1.*—Preached, after public service in Islington church-yard, to a greater congregation than ever. Now know I more and more that the Lord calls me into the fields; for no house or street is able to contain half the people that come to hear the Word." " *Wednesday, May 2.*—Preached this evening again to above ten thousand at Kennington Common." But the fullest and most interesting of these public open-air meetings is entered under the date of " *Sunday, May 6.*—Preached this morning in Moorfields to about twenty thousand people, who were very quiet and attentive, and much affected. Went to public worship morning and evening; and at six preached at Kennington. But such a sight never were my eyes blessed with before. I believe there were no less than fifty thousand people, near fourscore coaches, besides great numbers of horses; and what is most remarkable, there was such an awful silence amongst them, and the word of God came with such power, that all, I believe, were pleasingly surprised. God gave me great enlargement of heart. I continued my discourse for an hour and a-half; and when I returned home, I was filled with such love, peace, and joy, that I cannot express it. I believe this was partly owing to some opposition I met with yesterday. It is hard for men to kick against the pricks. The more they oppose, the more shall Jesus Christ be exalted. Our adversaries seem to be come to an extremity, while, for want of arguments to convince, they are obliged to call out to the civil magistrate to

compel me to be silent; but I believe it will be difficult to prove our assemblies in the fields to be either disorderly or illegal. But they that are born after the flesh, must persecute those that are born after the Spirit. 'Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.'"

In this spirit of devotedness he continued to labour day by day, and amidst not a little personal danger. The latter he incurred from his intrepid zeal, which led him boldly forward to confront iniquity within its own intrenchments. "Have you heard," he says to a friend in one letter, "how I preached upon the stage among the cudgel-players at Basingstoke, and got a blow? Both I and my companions were also turned out of our inn, and in danger of being beaten heartily." In another, he says: "I am now about to attack Satan in one of his strongholds. If I perish. . . . To-night I preach, God willing, where a horse-race is to be. I find my Master strengthens me for the work."

Amidst all these labours, and the continually growing tide of popularity, the heart of Whitefield had never ceased to remember America, and his benevolent purpose of founding an orphan-house there. This object he had warmly urged, both upon his friends and the audiences to which he preached, and with such success, that he collected upwards of a thousand pounds for the establishment of the institution. He therefore commenced his second voyage to America in August 14, 1739, and arrived in Philadelphia after a passage of nine weeks. The same popular excitement, the same thronging of multitudes, and eagerness to hear his preaching, were manifested there as in London, and the churches were crowded with people of all denominations; while this was also mingled with a considerable leaven of that hostility with which his labours at home had been followed. He took, however, a calm view of

either alternative, and estimated both at their proper value. These are his sentiments upon the subject:—

“The innumerable temptations that attend a popular life sometimes make me think that it would be best for me to withdraw. But then, I consider that He who delivered Daniel out of the den of lions, and the three children out of the fiery furnace, is able and willing to deliver me also out of the fiery furnace of popularity and applause, and from the fury of those who, for preaching Christ and him crucified, are my inveterate enemies. In his strength, therefore, and at his command, whenever his providence shall call, I will venture out again. . . . I trust the Lord by these inward trials will purge me, that I may bring forth more fruit.”

The stay of Whitefield in America during this his second visit, lasted little more than a year; but it was a period filled with the same abundant labours which characterized his whole history. We find him itinerating through the different towns and districts of New England, preaching alternately in churches, in meeting-houses, and the fields, while delighted thousands hung upon his ministry. Our limits cannot admit even a scanty detail of these proceedings; but their general effect may be ascertained from the following extracts of letters, written by several of the American divines, quoted by Dr. Gillies, the biographer of Whitefield:—

“*October 1, 1740.*

“REV. AND DEAR SIR,—Your kind letter by Mr. Whitefield, and your other, are both now before me. You raised our expectations of him very much, as did his journals more, and Mr. P—— of New York concurred with them; but we own, now that we have seen and heard him, that our expectations are all answered and exceeded, not only in his zealous and fervent abounding labours, but in the command of the hearts

and affections of his hearers. He has been received here as an angel of God, and servant of Jesus Christ. I hope this visit to us will be of very great use and benefit to ministers and people. He has found his heart and mouth much opened to speak freely and boldly to us; and he finds it received with joy.' The same gentleman, November 29, 1740, writes thus: 'Mr. Whitefield left us seven weeks ago; the last week we heard of him at Philadelphia. I hear that much of the presence of God is with him. He has left a blessing behind him, we hope, with us. Our people, high and low, old and young, are very swift to hear. The excellent meekness of Mr. Whitefield's answer to the querists will honour him to you.'

“ Another, in a letter, October 22, 1740, expresses himself thus: 'Though it is always a singular pleasure to me to hear from you, yet your two letters by Mr. Whitefield had a new circumstance of pleasure, from the dear hand that presented them. I perceive you was impatient to know what sort of entering in he had among us. We (ministers, rulers, and people) generally received him as an angel of God. When he preached his farewell sermon in our Common, there were twenty-three thousand, at a moderate computation. We are abundantly convinced that you spoke the words of truth and soberness in your sermon relating to him. Such a power and presence of God with a preacher, and in religious assemblies, I never saw before; but I would not limit the Holy One of Israel. The prejudices of many are quite conquered, and expectations of others vastly outdone, as they freely own. A considerable number are awakened, and many Christians seem to be greatly quickened. He has preached twice at Cambridge. He has one warm friend there, Mr. —, the tutor, who has followed him to Northampton, and will, for aught I

know, to Georgia. But Mr. Whitefield has not a warmer friend anywhere, than the first man among us. Our governor has showed him the greatest respect, carried him in his coach from place to place, and could not help following him fifty miles out of town. I hope the religion of the country will fare the better for the impressions left on him.' The same gentleman writes, December 2, 1740: 'The man greatly beloved, I suppose, may be with you before now. That his visit here will be esteemed a distinguishing mercy of heaven by many, I am well satisfied. Every day gives me fresh proofs of Christ's speaking in him. A small set of gentlemen amongst us, when they saw the affections of the people so moved under his preaching, would attribute it only to the force of sound and gesture. But the impressions on many are so lasting, and have been so transforming, as to carry plain signatures of a divine hand going along with him.' Another gentleman writes, October, 21, 1740, and thanks me for recommending to him so worthy a person as the Rev. Mr. Whitefield, who has preached Christ and the great truths of the Gospel among them, with remarkable fervour of spirit, and to a general acceptance; and hopes that there are many awakened by his ministry. Another of the same date writes, that he had conceived very highly of him by some clauses in my private letters, and the sermon I preached by way of apology, &c; but confesses he had not gone high enough in his opinion of him, and that his expectations are more than answered in him. Another, November 21, 1740, blesses God that he was sent thither; that he had so many opportunities of seeing him, and sitting under his ministry;—that he appeared to him a wonderful man indeed; that his preaching was accompanied with a divine power and energy, beyond any man's he had ever heard before; and the effects of

his ministry were very marvellous among them. I shall conclude with the following passage of another gentleman, in a letter of November 1, 1740: 'I received yours by the Rev. Mr. Whitefield, with whom I coveted a great deal more private conversation than I had opportunity for, by reason of the throngs of people almost perpetually with him. But he appears to be full of the love of God, and fired with an extraordinary zeal for the cause of Christ, and applies himself with the most indefatigable diligence that ever was seen among us, for the promoting the good of souls. His head, his heart, his hands seem to be full of his Master's business. His discourses, especially when he goes into the expository way, are very entertaining. Every eye is fixed upon him, and every ear chained to his lips. Most are very much affected; many awakened and convinced, and a general seriousness excited. His address, more especially to the passions, is wonderful, and beyond what I have ever seen. I think I can truly say that his preaching has quickened me, and I believe it has many others besides, as well as the people. Several of my flock, especially the younger sort, have been brought under convictions by his preaching; and there is this remarkable amongst them of the good effects of his preaching, that the word preached now by us seems more precious to them, and comes with more power upon them. My prayer for him is, that his precious life may be lengthened out, and that he may be an instrument of reviving dying religion in all places whithersoever he comes, who seems to be wonderfully fitted for, as well as spirited to it.'

On the 16th of January Whitefield set sail, and arrived in England on the 11th of March, 1741. The following letter, which he had previously addressed to the Bishop of London, will give an idea of the eccle-

siastical difficulties with which the American mission had to contend:—

“To the Right Reverend Father in God, Edmund Lord
“Bishop of London.

“*On board the Savannah, bound from Charles Town
“to Boston, September —, 1740.*

“MY LORD,—Although your lordship has been pleased to caution the people against running into those extremes to which your lordship apprehended my doctrine would lead men, yet I am persuaded that will not any way influence your lordship as to the contents of this letter. The one single point which it contains, is this query: ‘Whether the commissary of South Carolina has power given him from your lordship, to exercise any judicial authority against me, or any other clergyman, who doth not belong to his province?’ The reason of my putting this question, I suppose your lordship will be apprized of, before this reaches your lordship’s hands. I have been lately cited to appear in an ecclesiastical court, erected by the Rev. Mr. G——, for not reading the common prayer in the meeting-house, which I was obliged to preach in at Charles Town (unless I would be silent), because the commissary would not let me have the use of his church. I appeared, and have appealed, according to law, to four of his majesty’s commissioners for reviewing appeals, to know whether the commissary ought not to have accepted a *recusatio judicis*, which I lodged in court. This, I suppose, they will determine. I only desire your lordship’s explicit opinion and determination, whether Mr. G—— (supposing he hath power over his own clergy) has authority to erect such a court to arraign me, who belong to the province of Georgia. The bearer hereof will give me your lordship’s answer. In favouring me with which, your lordship will oblige, my lord, your lordship’s obedient son and servant, G. W.”

But he had something better than a mere controversy with which to occupy his attention, even while he was sailing in one of the uncomfortable coasters of that semi-barbarian period of naval transit; and he thus writes on board the *Minerva*, about a month after he had set sail:—"The Lord hath been with me, and is now with me in an especial manner. I have been enabled to prepare *nine discourses for the press.*" Besides this labour on board, twenty-eight letters are dated from the same place, some of them of considerable length as well as importance—implying an amount of labour and diligence very difficult to be conceived in these our days of snug but indolent modern navigation. This correspondence is so rich and so varied, that to quote becomes a matter of difficulty. Still, however, we cannot omit the following as a specimen, addressed to one of his brethren of New England, and which shows how completely he bore upon his heart the character and situation of his friends in either hemisphere:—

"To the Rev. Mr. T——, at Edisto.

"On board the *Minerva*, Feb. 17, 1741.

"DEAR MR T——,—Providence prevented my coming to see you at Edisto; however, I must not omit writing to you now. How is it with your heart? I hope you are not *nimis uxorius*; take heed, my dear B——, take heed. Time is short. It remains that those who have wives, be as though they had none. Let nothing intercept or interrupt your communion with the Bridegroom of the Church. I hope you do not feel such damps of soul as you used to complain of. May the Lord of glory dispel every black cloud, and cause you continually to rejoice in his salvation. You have strong passions. The Lord Jesus is stronger. In his strength may you subdue them, till you are meek as a lamb, and are become a very little child. I write thus, because I pray for you

most heartily. Deal with me in the same manner; and now, dear brother, farewell. The Lord be with you. He is pleased to refresh my soul, and give me the prospect of a short passage. I commend myself and affairs to the prayers of your flock, and I earnestly recommend you to the God of all grace. That he may bless you and give you an inheritance among all them that are sanctified, is the earnest prayer of, dear Mr. T——, your affectionate brother and fellow-labourer in the Lord,
“G. W.”

Whitefield landed at Falmouth on the 11th of March, and on the Sunday following he was preaching on Kennington Common. But he had now very serious difficulties to contend with. He had offended many of the staunch adherents of the Church of England, by two “well-meant, though injudicious letters,” as he characterizes them, against that popular work, “The Whole Duty of Man,” and against the equally popular prelate, Archbishop Tillotson, who, he rashly declared, knew no more of religion than Mahomet. The Moravians, also, were opposed to him, and had contrived to damage his reputation with the religious public. On these accounts, during his first public labours after his return, instead of the thousands who had formerly thronged to his preaching, he had not even hundreds; and what was still more painful, those hearers of his, to whom he had been so welcome in former days, and whom he regarded as his spiritual children, were among the absentees. A still more annoying misunderstanding had commenced between him and John Wesley, chiefly regarding the doctrine of election, against which the latter preached and wrote with great ardour, while Whitefield as zealously maintained it. But we will no further enter into the contest between two such great and good men, each equally zealous in advancing the cause of his Divine Master, and

both so eminently successful. It is enough to state, that the breach widened into a complete separation, the result of which was the formation of two parties in this great revival of the Christian Church—the one distinguished by the title of Calvinistic, and the other by that of Arminian or Wesleyan Methodists. Still, however, there was Christian forbearance on both sides, even during the irritating process of separation. “As we differed in judgment, and not in affection,” Whitefield adds, “and aimed at the glory of our common Lord, though we hearkened too much to tale-bearers on both sides, we were kept from anathematizing each other, and went on in our usual way, being agreed on one point—endeavouring to convert souls to the ever-blessed Mediator.”

These and other difficulties in which he found himself involved on his return to England, were in painful contrast to the triumphant popularity with which he had been formerly applauded by the shouts of myriads; but perhaps the lesson was not more than necessary to wean him from putting too much confidence in man. He was still young and inexperienced; his reading, as may well be imagined from such a busy life, had been limited; and his ardent spirit was apt to adopt extreme views, and express them strongly and hastily, while the kindred enthusiasm with which they were received might have gradually seduced him, not only into pride and arrogance, but into novelties of doctrine inconsistent with the simplicity of the gospel. He received the chastisement like a weaned child; and after it had produced its due effect, his bands were loosed, and his field of usefulness re-opened. He had commenced the experiment of preaching in Moorfields on week-days, under a tree, exposed to the inclemency of the weather; but his still devoted adherents erected a large wooden shed, to screen

his hearers from cold and rain, and which from its temporary character, he called a Tabernacle. "All." he says, "was wonderfully overruled for good, and for the furtherance of the gospel. A fresh awakening immediately began. Congregations grew exceeding large; and at the people's desire, I sent (necessity reconciling me more and more to lay-preaching) for Messrs. Cennick, Harris, Segrave, Humphries, &c., to assist." Invitations now thronged upon him, not only from his former hearers in various parts of England, but from districts also in which he was personally a stranger. His missionary circuit at this time comprised the counties of Hertford, Essex, Bedford, Cambridge, and Suffolk, and his auditories were again to be counted by thousands. The language of his letters at this period is: "Blessed be our glorious Immanuel, the gospel runs and is glorified. A wonderful power attends the word preached. Every day, I believe, some or other are pricked to the heart."—"The Lord has been with me greatly ever since I left London. I have been enabled to preach twice every day, and to ride several miles. The congregations have been everywhere very large. God's presence has accompanied the word. I am more and more convinced that evangelizing is my proper business at present. I have no freedom but in going about to all denominations. I cannot join with any one so as to be fixed in any particular place. Every one hath his proper gift. *Field-preaching* is my place: in this I am carried as on eagles' wings."

It was during this period that, in consequence of the wide reputation of his ministry, and the wonderful effects with which it was attended, he received pressing invitations, and especially from the Erskines, to visit Scotland. The fathers of the Secession recommended, however, that he should exclusively attach himself, during

his visit, to their communion. The nature of his reply to this unexpected request might be anticipated from the last of the foregoing extracts. He thus writes upon the subject to Ebenezer Erskine :—

“ *Bristol, May 16, 1741.*

“ REV. AND DEAR SIR,—I owe you much love. Only want of time prevents my writing to you oftener. This morning I received a kind letter from your brother Ralph, who thinks it best for me wholly to join the Associate Presbytery, if it should please God to send me into Scotland. This I cannot altogether come into. I come only as an occasional preacher, to preach the simple gospel to all that are willing to hear me, of whatever denomination. It will be wrong in me to join in a reformation as to Church government, any further than I have light given me from above. If I am quite neuter as to that in my preaching, I cannot see how it can hinder or retard any design you may have on foot. My business seems to be, to evangelize—to be a presbyter at large. When I shall be sent into your parts I know not. I write this, that there may not be the least misunderstanding between us. I love and honour the Associate Presbytery in the bowels of Jesus Christ. With this I send them my due respects, and most humbly beg their prayers. But let them not be offended, if in all things I cannot immediately fall in with them. Let them leave me to God. Whatever light he is pleased to give me, I hope I shall be faithful to it. Our dear and precious Master still carries me on. God enables me to fight my way through. The gospel doctrines, I believe, will yet prevail. I feel a divine power attending my ministrations. I preach twice daily, and am invited to many places. I believe the Lord intends to keep me on this side the water for some time. Blessed be God, all places are alike to me. Oh, dear sir, pray

for me. I am a poor unworthy worm. I love you tenderly, but am almost ashamed to subscribe myself your brother in the best of bonds,
G. W."

He embarked, for the purpose of visiting Scotland, on July 24 (1741), and after a passage of five days, arrived in Edinburgh; and during these five days, twenty-eight letters, which he wrote, have appeared in his published correspondence, indicating his indefatigable zeal in the work to which he was called, and his desire to reprove, exhort, and instruct, not only in season, but out of season also. The cabins, or rather cribs, of the coasting vessels between England and Scotland, at this time, make it wonderful that he could have written so much, or even that he could have written at all. On arriving in Edinburgh, he was strongly solicited to commence his labours there at once; but thinking that his countenance, first of all, was due to the Erskines, by whose instigation chiefly he had now visited Scotland, he felt himself bound to give them the first offer. He therefore commenced his evangelistic work at Dunfermline, where Ralph Erskine had a large meeting-house and numerous congregation. But it is necessary here to let him speak for himself:—"As you know that the Messrs. Erskine gave me the first invitation to Scotland, and have been praying for me in the most public, explicit, I could almost say extravagant manner, for nearly two years last past, I was determined to give them the first offer of my poor ministrations. Accordingly, I went yesterday to Dunfermline, where dear Mr. R—— E—— hath got a large and separate, or, as it is commonly termed, Seceding meeting-house. He received me very lovingly. I preached to his and the town's people—a very thronged assembly. After I had done prayer, and named my text, the rustling made by opening the Bibles all at once, quite surprised me: a

scene I never was witness to before. Our conversation after sermon, in the house, was such as became the gospel of Christ. They entertained me with various accounts of the success of the Seceders' labours; and, as a proof of God's being with them, Mr. R——'s son-in-law told me, that, at one of their late occasions, a woman was so deeply affected, that she was obliged to stop her mouth with a handkerchief to keep herself from crying out. They urged a longer stay, in order to converse more closely, and to set me right about Church government, and the Solemn League and Covenant. I informed them, that I had given notice of preaching at Edinburgh this evening; but as they desired it, I would in a few days return, and meet the Associate Presbytery in Mr. R——'s house. This was agreed on. Dear Mr. E—— accompanied me, and this evening I preached to many thousands, in a place called The Orphan-house Park. The Lord was there. Immediately after sermon, a large company, among whom were some of the nobility, came to salute me. Amidst our conversation, came in a portly well-looking Quaker, nephew to Messrs. E——, formerly a Baptist minister in the north of England, who, taking me by the hand, said, 'Friend George, I am as thou art; I am for bringing all to the life and power of the ever-living God: and, therefore, if thou wilt not quarrel with me about my hat, I will not quarrel with thee about thy gown.' In this respect, I wish all, of every denomination, were thus minded. I find God has blessed my works in these parts. I am most cordially received by many that love the Lord Jesus. I have just been in company with a nobleman, who, I believe, truly fears God; and also with a lady of fashion, that discovers a Christian spirit indeed. I already hear of great divisions. But Jesus knows how to bring order out of confusion."

A controversy between Whitefield and the Seceders was inevitable, for the former could see no necessity of being "set right in the matter of Church government, and the Solemn League and Covenant," or to lift up a "testimony against the backslidings and apostasy of the corrupt Church of England." "I then asked them seriously," he adds, "what they would have me to do; the answer was, that I was not desired to subscribe immediately to the Solemn League and Covenant; but to preach only for them till I had further light. I asked, why only for them? Mr. Ralph E—— said, 'they were the Lord's people.' I then asked, whether there were no other Lord's people but themselves; and supposing all others were the devil's people, they certainly had more need to be preached to, and therefore I was more and more determined to go out into the highways and hedges; and that if the pope himself would lend me his pulpit, I would gladly proclaim the righteousness of Jesus Christ therein. Soon after this, the company broke up; and one of these otherwise venerable men, immediately went into the meeting-house, and preached upon these words, 'Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night? The watchman said, The morning cometh, and also the night, if ye will inquire, inquire ye; return, come.' I attended; but the good man so spent himself in the former part of his sermon, in talking against Prelacy, the common-prayer book, the surplice, the rose in the hat, and such like externals, that when he came to the latter part of his text, to invite poor sinners to Jesus Christ, his breath was so gone, that he could scarcely be heard. What a pity that the last was not first, and the first last! The consequence of all this was, an open breach. I retired, I wept, I prayed, and after preaching in the fields, sat down and dined with them, and then took a final leave."

Being thus released from the trammels of sectarianism, and having proclaimed his readiness to preach the gospel to all without exception, he gave himself, not to a party, but to Scotland at large. The following extracts from his correspondence in Scotland will in some measure illustrate the success with which this liberal movement was followed:—

“*Edinburgh, Aug. 8, 1741.*—You will see, my dear brother, by the following, what God is still doing for me. On Sunday evening, I preached in a field near the Orphan-house, to upwards of fifteen thousand people; and on Monday, Friday, and Saturday evening, to nearly as many. On Tuesday I preached in the Canongate Church; on Wednesday and Thursday at Dunfermline; and at my return on Friday morning, at about eight o'clock, I preached at a town called Queensferry, seven miles from Edinburgh. Everywhere the auditories were large, and very attentive. Great power accompanied the word. Many have been brought under convictions; and I have already received several invitations to different places, which, God willing, I intend to comply with.”

“*Edinburgh, Aug. 10, 1741.*—Unworthy as I am, the glorious Immanuel is pleased to clothe his word with power. I am amazed at his loving-kindness, and want heaven and earth to join with me in praising his holy name. By your son I have sent some papers, and shall gladly receive any from you. I wish you would not trouble yourself or me in writing about the corruptions of the Church of England. I believe there is no Church perfect under heaven; but as God, by his providence, is pleased to send me forth simply to preach the gospel to all, I think there is no need of casting myself out. The divisions in Scotland are affecting, and undoubtedly they will occasion great searchings of heart.”

“Edinburgh, Aug. 11, 1741.

“MY VERY DEAR BROTHER H——,—Though my eyes are dim, and my body calls for rest, yet I would fain send you a line before I go. The Lord Jesus is getting himself into many hearts. I scarcely feel any restraint in preaching. Both in public and private, the Lord clothes his word with power. Poor souls come to me under deep convictions. Sweet letters are sent to me of the success of my writings and sermons; and several pressing invitations to many places. I hope God is beginning such a work here, as he began, and is now carrying on, in New England. Night and day Jesus fills me with his love. My bodily strength is daily renewed. The Lord is pleased to open my mouth wide; praise him for it. I have preached twice, and talked and walked much to-day. My dear man, good night. The Lord be with you!—Ever, ever yours, in the most adorable Jesus,

G. W.”

Was the following declaration, which occurs in one of his letters written during this period (dated August 13, 1741), delivered in a spirit of prophecy, or from that keen sagacity of the heart that feels intensely, and which in many cases far transcends the most piercing explorations of the intellect?—“Were the Associate Presbytery scheme to take effect, out of conscience, if they acted consistently, they must restrain and grieve, if not persecute many of God’s children, who could not possibly come into their measures; and I doubt not but their present violent methods, together with the corruptions of that assembly, will cause many to turn Independents, and set up particular churches of their own. This was the effect of Archbishop Laud’s acting with so high a hand; and whether it be Presbytery or Episcopacy, if managed in the same manner, it will be productive of the same effects. Blessed be God, I have not so learned

Christ. I preach the simple gospel, and our glorious Jesus is pleased to attend it with his power. Every day I feel more and more of the divine presence, and people are coming to me crying, ‘What shall we do to be saved.’”

“*Edinburgh, Aug. 15, 1741.*—It would make your heart leap for joy to be now in Edinburgh. I question if there be not upwards of three hundred in this city seeking after Jesus. Every morning I have a constant levee of wounded souls, many of whom are quite slain by the law. God’s power attends the word continually, just as when I left London. At seven in the morning, we have a lecture in the fields, attended not only by the common people, but persons of great rank. I have reason to think several of the latter sort are coming to Jesus. Little children also are much wrought upon. God much blesses my letters from the little orphans. He loves to work by the most contemptible means. O my dear brother, I am quite amazed when I think what God hath done here in a fortnight. My printed journals and sermons have been blessed in an uncommon manner. I am only afraid lest people should idolize the instrument, and not look enough to the glorious Jesus, in whom alone I desire to glory. Congregations consist of many thousands. Never did I see so many Bibles, nor people look into them, when I am expounding, with such attention. Plenty of tears flow from the hearers’ eyes. Their concern appears various ways. I preach twice daily, and expound at private houses at night, and am employed in speaking to souls under distress great part of the day. I have just snatched a few moments to write to my dear brother.”

“*Edinburgh, Sept. 19, 1741.*—Though nature calls for rest, and I am to preach four times to-morrow, yet I cannot go to bed without answering your kind letter.

Blessed be God for any good done at Dundee! Not unto me, not unto me, but unto Jesus Christ be all the glory. Thanks be to God, I can yet send you more glad tidings. At Crieff we had a most precious meeting. At Glasgow I preached ten times. The Lord was with me of a truth. The congregations were very large, as were the contributions; and many were brought under the deepest convictions. With great regret we parted, and with great joy I was received at Edinburgh."

"*Melville, October 5, 1741.*—I have been in Scotland about two months, and think to be here about a fortnight longer. God is pleased to give me health, and to bless my ministrations in an abundant manner. The little children in the hospitals are much wrought upon. Saints have been stirred up and edified; and many others, I believe, are translated from darkness to light, and from the kingdom of Satan to the kingdom of God's dear Son. The good that has been done is inexpressible. I am intimate with three noblemen, and several ladies of quality, who have a great liking for the things of God. I am now writing in an earl's house, surrounded with fine furniture; but, glory be to free grace! my soul is in love only with Jesus: he helps me more and more. I feel but little straitness in preaching, and we have often sweet appearances of the Divine presence in our large assemblies. As to my own soul, it is very comfortable and composed; I feel the power of Jesus more, and the power of indwelling sin less. I am daily waiting for the coming of the Son of God."

"*Dundee, October 21, 1741.*—You will see by the following, what God is still doing for me. On Wednesday night last I left Aberdeen, after preaching there seven times, besides expounding in private. Before I came among them, numbers were much prejudiced against me; but God was pleased to attend

my ministry with such power that all opposition fell before me. Many were brought under great convictions. The magistrates made me free of the city, and the people much regretted my speedy departure from them. On Thursday last I preached at Stonehithe and Benham; on Friday, thrice at Montrose; on Saturday twice, and on Sunday thrice at Brechin, and lectured in the evening at a private house. On Monday I preached twice at Forfar; on Tuesday twice at Cupar in Angus; and once at Dundee, five miles from Cupar, at four in the afternoon, and again at night; here I have also preached twice this day. The presence of God accompanies me more and more. Wherever I have preached, I hear of the good fruits of it, both in convicting sinners and reviving saints. At Dundee, the concern among the hearers is very remarkable. People are still more desirous to hear the word."

"*Edinburgh, October 27, 1741.*—Although it be past eleven at night, yet I cannot miss a post. The Lord is doing very great things here. At Dundee the congregation was very extraordinary. On Sabbath-day, the Lord enabled me to preach four times, and to lecture in the evening at a private house. Yesterday I preached three times, and lectured at night. This day Jesus has enabled me to preach seven times—once in the church, twice at the girls' hospital, once in the park, once at the old people's hospital, and afterwards twice in a private house. Notwithstanding, I am now as fresh as when I arose in the morning. 'They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount on wings like eagles.' It would delight your soul to see the effects of the power of God. Both in the church and park the Lord was with us. The girls in the hospital were exceedingly affected, and so were the standers-by. One of the mistresses told me she is now

awakened in the morning by the voice of prayer and praise; and the master of the boys says, that they meet together every night to sing and pray; and when he goes to their rooms at night to see if all be safe, he generally disturbs them at their devotions. The presence of God at the old people's hospital was really very wonderful. The Holy Spirit seemed to come down like a mighty rushing wind. The mourning of the people was like the weeping in the valley of Hadadrimmon. They appear more and more hungry. Every day I hear of some fresh good wrought by the power of God. I scarcely know how to leave Scotland. I believe I shall think it my duty to pay the inhabitants another visit as soon as possible. May the Lord order my goings in his ways!"

These effects of Whitefield's visit to Scotland were of the happiest nature. The dead, cold Moderatism of the predominant body in the Church, was pervaded by the electric influence of a style of preaching that commanded and compelled attention; the Evangelical party was encouraged and strengthened; and the Secession itself, although he refused to shut himself up within its pale, found its best religious principles enforced by so effective and yet so disinterested an advocate. It was the commencement of a better day in the religious history of Scotland, the blessings of which we still continue to enjoy. The national cautiousness seemed for the time to be prostrated beneath the thunder of this Boanerges, and all its latent fervour called forth, so that amongst every denomination he found not only willing but enthusiastic auditors. And it was not merely upon the lower and middle classes that these impressions were produced. The rich and the noble were in several cases among the fast friends of this churchless itinerant Methodist, among whom he numbered the Marquis of Lothian,

the Earl of Leven, Lord Rae, and the Ladies Frances Gardiner, Jane Nimmo, and Lady Dirleton.

We cannot better close this account of Whitefield's visit to Scotland, than by the following letter written by Willison of Dundee to a friend in Edinburgh, on the 8th of October 1741:—

“HONOURED SIR,—I am favoured with yours, wherein you desire my thoughts of Mr Whitefield, and an account of his labours and success with us. Although my sentiments may be little regarded by many, yet when you put me to it, I think I am bound to do justice to the character of this stranger, which I see few willing to do. I am not much surprised, though the devil, and all he can influence, be up in arms against the youth, seeing he makes such bold and vigorous attacks upon his kingdom and strongholds. As you, sir, do observe it to be with you, so it is with us. He is hated and spoken against by all the Episcopal party, and even the most of our clergy do labour to diminish and expose him. This is not to be much wondered at, seeing his incessant labours for Christ and souls is such a strong reproof to them; besides, what he says publicly against the sending out of unconverted ministers, and their preaching an unknown Christ: this must be galling to carnal men. I look upon this youth as raised up of God for special service, and spirited for making new and singular attempts, for promoting true Christianity in the world, and for reviving it where it is decayed; and I see him wonderfully fitted and strengthened, both in body and mind, for going through with his projects, amidst the greatest discouragements and difficulties. I see the man to be all of a piece—his life and conversation to be a transcript of his sermons. It is truly a rare thing to see so much of God about any one man. To see one so eminent for humility, in the midst of applause; for meekness and

patience, under reproaches and injuries; for love to enemies; for desire to glorify Christ, and save souls; contentment in a mean lot, acquiescing in the will of God in all cases; never fretting under any dispensation, but still praising and giving thanks for every thing. It is rare to see in a man such a flaming fire for God and against sin, when in the pulpit; and yet most easy and calm in conversing with men out of it; careful not to give offence to them, and yet never courting the favour of any. God has bestowed a large measure of gifts and graces upon him for the work he is engaged in, and has made him a chosen vessel, to carry his name among the Gentiles, and to revive his work in several other Churches. Oh, that God may order his coming to poor Scotland, in such a cloudy time, for the same end! And who knows but God might be entreated, if we could wrestle with him, notwithstanding all our provocations! Things appeared most unlikely in other places, some while ago, where now Christ is riding in triumph, going forth conquering and to conquer. This worthy youth is singularly fitted to do the work of an evangelist; and I have been long of opinion, that it would be for the advantage of the world were this still to be a standing office in the Church. And seeing the Lord has stirred him up to venture his life, reputation, and his all for Christ; refuse the best benefices in his own country, and run all hazards by sea and land, and travel so many thousand miles to proclaim the glory of Christ, and riches of his free grace, of which he himself is a monument; and especially, seeing God has honoured him to do all this with such surprising success among sinners of all ranks and persuasions, and even many of the most notorious, in awakening and turning them to the Lord, I truly think we are also bound to honour him, and to esteem him highly in love for his Master's and for his

work's sake, according to 1 Thess. v. 13. And for those who vilify and oppose him, I wish they would even notice a Gamaliel's words, Acts v. : 'Let him alone, lest haply ye be found to fight against God.' Or rather, that they would regard the apostle Peter's words, apologizing for his going in with the uncircumcised (Acts xi.) when the Holy Ghost fell upon them : 'What was I, that I could withstand God?' I have myself been witness to the Holy Ghost falling upon him and his hearers oftener than once, I do not say in a miraculous, though in an observable manner. Yea, I have already seen the desirable fruits thereof in not a few ; and hope, through the divine blessing on the seed sown, to see more. Many here are blessing God for sending him to this country, though Satan has raged much against it.

"The Lord is a sovereign agent, and may raise up the instruments of his glory from what Churches or places he pleases ; and he glorifies his grace the more, when he does it from those societies when and whence it could be least expected. Though Mr Whitefield be ordained, according to his education, a minister of the Church of England, yet we are to regard him as one whom God has raised up to witness against the corruptions of that Church, whom God is still enlightening and causing to make advances towards us. He has already conformed to us, both in doctrine and worship, and lies open to light to conform to us in other points. He is thoroughly a Calvinist, and sound in the doctrines of free grace, in the doctrine of original sin, the new birth, justification by Christ, the necessity of imputed righteousness, the operations of the Holy Ghost, &c. These he makes his great theme, drives the point home to the conscience, and God attends it with great power. And as God has enlightened him gradually in these

things, so he is still ready to receive more light; and so soon as he gets it, he is most frank in declaring it.

“God, by owning him so wonderfully, is pleased to give a rebuke to our intemperate bigotry and party-zeal, and to tell us, that neither circumcision nor uncircumcision availeth any thing, but the new creature.

“*P.S.*—Many with us are for preferring ministers according to the party they are of; but commend me to a pious, Christ-exalting, and soul-winning minister, whatever be his denomination. Such are ministers of Christ's sending, and of such he saith: ‘He that receiveth you receiveth me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth me;’ which is a rule of duty to us.”

PART III.

FROM HIS VISIT TO SCOTLAND IN 1741, TO HIS RETURN
FROM AMERICA IN 1752.

THIS visit which Whitefield paid to Scotland so endeared its people to his affections, that he left them with regret, and resolved to console himself with a speedy return. On leaving Edinburgh, which he did towards the end of October, 1741, he visited Wales, where he married a widow considerably older than himself; but his heart was so devoted to the great work which he had on hand, that, although he proved a most affectionate husband, he does not seem at any time to have considered marriage as the most important step of man's existence. Almost immediately after that event, therefore, which so often changes the whole current of a man's pursuits, he resumed his wonted labours in Bristol and London. We would gladly quote from his own letters the success which attended his efforts in both of these important quarters; but our limits will only permit the most remarkable of them, which occurred in the metropolis, to be fully mentioned. This was his preaching in Moorfields—and not on Sabbaths or usual week-days, as before, but on the days when the annual fair was held, and when the thousands that thronged it were wholly given up to frantic glee, debauchery, and drunkenness. Such were these annual Saturnalia at the time, and even till late years, both at Moorfields and Smithfield. To preach on such an oc-

casion was a perilous experiment, where the requital from such a crowd, in the middle of the eighteenth century, must be a shower of insults and blows, if it did not rise to absolute martyrdom on the spot. The only parallel to such an event has been given, not in history, but in allegory—in Bunyan's account of Vanity Fair. Let us now hear the particulars of this new and daring experiment from Whitefield himself.

“To MR L——.

“*London, May 11, 1742.*

“With this I send you a few out of the many notes I have received from persons who were convicted, converted, or comforted in Moorfields, during the late holidays. For many weeks I found my heart much pressed to determine to venture to preach there at this season, when, if ever, Satan's children keep up their annual rendezvous. I must inform you, that Moorfields is a large spacious place, given, as I have been told, by one Madam Moore, on purpose for all sorts of people to divert themselves in. For many years past, from one end to the other, booths of all kinds have been erected for mountebanks, players, puppet-shows, and such like. With a heart bleeding with compassion for so many thousands led captive by the devil at his will, on Whit-Monday, at six o'clock in the morning, attended by a large congregation of praying people, I ventured to lift up a standard amongst them in the name of Jesus of Nazareth. Perhaps there were about ten thousand in waiting, not for me, but for Satan's instruments to amuse them. Glad was I to find that I had for once, as it were, got the start of the devil. I mounted my field pulpit: almost all flocked immediately around it. I preached on these words, ‘As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so shall the Son of Man be lifted up,’ &c. They gazed, they listened, they wept;

and I believe that many felt themselves stung with deep conviction for their past sins. All was hushed and solemn. Being thus encouraged, I ventured out again at noon; but what a scene! The fields, the whole fields seemed, in a bad sense of the word, all white, ready not for the Redeemer's, but Beelzebub's harvest. All his agents were in full motion—drummers, trumpeters, merry-andrews, masters of puppet-shows, exhibitors of wild beasts, players, &c., &c.—all busy in entertaining their respective auditories. I suppose there could not be less than twenty or thirty thousand people. My pulpit was fixed on the opposite side, and immediately, to their great mortification, they found the number of their attendants sadly lessened. Judging that, like St Paul, I should now be called, as it were, to fight with beasts at Ephesus, I preached from these words: 'Great is Diana of the Ephesians.' You may easily guess that there was some noise among the craftsmen, and that I was honoured with having a few stones, dirt, rotten eggs, and pieces of dead cats, thrown at me, whilst engaged in calling them from their favourite but lying vanities. My soul was indeed among lions; but far the greatest part of my congregation, which was very large, seemed for a while to be turned into lambs. This encouraged me to give notice that I would preach again at six o'clock in the evening. I came, I saw, but what?—thousands and thousands more than before, if possible, still more deeply engaged in their unhappy diversions; but some thousands amongst them waiting as earnestly to hear the gospel. This Satan could not brook. One of his choicest servants was exhibiting, trumpeting on a large stage; but as soon as the people saw me in my black robes and my pulpit, I think all to a man left him and ran to me. For a while I was enabled to lift up my voice like a trumpet,

and many heard the joyful sound. God's people kept praying, and the enemy's agents made a kind of roaring at some distance from our camp. At length they approached nearer, and the merry-andrew (attended by others, who complained that they had taken many pounds less that day on account of my preaching) got upon a man's shoulders, and advancing near the pulpit, attempted to slash me with a long heavy whip several times, but always with the violence of his motion tumbled down. Soon afterwards, they got a recruiting sergeant with his drum, &c., to pass through the congregation. I gave the word of command, and ordered that way might be made for the king's officer. The ranks opened, while all marched quietly through, and then closed again. Finding these efforts to fail, a large body quite on the opposite side assembled together, and having got a large pole for their standard, advanced towards us with steady and formidable steps, till they came very near the skirts of our hearing, praying, and almost undaunted congregation. I saw, gave warning, and prayed to the Captain of our salvation for present support and deliverance. He heard and answered; for just as they approached us with looks full of resentment, I know not by what accident, they quarrelled among themselves, threw down their staff, and went their way; leaving, however, many of their company behind, who, before we had done, I trust were brought over to join the besieged party. I think I continued in praying, preaching, and singing (for the noise was too great at times to preach), about three hours. We then retired to the Tabernacle, with my pockets full of notes from persons brought under concern, and read them amidst the praises and spiritual acclamations of thousands, who joined with the holy angels in rejoicing that so many sinners were snatched, in such an unex-

pected, unlikely place and manner, out of the very jaws of the devil. This was the beginning of the Tabernacle Society. Three hundred and fifty awakened souls were received in one day, and I believe the number of notes exceeded a thousand; but I must have done, believing you want to retire to join in mutual praise and thanksgiving to God and the Lamb, with yours, &c. G. W."

"TO THE SAME.

London, May 15, 1742.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,—Fresh matter of praise! bless ye the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously. The battle that was begun on Monday, was not quite over till Wednesday evening, though the scene of action was a little shifted. Being strongly invited, and a pulpit being prepared for me by an honest Quaker, a coal merchant, I ventured on Tuesday evening to preach at Mary-le-bone fields—a place almost as much frequented by boxers, gamesters, and such like, as Moorfields. A vast concourse was assembled together, and as soon as I got into the field pulpit, their countenance bespoke the enmity of their hearts against the preacher. I opened with these words:—'I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.' I preached in great jeopardy; for the pulpit being high, and the supports not well fixed in the ground, it tottered every time I moved, and numbers of enemies strove to push my friends against the supporters, in order to throw me down. But the Redeemer stayed my soul on himself, therefore I was not much moved, unless with compassion for those to whom I was delivering my Master's message; which I had reason to think, by the strong impressions that were made, was welcome to many. But Satan did not like thus to be attacked in his strongholds, and I narrowly escaped with my life:

for as I was passing from the pulpit to the coach, I felt my wig and hat to be almost off. I turned about, and observed a sword just touching my temples. A young rake, as I afterwards found, was determined to stab me; but a gentleman, seeing the sword thrusting near me, struck it up with his cane, and so the destined victim providentially escaped. Such an attempt excited abhorrence; the enraged multitude soon seized him, and had it not been for one of my friends, who received him into his house, he must have undergone a severe discipline. The next day I renewed my attack in Moorfields; but, would you think it? after they found that pelting, noise, and threatenings, would not do, one of the merry-andrews got up into a tree very near the pulpit, and behaved in such a disgraceful manner as quite abashed the serious part of my auditory; whilst hundreds of another stamp, instead of rising up to pull down the unhappy wretch, expressed their approbation by repeated laughs. I must own at first it gave me a shock; I thought Satan had now almost outdone himself; but recovering my spirits, I appealed to all, since now they had such a spectacle before them, whether I had wronged human nature in saying, after pious Bishop Hall, 'that man, when left to himself, is half a devil, and half a beast;' or as the great Mr Law expressed himself, 'a motley mixture of the beast and devil.' Silence and attention being thus gained, I concluded with a warm exhortation, and closed our festival enterprises in reading fresh notes that were put up, praising and blessing God amidst thousands at the Tabernacle, for what he had done for precious souls, and on account of the deliverances he had wrought out for me and his people. I could enlarge; but being about to embark in the Mary and Ann for Scotland, I must hasten to subscribe myself, yours, &c. G.W."

“*P.S.*—I cannot help adding, that several little boys and girls who were fond of sitting round me on the pulpit, while I preached, and handing to me people’s notes, though they were often pelted with eggs, dirt, &c., thrown at me, never once gave way; but, on the contrary, every time I was struck, turned up their little weeping eyes, and seemed to wish they could receive the blows for me. God make them in their growing years great and living martyrs for him, who out of the mouth of babes and suckling perfects praise!”

Amidst these important movements and trying adventures, however, Whitefield still looked fondly northward, and was eager to return to Scotland; while the longing of many there to receive and welcome him once more, kept pace with his own wishes. He therefore embarked, and arrived at Leith on June 3, 1742. On the February previous, the wonderful movement at Cambuslang had commenced, to which his first visit to Scotland had given an important impulse; and his second visit was at least equally effective. In consequence of pressing invitations, he went to Cambuslang, after having preached at Glasgow in the morning, and delivered three discourses to the listening thousands, continuing his labours till near midnight. For a full account of this visit, however, we refer to the “Revival of Cambuslang,” which we have already published in our series. But it was not to that place alone that he confined himself. At Paisley, Irvine, and Mearns; at Cumbernauld and Falkirk; at Greenock, Kilbride, Stevenston, and Kilmarnock, as well as other towns and districts, he was equally indefatigable—so much so, indeed, that after a day’s incessant labour, he was often faint, and apparently expiring. But no sooner did a claim for new exertion arrive, than new strength was given him, and he ascended the pulpit

with full reliance upon his Divine Master. And there, the style and spirit of his oratory were so very different from the logical and didactic sermons of the Scottish preachers, that the auditories were captivated—prostrated in an instant. Well says Cornelius Winter, in speaking of him: “It was not without great pathos, you may be sure, he treated upon the sufferings of the Saviour. He was ready at that kind of painting—which frequently answered the end of *real* scenery. As though Gethsemane were within sight, he would say, stretching out his hand—‘Look yonder! What is it I see? It is my agonizing Lord!’ And as though it were no difficult matter to catch the *sound* of the Saviour praying, he would exclaim, ‘Hark, hark!—do you hear?’ You may suppose, that as this occurred frequently, the efficacy of it was destroyed:—but no; though we often knew what was coming, it was as new to us as though we had never heard it before.”

With the end of October, Whitefield again returned to London; but even there he still cherished the affectionate recollection of those warm hearts he had left. In one letter he says: “Wonderfully great things did the Lord perform for me and his people in Scotland. The concern expressed at my departure was really unspeakable.” And in another: “O Edinburgh, Edinburgh! I think I shall never forget thee. Surely many can say, ‘Our fellowship has been with the Father, and with the Son; and now, though absent, we may have fellowship together in and through the Eternal Spirit.’” He wrote more fully on the same subject to a friend in Worcester, to whom he announced the opposition that was mixed with his success: “In Scotland, my reception was extraordinary. It was almost wholly among the people and clergy of the Kirk, with many of the highest rank. I was very in-

timate with several persons of quality, who, I trust, have been awakened to a true sense of the divine life, and enabled to count all things but dung and dross for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus their Lord. My chief opposition was from the dear Messrs Erskine, and the Associate Presbytery. They first invited me to Scotland; but finding I would preach for the ministers of the Established Church, as well as for them, they spake all manner of evil against me falsely, and imputed all the work in Scotland and New England to the agency of the evil spirit. I pitied, prayed for, and loved them; and do so still."

Whitefield's labours were immediately resumed in London; and not only there, but also in Gloucestershire, Dursley, and Bristol: after which he travelled through a great part of Wales. In this last journey, he spent three weeks, rode four hundred miles, visited seven counties and thirteen towns, and preached forty sermons. We can only quote from his letters a few of these instances:—

"*Swansea, April 12, 1743.*—I hope all is well with you. Great things are doing in Wales. An effectual door is opened for preaching the everlasting gospel. Yesterday I preached at Neath (seven miles from this place), from a balcony, to about three thousand souls in the street. The Lord was with me of a truth. This morning I preached here to about four thousand with great power. About one I preached at Harbrook, four miles off; and am now returned to preach here again. Our Saviour has prepared the way before him. O free grace!—Ever yours,
G. W."

"*Larn, April 15, 1743.*—On Tuesday I preached, and the Lord was with me. In the evening I went to Llanelthy, eight miles from Swansea. There I preached twice on Wednesday with great power to a large con-

gregation; and in the evening near Aberquille, five miles from thence. On Thursday I preached at Carmarthen, one of the greatest and most polite places in Wales—in the morning from the top of the cross; in the evening from a table near it. It was the great sessions. The justices desired I would stay till they rose, and they would come. Accordingly they did, and many thousands more; and several people of quality. Jesus was much with me, and I hope much good work was done. Several sent for me to their houses.—Ever yours,
G. W.”

“*Haverfordwest, April 17, 1743.*—Since I left Larn, from whence I wrote to you, the Lord has dealt most bountifully with me. I went that evening to Narbatt, where I preached to some thousands with great power. On Saturday I preached at Newton, and afterwards at Jefferson to several thousand souls, very like the Kingswood colliers. This morning I preached at Llassivran, and had as it were a Moorfields congregation; and this afternoon I preached to about the same number near this town. I also read prayers. Where I have been, the people call loudly again. A most effectual door is opened in South Wales.—Yours, &c.

“G. W.”

“*Carmarthen, April 20, 1743.*—Since I wrote from Haverfordwest, I preached yesterday, at eight in the morning, to about eight thousand people in this place, and in the afternoon to several thousands at Narbatt, both times with great power. This morning I preached at Larn, and coming over in the ferry, had the unexpected compliment paid me, of one ship firing several guns, and of some others hoisting their flags. This afternoon I preached at a little town called Kidwilly, to a large congregation; and came this evening here.—Ever yours,
G. W.”

On returning to London, he resumed his daring experiment at Moorfields during the holidays, and with such success, that thousands repaired to this most unwanted and perilous ministry, and large collections were made from the miscellaneous congregations for his Orphan School in America. He then itinerated through different counties in the midst of winter, and was received with acceptance and welcome. It was not, however, always in peace that he was thus permitted to labour; and after much menacing, the following interruption occurred, which might have been attended with still more serious consequences.

“Hampton, July 25, 1743.

“MY DEAR FRIEND,—On Thursday I came here, and expected to be attacked; because I had heard that the mob which had been so outrageous towards you and others for so long time, had now threatened, that if ever I came there again, they would have a piece of my black gown to make aprons with. No sooner had I entered the town, but I saw and heard the signals, such as blowing of horns, and ringing of bells, for gathering the mob. My soul was kept quite easy. I preached in a large grass plat from these words: ‘And seeing the grace of God, he exhorted them with full purpose of heart to cleave unto the Lord;’ and as it happened, I finished my sermon and pronounced the blessing, just as the ring-leader of the mob broke in upon us; which I soon perceived, disappointed and grieved them very much. One of them, as I was coming down from the table, called me coward; but I told him they should hear from me another way. I then went into the house, and preached upon the staircase to a large number of serious souls; but these real troublers of Israel soon came in to mock and mob us. But feeling what I never felt before, as you know I have very little

natural courage, strength and power being given me from above, I leaped down stairs, and all ran away before me. However, they continued making a noise about the house till midnight, abusing the poor people as they went home; and, as we hear, they broke one young lady's arm in two places. Brother A—— they threw a second time into the pool; in which operation he received a deep wound in his leg. John C——'s life (that second Bunyan) was much threatened. Young W—— H—— they wheeled in a barrow to the pool's side, lamed his brother, and grievously hurt several others. Hearing that two or three clergymen were in the town, one of whom was a justice of the peace, I went to them; but, alas! I seemed unto them as one that mocked, and instead of redressing, they laid the cause of all the grievances at my door; but, by the help of my God, I shall still persist in preaching myself, and in encouraging those (as I know no law of God or man against it) who I believe are truly moved by the Holy Ghost. As I came out from the clergymen, two of the unhappy mobbers were particularly insolent, and huzza'd us out of town. 'Let us rejoice and be exceedingly glad,' for now I humbly hope, I begin to be a disciple of Jesus Christ; since to suffer for, as well as to believe and preach his precious truths, and own his despised people, is now given to yours, &c.

“G. W.”

Passing over the various movements which occurred in his itineracy, we come to his labours in the important town of Birmingham, and the neighbouring villages. His letter is dated from that town, on 31st December 1743.

“MY DEAR FRIEND,—What do you think? Since my last, I have stolen a whole day to despatch some private business: however, in the evening I expounded to a

great room full of people, who would rush into my lodgings, whether I would or not. On Sunday morning at eight I preached in the street to about a thousand with much freedom. I then went to church and received the sacrament, and afterwards preached to several thousands in the street. The hearers seemed much pleased and delighted. It happened, by the providence of God, that no minister would come to preach at a house at Wedgbury, where a weekly lecture used to be kept up: I was therefore earnestly entreated to come. I went, after my afternoon's preaching at Birmingham, and preached there at six in the evening to many hundreds in the street. It is about six miles from Birmingham. The word came with power, and only one or two made a noise at a distance. Afterwards we had a precious meeting in private. The power of the dear Redeemer was much amongst us. The person with whom I lodged was a widow fearing God. Her husband was an eminent saint, and had been refreshed by my writings, particularly my journals, as had many others that I met with. On Monday morning about eight I preached to a large company in a field. By eleven I returned to Birmingham, and preached to many thousands on a common near the town. The soldiers were exercising; but the officers hearing that I was coming to preach, dismissed them, and promised that no disturbance should be made. All was quiet, and a blessed time we had. In the afternoon about three I preached again to about the same company, with the same success. Then I rode to Wedgbury and preached there, and afterwards exhorted: but I cannot well tell you what a sweet melting time there was. Many were in tears. About one I went to bed exceedingly happy. In the morning I broke up some fallow ground at a place called Mare-Green, about two miles from Wedgbury. Much mob-

bing had been there against Mr Wesley's friends. A few poor souls began to insult me, but Jesus strengthened me much. Several clods were thrown; one of them fell on my head, and another struck my fingers, while I was in prayer. A sweet gospel spirit was given to me. I preached again at Birmingham to larger auditories than before, about eleven the same morning and three in the afternoon. In the evening I expounded twice in a large room—once to the rich, and once to the poor, and went to rest happier than the night before. In the morning I took my leave of the Birmingham people, who wept much and were indeed deeply affected, and showed great concern at my departure."

With the return of the following summer Whitefield prepared to revisit America, and accordingly he went to Portsmouth to take his passage; but the captain to whom he applied would not receive him as a passenger, lest he should "spoil his sailors!" The same dread of a Methodist on board seemed to hold good with captains of merchant vessels in those days, which is now confined to clergymen and cats. Whitefield accordingly repaired to Plymouth, where he found a bolder or more intelligent captain, who readily engaged to take him. Here, however, his troubles were not yet ended; and on his arrival at Plymouth, the following singular event occurred:—

"A report being spread that I was come, a great number of people assembled upon the Hoe (a large green for walks and diversions), and somebody brought out a bear and a drum; but I did not come until the following evening, when, under pretence of a hue-and-cry, several broke into the room where I lodged at the inn, and disturbed me very much. I then betook myself to private lodgings, and being gone to rest, after preaching

to a large congregation, and visiting the French prisoners, the good woman of the house came and told me that a well-dressed gentleman desired to speak with me. Imagining that it was some Nicodemite, I desired he might be brought up. He came and sat down by my bed-side, told me he was a lieutenant of a man-of-war, congratulated me on the success of my ministry, and expressed himself much concerned for being detained from hearing me. He then asked me if I knew him. I answered, No. He replied, his name was Cadogan. I rejoined, that I had seen one Mr Cadogan, who was an officer at Georgia, about a fortnight ago at Bristol. Upon this, he immediately rose up, uttering the most abusive language, calling me dog, rogue, villain, &c., and beat me most unmercifully with his gold-headed cane. As you know I have not much natural courage, guess how surprised I was; being apprehensive that he intended to shoot or stab me, I underwent all the fears of a sudden violent death. But, as it providentially happened, my hostess and her daughter hearing me cry murder, rushed into the room and seized him by the collar; however, he immediately disengaged himself from them, and repeated his blows upon me. The cry of murder was repeated also, which putting him into some terror, he made towards the chamber door, from whence the good woman pushed him down stairs. About the bottom of which, a second cried out: 'Take courage, I am ready to help you;' accordingly, whilst the other was escaping, he rushed up, and finding one of the women coming down, took her by the heels and threw her upon the stairs, by which her back was almost broken. By this time the neighbourhood was alarmed. Unwilling to add to it, I desired the doors might be shut, and so betook myself to rest, not without reflecting how indispensably necessary it was for Christians

and Christian ministers to be always upon their guard, and with what great propriety we are taught to pray in our excellent Litany: 'From sudden,' that is, from violent and unprepared 'death, good Lord, deliver us.'"

In a letter written a few days after, he adds the following particulars: "It seems, that four gentlemen came to the house of one of my particular friends, kindly inquiring after me, and desired to know where I lodged, that they might come and pay their respects. He directed them. Soon afterwards I received a letter, informing me that the writer was a nephew to Mr S——, an eminent attorney at New York; that he had the pleasure of supping with me at his uncle's house, and desired my company to sup with him and a few more friends at a tavern. I sent him word, that it was not customary for me to sup out at taverns, but should be glad of his company, out of respect to his uncle, to eat a morsel with him at my lodgings. He came; we supped; and I observed that he frequently looked around him, and seemed very absent; but having no suspicion, I continued in conversation with him and my other friends till we parted. This, I now find, was to have been the assassin; and being interrogated by his other companions on his return to the tavern about what he had done, he answered, that being used so civilly, he had not the heart to touch me. Upon which, as I am informed, the person who assaulted me laid a wager of ten guineas that he would do my business for me. Some say that they took his sword from him; which I suppose they did, for I only saw and felt the weight of his cane. The next morning I was to expound at a private house, and then to set out for Biddeford. Some urged me to stay and prosecute; but being better employed, I went on my intended journey, was greatly blessed in preaching

the everlasting gospel, and upon my return was well paid for what I had suffered; curiosity having led perhaps two thousand more than ordinary to see and hear a man that had like to have been murdered in his bed. Thus all things tend to the furtherance of the gospel, and work together for good to those that love God."

Even this outrage, and the delay which he afterwards suffered before the vessel sailed, were singularly blessed, by the opportunities they afforded him of extending his efforts, both in Plymouth and its neighbourhood, as the following extracts from his letters will show:—

"*Plymouth, July 26, 1744.*—I am still here waiting for the promised convoy, and, as I humbly hope, really waiting for the convoy of death to carry me to Abraham's bosom. Could you think it? I have been preaching a confirmation sermon. Do you ask me where? In a Quaker's field. As I saw thousands flocked to the church to have the bishop's hands imposed upon them, I thought it not improper to let them have a word of exhortation suitable to the occasion. I have also made an elopement to Kingsbridge, where I preached to many thousands a few days ago. It was really a most solemn occasion. A calling, inviting, persuasive gift was vouchsafed me. The hearts of the auditory seemed to be bowed as the heart of one man. Many tears were shed; but I was obliged to ride off as soon as my discourse was ended, and to return hither in the night. But, blessed be God, our night was as it were turned into day. I was accompanied by several old and new converts, and we conversed in some degree as became persons who ought to be employed every hour and every moment in trimming their lamps to be ready for the midnight cry, 'Behold, the Bridegroom cometh!'"

"*Plymouth, July 27.*—Matters go on better and better here. I begin to think myself in London. We have

our regular morning meetings; and our Lord is pleased to grace them with his presence. We are looking out for a place proper for a society, and to expound in. People come daily to me, especially from the Dock, under convictions. Some, I believe, have really closed with Christ; and here are several aged persons perfectly made young again. We are just now entered upon our singing hours. The souls come forward greatly in many respects, and friends are more and more hearty. Fresh news from Kingsbridge of souls being awakened; but I am kept close prisoner on account of the convoy."

"*Plymouth, July 29.*—Our Lord has been giving us blessings in drops, but now he is sending them in showers. This morning we have had a most precious meeting. Perhaps more good hath been done by that one sermon, than by all I have preached before. When God will work, who shall hinder? The wind is yet against us. Our Lord detains me here for wise reasons."

At last, after a passage of eleven weeks, Whitefield arrived at New England, where the "New Light," as the religious people were called, had been praying for his arrival. On his landing, he was thus hailed by a worthy but eccentric minister of York: "Sir, you are, first, welcome to America; secondly, to New England; thirdly, to all faithful ministers in New England; fourthly, to all the good people in New England; fifthly, to all the good people of York; and, sixthly, and lastly, to me, dear sir, less than the least of all."

It was in a miserable state of health that Whitefield arrived in York. A temporary recovery extracted from him a promise to preach for the eccentric welcomer above mentioned; but when the time arrived, his condition was more dangerous than ever. He says: "I caught cold, immediately relapsed, and was taken, as every one thought, with death. in my dear friend Mr Sherburne's

house. My pains returned ; but what gave most concern was, that notice had been given of my being to preach the next evening. A great number of ministers and people flocked to hear ; three physicians attended me, and Colonel Pepperel with many others were so kind as to pay me a visit and sympathize with me. God dealt so bountifully with me, that I was enabled to tell the colonel in particular, from heart experience, that I felt a divine life distinct from my animal life, which made me as it were to laugh at pain ; this made me determine to get up and preach, though the general and all had left me, and the person appointed to lecture in my stead was just going out of the house. My dear York physician was then about to administer a medicine. I on a sudden cried : ‘ Doctor, my pains are suspended : by the help of God I’ll go and preach, and then come home and die.’ With some difficulty I reached the pulpit. All looked quite surprised, as though they saw one risen from the dead. Indeed, I was as pale as death, and told them ‘ they must look upon me as a dying man ; that I came to bear my dying testimony to the truths I had formerly preached amongst them, and to the invisible realities of another world.’ Nature (by my continuing an hour in my discourse) was almost quite exhausted ; but, oh, what life ! what power spread all around ! All seemed to be melted, and were drowned in tears. The cry after me when I left the pulpit, was like the cry of sincere mourners when attending the funeral of a dear departed friend. Upon my coming home, I was laid on a bed upon the ground near the fire, and I heard them say, ‘ He is gone ;’ but still you find by this I am alive, and if spared to be instrumental in making any poor dead soul alive to God, I shall rejoice that the all-wise Redeemer has kept me out of heaven a little longer.”

From York, Whitefield travelled to Boston; but here he found the clergy opposed to him. This feeling on their part, however, seems to have produced a totally opposite effect on the minds of their congregations. "Finding," he says, "some of their pastors without cause shy of me, they have passed votes of invitation for me to preach in the pulpits, and some time ago prevailed upon me, as they heard I had done in Scotland, to set up a lecture at six o'clock in the morning. Not expecting a very great auditory, I opened a lecture in one of the smallest meetings, upon these words, 'And they came early in the morning to hear him;' but how was I disappointed! Such great numbers flocked to hear, that I was obliged for the future to make use of two of their very largest places of worship, where I believe seldom less than two or three thousand attentive hearers hung as it were upon me, to hear the word preached. I began with the 1st of Genesis, and have now lectured in order, till I am almost come to the story of Abraham sending his servant to fetch a wife for his son Isaac. Many, I trust, have been made willing to say: 'I will go with the God-man, even Isaac's God.' It is impossible to describe the eagerness and punctuality of these early visitants. To see so many hundreds of both sexes neatly dressed, walking or riding so early along the streets to get food for their souls, has feasted my own heart. The Pharaohs who used to say, 'Ye are idle, ye are idle,' now are struck dumb: for lecture, and family prayer, and breakfast, are now over in many houses before the sun is suffered to come into others' windows; and it is now become almost a common proverb, 'That between tar-water and early rising, the physicians will have no business.' One morning the crowd was so great that I was obliged to go in at the window. The high sheriff, who was once most forward in persecuting good

Mr D——t, being a little convinced under the word, accompanied me, and when he put his head in at the window after me, the people were ready to cry out, ‘Is Saul also among the prophets?’”

The following incident affords an individual illustration of the effects of Whitefield’s preaching when at Boston. “Good Mr P—— told me some time ago, that I should shortly be favoured with the company of a very pensive and uncommon person; a man of good parts, ready wit, and lively imagination, and who had made it his business, in order to furnish matter for preaching over a bottle, to come and hear, and then carry away scraps of my sermons, which it seems were to serve as texts or theses for his tavern harangues. A few nights ago he came for this purpose to Dr S——’s meeting. Upon my coming in, he crowded after amongst the people, and having got sufficient matter to work upon, as he thought, attempted to go out; but being pent in on every side, he found his endeavours fruitless. Obligated thus to stay, and looking up to me, waiting for some fresh matter for ridicule, God was pleased to prick him to the heart. He came to Mr P—— full of horror, confessed his crimes, and longed to ask my pardon, but was afraid to see me. Mr P—— encouraged him to venture. This morning, hearing somebody knock at the parlour door, I arose, and upon opening the door, by the paleness, pensiveness, and horror of his countenance, guessed I had met with the person of whom Mr P—— had apprized me. Immediately he cried, with a low but plaintive voice, ‘Sir, can you forgive me?’ I smiled and said, ‘Yes, sir, very readily.’ ‘Indeed!’ replied he; ‘Sir, you cannot, when I tell you all.’ I then asked him to sit down; and judging that he had sufficiently felt the lashes of the law, I preached to him the gospel.”

It was not, however, merely as an advocate of what is gentle and peaceable that Whitefield was during this period employed in America. A struggle was going on in which the question at issue was, whether the French or British influence should finally predominate in that hemisphere; and the object at this time at stake was Cape Breton, which the English Government sought to wrest from the enemy. And what had Whitefield to do with either France or Cape Breton? But was he not an Englishman, as well as a minister of the gospel? His friend Colonel Pepperel, who, on account of his success, was afterwards created a Baronet, was appointed commander of the expedition; and the manner in which Whitefield's sanction was obtained to it, as well as the success with which it was crowned, are fully contained in the following letter:—

“ TO MRS ———.

“ *Boston, July 29, 1745.*

“ DEAR MADAM,—You will be surprised to hear that a messenger of the Prince of Peace, especially such a weak creature as I am, should beat up to arms. No doubt you have judged me, as well you may; but Providence seemed to force me to it. You have now heard of the Cape Breton expedition, which was carried on and finished with the greatest secrecy and expedition here, before it could be scarcely known to you at home. Worthy Colonel P—— was fixed upon to command. The day before he accepted of the commission, he purposed to dine with me to ask my advice. I told him, ‘that I hoped, if he did undertake it, he would beg of the Lord God of armies to give him a single eye; that the means proposed to take Louisburgh, in the eye of human reason, were no more adequate to the end, than the sounding of rams’ horns to blow down Jericho; that the eyes of all would be upon him; and if he should

not succeed in the intended enterprise, the widows and orphans of the slain soldiers would be like lions robbed of their whelps; but if it pleased God to give him success, envy would not suffer him to take the glory; and therefore he should take great care that his views were disinterested, and then I doubted not, if Providence really called him, he would find his strength proportioned to the day, and would return more than conqueror.' He thanked me, and his lady having given her free consent, he commenced General. The sound was now, To arms! to arms! New recruits were eagerly sought after, and my worthy friend Mr S—— was appointed one of the commissaries. Being at his house, he told me one evening that he was preparing the flag, and that I must give him a motto, and that the people must know it too. I absolutely refused, urging that it would be acting out of character; he replied, that the expedition, he believed, was of God, and that if I did not encourage it, many of the serious people would not enlist. I still refused; he desired me to consider, and sleep upon it, and to give him my answer in the morning. I retired, I prayed, I slept; and upon his renewing his request in the morning, I told him, that since he was so urgent, and as I did not know but divine Providence might intend to give us Louisburgh, therefore he might take this motto, '*Nil desperandum Christo duce.*' Upon this, great numbers enlisted, and before their embarkation, their officers desired me to give them a sermon. I preached from these words: 'As many as were distressed, as many as were discontented, as many as were in debt, came to David, and he became a captain over them.' Officers, soldiers, and others attended. I spiritualized the subject, and told them how distressed sinners came to Jesus Christ the Son of David; and in my application exhorted the

soldiers to behave like the soldiers of David, and the officers to act like David's worthies; then, I made no manner of doubt, but we should receive good news from Cape Breton. After this, I preached to the general himself, who asked me if I would not be one of his chaplains: I told him, 'I should think it an honour, but believed, as I generally preached three times a-day in various places to large congregations, I could do my king, my country, and my God, more service, by stirring up the people to pray, and thereby strengthen his and his soldiers' hands.' Through divine grace, I was enabled to persist in this practice for some weeks; but at last news arrived that the case was desperate. Letter upon letter came from one officer and another to those who planned this expedition, and did not know the strength of the fortress. I smiled, and told my friends that I believed now we should have Louisburgh;—that all having confessed their helplessness, God would now reveal his arm, and make our extremity his opportunity. I was not disappointed of my hope; for one day having taken a weeping leave of dear Boston, and being about to preach a few miles out of the town, news was brought that Louisburgh was taken. Numbers flocked with great joy from all quarters, and I immediately preached to them a thanksgiving sermon from these words: 'By this I know that thou favourest me, since thou hast not permitted mine enemies to triumph over me.' Here ends, dear madam, my beating to arms. It is left to you to judge as you please of, dear madam, yours, &c. G. W."

"*P.S.*—I forgot to tell you, to the honour of worthy Madam P——, that during the time of the expedition, at her desire, I preached in the general's house, and took the liberty before sermon to ask her, how she came to give up the general? She answered

‘That it was God who enabled her to do it for his glory, and her country’s good; and that now the general was gone, she had the pleasing reflection, that through divine mercy, home had never been made so disagreeable to him by her conduct, as to make him wish to be gone.’”

In this manner Whitefield continued to labour in America four years, during which time he travelled over a great extent of country, and was subject to frequent attacks of illness. After a passage from Bermudas of twenty-eight days, he arrived at Deal on July 6, 1748, and reached London the next evening, where he was welcomed by rejoicing multitudes. An event awaited him also on his return, which was to have an important effect upon his future character and usefulness; this was, the acquaintanceship of the eminent and pious Countess of Huntingdon, at whose earnest invitation he preached twice in her drawing-room, and afterwards became one of her chaplains.

The history of this lady, who became so ardent a patroness of Whitefield, as well as devoted convert to his religious views, was an anomaly at this time in the rank she held, and the court which she adorned. She was second daughter of the Earl of Ferrars, and born in the year 1707. Her husband was Theophilus, Earl of Huntingdon, to whom she was married in 1728. Young, beautiful, and accomplished, she adorned the high sphere in which she moved, although she gave no striking indication of that religious spirit which afterwards became her chief characteristic. But the death of her children and husband, by clouding the world and its attractions to her view, allured her affections and her hopes to that world in which there is no change, and thenceforth she lived for eternity. And who is ignorant of the benevolence she exercised both for the temporal and spiritual

welfare of society—of the effects her example produced even upon the noblest and most fashionable—and of the sacrifices she made, and the privations she underwent, in devoting a princely fortune to the erection of churches, and the education of a numerous ministry? When her heaven-inspired work was done, which occurred at the age of eighty-four, one of her last declarations upon her death-bed was, “I am well—all is well—well for ever! I see, wherever I turn my eyes, whether I live or die, nothing but victory.”

On accepting the office of chaplain to the Countess, which he did in 1748, Whitefield became a preacher to persons of the most distinguished rank, who flocked to Lady Huntingdon's drawing-room, and were arrested by the life-and-death earnestness and thrilling eloquence with which the gospel was preached to them. Of these may be mentioned such unlikely personages as the Earl of Chesterfield, Lord Bolingbroke, and David Hume. “Sir,” said the earl to Whitefield after hearing him for the first time, “I will not tell you what I shall tell others, how I approve of you.” The impression produced upon Bolingbroke was thus expressed by him to the countess: “You may command my pen when you will, it shall be drawn in your service. For admitting the Bible to be true, I shall have little apprehension of maintaining the doctrines of predestination and grace against all your revilers.” Besides the throng of nobles and literary persons who habitually repaired to Whitefield's preaching, there were many countesses and ladies of rank; and in this way *Methodism* became a favourite subject of conversation even at court. The following is an anecdote contained in one of Whitefield's letters, and which forms only one of many proofs of our assertion: “His majesty seems to have been acquainted with some things about us, by what passed in his discourse with

Lady Chesterfield. The particulars are these: Her ladyship had a suit of clothes on, with a brown ground and silver flowers, which was brought from abroad. His majesty coming round to her, first smiled, and then laughed quite out. Her ladyship could not imagine what was the matter. At length, his majesty said: ‘I know who chose that gown for you—Mr Whitefield; and I hear that you have attended on him this year and a half.’ Her ladyship answered, ‘Yes, I have, and I like him very well;’ but after she came to her chair, she was grieved she had not said more; so that I find her ladyship is not ashamed.”

But notwithstanding this grandeur of reputation which Whitefield had acquired in the highest and most accomplished of English circles, his apostolic heart was with the multitude. It was there that the people were perishing for lack of knowledge; and therefore, a very short time after having assumed the scarf of a domestic chaplain, he was in the field once more, in highways and among the hedges. He made his third visit to Scotland in September 1748, a few days after his appointment to the Huntingdon chaplaincy; and the following brief extracts will show the effects of his visit:—

“*Edinburgh, Sept. 16, 1748.*—On Thursday at noon, through the providence of a good and gracious God, I came hither, where I have met with a hearty welcome. Last night, I preached to a *Moorfields* congregation for numbers; and the Lord, I believe, was pleased to give it his blessing.”

“*Edinburgh, Sept. 19.*—My prayer for you all is, that you may be good soldiers of Jesus Christ. I am fighting for him here. Vast multitudes come to hear; but what good is done cannot yet be determined.”

“*Edinburgh, Sept. 20.*—Upon my first coming, I was somewhat discouraged at hearing of the death of

many of my valuable and leading friends, and of others losing their first love. Besides, the weather was boisterous, some ministers shy, and God was pleased to visit me with a great hoarseness. But the prospect is now more pleasant; and I trust ere I leave Scotland, your ladyship will have some good news from a far country."

"*Glasgow, Sept. 28.*—My hands are full, and I trust the pleasure of the Lord will prosper in them. Very great multitudes have flocked to hear; and in Glasgow the prospect of doing good is rather more promising than in Edinburgh."

"*Glasgow, Oct. 1.*—Many come to me, telling me what the Lord did by me the last time I was in Scotland, and also the time before. Congregations are very large. I am pressed to stay three or four days more than I intended. Some that were prejudiced have had their prejudices removed, and I believe will be greater friends than ever. Oh that I were humble and thankful!"

After a short stay in Scotland, of which he said, "I have reason to believe some have been awakened, and many, many quickened and comforted," he returned to London, where he preached twice a-week in the house of Lady Huntingdon, to the fashionable audiences who crowded to hear him, and of whom he said in a letter to a friend, "Two or three among the great, I trust, have been made the happy subjects of redeeming love." Soon afterwards, he was labouring at Gloucester and Bristol, after which he returned to London. And yet, with all this incessant labour, and the applause that followed it, his language of himself at this time is: "I am now thirty-four years of age; and yet, when I consider how I have lived, shame and confusion cover my face." The two following letters will show the delicacy and also the frankness with which he discharged his pastoral duties to the illustrious of his flock:—

“TO LORD B——.

“*London, December 30, 1748.*

“MY LORD,—I had the honour of your lordship’s letter. Gratitude constrains me to send my heartiest acknowledgments. Though absent from, yet I am often present with you. That benign, that sweet disposition of which your lordship is possessed, must make you appear amiable to all who know you. Add but the Christian to it, and then, O then, how happy will your lordship be! Thanks be to God, that your lordship begins to feel there is no being happy without real Christianity. O that this conviction may be abiding, and that your lordship may have no rest, till you find it in Him who is the Alpha and Omega, the author and finisher of our faith. He longs to make you happy, he is ready to receive you with open arms. He cries, ‘My son, give me thy heart.’ To engage you to love him more, he has let you have a worthy lady, who I am persuaded will be glad to go hand in hand to heaven. O that you may both walk in all the ordinances and commandments of the Lord blameless! No greater thing can be desired for you at the throne of grace by, my lord, your lordship’s most obedient, obliged, humble servant,
G. W.”

“TO LADY B——.

“*London, December 30, 1748.*

“HONOURED MADAM,—Have you not wondered at my not answering your ladyship’s kind letter before now? But I am persuaded you are well assured that a variety of avocations, and multiplicity of business for the best of Masters, not want of respect, hath been the cause. My lady, your family are always upon my heart. My constant desire and prayer to God is, that you all may be filled with all the fulness of God. As my lord mentions nothing to the contrary, I hope

your indisposition is removed, and that the language of your heart is, 'What shall I render unto the Lord?' I know that the love of Jesus which you have felt, must necessarily constrain your ladyship to live to Him who lived and died upon the accursed tree for you. Oh, how is the power of the Redeemer's resurrection displayed in Lady H——n! She is a mother in Israel indeed. It would please you to see the assemblies at her ladyship's house. They are brilliant ones indeed. The prospect of catching some of the rich in the gospel net is very promising. I know you will wish prosperity in the name of the Lord. But how does good Lady D——, dear Mrs C——, and Mrs I——? All, I hope, putting off the old man, and putting on the new man with greater earnestness than ever. Oh that I may begin to be in earnest! I am now thirty-four years of age. Is it not time for me to begin to spend and be spent for Him who has loved me and given himself for me? I beg your ladyship's prayers, and the prayers of all your dear and honoured relations. I send you all my humble and hearty respects, and beg you will accept the same from, my lady, your ladyship's most obliged, humble servant,

G. W."

Soon again he was upon his beloved work of itinerating, the result of which may be surmised from the following extracts of his letters to Lady Huntingdon:—

“ Exon, Feb. 9, 1749.

“HONOURED MADAM,—Your ladyship's laying your commands upon me to write often, makes me uneasy unless I can redeem time to send to your ladyship at least once a week. Blessed be God, I can inform your ladyship, that there was a great stirring among the dry bones at Bristol and Kingswood. Last Lord's-day was a great day of the Son of Man. The power of the Lord attended the word, as in days of old, and several

persons, that had never heard me before, were brought under great awakenings. A councillor came once, and was so affected, that when he got home he invited others to come and hear, which so alarmed his lady (ready to die of a consumption) that she is afraid her husband will go mad. Last night I came hither, and had the pleasure of seeing some spiritual children that were begotten unto God when I was here last. This evening I am to begin to spread the gospel net; and shall continue in Exeter till Monday. Affairs have been so confused, that it requires some time to settle them. I find a death must come upon all we do, that the life of it may appear to be wholly of God. I hope your ladyship finds that the Redeemer's work flourishes in your hands. I long to hear whether my letters were kindly received, and whether the seed sown by me or any other springs up. Whoever plants, or whoever waters, I know it is the Lord must give the increase. Mr C—— is vastly attached to your ladyship's interest, and, I believe, prays continually for your success. Many do so, whom your ladyship knows not. Your ladyship's letter to Mr R—— I find is blessed much. It is the good man's lot, that whatsoever he doth shall prosper. May this be fulfilled in your ladyship more and more every day! I could enlarge, but must away to my delightful work. People are waiting. This late journey has been blessed to the recovery of my health. I have not had any of my usual disorders since I left town. I am sometimes faint; but, 'Faint, and yet pursuing,' must be the Christian's motto. I hope my most dutiful respects will find acceptance with those honourable persons whose faces are set Zionwards, and that your ladyship will accept the same from, honoured madam, your ladyship's most obliged, obedient, and willing servant for Christ's sake, G.W.

“ TO LADY H——N.

“ *Plymouth, Feb. 16, 1749.*

“ HONOURED MADAM,—The last time I wrote to your ladyship I was at Exeter, where I began on Sunday evening to preach in the open air. Abundance of souls attended, and I trust real good was done. In the morning, grace flowed richly round the congregation; and many knew experimentally that Christ was risen, by his giving them to experience the power of his resurrection in their hearts. On Monday I went to Bovey-Tracey, about twelve miles from Exeter, where I found several poor simple souls. Here also the fountain of life was open, and I believe some drank it, and others felt the want of it. The next morning I preached at a place called Mary Church, where are supposed to be near a score of awakened souls, who have undergone much outward trouble for adhering to the cross of Christ. Most of their bitterest opposers were present. All was calm; and the power of the Lord accompanied the word. After sermon I rode twenty miles to Kingsbridge, where, to my great surprise, I found about a thousand souls waiting till eight in the evening to hear the word. Though nature said, ‘Spare thyself,’ I thought faith and duty said, ‘Venture upon the Lord’s strength, and speak to them.’ I did, from these words of our dear Lord’s: ‘I must work the works of Him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh when no man can work.’ I preached in the street. The moon shone. All was quiet; and I hope some began to think of working out their salvation with fear and trembling. The next morning I preached there again; four ministers attended. Our Lord was pleased to make it a very fine season. After sermon I had the pleasure of hearing, that by two or three discourses preached at this place about five years

ago, many souls were awakened. One young man, then called, is since a preacher. He was in a tree partly to ridicule me. I spoke to him to imitate Zaccheus, and come down and receive the Lord Jesus. The word was backed with power—he heard, came down, believed, and now adorns the gospel. From Kingsbridge to Plymouth is near twenty post miles. Hither I came last night. About ten miles from the town, I met several of my spiritual children, who came on horseback to see me. When I came into the town, many hundreds were waiting to hear the word, and received me with great joy. Though it was past seven at night, and I had preached at Kingsbridge in the morning, I thought it my duty to comply with the people's importunity, and, accordingly, I called upon them (in a place styled the Tabernacle, built since I have been absent) to behold the Lamb of God. I find a strange alteration in the people since I came first here, now above four years ago. Many were then awakened, and truly converted to the blessed Jesus. I write in a house belonging to a married couple, who call me their spiritual father. Plymouth seems to be quite a new place to me. I have also just now parted from a truly converted neighbouring clergyman, who has invited me to preach in his church. Ere long I hope to send your ladyship some more good news. In the meanwhile, I wish your ladyship the best of blessings; and entreat your ladyship to pray that a cheerful, humble, simple, and guileless heart may be given to, honoured madam, your ladyship's most dutiful, though unworthy servant for Christ's sake, G. W."

"TO LADY H——.

"*Plymouth, Feb. 21, 1749.*

"HONOURED MADAM,—I believe it will much rejoice your ladyship's heart to hear what is doing in the west.

I could not have thought that the seed sown four years ago would have met with such a great increase. But what cannot God do? I have now proclaimed here seven times the riches of redeeming love, to very large, attentive, and affected auditories. Generally about two thousand attend every night; and the Sunday evening, in the field, I believe there were above five thousand hearers. On Wednesday, God willing, I move hence. My short stay affects the people. But our Lord orders all things well."

His earnestness at this time in stirring up others to labour in the cause of Christ, is apparent from the following letter:—

"To MR C——.

Exeter, Feb. 25, 1749.

"MY DEAR MR C——,—Your last, with the enclosed, you may be sure gave me satisfaction, at the same time as they, I trust, humbled me before Him who will send by whom he will send. This post carries answers to the honourable women. I suppose that you will be pleased to find I am thus far on my return to London. O my friend, my friend, I come with fear and trembling! To speak to the rich and great, so as to win them to the blessed Jesus, is indeed a task. But wherefore do we fear? We can do all things through Christ strengthening us. But why does Mr C—— think it strange that nobody can be found to help me in the country? Is it not more strange, that you should lie supine, as it were, burying your talents in a napkin, complaining that you have nothing to do, and yet souls everywhere are perishing about you for lack of knowledge? Why do you not preach or print? At least, why do you not help me, or somebody or another, in a more public way? You are in the decline of life, and if you do not soon re-assume the place you

are now, through grace, qualified for, you may lose the opportunity of doing so for ever. I write this in great seriousness. May the Lord give you no rest till you lift up your voice like a trumpet! Up, and be doing, and the Lord will be with you. I can now do no more but inform you, that, God willing, I am to be at Bristol next Tuesday, where letters on Wednesday morning may find, very dear sir, yours most affectionately in Christ Jesus,

G. W."

After he had thus laboured in the humblest and most laborious departments of his ministerial office, he found himself again summoned back to the very different sphere which awaited him in the metropolis. "Lady Huntingdon writes me word," he says, "that the prospect of doing good at my return to London is very encouraging. Thither I am now bound. I go with fear and trembling, knowing how difficult it is to speak to the great, so as to win them to Jesus Christ. I sometimes am ready to say, 'Lord, I pray thee have me excused, and send by whom thou wilt send.' But divine grace is sufficient for me. I can do all things through Christ strengthening me. My dear brother, fail not to pray for me, that I may hold on, and hold out to the end, and in prosperity and adversity press forward, with an even, cheerful, meek, and lowly mind, towards the mark for the prize of our high calling in Christ Jesus." He repaired to London after an excursion of six hundred miles in the west of England, and resumed his labours among the rich and the fashionable. But his heart was still among the highways and hedges; and after a few weeks of labour in the metropolis, he thus writes: "I intend leaving town in about a week, and to begin ranging after precious souls. You judge right when you say, 'it is your opinion that I do not want to make a sect, or set myself at the head of a

party.' No, let the name of Whitefield die, so that the cause of Jesus Christ may live. I have seen enough of popularity to be sick of it; and did not the interest of my blessed Master require my appearing in public, the world should hear but little of me henceforward."

In consequence of this resolution, he was soon at Gloucester, the scene of his former labours; afterwards at Bristol, and then at Portsmouth and Gosport. Of these places, he says: "The night after I came here [Portsmouth] I preached to many thousands; a great body of whom was attentive, but some of the baser sort made a little disturbance. A very great opposer sent for me to his house immediately, and could scarce refrain weeping all the time I was with him. On the Friday evening, I preached at Gosport, where the mob has generally been very turbulent; but all was hushed and quiet, as far as I could find. Every time, the word has seemed to sink deeper and deeper into the people's hearts, and their affections seem to be more and more drawn out. In short, I hope I can inform your ladyship that Portsmouth is taken, and that we shall hear of many who will in earnest seek after the one thing needful." Four days after, he thus writes from the same quarter: "Blessed be God, I trust some in these parts who, a few days ago, had never heard of, now begin to look after, the kingdom of God. A more visible alteration I have not seen made in a people for some time. At first, some of the baser sort made a noise; but ever since, thousands have attended in the greatest order: numbers have been and are affected, and through their importunity, I have been prevailed on to stay longer than I designed." On the next day he writes: "Ever since my last, the prospect of doing good has increased. Thousands have attended; and even when it rained, when one could reasonably expect but very few, some thousands came

to hear the word." After this, he made a three weeks' circuit in Wales, during which he visited eight counties of the principality, where he sometimes had twenty thousand souls for an auditory.

After this, Whitefield was busily occupied, partly in London, and partly in the northern and western counties of England, for a twelvemonth, during which he laboured with that incessant diligence which characterized the whole of his well-spent life. In July 1750 he again visited Scotland—a country which had been endeared to him from his former visits; and the effect of his labours on this occasion may be judged from the following extracts:—

"*Edinburgh, July 12, 1750.*—Though I am really burning with a fever, and have a violent cold, yet I must send your ladyship a few lines by this post. They bring good news. People flock rather more than ever, and earnestly entreat me not to leave them soon. I preach generally twice a-day—early in the morning, and at six in the evening. Great multitudes attend."

"*Glasgow, July 21, 1750.*—I have nothing but good news to send you. The entrance God has been pleased to give me into Scotland, demands the highest tribute of gratitude and love. I preached twenty times at Edinburgh, and thousands attended morning and evening. Many I hope got good."

"*Glasgow, July 23, 1750.*—The Lord is still adding to my obligations to love and serve him. Friends here received me kindly, and the congregations, I think, are rather larger than ever. Yesterday, besides preaching twice in the field, I preached in the College Kirk, being forced by Mr G——. 'Twas a blessed season."

"*Edinburgh, July 29, 1750.*—No one can well describe the order, attention, and earnestness of the Scotch congregations. They are unwearied in hearing the gos-

pe'. I left thousands sorrowful at Glasgow, and here I was again most gladly received last night. By preaching always twice, and once thrice, and once four times in a day, I am quite weakened; but I hope to recruit again, and get fresh strength to work for Him who shed his precious blood for ill and hell-deserving me."

"*Berwick, Aug. 4, 1750.*—At length I have taken a very sorrowful leave of Scotland. The longer I continued there, the more the congregations and the power that attended the word increased. I have reason to think that many are under convictions, and am assured of hundreds having received great benefit and consolation. The parting was rather more affectionate than ever, and I shall have reason to bless God to all eternity for this last visit to Scotland."

The following account of the death of one of Whitefield's female hearers of high rank, which occurred shortly after, is interesting not only in itself, but as indicating the effect of his preaching among the elevated. And how many such instances may have occurred that did not come within his notice! "I think it is now near three weeks since good Lady G—— desired me to visit her sick daughter. She had been prayed for very earnestly the preceding day after the sacrament, and likewise previous to my visit in Lady H——'s room. When I came to her bed-side, she seemed glad to see me, but desired I would speak and pray as softly as I could. I conversed with her a little, and she dropped some strong things about the vanity of the world, and the littleness of every thing out of Christ. I prayed as low as I could; but in prayer (your ladyship has been too well acquainted with such things to call it enthusiasm) I felt a very uncommon energy and power to wrestle with God in her behalf. She soon broke out into such words as these: 'What a wretch am I!' She seemed

to speak out of the abundance of her heart, from a feeling sense of her own vileness. Her honoured parent and attending servants were affected. After prayer, she seemed as though she felt things unutterable, bemoaned her ingratitude to God and Christ; and I believe would gladly have given a detail of all her faults she could reckon. Her having had a form of godliness, but never having felt the power, was what she most bewailed. I left her; she continued in the same frame; and when Mrs S—— asked her whether she felt her heart to be as bad as she expressed herself, she answered: ‘Yes, and worse.’ At her request, some time after this, I gave her the holy communion; a communion indeed it was. Never did I see a person receive it with seemingly greater contrition, more earnest desire for pardon and reconciliation with God through Christ, or stronger purposes of devoting her future life to his service. Being weak, she was desired to keep lying on her bed. She replied: ‘I can rise to take my physic; shall I not rise to pray?’ When I was repeating the communion office, she applied all to herself, and broke out frequently aloud in her applying. When I said, ‘The burden of them is intolerable,’ she burst out, ‘Yea, very intolerable,’ with abundance of such like expressions. When she took the bread and wine, her concern gave her utterance, and she spake like one that was ripening for heaven. Those around her wept for joy. My cold heart also was touched, and I left her with a full persuasion that she was either to be taken off soon, or to be a blessing here below. I think she lived about a week afterwards: she continued in the same frame as far as I hear, and I trust is now gone where she will sing the song of Moses and of the Lamb for ever.”

After labouring for some time, not only in England, but in Wales, Whitefield resolved to cross over to Ire-

land. He had preached in that unfortunate country in 1738, during a short stay on his return from America; and believing that a field of usefulness had there been opened for him, which it was his duty to occupy, he reached Dublin on the 24th of May 1751. Writing on the beginning of next month from the Irish capital, he says: "At first the greatness and hurry of the place surprised me; but thanks be to the Lord of the harvest, here, as well as elsewhere, the fields are white, ready unto harvest. I have now preached about fourteen times, and find great freedom in dealing out the bread of life. Congregations are large, and hear as for eternity. Perhaps, last Lord's-day, upwards of ten thousand attended. It much resembled a Moorfields auditory." A few days after, he thus announces his progress in Ireland: "For this week past, I have been preaching twice almost every day in some country towns. I find, through the many offences that have lately been given, matters were brought to a very low ebb. But the cry now is, 'Methodism is revived again!'" And all this toil was undergone by Whitefield in the midst of incessant sickness! But as he persevered, his comforts were increased, and his strength made adequate to his exertions, so that in writing subsequently, he says: "Everywhere the Lord hath vouchsafed us his blessed presence. That supports me under the heat of the weather, the weakness of my body, and the various trials which exercise my mind. My coming was very opportune and providential. May I learn to follow the Lamb blindfold whithersoever he shall be pleased to lead me." Such also was the acceptance of his labours, that when taking leave of the people of Cork, many of the Papists told him, that if he would consent to stay, they would forsake their priests. A similar feeling prevailed in the Irish capital, and the following testimony in his favour

is sufficiently expressive : “ One to whom I had been represented in black colours, writes thus from Dublin to a preacher in Cork : ‘ What blessed seasons have we had since Mr Whitefield came ! His coming hath been unspeakably blessed to many. Thousands constantly attended the word. His word is attended with power. I never heard a man preach holiness of heart in a clearer manner. He powerfully preaches Christ for us, and in us ! I confess I had strange ideas about him ; but, blessed be God, I have not now. God be praised that ever I saw his face ! ’ ”

From Ireland, Whitefield crossed over to Scotland, where he resumed those labours which had been attended with such success in his former visits. Writing from Glasgow, he says : “ On Wednesday morning, at the desire of the magistrates, I preached to a great congregation, and ever since have been preaching twice every day in this city. Thousands attend every morning and evening. They seem never to be weary, and I am more followed than ever. Though I preached nearly eighty times in Ireland, and God was pleased to bless his word, yet Scotland seems to be a new world to me. To see the people bring so many Bibles, turn to every passage when I am expounding, and hang as it were upon me to hear every word, is very encouraging. I feel uncommon freedom of heart here, and talking with the winter as well as summer saints feeds and delights my heart.” As Whitefield’s stay in Scotland could only be prolonged for a few days, he soon repaired to Edinburgh, where, as before, thousands welcomed and thronged to his preaching. “ O Edinburgh, Edinburgh ! ” he says affectionately in one of his letters to Lady Huntingdon, “ surely thou must never be forgotten by me ! ” He adds : “ The longer I stayed, the more eagerly both rich and poor attended on the word preached. Perhaps for

nearly twenty-eight days together in Glasgow and Edinburgh, I preached to near ten thousand souls every day. It would have melted your ladyship's heart to have seen us part."

This parting, however, was necessary, as he was eager to return to America, not only to preach the gospel there, but to superintend the orphan hospital which he had established in Georgia. He therefore hastened to London, embarked on board the *Antelope*, and arrived safely in Georgia, in November 1751, where he found the orphan institution flourishing, and promising to become a source of useful education. After labouring in several parts of America for about five months with his usual assiduity, but of which his correspondence contains little account, he set sail, and after a voyage of five weeks, returned safely to London.

PART IV.

FROM HIS RETURN FROM AMERICA IN 1752, TO HIS
VISIT TO SCOTLAND IN 1758.

ON the arrival of Whitefield at this time in London, his prospects were peculiarly gratifying, so that only a few days after his landing he could thus write to a correspondent: "People have received me with great affection; and I never saw the work of God go on in a more promising way. Thousands and thousands hear the gospel gladly." And to another he thus writes: "Oh what a blessed thing is it to follow Jesus blindfold! He hath enabled me once more to take the field. The fields seem as white as ever; and I never saw the Tabernacle so well attended." Even, however, while labouring in a sphere so gratifying, in a few weeks he was eager to resume what he considered his proper work—the self-denying, laborious, and dangerous work of an apostolic itinerant. "Next week, God willing," he writes to Lady Huntingdon, "I shall go to Portsmouth, from thence to Bath, then to the west, then to Wales; and from thence, may be, to Scotland and Ireland. Oh that I could fly from pole to pole publishing the everlasting gospel!"

In consequence of this resolution, he commenced his tour a few days afterward, and we find him successively at Portsmouth, Bristol, Cardiff, Haverford-west, and back again to Bristol, from which last place he writes: "Since I wrote my last, I have been off my horse but

one day. The glorious Immanuel hath carried me through the Welsh circuit in peace and comfort. In the fortnight past, from my leaving this place, I preached twenty times, and have travelled above three hundred miles." After a short return to London, he again started upon his journey, meaning to visit Scotland, and on the way preached twice at Lutterworth, the parish of the celebrated reformer, John Wycliff. At his next stage, Leicester, some turnips were thrown at him during his first field-sermon; but on the second, the audience was hushed and attentive. After visiting Newcastle, he reached Edinburgh, where even more than his wonted success awaited him. "For this fortnight past," he says, "I have been preaching twice every day at Edinburgh, where a great multitude as well of polite as common sort of people attended continually. I wondered they were not wearied; but the more they heard, the more they seemed desirous of hearing." Afterwards, he was prevailed on to visit Glasgow, and there, although his visit was short, he says: "Many young ministers and students have given close attendance." Whitefield could well appreciate the effects that would be produced by such hearers upon the Church at large. "Every student's name," he observes, "is Legion: helping one of these, is helping thousands." On his return, he preached at the principal towns on the way to Newcastle; and when he reached Sheffield he thus writes: "Since I left Newcastle, I have scarcely known sometimes whether I have been in heaven or on earth. At Leeds, Burstall, Hawarth, Halifax, &c., thousands and thousands have flocked twice and thrice a day to hear the word of life. A gale of divine influence hath everywhere attended it." After continuing his labours in other towns upon his way to London, he arrived at the metropolis on the 10th of November

1752. "My Sunday's work," he says, "sickness, the change of weather, and affecting parting from friends, so enfeebled this tottering tabernacle, that I was in hopes on the road that the imprisoned soul would have been set at liberty, and fled to those blissful regions

' Where pain, and sin, and sorrow cease,
And all is calm, and joy, and peace.' "

Still more touching was the sentiment he expressed to Hervey, the well-known author of the "Meditations" and "Theron and Aspasio," two days afterwards: "You and I perhaps are not to see heaven as yet: I have waited for it long, but, alas! my appointed time is not yet come. Thanks be to God, there is such a thing as having a heaven upon earth. Christ in us is the heaven of heavens."

After having remained in London, which he called his winter quarters, and laboured with his usual fidelity, he commenced his "spring circuit" in April 1753, by a journey to Norwich, where his preaching in the evenings was frequently interrupted by the turbulent and profane. But this was soon over, and he afterwards writes: "How does God delight to exceed even the hopes, and to disappoint the fears of his weak though honest-hearted people! In spite of all opposition, he hath caused us to triumph even in Norwich. Thousands attend twice every day, and hear with the greatest eagerness." He continued his circuit, of which he gives the following account: "Within a little more than a fortnight, I have rode three hundred and fifty miles, and preached above twenty times—with what success the great day will discover. Then, we shall know who are stony-ground hearers, and who receive the word into honest and good hearts. At Narboth,

Pembroke, Haverford-west, &c., congregations were large, and a gracious melting seemed to be among the people. Nature now cries out for a little ease, but faith says, 'It is now just time to begin.'" Portsmouth, Leicester, Leeds, York, and Newcastle, were successively visited; from the last of which places he wrote the following account of his tour:—

“ TO MR S——.

“ MY VERY DEAR SIR,—Being, through the goodness of a never-failing Redeemer, just come hither, I sit down to perform my promise by writing to you. But where shall I begin, or where shall I end? Surely the goodness of the Lord to such a wretch as I am is unspeakable. I will inform you of a little. After leaving Leicester, I went to Nottingham, where a great multitude came to hear; and I trust good was done, though a son of Belial endeavoured to disturb us. From thence I went to Sheffield, where we had two good meetings. The congregation in the afternoon consisted of several thousands. Here some dear friends from Leeds met me, two of which were my spiritual children, and all had been blessed under the word. The next morning we set out for Leeds, and in our way preached at Rotherham and Wakefield. At the former place, I had been disturbed twice or thrice, and was almost determined to preach there no more. But we are poor judges. A person told me, 'That God had made me instrumental in converting his wife and brother, who had both been bitter persecutors, but now gladly received me under their roof.' After preaching, a young man was set at liberty, who had been groaning under the spirit of bondage four years; and whilst I was baptizing a child, the Holy Spirit was pleased to baptize several—one in particular—with a holy fire. What we saw, and felt, and heard at Leeds, cannot well be ex-

pressed. Thousands attended daily; and on the Lord's-day it was computed that nearly twenty thousand heard at once. I preached thrice, and the next day at Bun-stall and Bradford, where many thousands flocked also. Many were filled as with new wine; and as for myself, I scarcely knew whether I was in heaven or on earth. On Tuesday morning, though we had drunk plentifully before, yet our Lord kept the good wine till the last. We had a glorious parting-blessing. At York I preached four times. Twice we were disturbed, and twice we had sweet seasons. There is a good work begun there. The prospect all around is so glorious, I almost repent that I have engaged to go to Scotland. God willing, I shall come back as fast as possible. What a pity is it that I have but one body, and that a very weak one too! Lord, magnify thy strength in my weakness, and send me where thou wilt. Here I am most kindly received. How the Lord will be pleased to deal with me, you may know hereafter. I can now only entreat the continuance of the prayers of you and yours; and with repeated thanks for repeated favours, beg leave to subscribe myself, my very dear friend, yours," &c.,

"G. W."

He visited Scotland accordingly during this journey; but there, as he had anticipated, his stay was brief, as he was eager to return to the field he had just left. His visit, however, was not unprofitable to the country, as the following extract of one of his letters from Glasgow will testify: "Yesterday I was enabled to preach five times, and I suppose the last time to near twenty thousand, and almost to as many in the morning. People flock, and are more fond than ever to hear. At Edinburgh also, I preached every day to many thousands, among whom are many of the noble and polite. Attention sits upon the faces of all; and friends came

round me like so many bees, to importune for one week longer to stay in Scotland." His return was like his advance, a series of earnest and successful efforts, in which the principal towns of the northern counties were pervaded with his evangelistic labours; and on arriving in London, which he did on the 25th of September, he thus writes: "Thanks be to God for this last circuit! I think, this day three months I left London, since which time I have been enabled to travel about twelve hundred miles, and to preach about one hundred and eighty sermons, to many, very many thousands of souls."

We must now overleap a busy period of Whitefield's labours, not merely in the several counties where he itinerated, but in London, which was his head-quarters. During all these efforts he had never lost sight of America, which he regarded as a land that had a first claim upon him, and of which he never lost sight, amidst all the tempting applause that allured him to abide in Britain. Toward the close of 1752, therefore, he had thus written to an American correspondent in the midst of his greatest success at home: "It is hard to determine anything four thousand miles off. God willing, I hope to see you next year, though it is difficult to leave thousands and ten thousands who gladly receive the gospel, to come to a wilderness, where it has been, alas! too, too often most wretchedly despised and slighted by many." He was not, however, able to set sail till a later period, by the *Success*; of which vessel he thus speaks: "I sent for the owner, and finding that the ship was to touch at Lisbon to unload some wheat, it occasioned a little demur; but upon second thoughts, believing it might be serviceable to me, as a preacher and Protestant, to see something of the superstitions or the Church of Rome, I took my passage, and embarked in the *Success* the 7th of March (1754). On the 14th

we reached Cape Finisterre; on the 15th came in sight of the Burlings; and on the 16th anchored safe before Belem, about four miles' distance from Lisbon, the metropolis of Portugal."

And strange were the sights which the eye of the devout, simple-minded Englishman now beheld in the capital of Portugal! He might have heard of before, but have been unable to comprehend, the mummeries and abominations of Popery; and he had been accustomed to preach, as if the only aberrations from the faith were those of a depraved heart and corrupt intellect, leading from Protestant and evangelical faith into downright wickedness and indifference. But now he saw depraved and perverted devotion in its Popish form, and the sight made him shudder. During the time the ship anchored near Lisbon, he was frequently on shore, and wrote in wondering language of the religious festivals he beheld. Of these, however, we quote but one, not only as illustrative of the effect upon Whitefield's mind, but also as indicating the spirit of Popery in every age, which can never be anything more than a thing of shows and pageants, or, as Sydney Smith would have said, "a system of postures and impostures:"—

" *Lisbon, April 12, 1754.*

"MY DEAR FRIEND,—Providence still detains us at Lisbon, and therefore I know you will be inquiring what more news from thence? Truly, as extraordinary as ever, for I have now seen the solemnities of a Holy-Thursday, which is a very high day in this metropolis, and particularly remarkable for the grand illuminations of the churches, and the king's washing twelve poor men's feet. Through the interest of a friend, I got admittance into the gallery where the ceremony was performed. It was large, and hung with tapestry; one piece of which represented the humble Jesus washing

the feet of his disciples. Before this, upon a small eminence, sat twelve men in black. At the upper end, and in several other parts of the gallery, were sideboards of large gold and silver basons and ewers, most curiously wrought; and near these, a large table covered with a variety of dishes, all cold, set off and garnished after the Portuguese fashion. Public high mass being over, his majesty came in, attended with his nobles, who seemed to me to look like so many Roman senators. The act of washing the feet, I did not get in time enough to see; but that being ended, several of the young noblemen served up the dishes to the king's brother and uncles; these again handed them to his majesty, who gave (I think) twelve of them in all to each poor man. Everything was carried on with a great deal of decency and good humour. The young noblemen served very cheerfully, their seniors looked quite pleased, and the king and his royal relations behaved in a very polite, easy manner. Upon the whole, though as you may easily guess it was not an exact copy of the tapestry, yet, as the poor men's clothes and food, when sold, came to about ten moidores, and as there was little mixture of superstition in it, I cannot say but I was as well pleased with my morning's entertainment as with anything I had seen since my arrival. I believe the whole took up near two hours. After dinner we went to see the churches; but the magnificence and sumptuousness of the furniture cannot well be expressed. Many of them were hung on the occasion with purple damask trimmed with gold. In one of them there was a solid silver altar of several yards circumference, and near twelve steps high; and in another a gold one, still more magnificent, of about the same dimensions. Its basis was studded with many precious stones, and near the top were placed silver images, in representation of

angels. Each step was filled with large silver candlesticks, with wax tapers in them; which going up by a regular ascent, till they formed themselves into a pyramid, made a most glittering and splendid blaze. The great altars also of the other churches were illuminated most profusely, and silver pots of artificial flowers, with a large wax taper between each, were fixed all round several of them. Between these, were large paintings in black and white, representing the different parts of our Saviour's passion. And, in short, all was so magnificently, so superstitiously grand, that I am persuaded several thousands of pounds would not defray the expenses of this one day. Go which way you would, nothing was to be seen but illuminations within and hurry without. For all persons, princes and crowned heads themselves not excepted, are obliged on this day to visit seven churches or altars, in imitation, as is supposed, of our Lord's being hurried from one tribunal to another, before he was condemned to be hung upon the cross. I saw the queen pass by in great state to visit three of them. Velvet cushions were carried before her majesty, and boards laid along the streets for herself and retinue to walk upon. Guards attended before and behind, and thousands of spectators stood on each side to gaze at them as they passed along. Being desirous of seeing the manner of their entrance, we got into the last church before they came. It was that of St Domingo, where was the gold altar before mentioned, and at which her majesty and train knelt about a quarter of an hour. All the while the Dominican friars sang most surprisingly sweet. But, as I stood near the altar, over against the great door, I must confess my very inmost soul was struck with a secret horror, when, upon looking up, I saw over the front of the great window of the church, the heads of many hundred Jews, painted on canvass,

who had been condemned by what they call the Holy Inquisition, and carried out from that church to be burnt. Strange way this of compelling people to come in! Such was not thy method, O meek and compassionate Lamb of God! Thou camest not to destroy men's lives, but to save them; but bigotry is as cruel as the grave—it knows no remorse. From all its bitter and dire effects, good Lord, deliver us! But to return to the queen. Having performed her devotions, she departed, and went in a coach of state, I believe, directly from the church to her palace, and without doubt sufficiently fatigued; for, besides walking through the streets to the several churches, her majesty also, and the princesses, had been engaged in waiting upon and washing the feet of twelve poor women, in as public a manner as the king. In our walk home we met his majesty, with his brother and two uncles, attended only by a few noblemen in black velvet, and a few guards without halberts. I suppose he was returning from his last church, and, as one may well imagine, equally fatigued with his royal consort and daughters. When Church and State thus combine to be nursing fathers and nursing mothers to superstition, is it any wonder that its credit and influence are so diffusive among the populace? O Britain! Britain! hadst thou but zeal proportionable to thy knowledge, and inward purity adequate to the simplicity of thy external worship, in what a happy and godlike situation wouldst thou be! Here I could weep again. Again I leave you to guess the cause, and if I can send you one more letter of a like nature before we leave this place, it is all you must expect from, my dear friend, yours most assuredly in our glorious Head,

G. W."

“In our way,” he adds to a lady after he had set sail,

“we touched at Lisbon, which I hope hath been blessed to me, so far as to make me prize Protestant liberty and simplicity more than ever. Fain would I be one of Christ’s bees, and learn to extract honey from every flower. But, alas! I am a drone, and deserve to be stung out of God’s hive; but he is gracious and long-suffering. Oh, eternity! how do I long to praise my God there!”

After a voyage of six weeks from Lisbon, Whitefield landed at Port Royal, South Carolina, on May 26, 1754. Afterwards he visited Bethesda and Charles-Town. Of the first of these places, in reference to his orphans, he says, “Black and white persons I have now a hundred and six to provide for.” And of the latter town he adds, “At Charles-Town, and in other places of Carolina, my poor labours have met with the usual acceptance, and I have reason to hope a clergyman hath been brought under very serious impressions.” From Charles-Town he set sail to New York; and during the voyage, while writing to a friend in Edinburgh, he expresses the following beautiful sentiments—beautiful, because they are the outpourings of a heart of which they constituted as it were the principle of life and circulation: “I hope you enjoy a feeling possession, of your God, every day and every hour. This will make the most barren wilderness to smile, and support you under the most distressing circumstances. It is this that supports me by land and by water. Without it, what could such a poor, weak, faint-hearted pilgrim do? Verily, I should faint—but as yet I cannot die. In spite of thunder, lightning, rain, and heat, God is pleased to hold my soul in life, and to let me see his glorious work prosper in my unworthy hands.”

The following letter contains a very brief summary of his labours in the northern provinces of America during

the course of five months. It is addressed from Bohemia, in Maryland, and dated December 27, 1754.

“ TO MRS C——.

“ DEAR MADAM,—I have just now taken leave of the northern provinces, where I have been travelling and preaching for nearly these five months. I suppose in all, I may have rode near two thousand miles, and preached about two hundred and thirty times; but to how many thousand souls cannot well be told. Oh, what days of the Son of Man have I seen! God be merciful to me, an ungrateful sinner! I am now forty years of age, and, should business permit, would gladly spend the day in retirement and deep humiliation before that Jesus for whom I have done so little, notwithstanding he hath done and suffered so much for me. Well! to-morrow, O blessed Jesus, through thy divine assistance, will I begin, and travel for thee again! Lord, is the call to Virginia? Who knows but an infinitely condescending God may improve me there! About February I hope to reach Georgia, and at spring to embark for England. There, dear madam, I expect to see you once more in this land of the dying. If not, ere long I shall meet you in the land of the living indeed, and thank you, before men and angels, for all favours conferred on, madam, your most obliged and ready servant, for Christ’s sake,

G. W.”

To this short account of his varied but brief tour, we can only add the following extracts:—

“ *Virginia, Jan. 17, 1755.*—Here as well as elsewhere, rich and poor flock to hear the everlasting gospel. Many have come forty or fifty miles, and a spirit of conviction and consolation seemed to go through all the assemblies. One Colonel R——, a person of distinction, opened one church for me, invited me to his house, and introduced me himself to the reading-desk.

Blessed be God, I see a vast alteration for the better. Oh for more time, and if possible for more souls and bodies!"

"*Virginia, Jan. 23, 1755.*—That ever-loving and ever-lovely Redeemer, that owned my feeble labours in the northward, still continues to bless and succeed me in my journey southward. I have not been here a week, and have had the comfort of seeing many impressed under the word every day. Two churches have been opened, and a third (Richmond) I am to preach in to-morrow. Prejudices, I find, do subside, and some of the rich and great begin to think favourably of the work of God. Several of the lower classes have been with me, acknowledging what the Lord of all lords did for them when I was here before."

"*Charles-Town, March 17, 1755.*—Had I wings like a dove, how often would I have fled to Bethesda since my departure from it! I could almost say that the last few hours I was there were superior in satisfaction to any hours I ever enjoyed. But I must go about my heavenly Father's business. For this, I am a poor but willing pilgrim, and give up all that is near and dear to me on this side eternity. This week I expect to embark in the *Friendship*, Captain Ball; but am glad of the letters from Bethesda before I go. They made me weep, and caused me to throw myself prostrate before a prayer-hearing and promise-keeping God."

"*London, May 10, 1755.*—I arrived at Newhaven, in Sussex, the 8th instant, after a six weeks' passage. Hither the cloud seemed to move, though I must own that I left America with regret. Never was the door opened wider in those parts for preaching the everlasting gospel than now. Perhaps this may shorten my stay at home, but future things belong to Jesus."

Immediately on his arrival in London, we find Whitefield again at his wonted labours, as if no absence had

intervened. And with what result? A few days after his passage, he writes: "What a blessed week have we had! Surely sinners have come like a cloud, and fled like doves to the windows." After remaining in London for about a month, he set off upon a tour, of which he thus makes mention: "Yesterday, about noon, after being worn down with travelling, and preaching twice and thrice a-day in Gloucestershire, at Bath, and Bristol, a gracious and never-failing Providence brought me to town. Were the new Tabernacle at Bristol as large as that in London, it would be filled. Thrice last Sunday, and twice the Sunday before, I preached in the fields to many, many thousands." After remaining a short time in London, he again resumed his itinerating excursion to the town of Norwich, of which he says: "Never was I more satisfied of my call to any place than of my present call to Norwich. The Redeemer knows the way that I take. I came hither purely for his glory, without the least design to make a party for myself, or to please or displease any other party whatsoever. In this way and in this spirit, through his divine assistance, I hope to go on." Of another tour taken shortly after, he writes: "At Northampton we had blessed seasons; at Lady Huntingdon's, the Lord of all lords was with us of a truth; at Liverpool, I trust some fallow ground was broken up; at Bolton, the cup of many ran over; at Manchester, people heard most gladly; and at Leeds and Bradford, what many felt I believe is unutterable." And he thus sums up the effect of this last tour in a letter to Lady Huntingdon: "Indeed, and indeed, it hath given me great concern that I could not perform my promise to return to Donnington Park as soon as I expected. But had I done so, I must have failed preaching at least to above fifty thousand souls, who at different places ran most greedily many miles after the everlasting

gospel. This, I thought, your ladyship would by no means approve of, and therefore acquiesced. On Thursday evening, with no small regret, I came to town, after having preached about a hundred times, and travelled about eight hundred miles in the country. Blessed be God, my feeble carcass was strengthened to hold out, though for more than ten days together I preached thrice a-day." Toil like this would have worn out a frame of iron; for we soon after find him acknowledging the fact, which he had partially concealed from his tender-hearted patroness: "Ever since I came from the north, it hath pleased a sovereign Lord to visit me with a violent cold and sore throat, which threatened an inflammatory quinsy. Such a thing, I hoped, would have soon carried me where this cold heart should for ever be inflamed with seraphic love. But, alas! I fear this wished-for time is not at hand. One physician prescribed a *perpetual blister*, but I have found *perpetual preaching* to be a better remedy. When this grand catholicon fails, it is over with me."

A new affair in the winter of 1755 drew Whitefield into controversy with a prelate. He had been engaged to preach in a chapel in Long Acre, near the theatres, which he did with such power, that on the first night, while the building overflowed, hundreds went away disappointed. This was a perilous rival to the popularity and profits of the drama; and an opposition was hired, consisting of soldiers and the mob, who hammered every evening upon noisy instruments to disturb the worshippers. Some of these were arrested as rioters, and the Bishop of B—— sent Whitefield a prohibition to preach in that place any longer. His spirited reply we give at length, not only as a justification of his conduct, but as an illustration of the principle and spirit in which his ministrations had been hitherto conducted.

“TO THE BISHOP OF B——.

“*Tabernacle House, Feb. 16, 1756.*

“MY LORD,—I this evening received your lordship’s kind letter, and though it is late, and nature calls for rest, yet in the fear of Him to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid, I desire now to sit down and give your lordship an explicit answer.

“God, even that God by whom I am to be judged, can witness, that with a disinterested view to promote his glory, and the welfare of precious and immortal souls, I entered into holy orders, according to the form of ordination of the Church of England; and, as thousands can testify, for near these twenty years last past, I have conscientiously defended her homilies and articles, and upon all occasions spoken well of her liturgy. Either of these, together with her discipline, I am so far from renouncing, much less from throwing aside all regard to, that I earnestly pray for the due restoration of the one, and daily lament the wanton departure of too, too many from the other.

“But, my lord, what can I do? When I acted in the most regular manner, and when I was bringing multitudes even of Dissenters themselves to crowd the churches, without any other reason being given than that too many followed after me, I was denied the use of them. Being thus excluded, and many thousands of ignorant souls, that perhaps would neither go to church nor meeting-houses, being very hungry after the gospel, I thought myself bound in duty to deal out to them the bread of life. Being further ambitious to serve my God, my king, and my country, I sacrificed my affections, and left my native soil, in order to begin and carry on an orphan-house in the infant colony of Georgia, which, through the divine blessing, is put

upon a good foundation. This served as an introduction, though without design, to my visiting the other parts of his majesty's dominions in North America; and I humbly hope, that many made truly serious in that foreign clime, will be my joy and crown of rejoicing in the day of the Lord Jesus. If it were not for this hope, nay, my lord, if I were not assured, that the blessed Redeemer (O amazing condescension!) hath vouchsafed to own me for the real conversion, and turning of many from darkness to light, the weakness of my frequently worn-out and decaying body, the innumerable temptations that have beset my soul, together with the violent opposition I have met with from various quarters, would long since have quite overwhelmed, and at least have prevailed on me to accept some of those offers that have been made me to nestle, by accepting of which I might have screened myself from that obloquy and contempt which, in some degree or other, every day I have the honour to meet with for Jesus' sake. But hitherto, having obtained help from God, without eating a morsel of the Church of England's bread, I still continue to use her liturgy, wherever a church or a chapel is allowed me, and preach up her articles, and enforce her homilies.

“Your lordship therefore judgeth exceeding right when you say, ‘I presume you do not mean to declare any dissent from the Church of England.’ Far be it from me; no, my lord, unless thrust out, I shall never leave her; and even then (as I hope whenever it happen it will be an unjust extrusion) I shall still continue to adhere to her doctrines, and pray for the much wished-for restoration of her discipline, even to my dying day. Fond of displaying her truly Protestant and orthodox principles, especially when Church and State are in danger from a cruel and Popish enemy, I am

glad, my lord, of an opportunity of preaching, though it should be in a meeting-house; and I think it discovers a good and moderate spirit in the Dissenters, who will quietly attend on the Church service, as many have done, and continue to do at Long Acre Chapel, while many, who I suppose style themselves her faithful sons, by very improper instruments of reformation, have endeavoured to disturb and molest us. If the lessor of this chapel, my lord, hath no power to let it out, or if it be not legally and properly licensed, I have been deceived indeed; and if upon inquiry I find this to be the case, I shall soon declare, in the most public manner, how both your lordship and myself have been imposed upon. But if it appear that the lessor hath a right to dispose of his own property, and that the place is licensed, if not in the court books of the Quarter-Sessions, yet in the Commons or some other proper court; and as some good, I trust, has been, and hope will yet be, done by this foolishness of preaching, surely your lordship's candour will overlook a little irregularity, since I fear that in these dregs of time, these last days wherein we live, we must be obliged to be irregular, or in short we must do no good at all.

“ My lord, I remember well (and oh that I may more than ever obey your lordship's admonition), and often recollect that awful day wherein I was ordained priest, and when authority was given me, by my honoured friend and father, good Bishop Benson, to preach the word of God. Oh that the glorious exhortation, which he delivered with so much solemnity, may be written upon the tables of my heart! Mindful of this, I shall be always ready to go out and seek for Christ's sheep that are dispersed abroad, and be willing to spend and be spent for the good of his children which are in the midst of this naughty world. Never did I so much as

dream, my lord, that this was only a local commission, or that the condition annexed, 'Where you shall be lawfully appointed thereunto,' was to confine me to any particular place, and that it would be unlawful for me to preach out of it. It is plain my Lord Bishop of Gloucester did not think so; for when his secretary brought a license for me, his lordship said, 'It would cost me thirty shillings, and therefore I should not have it.' And when, after being presented to the late Bishop of London, I applied to him for a license, his lordship was pleased to say, 'I was going to Georgia, and needed none.' Accordingly I preached in most of the London churches under his lordship's immediate inspection; and why any other license than my letters of orders should now be required, I believe no substantial, I am positive no truly scriptural, reason can be assigned.

"It is true, as your lordship observes, there is one canon that says, 'That no curate or minister shall be permitted to serve in any place without examination and admission of the bishop of the diocese.' And there is another also, as quoted by your lordship, which tells us, 'That neither minister, church-wardens, nor any other officers of the church, shall suffer any man to preach within their chapels, but such as, by showing their license to preach, shall appear unto them to be sufficiently authorized thereunto.' But, my lord, what curacy or parsonage have I desired, or do I desire to be admitted to serve in? or into what church or chapel do I attempt to intrude myself, without leave from the church-wardens or other officers? No, my lord, being, as I think, without cause denied admission into the churches, I am content to take the field, and when the weather will permit, with a table for my pulpit, and the heavens for my sounding-board, I desire to proclaim to

all the unsearchable riches of Jesus Christ. Besides, my lord, if this canon should be always put into full execution, I humbly presume that no bishop or presbyter can legally preach at any time out of the diocese in which he is appointed to serve; consequently, no city incumbent can even occasionally be lawfully assisted by any country clergyman, or even a bishop himself be lawfully permitted to preach a charity sermon out of his own diocese, without a special license for so doing. And what a loss would that be to many noble charities here in town! As for that other canon which your lordship mentions, and which runs thus: 'Neither shall any minister, not licensed as is aforesaid, presume to appoint or hold meetings for sermons, commonly termed by some prophesies or exercises, in market towns or other places, under the said pains;' I need not inform your lordship, that it was originally levelled against those who would not conform to the Church of England, and that, too, in such high-flying times, which I cannot believe any one of the present moderate bench of bishops would wish to see again restored. And if this be the true state of the case, how, my lord, doth this canon belong to me, who am Episcopally ordained, and have very lately published a small tract (which I humbly beg your lordship's acceptance of) on purpose to recommend the communion office of the Church of England?

"But, my lord, to come nearer to the point in hand (and for Christ's sake let not your lordship be offended with my using such plainness of speech), I would, as in the presence of the living God, put it to your lordship's conscience, whether there is one bishop or presbyter in England, Wales, or Ireland, that looks upon our canons as his rule of action? If they do, we are all perjured with a witness, and, consequently, in a very bad sense

of the word, irregular indeed. May I not, therefore, say on this, alluding to what my blessed Master did on another occasion, ‘He that is without the sin of acting illegally, if the canons of our Church be implicitly to be obeyed, let him cast the first stone at me, and welcome.’ Your lordship knows full well, that canons and other Church laws are good and obligatory, when conformable to the laws of Christ, and agreeable to the liberties of a free people; but when invented and compiled by men of little hearts and bigoted principles, on purpose to hinder persons of more enlarged souls from doing good, or being more extensively useful, they become mere *bruta fulmina*; and when made use of only as cords to bind up the hands of a zealous few, that honestly appear for their king, their country, and their God, like the withes with which the Philistines bound Samson, in my opinion, they may very legally be broken. What pains and penalties are to be incurred for such offence (as I have not the canons at present before me), I cannot tell; but for my own part, my lord, if any penalty is incurred, or any pain to be inflicted upon me, for prophesying or preaching against sin, the pope, and the devil, and for recommending the strictest loyalty to the best of princes, his majesty King George, in this metropolis, or any other part of his majesty’s dominions, I trust, through grace, I shall be enabled to say,

‘All hail reproach, and welcome pain!’

“I think there now remains but one more particular in your lordship’s letter to be answered—your lordship’s truly apostolical canon, taken out of 2 Cor. x. 16; upon turning to, and reading of which, I could not help thinking, my lord, of a passage I once met with in good Mr Philip Henry’s life. It was this—Being ejected out of the Church, and yet thinking it his duty

to preach, he used now and then to give the people of Broad Oaks, where he lived, a gospel sermon; and one day, as he was coming from his exercise, and meeting with the incumbent, he thus addressed him: 'Sir, I have been taking the liberty of throwing a handful of seed into your field.' 'Have you so?' said the good man—'may God give it his blessing! There is work enough for us both.' This, my lord, I humbly conceive, is the case not only of your lordship, but of every minister's parish in London, and every bishop's diocese in England; and therefore as good is done, and souls are benefited, I hope your lordship will not regard a little irregularity, since, at the worst, it is only the irregularity of doing well. But supposing this should not be admitted as an excuse at other seasons, I would hope it will have its weight at this critical juncture, wherein, if there were ten thousand sound preachers, and each preacher had a thousand tongues, they could not well be too frequently employed in calling upon the inhabitants of Great Britain to be upon their guard against the cruel and malicious designs of France, of Rome, and of hell. After all, my lord, if your lordship will be pleased to apply to Mr B—— himself (who, I suppose, knows where the place is registered), or if, upon inquiry, I shall find that the lessor hath no power to let it out, as I hate and abhor every dishonourable action, after my setting out for Bristol, which I expect to do in a few days, I shall decline preaching in the chapel any more. But if the case should appear to be otherwise, I hope your lordship will not be angry, if I persist in this, I trust not unpardonable, irregularity: for if I decline preaching in every place, merely because the incumbent may be unwilling I should come into his parish, I fear I must seldom or never preach at all; and this, my lord, especially at this juncture, when all

day, I believe is not to be met with in English history. Indeed, my lord, it is more than noise. It deserves no milder a name than premeditated rioting. Drummers, soldiers, and many of the baser sort, have been hired by subscription. A copper furnace, bells, drums, clappers, marrow bones and cleavers, and such like instruments of reformation, have been provided and made use of, by them repeatedly, from the moment I have begun preaching to the end of my sermon. By these horrid noises, many women have been almost frightened to death, and mobbers encouraged thereby to come and riot at the chapel door during the time of divine service, and then insult and abuse me and the congregation after it hath been over. Not content with this, the chapel windows, while I have been preaching, have repeatedly been broken by large stones of almost a pound weight (some now lying by me) which, though levelled at, providentially missed me, but at the same time sadly wounded some of my hearers. Mr C——, one of your lordship's relations, can acquaint your lordship with many more particulars; and if your lordship would be so good as only to ride to Mr C——'s house, you would see such a scaffold (unless taken down) and such costly preparations for a noise upon it, that must make the ears of all that shall hear it to tingle."

From such painful remonstrances we gladly turn to a more pleasing part of Whitefield's correspondence. Amidst such incessant preaching and travelling, perhaps not the least or lightest part of his duty consisted in answers to those letters that were daily pouring in upon him from those anxious souls that were awakened, alarmed, and convinced by his powerful and earnest discourses. To these he replied, giving a fitting answer to each inquirer, according to the nature of his case. His answer to one which he received while itinerating

at Bristol, after these riots had ceased, is a pleasing specimen of the simplicity, faithfulness, and affection with which he discharged this important ministerial duty:—

“TO MR J—— R——.

“*Bristol, May 21, 1756.*

“MY DEAR SIR,—This morning (which is the first leisure time I have had since my leaving town) looking over my letters, I found one from you, who I suppose to be the person whom I have taken notice of at Long Acre chapel. As your behaviour there, and your letter before me, bespeak you to be in earnest about your soul, you will be quite welcome to come to my house; and if God should vouchsafe to bless any thing that I may drop for the furtherance of your faith, to him, and him alone, be all the glory. I desire to bless him for what he hath already done. Oh, amazing mercy! to be translated from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God’s dear Son—to be brought from the swine’s trough to feed upon the fatted calf; what a heaven upon earth is this! Be not discouraged, though you are obliged to fight every inch of your way. Jesus will pray for you, and your faith shall not fail. He can and will enable you to overcome yourself and the world. To his never-failing mercy do I most earnestly commit you, as being, for his great name’s sake, your friend and servant,

“G. W.”

As it was important that Whitefield should have a chapel in London less exposed than that of Long Acre, where he could preach during his winter sojourns in the metropolis, a place in Tottenham Court was chosen, and for the building £600 was speedily collected. It was intended at first to have placed it under the protection of Lady Huntingdon, but this proceeding was against ecclesiastical rule. To her ladyship he writes: “We have

consulted the Commons [Doctors Commons] about putting it under your ladyship's protection. This is the answer: 'No nobleman can license a chapel, or in any manner have one put in his dwelling-house; that the chapel must be a private one, and not with doors to the street for any persons to resort to at pleasure, for then it becomes a public one; that a chapel cannot be built and used as such without the consent of the parson of the parish, and when it is done with his consent, no minister can preach therein, without license of the bishop of the diocese.' There seems, then, to be but one way—to license it as our other houses are; and thanks be to Jesus for that liberty which we have." The place, accordingly, was finished and opened upon that principle, towards the close of the same year.

While this building was in progress, Whitefield resolved that his autumnal tour of this year should extend to Scotland, and in the beginning of August he left London for that purpose.

The following letter gives an account of his labours by the way:—

“TO MR Z——.

“*Sunderland, August 14, 1756.*

“HONOURED AND VERY DEAR SIR,—How swiftly doth my precious time fly away! It is now a fortnight since I came to Leeds in Yorkshire, where the gospel had indeed, free course, did run, and was glorified. On the Sunday evening, a few hours after my arrival, many thousands were gathered in the fields, to whom I trust Jesus enabled me to speak with some degree of power. The following week I preached in and about Leeds, thrice almost every day, to thronged and affected auditories; and on Sunday last, the fields were indeed white, ready unto harvest. At Bradford, about seven in the morning, the auditory consisted of about ten thousand;

at noon, and in the evening at Burstall, to near double the number. Though hoarse, the Redeemer helped me to speak, so that all heard. Upon every account it was a high day. In the evening, several hundreds of us rode about eight miles, singing and praising God. Indeed it was a night much to be remembered. The next morning I took a sorrowful leave of Leeds, preached at Tadcaster at noon, and at York the same night. God was with us. On Tuesday, I preached twice at York (delightful seasons!); on Wednesday, at Warstall, about fifty miles off; on Thursday, twice at Yarm; and last night and this morning here. All the way I have heard of a great concern since I was in these parts last year, and of many glorious trophies of the power of redeeming love. In heaven, honoured sir, you will know all. There I shall throw my crown before the Lamb; and there you shall be rewarded for strengthening the hands of the most unworthy creature that ever was employed by God. After spending my Sabbath here, and visiting Shields, Newcastle, and some adjacent places, I purpose to go on to Scotland. From thence I hope to have the honour of writing to you again. This is the first time I have had a proper opportunity of refreshing myself in that way. Praying that you may increase with all the increase of God, and begging your acceptance of repeated thanks for repeated unmerited favours, I subscribe myself, honoured and very dear sir, your most dutiful though most unworthy son in the glorious gospel,

G. W."

His stay in Scotland, during this his fourth visit to the country, was a very short one; and of its particulars we have no account in his own correspondence. He arrived in Edinburgh on the 20th of August, and as we learn from the daily prints of the period, his labours there were as indefatigable as ever. The following is a

consulted the Commons [Doctors Commons] about putting it under your ladyship's protection. This is the answer: 'No nobleman can license a chapel, or in any manner have one put in his dwelling-house; that the chapel must be a private one, and not with doors to the street for any persons to resort to at pleasure, for then it becomes a public one; that a chapel cannot be built and used as such without the consent of the parson of the parish, and when it is done with his consent, no minister can preach therein, without license of the bishop of the diocese.' There seems, then, to be but one way—to license it as our other houses are; and thanks be to Jesus for that liberty which we have." The place, accordingly, was finished and opened upon that principle, towards the close of the same year.

While this building was in progress, Whitefield resolved that his autumnal tour of this year should extend to Scotland, and in the beginning of August he left London for that purpose.

The following letter gives an account of his labours by the way:—

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short account of them from the *Glasgow Courant*, dated September 9, 1756:—"For near these three weeks, the Rev. Mr Whitefield hath been preaching in Orphan Hospital Park to very crowded auditories, twice every day. As he was frequently very explicit in opening the miseries of Popish tyranny and arbitrary power, and very warm in exhorting his hearers to loyalty and courage at home, and in stirring them up to pray for the success of his majesty's forces, both by sea and land, abroad, we have reason to believe that his visit at this juncture hath been particularly useful." He also preached at Glasgow. He left Scotland on the 22d of September, and on his return was not idle, as the following extract from one of his letters will testify: "I wrote a few lines not long ago from Leeds. Since that, I have been in honest Mr G—— and Mr J——'s round, preaching upon the mountains to many thousands. One that was awakened three years ago, is gone to heaven, and desired to be buried upon the spot where she was awakened. The sacrament at Mr G——'s was most awful, and the *Welch* night at Leeds exceedingly solemn. I would have continued my circuit, but found that preaching so frequently in those cold countries was bringing on my last year's disorder. Being, therefore, grown very prudent, I am come to open a new chapel in Tottenham Court Road, and in my poor way to recommend the ever-loving, ever-lovely Jesus."

The chapel in Tottenham Court Road was opened at Christmas; and such was the inundation of people upon this occasion, that hundreds were unable to get admittance. A neighbouring doctor, probably in derision, entitled the chapel, "Whitefield's soul-trap;" but the term was more happy than perhaps he intended, and Whitefield prayed that it might be a soul-trap indeed to many wandering creatures. It must be confessed, indeed, that the

building, in form, was wonderfully like a mouse-trap of the old fashion. After having laboured nearly five months in his winter quarters, and laboured daily with great success, the season had come for a summer tour, and to Scotland once more he directed his course—a land that owes much to his memory, were it for nothing more than the love he bore to it. Of this visit he says: “Surely my going thither was of God. I came thither the 12th of May, and left it the 6th of June, and preached just fifty times—to what purpose, the great day will discover; I have reason to believe to very good purpose. Being the time of the General Assembly (at which I was much pleased) many ministers attended—perhaps a hundred at a time. Thereby prejudices were removed, and many of their hearts were deeply impressed. About thirty of them, as a token of respect, invited me to a public entertainment. The Lord High Commissioner also invited me to his table, and many persons of credit and religion did the same in a public manner. Thousands and thousands, among whom were a great many of the best rank, daily attended on the word preached; and the longer I stayed, the more the congregations and divine influence increased. Twice I preached in my way to Glasgow, and last night opened my campaign here. The cloud seems to move towards Ireland. How the Redeemer vouchsafes to deal with me there, you shall know hereafter. In the meanwhile, my very dear friend, let me entreat the continuance of your prayers; for I am less than the least of all saints, and unworthy to be employed in the service of so divine a Master.”

He followed the leading cloud, and in the same month was found labouring in Dublin. “Here,” he says, “the congregations are very large, and very much impressed. The Redeemer vouchsafes to give me great freedom in preaching, and arrows of conviction fly and fasten. One

of the bishops told a nobleman, he was glad I was come to rouse the people." Three days after, he thus writes : " Here in Dublin, many have begun to say, 'What shall we do to be saved?' Congregations are large, and very much impressed indeed. A spirit of conviction and consolation seems to be sent forth. All sorts attend, and all sorts seem to be affected." But such labours in the very heart of a Popish people, could not escape the usual requital of Popish persecution, and the life of the preacher was exposed to the most imminent danger. His own account, although so full, is too interesting to be omitted, or even curtailed :—

" When here last, I preached in a more confined place on the week-days, and once or twice ventured out to Oxminton Green, a large place like Moorfields, situated very near the barracks, where the Ormond and Liberty—that is, high and low party boys—generally assemble every Sunday, to fight with each other. The congregations then were very numerous; the word seemed to come with power; and no noise or disturbance ensued. This encouraged me to give notice, that I would preach there again last Sunday afternoon. I went through the barracks, the door of which opens into the green, and pitched my tent near the barrack walls, not doubting of the protection, or at least interposition, of the officers and soldiery, if there should be occasion. But how vain is the help of man! Vast was the multitude that attended. We sang, prayed, and preached, without much molestation; only now and then a few stones and clods of dirt were thrown at me. It being war time, as is my usual practice, I exhorted my hearers not only to fear God, but to honour the best of kings; and after sermon I prayed for success to the Prussian arms. All being over, I thought to return home the way I came; but to my great surprise access was denied, so that I had

to go near half a mile from one end of the green to the other, through hundreds and hundreds of Papists, &c. Finding me unattended (for a soldier and four Methodist preachers who came with me had forsook me and fled), I was left to their mercy; but their mercy, as you may easily guess, was perfect cruelty. Volleys of hard stones came from all quarters; and every step I took, a fresh stone struck, and made me reel backwards and forwards, till I was almost breathless, and all over a gore of blood. My strong beaver hat served me as it were for a skull-cap for a while; but at last that was knocked off, and my head left quite defenceless. I received many blows and wounds; one was particularly large, and near my temples. I thought of Stephen, and as I believed that I received more blows, I was in great hopes that like him I should be despatched, and go off in this bloody triumph to the immediate presence of my Master. But providentially a minister's house lay next door to the green: with great difficulty I staggered to the door, which was kindly opened to and shut upon me. Some of the mob in the meantime having broke part of the boards of the pulpit into large splinters, they beat and wounded my servant grievously in his head and arms, and then came and drove him from the door. For a while I continued speechless, panting for and expecting every breath to be my last. Two or three of the hearers (my friends) by some means or other got admission, and kindly, with weeping eyes, washed my bloody wounds, and gave me something to smell and to drink. I gradually revived, but soon found the lady of the house desired my absence, for fear the house should be pulled down. What to do I knew not, being near two miles from Mr W——'s place. Some advised one thing, and some another. At length, a carpenter, one of the friends that came, offered me his wig and coat, that I might go

off in disguise. I accepted of, and put them on, but was soon ashamed of not trusting my Master to secure me in my proper habit, and threw them off with disdain. I determined to go out (since I found my presence was so troublesome) in my proper habit. Immediately deliverance came. A Methodist preacher with two friends brought a coach; I leaped into it, and rode in gospel triumph through the oaths, curses, and imprecations of whole streets of Papists unhurt, though threatened every step of the ground. None but those who were spectators of the scene, can form an idea of the affection with which I was received by the weeping, mourning, but now joyful Methodists. A Christian surgeon was ready to dress our wounds; which being done, I went into the preaching place, and after giving a word of exhortation, joined in a hymn of praise and thanksgiving to Him who makes our extremity his opportunity; who stills the noise of the waves, and the madness of the most malignant people. The next morning I set out for Port Arlington, and left my persecutors to His mercy who out of persecutors hath often made preachers. That I may be thus revenged of them, is the hearty prayer of yours," &c.,

"G. W."

After visiting Port Arlington, Athlone, Limerick, and Cork, where he had "Cambuslang seasons," and especially at Dublin, where he preached fifty times, Whitefield returned to London. His health was breaking down, so that he was reduced to what he terms "short allowance"—that is, preaching only once a-day, and thrice on Sabbath. He abode in this languid state by his chapel in Tottenham Court Road, and in the spring of 1758, he resumed his itinerancy into the west of England and Wales, but in so enfeebled a condition, that he could not endure even the motion of a chaise among the rough mountain roads. But still, he was as alert

as ever when the time of preaching arrived, that he might ascend the pulpit, which he called his *throne*. And still his language was, "Welcome, thrice welcome, death in such a cause!" But strength was brought out of his feebleness. "Oh, what delightful field gospel-scenes," he exclaims, "have been displayed in Gloucestershire, Bristol, and Wales! There I have been feebly labouring for above a fortnight. Thousands and thousands attended twice every day in various places, and on Sundays the numbers were almost incredible. A blessed influence ran through the whole circuit, and sundry times I humbly hoped my longing soul would have taken its wished-for flight; but I am preserved to return hither, and perhaps next week shall see London." In writing to Lady Huntingdon, on returning from Wales to Bristol, he adds:—"It proved a most delightful, trying circuit. I suppose your ladyship hath heard how low I have been in body,—scarce ever lower; not able to sit up in company all the time, yet strengthened to travel without bodily food, and to preach to thousands every day. Never were the fields whiter, and more ready to harvest. The Lord Jesus seemed to ride in triumph through the great congregation in Haverford-west. Perhaps the auditory consisted of near fifteen thousand. Tears flowed like water from the stony rock. The cup of God's people quite runs over. Many were sick of love. Welcome, then, bodily pain and bodily sickness! Oh for a hearse to carry my weary carcass to the wished-for grave! There the wicked cease from troubling, there the weary are at rest."

Notwithstanding this sickness, which threatened to be fatal, Whitefield continued his tour, as he was anxious to resume his labours in Scotland; towards which land his heart never ceased to beat. But, to give the particulars of this visit more clearly, we shall

give extracts from his letters in journal fashion. He thus begins at Newcastle, in a letter dated July 31, 1758:—

“Thus far a never-failing Redeemer hath brought on the most worthless and weak pilgrim that was ever employed in publishing his everlasting gospel. All the last week was taken up in preaching at Everton, St Neots, Kayso, Bedford, Oulney, Weston, Underwood, Ravenstone, and Northampton. Four clergymen lent me their churches, and three read prayers for me in one day. I preached also in Mr Bunyan’s pulpit, and at Northampton I took the field. Good seasons at all places. My bodily strength increases but very little. Sometimes I am almost tempted to turn back; but through divine strength I hope to go forward, and shall strive, as much as in me lies, to die in this glorious work.”

“*Edinburgh, August 10.*—With great difficulty I came here. I am strengthened to preach here twice a-day; but, alas! I grow weaker and weaker in preaching.”

“*Edinburgh, August 15.*—It seems I am growing better. Within these four days I have felt a great alteration; perhaps it may continue. God’s will be done. Surely never was there so weak a creature employed in such work for God; and yet people flock rather more than ever. We have two lovely scenes every day.”

“*Edinburgh, August 17.*—[This letter is written to a clergyman in Scotland.]—It is a little hard that we should be so near, and not have a personal interview. But our Lord orders all things well. Most of my Christian meetings must be adjourned to heaven. Thither I have been in hopes of going for many weeks last past; but it will not do. This preaching is a strange restorative. I wish you may take it every day.

If things are not right at home, it is well if we can take or catch fire abroad."

"*Edinburgh, August 19.*—I came here a fortnight ago, very low indeed; but, by preaching about thirty times, blessed be God, I am a good deal better. Multitudes of all ranks flock twice every day. A divine influence attends the word, and though sown in so much weakness, I trust it will meet with a divine increase. On Tuesday next I thought to have moved; but as it is race week, and my health is improving, friends advise me to stay, to stir them up to run with patience the race which is set before us."

"*Darlington, September 21.*—Surely it is an age since I had the pleasure of writing to you last. I was then appointed by Providence to stay at Edinburgh the race week; since then I have been at Glasgow, and returned to Edinburgh again. At both places my health grew better, and I was enabled to preach always twice, and sometimes thrice a-day, to very large and affected auditories. The partings from both places were very cutting. In heaven all this will be over."

Whitefield left Edinburgh on the 13th of September, and on his way to London he preached at Alnwick, Newcastle, Durham, Bishops-Aukland, Leeds, and other towns, where his sermons were attended by thousands. On reaching London, he says, "Lord Jesus, increase such mighty wonders! My health is somewhat improved, but I find a very little thing soon impairs it. Lord, help me! How very little can I do for thee!"

PART V.

FROM HIS VISIT TO SCOTLAND IN 1758, TO HIS ATTEMPT
TO FOUND A COLLEGE IN AMERICA.

ON returning to London in the winter of 1758, Whitefield found "the door for preaching the gospel opening wider and wider." Neither the new chapel in Tottenham Court, nor the Tabernacle, were large enough, capacious though they were, to receive the multitudes that flocked to them. His anxious wish was now to visit America, where the orphan hospital which he had established there, as well as the earnest entreaties of many Transatlantic friends, urged his coming; but the supply of the chapel and the Tabernacle during so long an absence was found so difficult, that he was obliged to postpone his intended visit. His hope, however, was, "Surely the God of the sea and the God of the dry land will open a door for my embarkation by-and-by." Thus the winter passed; spring arrived, and found him still labouring at these two chapels. He therefore resolved to revisit Scotland; and according to his usual plan, he stopped at every station of usefulness that lay in his route. "This day se'ennight," he writes from Bristol, "through divine goodness, I came hither. The next day, the spring campaign was opened: on the Lord's-day we took the field. Thousands and thousands attended: full as many as in London. The power of the Lord was present at the three meetings, as well as at the holy communion. Some cups were made to run

over. Ever since, I have been enabled to preach twice, and sometimes thrice a-day. Never did I see the Bristol people more attentive or impressed. My body feels the heat; but no matter. If souls are benefited, all is well." After continuing his itinerating labours in Gloucestershire and Yorkshire, and with the same acceptance from those who crowded to hear him, he reached Edinburgh about the beginning of July 1759.

His visit to Scotland on this occasion does not seem to have given him the same ardent satisfaction with which his former arrivals were gladdened. People, high and low, rich and poor, flocked indeed to his ministrations as before; but he did not find the same vitality among them. "I preach, and people flock as usual; but Scotland is not London." This is more fully explained in a subsequent letter: "It is a blessed thing to be kept alive in a dead time. It is a dead time in Scotland indeed—little or no stirring among the dry bones. It is not so in London, and several other parts of England." How was this? Had the charm of novelty departed, or Moderatism regained its full ascendancy? In addition to these melancholy prospects, the heart of Whitefield was troubled by the advance of what he considered the greatest of personal evils. This was a tendency to corpulency, which, although slight, had been threatening him since his fortieth year, and by which he feared the activity of his exertions in the divine work of an evangelist would be impeded. He writes at this time: "I am growing fat; but as I take it to be a disease, I hope I shall go home the sooner." And again: "I dread a corpulent body. But it breaks in upon me like an armed man. Oh that my heart may not wax gross at the same time!" His stay in Scotland lasted six weeks, during which he preached at Edinburgh and Glasgow nearly a hundred times, to congregations that were

always increasing. This fact seems to give a pleasing intimation of a re-action in favour of the gospel. One event also happened at this time which gives a high idea of Whitefield's disinterestedness. It must be remembered, that at all times he had possessed the poverty as well as the piety of an evangelist—careful for little beyond the wants of the day, and leading a life of habitual self-denial. During his visit, a young lady of considerable fortune, anxious to enlarge his means of comfort as well as usefulness, made an offer to transfer to him the possession of her estate and money, amounting to about seven thousand pounds. This offer he courteously, but most decisively refused. She then wished him to receive it as a donation for his orphan house in Georgia, but met with the same rejection. He would not stain the glory of his ministry by the slightest suspicion of selfishness.

The letters of Whitefield at this time are so few and brief, that we can merely allude to the events that filled up a considerable interval. After resuming his winter duties in London, he was enabled, in the spring of 1760, to enlarge his new chapel, upon which occasion he collected four hundred pounds for the benefit of the Prussian Protestants, who had been plundered by the Russians at Niewmark and Costein. He then made a summer tour to Gloucestershire, Wales, and his favourite and promising town of Bristol; at which last place his field-preachings were attended by at least ten thousand hearers. On his return to London, he found a new species of persecution awaiting him. A play written by Foote, called "The Minor," in which Whitefield is introduced with every species of profanity and ridicule, was brought out upon the stage of Drury Lane, to turn him and his preaching into burlesque. The "soul-trap" of Tottenham Court was making empty benches

in the theatre, and no attempt was thought too profane on the part of his opponents to surmount this rivalry, and recall the fugitives. "Satan is angry," was the language of Whitefield: "I am now mimicked and burlesqued upon the public stage. All hail such contempt! God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of Jesus Christ." His usual work was pursued in London, and on the arrival of summer he itinerated. But sickness hung upon him wherever he went, so that his friends were obliged to interpose, lest his ardent zeal should consume the frail tabernacle in which it lodged. These hindrances were most painful to his apostolic spirit, and he thus writes of them to a friend: "I am still in this dying world; but frequently tempted to wish the report of my death had been true, since my disorder keeps me from my old delightful work of preaching. But Jesus can teach us to exercise our passive as well as active graces. Fain would I say, 'Thy will be done.'" After a journey to Leeds and Newcastle towards the winter, by which his health was so much improved that he was able to bear travelling at the rate of sixty miles a-day in a post-chaise, he continued his tour to Scotland. He stayed there six weeks, preaching occasionally at Edinburgh and Glasgow; but still his feeble state of health laid a check upon his efforts, so that his time seems to have been chiefly spent in private circles, and revisiting his northern friends and acquaintances. Four eminent physicians of Edinburgh, who had carefully consulted upon his maladies, had enjoined him a cessation from preaching—in which case they gave him hopes of recovery; and most reluctantly he followed their advice. It was well that he did so; for scarcely four months after, he felt himself so much recovered as to be able to preach five times during one week at Bristol without injury. Even this, however, he did not reckon to be

permanent; and he quaintly adds: "A few more blows from friends and from foes, and the pitcher will be broken."

The following letter, which he wrote a short time after this, shows the value which he set upon health and a complete recovery: "Though I hope to be in London on Tuesday or Wednesday next, yet I cannot come thither without troubling you with another line. Blessed be God, it leaves me in better bodily health than when I wrote last. Through divine mercy, preaching four or five times a-week did not hurt me; and twice or thrice I have been enabled to take the field—in my opinion, a greater honour than to be monarch of the universe. London cares and London labours, I expect, will soon bring me low again. But, as Messrs D—— and K—— are coming up, I hope soon to slip away and get strength, and then hunt for precious souls again. How gladly would I bid adieu to ceiled houses and vaulted roofs! Mounts are the best pulpits, and the heavens the best sounding-boards. Oh for power to equal my will! I would fly from pole to pole, publishing the everlasting gospel of the Son of God. I know you would lend me the wings of prayer. Jesus, in answer, give the wings of faith and love, and we shall then quickly soar to thy bosom." On the following month he thus writes from Norwich: "At present, blessed be God, I can preach once a-day; and it would do your heart good to see what an influence attends the word. All my old times are revived again. On next Monday, God willing, I shall set forward to Lincolnshire, Yorkshire, &c. You that are in ceiled houses, and under vaulted roofs (which I do not grudge you), will not forget a poor pilgrim, who desires no other pulpit but a mount, no other sounding-board but the heavens."

The particulars of this last journey are not mentioned; but had the letters in which they were doubtless intimated been published, a valuable addition to the Life of Whitefield would have been extant. His arrival in Yorkshire seems to have suggested an extension of his tour to Scotland, and he accordingly arrived in Edinburgh on the 18th of August 1762. From Edinburgh he went to Glasgow, where he preached every day. One place, however, he deemed worthy of a visit once more, and which might probably be a parting one—it was Cambuslang, in the revival at which village he had in former years taken so deep an interest. There he preached twice, and there, as well as at Glasgow, to large audiences. On his return to Edinburgh, he continued preaching once a-day, till the 13th of September, when he returned to England. But how his languid appearance and diminished exertions must have struck those in Scotland, who had listened to the full thunder of his eloquence! On his return he preached at Sunderland and Leeds, but still upon the stinted measure—once a-day.

A short time after arriving in London, Whitefield repaired to Bristol, where he seems to have been visited with something of his former power and success. "Bristol," he says, "was a refreshing place indeed. Congregations were very large, and a most gracious gale of divine influences attended the word preached. Being under a positive promise to come here before I left England, I embraced this opportunity. I preached last night, and find no hurt this morning. Many young people, I hear, are under great awakenings. May such hostilities never cease!"

Many circumstances now urged Whitefield to make a voyage to America. Hitherto the war had prevented free communication with the colonies; but peace had

arrived, and the sea was no longer beset with hostile ships. He had longed also for a voyage across the Atlantic, in the hope that it would brace his enfeebled constitution, and fit him for fresh efforts. The affairs, moreover, of the orphan hospital pressed heavily upon his mind, his agent there having drawn upon him for £147 at a time when his health was too much broken to collect the necessary funds. All these were urgent claims for a fresh visit to America, independent of the strong interest he felt in its people, and his longing to advance the cause of the gospel among them. His great difficulty, however, was about the chapel and tabernacle in London, which might be injured by the length of his absence. A satisfactory arrangement at length was made upon this matter, so that he felt himself at full liberty to take his departure, and he resolved to set sail from Greenock. His journey towards the place of embarkation was, as might be expected from him, a journey of evangelistic labours; and before he reached Scotland, he preached at Everton, Leeds, Aberford, Kippox, and Newcastle, besides writing a controversial treatise in answer to Bishop Warburton. On his arrival at Edinburgh in March 1763, he was able to preach once a-day, and he felt an energy and buoyancy of spirit to which he had long been a stranger. This, however, soon gave place to his old malady, under which he was so overcome, that he was obliged to remain silent for the greater part of six weeks. On arriving at Virginia, he wrote two affectionate letters—the one to the congregation of the Tabernacle, and the other to that of Tottenham Court—giving a short account of what had befallen him since his departure. We quote the first of these:—

“TO ALL MY DEAR TABERNACLE HEARERS, THAT LOVE
THE LORD JESUS CHRIST IN SINCERITY.

“ *Virginia, Sept. 1, 1763.*

“ DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD,—Though absent in body, the Searcher of hearts knows that I have been present with you in spirit ever since I left London. Glad, very glad, was I to hear from time to time, whilst ashore, that the shout of a king was among you; and it was my continual prayer whilst at sea, that the glory of the Lord may so fill the Tabernacle, that all who come to hear the word, may be constrained to say, ‘Surely God is in this place.’ I doubt not of your wrestling in my behalf. Certainly it must be in answer to your cryings unto the Lord, that I have been dealt with so bountifully. For some weeks I was enabled to preach once a-day when in Scotland, and I trust not without some divine efficacy. But my late disorder kept me silent for some weeks afterwards, and put me upon thinking sometimes that my intended voyage would be retarded, at least for one year longer. Having obtained a little more bodily strength, I ventured upon the mighty waters; and thanks, eternal thanks, to a never-failing Redeemer, I have not been laid by an hour through sickness since I came on board. Every thing hath been providentially ordered, suitable to my low estate—a large and commodious cabin, a kind captain, and a most orderly and quiet ship’s company, who gladly attended when I had breath to preach. Scarce an oath have I heard upon deck, during a twelve weeks’ voyage; and such a stillness through the whole ship, both on week-days and the Lord’s-day, as hath from time to time surprised me. Some concern hath appeared, but of what kind or duration the event alone can discover. The spiritual bread hath been cast on the waters: who knows but it may be found after

many days? How it shall please my all-bountiful Master to dispose of me when I get on shore, you shall know hereafter. All that I can say is (if I know any thing of my unspeakably deceitful and desperately wicked heart), Lord Jesus,

‘ A life that all things casts behind,
Ssprings forth obedient to thy call;
A heart, that no desire can move,
But still t’adore, resign, and love,
Give me, my Lord, my life, my all !’

You will not forget to persevere in praying for a poor, worthless, but willing pilgrim, who dearly loves you, and daily rejoices in the pleasing reflection, that he shall ere long meet you in a better world, where the inhabitants shall no more say, ‘ I am sick.’ Blessed prospect ! Surely on the very mentioning it, you will break forth in singing—

‘ Rejoice, the Lord is king,’ &c.

I will not interrupt you. Adieu. The Lord Jesus be with your spirits. Only when you have done singing, my dear fellow-labourers, my dear Tabernacle hearers, forget not to subjoin at least one petition, that, whether absent or present, Jesus may be more and more precious to your affectionate friend, and willing servant, for his great name’s sake, G. W.”

On arriving in Virginia, he commenced the good work for which he had come; and while he travelled from town to town through the ample length and breadth of the New World, he bravely bore up against that feebleness and sickness which would have driven ordinary labourers into utter seclusion. To give, however, a connected account of these arduous duties, and their results, we select the following extracts from his correspondence:—

“*Virginia, Sept. 7, 1763.*—We are now on dry land. Christian friends whom I never before heard of, were prepared to receive me; and I have preached four times. This leaves me on my way to Philadelphia, still visited with my old disorder, which I now never expect to drop, till I drop for good and all this body of clay—this body of sin and death.”

“*Philadelphia, Sept. 29.*—EBENEZER! Hitherto the Lord hath helped! I have been here above a week, but still an invalid.”

“*Philadelphia, Oct. 21.*—Here are some young bright witnesses rising up in the Church. Perhaps I have already conversed with forty new-creature ministers of various denominations. Sixteen hopeful students, I am credibly informed, were converted at New Jersey College last year. What an open door, if I had strength! But—Father, thy will be done: blessed be his name, I can preach now and then. Last Tuesday we had a remarkable season among the Lutherans. Children and grown people were much impressed.”

“*Philadelphia, Nov. 8.*—The physicians all agree, that the only chance I have for growing better, is to stay and see what the cold weather will do for me. At present, I make a shift to preach twice a-week. But, alas! my strength is perfect weakness.”

“*Philadelphia, Nov. 14.*—I am here yet, left behind, and now about to make my first excursion to the New Jersey College. Twice a-week preaching is my present allowance. Many of various ranks seem to be brought under real concern. Physicians are absolutely against my going to Georgia till I get more strength.”

“*New York, Dec. 1.*—Some very good impressions have been made in Philadelphia, and we had four sweet seasons at New Jersey College, and two at Elizabeth-Town, in my way hither. Some said, they resembled

old times. My spirits grow better, but thrice a-week is as often as I can preach. To-day, I begin here."

"*New York, Dec. 4.*—Since writing the above, blessed be God, I have preached. Persons of all denominations seem to be athirst."

"*New York, Dec. 8.*—Blessed be God, I am enabled to preach thrice a-week. But such a flocking of all ranks, I never before saw at New York. A great number have been to see me; and several come to me in the evening, as it should seem, to hear something of the kingdom of God."

"*New York, Dec. 16.*—Every day the thirst for hearing the word increases, and the better sort come home to hear more of it."

"*New York, Dec. 18.*—Blessed be God, I am better in health than when I wrote last. Preaching thrice a-week agrees pretty well with me in this cold season of the year. I am apt to believe my disorder will be periodical. New Jersey College is a blessed nursery—one of the purest, perhaps, in the universe. The worthy President, and three tutors, are all bent upon making the students both saints and scholars. I was lately there for a week. The Redeemer vouchsafed to men the word preached. Some said it was like old times. Prejudices in this place have most strangely subsided. The better sort flock as eagerly as the common people, and are fond of coming for private gospel conversation."

"*New York, Jan. 12, 1764.*—Blessed be God, the cold braces me up a little. I am enabled to preach twice or thrice a-week. Congregations continue very large; and, I trust, saving impressions are made upon many. Some students also in Philadelphia and New Jersey Colleges, I hear, are much awakened."

"*Boston, March 3.*—The enclosed will let you see

how matters went at New York. Since leaving that place, a sweet influence hath attended the word at Easthampton, Bridgehampton, and South-hold upon Long Island—at Shelter Island also, and at New London, Norwich, and Providence, on the mainland. At Boston, I have been received with the usual warmth of affection. Twice have we seen the Redeemer's stately steps in the great congregation. Invitations come so thick and fast from every quarter, that I know not what to do. I cannot boast of acquiring much additional bodily strength, any otherwise than as the cool season of the year helps to keep me up. Twice a-week is as often as I can with comfort ascend my throne. The Redeemer vouchsafes to speak for himself there, and private conversation is greatly blessed."

After this he preached at Concord, Providence, Newbury, and Portsmouth, and on returning to Boston, he says: "I have been at my *ne plus ultra* northward, and am now more free and capable of settling my affairs southward." He would have started forthwith, but others were to be consulted. From Boston he writes: "Words cannot well express the eagerness of the people to hear. I was meditating an escape to the southward last week, but the Boston people sent a gospel hue-and-cry after me, and really brought me back." He was benefited by this pursuit and apprehension. "Friends have even constrained me to stay here," he afterwards writes from Boston, "for fear of running into the summer's heat. Hitherto I find the benefit of it. Whatever it is owing to, through mercy, I am much better in health than I was this time twelvemonth, and can now preach thrice a-week to very large auditories without hurt. Every day, I hear of some brought under concern; and I trust, whenever I remove, a blessing will be left behind." Even when he got away, which was not till the month

of June, such was the eagerness of the Boston people to recover him, that they proposed to send after him a book full of signatures imploring his return. He reached New York on his way to Georgia, from which town he gives the following intelligence:—

“*New York, Aug. 8.*—I have preached twice lately in the fields, and we sat under the blessed Redeemer’s shadow with great delight.”

“*New York, Aug. 25.*—Still I am kept as it were a prisoner in these parts, by the heat of the weather. All dissuade me from proceeding southward till the latter end of September. My late excursions upon Long Island, I trust, have been blessed. It would surprise you to see above a hundred carriages at every sermon in this New World.”

After this he continues his journey, which we follow in its order:—

“*Philadelphia, Sept. 21.*—After a most solemn and heart-breaking parting at New York, I am come thus far in my way to Georgia. I have only preached twice here, but the influence was deep indeed. I am really better in health than I have been these three years.

“*New Brunswick, North Carolina, Nov. 22.*—Through the tender mercy of a never-failing Redeemer, I am thus far advanced from Philadelphia, through Virginia, in my way southward.”

“At Newburn, last Sunday, good impressions were made. From that place to this, I have met with what they call *New Lights* almost every stage. At Lochwood’s Folly (an unlikely place as Rome itself), there is to be a general rendezvous of them. This is grace indeed. I am to call to-morrow on a wealthy planter that seems to lead the van; there I shall inquire more particulars. I have the names of six or eight of their preachers. This, with every other place being open,

and extremely desirous to hear the gospel, makes me almost determine to come back early in the spring. Surely the Londoners, who are fed to the full, will not envy the poor souls in these parts, who scarcely know the right hand from the left."

"*Charles-Town, Dec. 2.*—In a little above a month, we came by land from Philadelphia. This morning I am to preach, and to-morrow, God willing, shall set forwards for Georgia. Fain would I be a pilgrim to my last gasp."

Whitefield had especially longed to reach Bethesda, not only for the especial love he bore to that place, but on account of a plan he entertained for the welfare of that district, and for America at large. This was nothing less than the establishment of a college for the advancement of education in general, and the rearing of an effective gospel ministry. The following letters will illustrate not only his exertions for this particular object, but the manner in which he spent his time at this home of his affections:—

"TO MR S—— S——.

"*Bethesda, Jan. 14, 1765.*

"MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,—Through tender mercy, I have been in this province above five weeks. All things, in respect to Bethesda, went on successfully. God hath given me great favour in the sight of the governor, council, and assembly. A memorial was presented for an additional grant of lands, consisting of two thousand acres. It was immediately complied with. Both Houses addressed the governor in behalf of the intended college. As warm an answer was given; and I am now putting all in repair and getting everything ready for that purpose. Every heart seems to leap for joy at the prospect of its future utility to this and the neighbouring colonies. The only question now is,

whether I should embark directly for England, or take one tour more to the northward? He that holdeth the stars in his right hand will direct in due time. I am here in delightful winter quarters. Peace and plenty reign at Bethesda. His Excellency dined with me yesterday, and expressed his satisfaction in the warmest terms. Who knows how many youths may be raised up for the service of the ever-loving and altogether lovely Jesus! Thus far, however, we may set up our Ebenezer. Hitherto the bush hath been burning, but not consumed.

‘Blest is faith that waits God’s hour;
Blest are saints that trust his power.’

Lord, I believe; help thou my unbelief! You and yours will continue to pray for me. Be pleased to accept this as a small token of acknowledgment for all favours conferred upon, my very dear friend, yours, &c., in our glorious Immanuel,

G. W.”

“TO MR P——E.

“*Bethesda, Feb. 3, 1765.*

“MY DEAR MR P——,—Your kind letter lies by me. Love unfeigned constrains me to answer it. We have just been wishing that some of our London friends were here. We have love-feasts every day. Nothing but peace and plenty reign in Bethesda, this house of mercy. God be praised for making the chapel such a Bethel. I believe it will yet be a gate of heaven to many souls. Whether we live or die, we shall see greater things. Remember, my dear friend, to ask something worthy of a God to give. Be content with nothing short of himself. His presence alone can fill and satisfy the renewed soul. Trials only empty the heart, and thereby make way for further communications from above. Seed time and harvest, summer and winter, will always succeed each other here. Do you not

find it so, dear Mr and Mrs A——r, as well as your friend Mr P——e? Though you do not write, I will venture to answer for you: Yes. Well, then, let us go on, till we enter into our eternal summer, our uninterrupted harvest. Haste we, haste we; the Lord is at hand! Pray that my tardy pace may be quickened; get all inquiring friends to join with you; and believe me to be, my dear Mr P——e, yours, &c., in our sympathizing Lord,
G. W.”

“TO MR R—— K——N.

“*Bethesda, Feb. 14, 1765.*

“MY VERY DEAR SIR,—A few days more, and then farewell Bethesda, perhaps for ever. Affairs, as to me, I trust are now brought near a close. The within audit I sent to the governor. Next day came Lord F. A. G——n, to pay his excellency a visit. Yesterday morning, they, with several other gentlemen, favoured me with their company to breakfast. But how was my lord surprised and delighted! After expressing himself in the strongest terms, he took me aside and informed me ‘that the governor had shown him the accounts, by which he found what a great benefactor I had been; that the intended college would be of the utmost utility to this and the neighbouring provinces; that the plan was beautiful, rational, and practicable; and that he was persuaded his majesty would highly approve of and also favour it with some peculiar marks of his royal bounty.’ At their desire I went to town, and dined with him and the governor at Savannah. On Tuesday next, God willing, I move towards Charles-Town, leaving all arrears paid off, and some cash in hand, besides the last year’s whole crop of rice, some lumber, the house repaired, painted, furnished with plenty of clothing, and provision till next crop comes in, and perhaps some for sale. Messrs D——n, S——k, and their wives,

stay till my successors come to supply their places. Only a few boys will be left, and two of them are intended for the foundation. So that this year they will be getting, rather than expending. Near ten boys and girls have been put out; and the small-pox hath gone through the house, with the loss of about six negroes and four orphans. Before which, I think, not above four children have been taken off these twenty-four years. As an acknowledgment of Mr and Mrs D——n's faithfulness and care, I have made them a present of a bill of exchange drawn upon you. It is for Jesus, who shed his dear and precious blood for ill and hell-deserving me. And now it may be I may see England this summer. But still I cry, Who shall roll away the stone? Jesus will do it for me. And now farewell, my beloved Bethesda; surely the most delightfully situated place in all the southern parts of America. I do not forget your dear relations. What a blessed winter have I had! Peace, and love, and harmony, and plenty reign here. Mr W——t hath done much in a little time. All are surprised at it. But he hath worked night and day, and not stirred a mile for many weeks. Help, help, my dear English friends, to pray me over, as being for Christ's sake, my very dear sir, ever yours, theirs," &c.,

"G. W."

His plan in reference to Bethesda adhered to him during the rest of his American tour, which was a gratifying and successful one. We cannot refrain from quoting entire two short letters from Charles-Town and Wilmington.

"To MR S—— S——.

Charles-Town, March 15, 1765.

"MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,—Hitherto the Lord hath helped: I have had a most pleasant winter. The enclosed will show you in what a situation I left Bethesda.

To put the finishing stroke to that affair, I fear I must embark for England. Well may I say, I fear; for indeed words cannot well express what a scene of action I leave behind. Alas! my American work seems as yet scarce begun. My health is better, and every day the word of God runs and is glorified more and more. In two days, my wilderness range commences afresh. In about six weeks I hope to see Philadelphia. From thence, they say, I am to set sail for my native country. But heaven, a blessed, long wished-for heaven, is my home. Surely death will say by-and-by, 'Come up hither.' This, I trust, will find you and yours mounting aloft. God bless you, and all your connexions! Indeed, and indeed, I owe you much, very much love. As a peppercorn of acknowledgment, be pleased to accept these few loving lines from, my very dear friend, ever yours, &c., in Jesus,

G. W."

"To MR R—— K——N.

"*Wilmington, Cape Fear, March 29, 1765.*

"MY VERY DEAR MR K——N,—Thus far the Lord hath brought me on my way to Philadelphia, from whence, according to the present scheme, I purpose to embark for England. But I sometimes doubt whether it is right or not. However, this is my comfort, that I serve a Master who will not suffer the blind, that desire to know and do his will, to go out of their way. Hitherto he hath made the wilderness to smile! We had a most cutting parting from Charles-Town. I preached thrice in my way to this place. At the desire of the mayor and other gentlemen, I shall stay till next Sunday, and then purpose, God willing, to go on my way. Indeed, and indeed, this pilgrimage kind of life is the very joy of my heart. Ceiled houses and crowded tables I leave to others. A morsel of bread, and a little

bit of cold meat, in a wood, is a most glorious repast. Jesus' presence is all and all, whether in the city or the wilderness. I hope that you and my other dear metropolitan friends, in the midst of all your noise, are always hearing, that small still voice that whispers 'Love.' I think much of the late trial of my never-to-be-forgotten friends at Cannonbury House. Remember, according to promise, you will be kind enough to act as trustee; and all things are to continue just as they are, if it should please God to bring me to London. Now I am free; God keep me so for Christ's sake. Tender love to all. I send them most cordial salutations, and entreat the continuance of their and your prayers, in behalf of, my very dear Mr K——, theirs and yours most affectionately in our never-failing Immanuel, G. W."

The cares which he was leaving behind him, as well as those which he was preparing to confront in England, are well expressed in the following epistle:—

"To Mr R—— K——N.

"Newcastle, 30 miles from Philadelphia,

"May 4, 1765.

"MY DEAR MR K——N,—I am just come here, on my way to embark from Philadelphia. But how shall I do it? Everywhere the door opens wider and wider. All along, from Charles-Town to this place, the cry is, 'For Christ's sake, stay and preach to us.' Oh for a thousand lives to spend for Jesus! He is good, he is good! His mercy endureth for ever. Help, help, my dear English friends, to bless and praise him. The letters by Captain Bell, I hear, are sent from Charles-Town, in my trunk, to Philadelphia. I expect to receive them this evening. Thanks be to God, all outward things are settled on this side the water. The auditing the accounts, and laying a foundation for a college, hath silenced enemies and comforted friends.

The finishing this affair confirms my call to England at this time. But I have no manner of prospect of being able to serve the Tabernacle and chapel. I cannot preach once now without being quite exhausted. How, then, shall I bear the cares of both those places? But I must beg you and dear Mr H——y to continue trustees, when I am present, as well as in my absence. I wish that a ship were ready now; perhaps I may yet sail from New York. I am praying night and day for direction. The word runs here, and is glorified. But the weather, for two days, has been so hot, that I could scarce move. To-day it is much cooler. I dread the shaking of the ship. But if it shake this tottering frame to pieces, it will be a trading voyage indeed. As Mr Blake is not mentioned in your last, I hope he is recovered. Death will do this for us all. Blessed be God, for enabling young Mr Beckman to face it so triumphantly! This must be a great cordial to the afflicted parents. That they, your dear relations, and all my tried friends, may be comforted yet more and more, is the earnest prayer of, my very dear sir, yours, theirs, &c., in Jesus, G. W."

After a short passage of twenty-eight days from New York, Whitefield arrived at Falmouth in July, and proceeded to Plymouth, but in a state of great debility. Even then, however, he was so eager for the commencement of a home campaign, that he wrote to a friend to have a gown and cassock made for him. On reaching London, he announced the state of matters there, and what was necessary to be done, to a young clergyman in the country, whose assistance he greatly needed.

“ London, September 28, 1765.

“ MY VERY DEAR TIMOTHY,—Those that are Timothies indeed, shall be honoured of Him whom they desire to honour with a disinterested spirit. I am glad

you find old Jacob's prophecy to be fulfilling: 'To Shiloh shall the gathering of the people be.' Nothing is wanting at Bristol, London, and elsewhere, but labourers full of the first old Methodistical spirit. But where to get them is the question. Those that are thus minded, are almost worn out. I would gladly fly to Bristol, if I could; but I see that it is best to be here for some time. And indeed, things have always been at such a low ebb when I have been at Bristol, and matters carried on with so little spirit, that I have generally come mourning away. If a few, such as Mr C——t, would exert themselves steadily and perseveringly, and proper preachers were sent, something might be done to purpose. But as neither of these things is likely to happen, my expectations are not very much raised. However, the residue of the Spirit is in the Redeemer's hands. Our eyes wait upon Him. From Him, and Him alone, all kinds of salvation do come. Fain would I have you up at London for some time, at this season. Mr D——r expects to see you in a clerical habit about Christmas. He asked me if I would get him a scarf? I answered, that you must have one first. You may guess how he smiled. However, I really intend you shall preach in the chapel. I want you also to read the letters, and give me leave to comment upon them, as my breath will allow. You may return by way of Bristol, or if Sarah is worse, go from hence. I thank you heartily for making the collections. Never was a cause kept up at such a small expense. 'Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord.' This be our invariable rule. God bless and prosper you more and more. If I have not tired you, I have almost tired, my very dear Timothy, yours, &c.,
G. W."

"P.S.—Since writing the above, I find Providence

calls me to Bath, to open good Lady Huntingdon's chapel. God willing, I purpose to set out next Tuesday. You must set out for London the same day; otherwise, it may be, Bristol people will not see me. Adieu. Your preaching orders, as to time and place, you will receive on your arrival. That you may do Satan's kingdom much hurt, is the hearty prayer of, my very dear man, ever yours, &c., in our common Lord,

G. W."

Having opened the chapel at Bath, and returned to London, he appears to have been plied with requests from various quarters of a similar nature; and, indeed, it was not wonderful, considering the celebrity he had now attained, and the blessing that had attended his labours. He was now a patriarch for whom many a young minister experienced the most filial devotedness. But neither his health, nor his pressing duties in London, would allow him at this time to travel; and the following refusal to a demand of this kind shows his liberal and catholic spirit:—

" To ——, AT SHEERNESS.

" *London, Jan. 18, 1766.*

DEARLY BELOVED,—Not want of love, but of leisure and health, hath occasioned you the trouble of writing a second letter. And now I am sorry to acquaint you, that it is not in my power to comply with your request. For want of more assistance, I am confined in town with the care of two important posts, when I am only fit to be put into some garrison among the invalids, to stand by an old gun or two. However, my former ambition still remains, and, through the help of your prayers, who knows but this feeble arm may yet be strengthened to annoy the enemy? If others are blessed to do any execution, God forbid that I should hinder, though in all things they follow not with us. Let the

Lord send by whom he will send. So that Christ is preached, and true evangelical holiness promoted, I rejoice, yea, and will rejoice. God keep us all from flagging in the latter stages of our road! Lord Jesus, quicken my tardy pace! How little, my Lord and my God, have I done for thee, who hast done and suffered so much for ill and hell-deserving me! Brethren, pray for us. Ere long we shall meet

‘ Where sin and strife and sorrow cease,
And all is calm and joy and peace.’

He is faithful who hath promised, who also will do it. Amen! Hallelujah! To his never-failing mercy do I commend you, as being, for his great name’s sake, dearly beloved, your affectionate friend and willing servant,
G. W.”

Mention has been already made of Lady Huntingdon’s chapel at Bath, which Whitefield had just opened. Nothing, indeed, more effectually shows the powerful effect of his preaching, and the hold which Methodism had already taken upon the public mind, than the fact, that such a building should have been erected in the city of Beau Nash, the capital of fashion and frivolity. Well might Whitefield, when he went to open it, regard it with the complacency he felt when he called it “plain, yet grand—a most beautiful original.” On the week after, he preached thrice there, to “very thronged and brilliant auditories.” Matters, also, had greatly improved with him in London, not only as to his health, but also regarding those American affairs which he had so much at heart. Upon these he thus writes to one of his Scottish clerical friends:—“Not want of love, but of leisure and better health, hath prevented your hearing from me more frequently. I find I cannot do as I have done. But, through infinite, free, and sovereign mercy, I am enabled to ascend my gospel throne

three or four times a-week; and a glorious influence attends the word. People have indeed a hearing ear; but we want more preachers. I know the continual cry of your heart is, 'Lord, let thy kingdom come.' The prospect of a large and effectual door opening among the heathen, blessed be God, is very promising. Mr Occum, the Indian preacher, is a settled, humble Christian. The good and great, with a multitude of a lower degree, heard him preach last week at Tottenham Court chapel, and felt much of the power and presence of our common Lord. Mr R——n hath preached, and collected a hundred pounds; and I believe seven or eight hundred pounds more are subscribed. The truly noble Lord Dartmouth espouses the cause most heartily, and his Majesty is become a contributor. The King of kings and Lord of all lords will bless them for it. O what an honour, to be permitted to do or suffer any thing for Jesus of Nazareth!"

Having continued about six weeks after this period in London, during which he diligently employed himself in his usual metropolitan duties, he prepared himself for a country excursion; and Bath and Bristol were the places chosen for his labours. His stay at the former place was short, but longer at the latter, as, from the state of his health and of the weather, it was thought unsafe for him to travel. He was also advised to drink of the hot wells of Bristol, at that time particularly frequented; with which prescription he complied. But although an invalid, he was by no means an idle one; and as he was unable to confront the heat of the day in the pulpit, he selected an early hour for the purpose. Writing from Bristol on the 19th of June 1766, he says: "I have complied with the advice of friends, and have commenced a hot well water-drinker twice a-day. However, twice this week, at six in the morning, I have

been enabled to call thirsty souls to come and drink of the water of life freely. To-morrow evening, God willing, the call is to be repeated, and again on Sunday. By that time, perhaps, the cloud may point to some particular corner. Good seasons at Bath. Good seasons here. Large auditories. Grace, grace!"

We know not in what direction the cloud pointed, as here a gap occurs in the correspondence. We find him, however, in London at the beginning of November, and rejoicing in the success that was now crowning his past labours. Indeed, he had cause; for among those distinguished characters by whom his work was to be carried forward, he could number Fletcher of Madely and Rowland Hill. The following letter at this time will give a full idea of his occupation and his prospects:—

“To W____ P____, Esq.

“*London, Nov. 1, 1766.*

“HAPPY HEIRS OF THE GRACE OF LIFE,—By your giving young Mr Rowland Hill hints about a proper direction, I have inferred that a line, though from one who is less than the least of all, would not be altogether unacceptable. I am sure my poor prayers are continually ascending to the throne of grace in your behalf. I want to have you great, yea, very great, in the kingdom of heaven. Have you not found, by your heart's being warmed with the conversation of gospel ministers, that your heaven is begun on earth? Dear Mr Fletcher is become a scandalous Tottenham Court preacher. I trust he will come down into your parts baptized with the Holy Ghost as with fire. Dear Mr R——n hath been much owned in good Lady Huntingdon's chapel. Ill and hell-deserving I am to go thither next week. Dear Mr M——n is detained at Aldwinckle, by his children having the small-pox in town. The shout of a king is yet heard in the Methodist camp. The glorious cry,

‘What shall I do to be saved?’ is frequently sounding in our ears. Had we more reproach, and were we more scandalous, more good would be done. Several promise well. Some say Shibboleth with a good grace, and very proper accent; others, as yet, can only say Sibboleth: but I have heard of One who can teach the tongue of the stammerer to speak plain. Good Lady Huntingdon is an excellent schoolmistress in this way. The writer of the letter on the other side seems to be an apt scholar. The person referred to, keeps house where dear Mr S——t constantly expounds. He is in a consumption. What a mercy that such a confessor should be sent to prison! I want all the followers of the Lamb in general, and a certain gospel-happy pair in particular, to grow higher and richer every day towards God. Time is short; eternity is endless; the Judge and judgment are at the door.

‘We soon shall hear th’ archangel’s voice;
The trump of God shall sound, Rejoice!
Amen! Hallelujah!’

But I must have done. A dear company of ministerial cast-outs are coming to breakfast under my despised roof. It stinks too much for worldlings. If you would be so good as to let dear Mr Hill see the Oxonian letter, it may be of service. Next Tuesday, God willing, I shall read an account of his servant’s death. May the last end of every Christian master be like his! But I cannot die: cold bathing and cool weather brace up my tottering tabernacle. I hope that both to whom I am writing, enjoy thriving souls in healthy bodies. That they may increase with all the increase of God, earnestly prays their, &c., in a once crucified but now exalted Jesus,
G. W.”

Whitefield was soon again at Bath, where his renewed applications to the work were attended with consider-

able promise. Such was also the case at Bristol, where he preached to a very crowded audience, and administered the sacrament. But it was in the gay city of fashion and dissipation, towards the end of this month, that the brightest prospect was unfolded, presenting a strange contrast to the great watering city's former character and occupations. Let the following account bear testimony:—

“TO MR R—— K——N,

“*Bristol, Nov. 23, 1766.*

“DEAR SIR,—Such a numerous, brilliant assembly of the mighty and noble, I never saw attend before at Bath. Every thing is so promising, that I was constrained to give notice of preaching next Sunday. I hope the Redeemer will give us a blessed Sabbath. I trust already the arm of the Lord hath been revealed. Congregations have been very large and very solemn. Oh, what Bethels hath Jesus given to us! We were filled as with new wine! Oh that God would make my way into every town in England! Methinks I long to break up fresh ground, and to begin to do something for Jesus. I am just come here weary, but am going to speak a few words. This prevents my enlarging; but I could not refrain writing to one I so dearly love, and to whom I am so greatly obliged. God bless you! God bless you and yours! Accept most unfeigned love and acknowledgments, and still add to my innumerable obligations, by praying for, my very dear sir, yours, &c., in our glorious Head,
G. W.”

On his return to London, he wrote the following letter, from which it appears how much the cause was strengthening and increasing:—

“ To W—— P——, Esq.,

“ *At my Tottenham Court Bethel, Six in the
Morning, Dec. 30, 1766.*

“ MY VERY DEAR SIR,—The Christmas holiday season hath prevented my sending an immediate answer to your last kind letter. The order therein given shall be readily complied with, and the love therein expressed returned, by praying for the writer’s whole self, and the honourable, Christian, and ministerial circle with which they are at present happily surrounded—four Methodist parsons. Honourable title! so long as attended with the cross. When fashionable (and, blessed be God, there is not much danger of that), we will drop it. Four Methodist parsons!—enough (when Jesus says, ‘ Loose them, and let them go’) to set a whole kingdom on fire for God. I wish them prosperity in the name of the Lord. *I præ sequar etsi non passibus æquis.* Fy upon me, fy upon me, fifty-two years old last Saturday; and yet, oh loving, ever-loving, altogether lovely Jesus, how little, yea, how very little, have I done and suffered for thee! Indeed, and indeed, my dear and honoured friends, I am ashamed of myself: I blush and am confounded. To-morrow, God willing, and Thursday also, with many hundreds more, I intend to take the sacrament upon it, that I will begin to be a Christian. Though I long to go to heaven to see my glorious Master, what a poor figure shall I make among the saints, confessors, and martyrs, that surround his throne, without some deeper signatures of his divine impress, without more scars of Christian honour! Our truly noble mother in Israel is come to London full of them. *Crescit sub pondere virtus.* She is come out of her cell with her face shining again. Happy they who have the honour of her acquaintance! Highly honoured are those ministers who have the honour of preaching for and

serving her. Good and honest and dearly beloved Sir C——s, and all your happy circle, male and female, I am persuaded, are of my mind. Oh, this single eye, this disinterested spirit, this freedom from worldly hopes and worldly fears, this flaming zeal, this daring to be singularly good, this holy, laudable ambition to lead the van; oh it is, what?—a heaven upon earth! Oh for a plerophory of faith! to be filled with the Holy Ghost. This is the grand point. God be praised that you have it in view! All our lukewarmness, all our timidity, all our backwardness to do good, to spend and be spent for God, is all owing to our want of more of that faith which is the inward, heart-felt, self-evident demonstration of things not seen. But whither am I going? Pardon me, good sir: I keep you from better company. Praying that all (if you live to be fifty-two) may not be such dwarfs in the divine life as I am, I hasten to subscribe myself, most honoured friends, yours, &c., in Jesus,

G. W."

After the winter had ended, he set off upon a spring tour, and arrived at Norwich in April. He calls this journey, "as sweet a gospel excursion as at any time." He adds: "I met, within three miles of Norwich, with another clergyman of the Establishment, who promises well. He heard me last night. It was a night of power: a large congregation. It will be too large, I fear, to-morrow, though the place will hold some thousands." Whitefield was now keenly alive to the important fact of a spirit of inquiry having been stirred, through which there was the prospect of a purer gospel being preached. At Radborough, he says (May 13): "Through mercy, we got here yesterday about seven in the evening. I was regaled with the company of some simple-hearted, first-rate old Methodists, of near thirty years' standing. God willing, I am to preach to-morrow morning, and

to have a general sacrament on Friday evening." How delightful it must have been to Whitefield now, in all his various pilgrimages, to find friends where at first there could have been nothing but strangers! He had also the additional pleasure of the society of Lady Huntingdon and her company, who lodged at Radborough House. Twice on this occasion he preached in Radborough Wood, while thousands crowded to hear him. He then proceeded to Gloucester, and afterwards to Haverford-west; from which place he writes on the 31st of May: "My route is not yet fixed. I am just come from my field throne. Thousands and thousands attended by eight in the morning. Life and light seemed to fly all around. On Tuesday, God willing, I am to preach at Woodstock; on Friday at Pembroke; here again next Sunday by eight; and then for England." So greatly had this field-preaching and its crowds revived him, that he buoyantly adds: "Who knows, who knows, but preaching may be our grand catholicon again? This is the good Methodistical, thirty-year-old medicine." He thus closes the account of this tour:—

"TO MR R—— K——N.

"Gloucester, June 10, 1767.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,—Blessed be God, I am got on this side the Welsh mountains! Blessed be God, I have been on the other side! What a scene last Sunday! What a cry for more of the bread of life! but I was quite worn down. Blessed be God, I am now better than could be expected. To-morrow evening, God willing, my wife shall know what route. I hope all are well. I expect dear Mr H——y is gone; therefore I do not write to him. How it shall please the Lord to deal with me in my next remove, you shall hear. I count it my privilege to let you know all good news, because I know it puts gladness into your heart. It is food, it

is physic, it is every thing, to a soul that lives near to Jesus. Oh, when shall I begin to live to him as I would! I want to be a flame of fire. I know, my dear sir, you would pray for me. I can never forget you and yours.—I am, my very dear friend, yours most affectionately, in our glorious Jesus, G. W.”

As all our readers must by this time be aware, it was no safe or comfortable choice, that of being a preacher among the Methodists. Theirs was already an ascending cause; but just in proportion to its success, was the rancour with which it was hated, and the unjust severity with which it was persecuted. The Established clergy endeavoured to preach it down; the magistrates tried to indict and punish its open-air assemblies as illegal meetings; and the mob, animated by those examples, had always blows or missiles in store for the wandering, heaven-devoted preacher. It was not every one who possessed the sudden and thrilling eloquence of Whitefield—an eloquence that had often paralyzed the uplifted arm, and made the stone or weapon fall harmless. Those, therefore, who were preparing to labour in that new field which had been opened up, required encouragement as peculiar as the danger. This Whitefield knew from his own experience; and he thus exhorted and animated a young student who, after preparing for the Church, had resolved to cast in his lot with the despised and persecuted.

“ *London, July 21, 1767.*

“MY DEAR SIR,—I hope, ere this come to hand, you will have taken your second degree. A good degree indeed: to be a preacher, a young preacher, a mobbed, perhaps a stoned preacher—oh, what an honour! How many prayers will you get when I read your letter at the Tabernacle; and the prayers of so many dear children of God will do you no hurt, I assure you. When we

are fighting with Amalek below, it is good to have a Joshua praying for us above. Jesus is our Joshua—Jesus is our intercessor; he liveth, he ever liveth to make intercession, especially for his young soldiers. Yonder, yonder he sits. Whilst praying, he reaches out a crown; at this distance you may see written in capital letters, *Vincenti dabo*. All a gift, a free gift, though purchased by his precious blood. Tell churchmen, tell meetings, tell the wounded, tell all of this; tell them when you are young—you may not live to be old; tell them whilst you are an under-graduate—you may be dead, buried, glorified, before you take a college degree; tell those who would have you spare yourself, that time is short, that eternity is endless, that the Judge is before the door: but I can no more—the thought overwhelms; but with what?—with joy, joy unspeakable, and full of glory. Good night. I long to hear particulars from ——. If you send me word that young —— is there, I will answer his letter that hath lain by me some time. My poor prayers await you all. God bless you all! God bless you!—Yours, &c., in Jesus.
G. W.”

A letter of a similar character was thus written to another, who already was enduring that scorn and contumely which to generous minds is more intolerable still than bodily pain and privation.

“*London, Aug. 6, 1767.*

“MY DEAR SIR,—It is late; but I must answer your request. The enclosed made me pity, smile, and rejoice—smile at the writer’s worn-out sarcasms, pity his ignorance, and rejoice that you are thus called to be a martyr, a living martyr, for our common Lord. Fear not, only go forward; you know Jesus, and by preaching will know more. To him that hath shall be given.

‘ For this let men despise your name;
 You’ll shun no cross, you’ll fear no shame.
 All hail, reproach !’

If you write, *with all deference*, let him know that Jesus hath revealed himself not only *to* you by his Word, but *in* you by his Spirit: that you look upon those whom he is pleased to term deluded and fanatics as the excellent ones upon the earth; and that you choose rather to suffer reproach with them, than to enjoy all the pleasures of sense, and all the preferments in the world. But why do I dictate? I trust you to the teaching of that Jesus who has said, ‘ It shall be given you in that hour what ye shall say.’ Where does this — live? What is the — he mentions? God grant it may be a nursery for what he calls fanatics so long as one stone is left upon another. One letter more I imagine will rid you from further trouble from this quarter; expect, then, attacks from another; but look to Jesus—he will make you more than conqueror. ‘ I thank thee, holy Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father; for so it seemeth good in thy sight.’ Why me, Lord? why me? A sense of this distinguishing love will make you laugh at all that men or devils can say of or do unto you. Good night. I must away and pray for you. To-morrow Mr —, &c., breakfast with me. God bless you! Be of good courage; give not way, no, not for a moment.—Ever yours, &c., in almighty Jesus, G. W.”

In London he continued his duties as far as his strength, or rather sickness, would permit; but the pent-up air of the metropolis made him long for the green fields and active exertion of those evangelistic tours to which his heart was so devoted. “ Who knows,” he writes, “ but I may be strengthened to take a trip to Scotland? This

itch after itinerating, I hope, will never be cured till we come to heaven." At length, as both of his pulpits were ably supplied with lay preachers, he was able once more to take the field. His course was to Yorkshire, and he preached at Northampton, Sheffield, and Leeds, where he had "good seasons." As if all he had hitherto done at this time were nothing, his exclamation now was, "Lord, help me to begin to *begin!*" He was afterwards at Newcastle, having visited intermediate places, and preached, not only in the fields, as hitherto, but in the streets also. He seems at this time to have been in a happy frame, as he thus writes to a friend: "Send me no bad news, unless absolutely necessary. Let me enjoy myself in my delightful itineracy. It is good both for my body and soul." From Thirsk, which he next visited, he says: "My body feels much fatigue in travelling; comforts in the soul overbalance. Every stage more and more convinces me that old Methodism is the thing." His aim at the commencement of his journey had been Scotland; but this visit he found it necessary to postpone. On returning to Leeds, he gives this brief account of his excursion: "I have been enabled to go forth into the highways and hedges, into the lanes and streets of the towns and cities. Good old work! good old seasons! Help, help to praise Him whose mercy endureth for ever." And in a letter to a lady, he thus writes of himself in the third person: "What news so good, as that of the word of the Lord Jesus running and being glorified? This hath been the case with the worthless but willing pilgrim. Everywhere, the sound of his blessed Master's feet hath been heard behind him. Field and street preaching hath rather bettered than hurt his bodily health. But as the weather begins to break, he must look towards winter quarters."

To winter quarters he accordingly returned; and the

happy condition in which he found himself in London, from a review of his late tour, and the affectionate solicitude he felt for all in whom he was interested, are buoyantly expressed to one of his correspondents, with whom he appears to have been on terms of the closest intimacy.

“TO MR A——s.

“*London, Oct. 12, 1767.*

“MY VERY DEAR TOMMY,—Good-morrow. This comes to inquire how you and yours do? I am just returned from my northern circuit. It hath been pleasant, and I trust profitable. Praise the Lord, oh our souls! Everywhere the fields have been white, ready unto harvest. I am become a downright street and field preacher. I wish the city, and want of riding, may not hurt me. No nestling, no nestling on this side Jordan. Heaven is the believer’s only resting-place. There we shall not be disturbed. I do not know but Mr Winter will get there soon. At present he is very ill. But He that bringeth down to the grave, can bring up again. You and I know this by repeated experience. But we shall not always put out to sea again and again. Hallelujah. Come, Lord, come! How is Mr C——m? Is he near the haven, or kept back by cross winds? Write me an answer to all the above interrogatories, especially to those concerning yourself. Tender love to all. Mr Wright joins in sending cordial respects. Mr J——s hath been much blessed here. That the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ may bless you and yours ever more, heartily prays, my very dear Tommy, ever yours, &c., in our glorious Immanuel, G. W.”

On his return to London, he was again called upon to perform the part of adviser and comforter to an unfortunate collegian, who had offended his superiors, by being, as it would appear, in their estimation, “righte-

ous over much." This was becoming a crying evil, both at Oxford and Cambridge, and especially the former, of which the heads of the universities were very anxious to be delivered. To the culprit, on this occasion, Whitefield thus kindly addresses himself:—

“ *London, Oct. 23, 1767.*

“ MY DEAR SIR,—By your brother Peter’s letter, the hour of expulsion is not yet come. Surely they will not be so imprudent, or act so contrary to the laws of English liberty. I long to know what statutes they say you have broken—what concessions have been made. Your diocesan will make a strict inquiry. I wish you could recollect all circumstances; the rise and progress of the present contest, with all the various pleadings, threats, conferences, *pro* and *con*. The issue of the trial you may leave to the Judge; he is always the injured prisoner’s friend. If confined to college, this will be a good exercise for you. You may lodge it in court, as a proof whether you understood to write plain English, or sound, practical, experimental divinity. This can do you no harm; it may do good. Do therefore set about it. I know one who will readily revise and correct, if necessary. The Lord Jesus be with your spirit! You see how I write out of the fulness of my heart. Sick, suffering soldiers must be attended. If ever so busy, for the sake of the glorious Captain of our salvation, you shall receive a line by way of answer from, my dear sir,
yours, &c.,
G. W.”

“ *P.S.*—I shall send the original to your *Fidus Achates*, in —; but I shall keep a copy. Who knows? Sauls may yet become Pauls.”

The following is another letter on a similar occasion, in which the parties were about to be tried by their diocesan, and had every thing to fear from the result. The crisis was indeed at hand. Six pious young students of

Oxford had been in the habit of meeting for religious conversation and devotion, during the intervals they enjoyed from study; but this unwonted innovation was thought to savour strongly of Methodism, more especially as they sang hymns that had not proceeded from the pens of Sternhold and Hopkins, and used extempore prayers. The trial alluded to in the following letter was soon after held, and in the beginning of next year the students were expelled:—

“TO MR C——.

“*London, Oct. 24, 1767.*

“MY DEAR SIR,—Supposing you made this addition to the motto of your coat-of-arms, *Nemo me impune lacessit?* He that toucheth God’s people, toucheth the apple of God’s eye. That is a very tender part. I am glad your diocesan is expected soon. I have no suspicion of his beating a retreat. “To arms, to arms,” must be the watchword now. It was the constancy of the three children (the three heroes) that confounded their enemies. The company of the Son of man is never so sweet as when he walks with us in the fiery furnace, never so glorious as when he is seen keeping his honest Daniels company in a den of lions. You have therefore your answer ready: ‘We are not careful about this matter; we will not bow down to the golden image which Nebuchadnezzar hath set up; the God whom we serve is able to deliver us.’ If you do not like these examples, take Peter and John. Suppose dear —— to be John, and —— to be Peter. You know how the high priests addressed them: you know their answer. By their answer, by their boldness, they took notice that they had been with Jesus. Nothing, nothing can stand before an honest, truly Israelitish heart. But this is enough for a sick-bed lecture. I would only add, that those who endeavour to entangle Christ’s followers in

their talk, will in the end be entangled themselves. Good morning to you all. Remember the watchword. Stand out your full time in guard hours, send word at about what distance the enemy keeps, or how near he approaches, or what further feint attacks he makes, and, God willing, you shall hear again from yours, &c., in our Lord God Almighty, G. W."

At this period, a mournful and yet pleasing event occurred at Bath, in the death of the Earl of Buchan, one of Whitefield's frequent hearers and ardent admirers. The following is the brief account of his last hour: "He behaved," Whitefield writes, "like the patriarch Jacob, when, by faith, leaning upon his staff, he blessed his children. The earl added: 'Yea, and they shall be blessed. Had I strength of body,' cried the earl, 'I would not be ashamed before men and angels to tell what the Lord Jesus hath done for my soul. Come, Holy Ghost; come, Holy Ghost; happy, happy, happy!'—and then sweetly slept in Jesus." His remains, previous to interment, were deposited in Lady Huntingdon's chapel, where there were prayers and preaching upon the occasion twice every day. Besides the noble relatives who were in constant attendance, great numbers of all ranks repaired to the chapel to gaze upon the solemn spectacle. The full particulars of these impressive rites are thus given by Whitefield:—

"To LADY S—— S——.

"*Bath, Dec. 9, 1767.*

"HONOURED MADAM,—All hath been awful, and more than awful. On Saturday evening, before the corpse was taken from Buchan House, a word of exhortation was given, and a hymn sung in the room where the corpse lay. The young earl stood with his hands on the head of the coffin, the countess-dowager on his right hand, Lady Ann and Lady Isabella on his

left, and their brother Thomas next to their mother, with Miss O——n, Miss Wh——r, Miss G——e; on one side all domestics, with a few friends on the other. The word of exhortation was received with great solemnity, and most wept under the parting prayer. At ten, the corpse was removed to good Lady Huntingdon's chapel, where it was deposited within a place railed in for that purpose, covered with black bays, and the usual funereal concomitants, except escutcheons. On Sunday morning, all attended in mourning at early sacrament. They were seated by themselves, at the feet of the corpse, and, with their head servants, received first, and a particular address was made to them. Immediately after receiving, these verses were sung for them:—

‘ Our lives, our blood, we here present,
If for thy truths they may be spent:
Fulfil thy sovereign counsel, Lord;
Thy will be done, thy name ador'd.

‘ Give them thy strength, O God of power,
Then let men rave or devils roar;
Thy faithful witnesses they'll be;
'Tis fix'd—they can do all through thee.’

Then they received this blessing, ‘ The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon you; the Lord cause his face to shine upon you, and give you peace;’ and so returned to their places. Sacrament ended (and a blessed sacrament it was), the noble mourners returned to good Lady Huntingdon's house, which was lent them for the day. At eleven, public service began. The bereaved relations sat in order within, and the domestics around the outside of the rail. The chapel was more than crowded. Near three hundred tickets, signed by the present earl, were given out to the nobility and gentry, to be admitted. All was hushed and solemn. Proper hymns were sung, and I preached on these words, ‘ I heard a voice

from heaven, saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord.' Attention sat on every face, and deep and almost universal impressions were made. The like scene, and if possible more solemn, was exhibited in the evening, and I was enabled to preach a second time; and a like power attended the word as, in the morning. Ever since, there hath been public service and preaching twice a-day. This is to be continued till Friday morning, then all is to be removed to Bristol, in order to be shipped off for Scotland. The inscription on the coffin runs thus:—

'His life was honourable—his death blessed. He sought earnestly peace with God: he found it with unspeakable joy alone in the merits of Christ Jesus, witnessed by the Holy Spirit to his soul. He yet speaketh. Go thou and do likewise.'

I have often wished for your ladyship here. Congregations are very large, attentive, and deeply impressed. Surely the death of this noble earl, thus improved, will prove the life of many. He had great foretastes of heaven, and cried 'Come, Holy Ghost:' he came, and filled him with joy unspeakable. 'Happy, happy,' were his last dying words. All surviving relatives still feel the influence. They sit round the corpse attended by their domestics and supporters twice a-day. Good Lady S——x gets fresh spirits. She loves your ladyship dearly. I am called to attend, and therefore must hasten to acknowledge innumerable obligations, and to subscribe myself, honoured madam, your ladyship's, &c.,

G. W."

As Whitefield accompanied the body to Bristol, he availed himself of the opportunity of preaching there, as he had done in times past, and apparently with his former popularity and success. "We have been favoured," he says, "with golden seasons here. I have been enabled to preach thrice, and to administer the

holy sacrament. Thousands went away on Sunday, because they could not come in. The word hath been attended with great power." After this he returned to Bath, where having preached two days, he resumed his winter quarters in London.

But it was not merely the death of this illustrious convert, or the dropping off of old friends, that weighed heavily at this time upon Whitefield's spirit. Another event still hanging in painful uncertainty, wrung from him the following language: "None but God knows what a concern lies upon me now, in respect to Bethesda. Friends can guess, and a little sympathize, and I thank them for it; but the Friend of sinners alone can show what is to be done. At present, as to this particular, I walk in darkness, and have no light. In other respects, blessed be God, the light shines as at noon-day." Anticipating the possibility of failure in obtaining a charter for the establishment of his intended college, he adds: "As another voyage perhaps may be the issue and result of all at last, I would beg you and my dear Mr H——y, to let me have my papers and letters, that I may revise and dispose of them in a proper manner." This winter brought matters to a crisis: after much and weary negotiation, the charter was refused. As the whole affair illustrates that public spirit and large-hearted philanthropy by which the views of Whitefield were directed, we shall now pause for a little in our narrative, to give an account of the failure of the college of Bethesda, which we do from those papers and letters to which he has made allusion.

PART VI.

FROM HIS ATTEMPT TO FOUND A COLLEGE IN AMERICA,
TO HIS LAST VISIT THERE IN 1769.

THE affection which Whitefield entertained for the American colonists, and the earnestness with which he laboured to advance their highest interests, must already have been apparent to the reader. Next, indeed, to their own Washington, we know of no one whose memory they are more bound to cherish. For their welfare his heart glowed, and his prayers ascended; for this his exertions were unwearied, not merely in America, but in Britain. One proof of his devotedness to their interests is to be found in the establishment of the orphan school at Bethesda, and his exertions in supplying means for its support. The money for this purpose had chiefly to be collected in pence from the numerous church and field audiences which he addressed in his own country; and yet, although other demands pressed urgently upon him for application to the public benevolence, and although he made collections for the orphan institution at Edinburgh, for the poor Highlanders, for the sufferers upon the Continent from the desolations of the seven years' war, and for many other emergencies in which the cause of religion or philanthropy was at stake; yet, for this American institution alone, his collections amounted, during the course of his labours in its behalf, to upwards of twelve thousand pounds. It is of this school that we must now give an

account, not only as hitherto we have scarcely mentioned it, but also as it was the germ in which the plan of the college originated. We cannot for this purpose do better than quote entire the whole of that simple narrative which Whitefield himself has delivered, both of its commencement and subsequent progress.

“ *Bethesda, March 21, 1746.*

“ SIR,—Some months have I been here, and now think it high time, according to my promise, to send you as explicit an account as I well can of the *progress* and *present situation* of the orphan-house.

“ Some have thought that the erecting such a building was only the produce of my own brain; but they are much mistaken. It was first proposed to me by my dear friend, the Rev. Mr Charles Wesley, who, with his excellency General Oglethorp, had concerted a scheme for carrying on such a design, before I had any thoughts of going abroad myself. It was natural to think that, as the government intended this province for the refuge and support of many of our poor countrymen, numbers of such adventurers must necessarily be taken off, by being exposed to the hardships which unavoidably attend a new settlement. I thought it therefore a noble design in general, to erect a house for fatherless children. And believing such a provision for orphans would be some inducement with many to come over, I fell in with the design, when mentioned to me by my friend, and was resolved, in the strength of God, to prosecute it with all my might. This was mentioned to the Honourable the Trustees. They took it kindly at my hands; and as they then began to be pretty popular at Bristol, and elsewhere, they wrote to the Bishop of Bath and Wells, for leave for me to preach a charity sermon on this occasion in the Abbey Church. This was granted, and I accordingly began immediately to com-

pose a suitable discourse; but knowing my first stay at Georgia would be but short, on account of my returning again to take priest's orders, I thought it most prudent, first to go and see for myself, and defer prosecuting the scheme till I came home; because I could then be better able to judge whether the scheme were practicable, and consequently could be able to recommend it with the greater earnestness.

“When I came to Georgia I found many poor orphans, who, though taken notice of by the Honourable Trustees, yet, through the neglect of persons that acted under them, were in miserable circumstances. For want of a house to breed them up in, the poor little ones were tumbled out here and there, and besides the hurt they received by bad examples, forgot at home what they learnt at school. Others were at hard services, and likely to have no education at all. Upon seeing this, and finding that his Majesty and Parliament had the interest of this colony much at heart, I thought I could not better show my regard to God and my country, than by getting a house and land for these children, where they might learn to labour, read, and write, and at the same time be brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Accordingly, at my return to England in the year 1738, to take priest's orders, I applied to the Honourable Society for a grant of five hundred acres of land, and laid myself under an obligation to build a house upon it, and to receive from time to time as many orphans as the land and stock would maintain.

“As I had always acted like a clergyman of the Church of England, having preached in many of the London churches, and as I had but a few months before collected near a thousand pounds sterling for the children belonging to the charity schools in London and Westminster, it was natural to think that I might now have

the use at least of some of these churches to preach in for the orphans hereafter more immediately to be committed to my care. But by the time I had taken priest's orders, the spirit of the clergy began to be much embittered. Churches were gradually denied to me. And I must let this good design drop, and thousands (I might add, tens of thousands) go without hearing the word of God, or preach in the fields. Indeed, two churches—one in London (Spitalfields) and one in Bristol (St Philip's and Jacob)—were lent me upon this occasion, but those were all. However, God kept me from being discouraged. I collected for the orphan-house in Moorfields two-and-fifty pounds one Sabbath-day morning, twenty-two pounds of which were in copper. It would have rejoiced your heart to see the people give: they offered willingly, and took more pains to come through the crowd and put their contributions into my hat, than some would to have gotten them. Thousands of prayers were put up with the alms that were given; and I trust both went up as a memorial before God. In the afternoon I collected again at Kennington-Common, and continued to do so at most of the places where I preached. Besides this, two or three of the bishops and several persons of distinction contributed, till at length, having about a thousand and ten pounds, I gave over collecting, and went with what I had to Georgia.

“At that time multitudes offered to accompany me; but I chose to take over only a surgeon, and a few more of both sexes, that I thought would be useful in carrying on my design. These cheerfully embarked with me, desiring nothing for their pains but food and raiment. My dear fellow-traveller, William Seward, Esq., also joined with them, and was particularly useful to me on this occasion. Our first voyage was to Philadelphia, where I was willing to go for the sake of

laying in provision. Having a captain of a ship with me, who had been my spiritual child, by his advice I laid out in London a good part of the thousand pounds for goods; and by his care and that of my other fellow-travellers, without any trouble to myself, got as much by them at Philadelphia as nearly defrayed the family's expense of coming over. Here God blessed my ministry daily, and began that work in Philadelphia, which I am persuaded will be remembered through the ages of eternity. January following, 1739, I met my family at Georgia; and being unwilling to lose any time, I hired a large house, and took in all the orphans I could find in the colony. A great many also of the town's people came to school gratis; and many poor people who could not maintain their children, upon application, had leave given them to send their little ones for a month or two or more, as they could spare them, till at length my family consisted of between sixty and seventy. Most of the orphans were in poor case, and three or four almost eaten up with lice. I likewise erected an infirmary, in which many sick people were cured and taken care of gratis. I have now by me a list of upwards of a hundred and thirty patients who were under the surgeon's hands, exclusive of my own private family. This surgeon I furnished with all proper drugs and utensils, which put me to no small expense; and this was still increased by clearing land, buying stock, and building a large dwelling-house, sixty feet by forty, and out-houses, commodious for a large family to live in. Sometimes (labourers and all) I have had a hundred and twenty to provide for daily.

“My friends, as well as myself, seemed to have particular courage and faith given them for the season, and we went on cheerfully, believing that He for whose sake we began would enable us to finish this good work.

About March I began the great house, having only about one hundred and fifty pounds in cash. I called it Bethesda, because I hoped it would be a house of mercy to many souls. Blessed be God, we have not been disappointed of our hope; it has proved a house of mercy indeed to many. Several of our labourers, as well as visitors, have (in a judgment of charity) been born of God here, and given evident proofs of it by bringing forth the fruits of the Spirit. Many boys have been put out to trades, and many girls put out to service. I had the pleasure the other day of seeing three boys work at the house in which they were bred—one of them out of his time, a journeyman, and the others serving under their masters. One that I brought from New England is handsomely settled in Carolina; and another from Philadelphia is married, and lives very comfortably at Savannah.

“How so large a family has been supported in such a colony, without any visible fund, is wonderful. I am surprised when I look back, and see how for these six years last past God has spread a table in the wilderness for so many persons. Were all the particular providences that have attended this work recorded, perhaps they would be found not inferior to those mentioned by Professor Franck in his *Pietas Hallensis*, whose memory is very precious to me, and whose example has a thousand times been blessed to strengthen and encourage me in the carrying on this enterprise. My being detained so long in England has been a little detrimental to me, my friends not knowing so well how to act, because they expected to see me daily. And I cannot yet say that I have surmounted the first year's expense, which indeed was very great, and greater, no doubt, than it would be now, after my friends have had so many years' experience in the colony. However, I doubt not but,

by the blessing of God, in a short time to pay off my arrears, and then the family will be maintained at a small expense. My standing annual charges are now but trifling to what they have been, and my friends have raised an annual subscription sufficient for discharging it, till the family may be able to provide for itself. This, God willing, I hope will be in a good measure speedily effected. We have lately begun to use the plough, and next year I hope to have many acres of good oats and barley. We have near twenty sheep and lambs, fifty head of cattle, and seven horses. We hope to kill a thousand-weight of pork this season. Our garden, which is very beautiful, furnishes us with all sorts of greens, &c. We have plenty of milk, eggs, poultry, and make a good deal of butter weekly. A great quantity of wool and cotton has been given me, and we hope to have sufficient spun and wove for the next winter's clothing. If the vines hit, we may expect two or three hogsheads of wine out of the vineyard.

“The family now consists of twenty-six persons. Two of the orphan boys are blind, one is little better than an idiot. But notwithstanding, they are useful in the family—one in the field, and the other in the kitchen. I have two women to take care of the household work, and three men and two boys employed about the plantation and cattle. A set of Dutch servants has been lately sent over: the magistrates were pleased to give me two; and I took in a poor old widow, aged near seventy, whom nobody else cared to have. A valuable young man from New England is my school-master, and in my absence performs duty in the family. Sabbath-days the grown people attend public worship at Savannah, or at White-bluff, a village near Bethesda, where a Dutch minister officiates. My dear friends who have hitherto been my assistants, being married and having

three or four children, thought it best, as most suitable to the institution, to remove. God has mercifully provided for them, and they are comfortably settled at Savannah and elsewhere. We frequently write to and hear from one another.

“ I need not trouble you with the order of our family. It is pretty near the same as usual, and I do not think to make any material alteration for some time. Many have applied to me to take in their children as boarders, and erect a public school; but I have not yet determined. It is certain such a school would be exceedingly useful in this part of the world, if there should be a peace, not only for these northern parts of the colony, but also for the more southern parts of Carolina, Purisburgh, and Frederica, where are many fine youths. I have been prevailed on to take one from Frederica, and another from Purisburgh, and it may be shall admit more. For the present, considering the situation of affairs, I think it most prudent to go on making what improvements I can on the plantation, and shall bring a tutor with me from the northward in the fall, to teach a few youths the languages, and enlarge the family, when affairs are more settled. The house is a noble, commodious building, and every thing well adapted for bringing up youth. Here is land to employ them in exercising their bodies, and to keep them from idleness out of school hours. Here are none of the temptations to debauch their tender minds, which are common to more populous countries, or in places where children must necessarily be brought up with negroes. What God intends to do with the colony is not for me to inquire; secret things belong to him. It has hitherto been wonderfully preserved, and the orphan-house, like the burning bush, has flourished unconsumed. In fine, the government has, no doubt, its welfare much at heart; and,

God willing, I intend to carry on my design till I see the colony sink or swim. The money that has been expended on the orphan-house, and orphan-house family, has been of vast service to this northern part of the colony. And though it has been greatly detrimental to my own private interest, yet I do not repent of the undertaking. No, I rejoice in it daily, and hope yet to see many more souls born unto God here. I have had a very comfortable winter. The people of Savannah, having no minister till lately, gladly accepted my labours; and at Frederica, the gentlemen and soldiers of General Oglethorp's regiment, as well as the inhabitants of that town, received me very gladly. Major Horton seems to behave very well; he has a very fine growing plantation. I saw barley in the ear the 1st of March. Georgia is very healthy. Not above one, and that a little child, has died out of our family, since it removed to Bethesda. I think the colony (were the inhabitants sufficiently numerous) is capable of as good improvement as any on the Continent.

“For the satisfaction of my friends, and silencing, if possible, my enemies, I have had my accounts from the very beginning to January last, publicly audited and examined, debtor and creditor, article by article; and an oath for confirmation being an end of all strife, I have sworn to them. If it gives you or others any satisfaction, I shall be glad. I have no more to add, but to beg a continued interest in your prayers, and subscribe myself, very dear sir, your most affectionate friend and servant,

G. W.”

In the following extract of a petition which he addressed in 1764 to the governor of Georgia, for a grant of two thousand acres of land to the institution at Bethesda, he explains the purposes to which it was to be devoted—the expansion of the school into a college:—

“That your memorialist, since the commencement of this institution, hath had the satisfaction of finding, that by the money expended thereon, not only many poor families were assisted, and thereby kept from leaving the colony in its infant state, but also that a considerable number of poor helpless children have been trained up; who have been, and now are, useful settlers in this and the other neighbouring provinces.

“That, in order to render the institution aforesaid more extensively useful, your memorialist, as he perceived the colony gradually increasing, hath for some years designed within himself to improve the original plan, by making further provision for the education of persons of superior rank; who thereby might be qualified to serve their king, their country, and their God, either in Church or State. That he doth with inexpressible pleasure see the present very flourishing state of the province; but with concern perceives that several gentlemen have been obliged to send their sons to the northern provinces, who would much rather have had them educated nearer home, and thereby prevent their affections being alienated from their native country, and also keep considerable sums of money from being carried out of this into other provinces.

“Your memorialist further observes, that there is no seminary for academical studies as yet founded southward of Virginia; and consequently, if a college could be established here (especially as the late addition of the two Floridas renders Georgia more central for the southern district), it would not only be highly serviceable to the rising generation of this colony, but would probably occasion many youths to be sent from the British West India Islands and other parts. The many advantages accruing thereby to this province must be very considerable.

“From these considerations, your memorialist is induced to believe that the time is now approaching when his long-projected design for further serving this his beloved colony shall be carried into execution.”

But the government at home had also to be memorialized for this important object. The ground was obtained, the funds were ready or in prospect, and the colony eager for the establishment of the expected college. All was ready except the mere sanction of the home government, which appeared the easiest of all. Whitefield accordingly presented his petition, and it was negatived. His plan was too catholic in its character, and ecclesiastical authority interfered. The English hierarchy could not imagine a college even in a remote colony, unless it were wholly comprised within the hold and authority of the Church as by law established; and rather than permit such an institution as Bethesda college, they would allow the colonies to remain in darkness, until they found it convenient to supply the defect according to their own fashion. Little did they think how near the time was at hand when such permission would be superfluous. After a long and harassing correspondence with the Archbishop of Canterbury, the following letter of Whitefield will show the principles on which the application was carried on, and the feeling in which it terminated:—

“*Tottenham Court, Oct. 16, 1767.*”

“MAY IT PLEASE YOUR GRACE,—After earnest application to the Father of mercies for direction, I have endeavoured, as in his presence, duly to consider and weigh the contents of the Lord President’s letter, which your Grace was so condescending as to transmit for my perusal. His lordship therein is pleased to inform your Grace, “That he observes that the second draught of Mr Whitefield’s charter differs from that of New York, in not requiring the head of the college to be a member

of the Church of England; which his lordship thinks so material a qualification, that for one, he should not be for dispensing with it. And his lordship is also of opinion that the public prayers should not be extempore ones, but the liturgy of the Church, or some part thereof, or some other settled and established form.' Thus far his lordship. And as I profess myself to be a presbyter of the same communion with his lordship, I cannot but applaud his lordship's zeal for, and watchfulness over, the honour of the Established Church. But if his lordship would be so good as to take a particular view of the point of light in which I stand, I cannot help flattering myself, but that his lordship will be so far from thinking that being a member of the Church of England is a qualification not to be dispensed with in the head of the intended college, that, on the contrary, it ought not so much as to be mentioned or insisted upon in the charter at all.

“ For not to trouble your Grace with a repetition of the reasons urged against such a restraining clause, in my letter of June 17, I would beg leave further to observe to your Grace, that by far the greatest part of the orphan-house collections and contributions came from Dissenters, not only in New England, New York, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, and Scotland, but in all probability here in England also. Most of these places I have visited since the several audits of the orphan-house accounts, and acquainted with the design of turning it into a college; and likewise the address of the Council and Assembly of the province of Georgia, with his Excellency Governor Wright's answer, highly approving and recommending the design, have been published. Being frequently asked, 'Upon what bottom the intended college was to be founded,' I not only readily and repeatedly answered, 'Undoubtedly upon a broad bot-

tom,' but likewise, in most of the above mentioned places, have solemnly declared from the pulpit that it should be upon a broad bottom, and no other. This, I judged, I was sufficiently warranted to do, from the known, long established, mild, and uncoercive genius of the English Government; also from your Grace's moderation towards Protestant Dissenters; from the unconquerable attachment of the Americans to toleration principles, as well as from the avowed habitual feelings and sentiments of my own heart.

“This being the case, may it please your Grace, I would humbly appeal to his lordship, whether I can answer it to my God, my conscience, my king, my country, my constituents, and orphan-house benefactors and contributors, both at home and abroad, to betray my trust, forfeit my word, act contrary to my own convictions, and greatly retard and prejudice the growth and progress of the intended institution, by narrowing its foundation, and thereby letting it fall upon such a bottom, as I am persuaded will give a general disgust, and most justly open the mouths of persons of all denominations against me. This, as I acquainted your Grace, in the same letter referred to above, is what I dare not do. And therefore, as your Grace, by your silence, seems to be like-minded with the Lord President, and as your Grace's and his lordship's influence will undoubtedly extend itself to others of his Majesty's most Honourable Privy Council, I would beg leave, after returning all due acknowledgments, to inform your Grace, that I intend troubling your Grace and his lordship no more about this so long depending concern. As it hath pleased the great Head of the Church, in some degree, to renew my bodily strength, I purpose now to renew my feeble efforts, and turn the charity into a more generous, and consequently into a more extensively use-

ful, channel. If I know anything of my own heart, I have no ambition to be looked upon at present, or remembered for the future, as a founder of a college; but I would fain, may it please your Grace, act the part of an honest man, a disinterested minister of Jesus Christ, and a truly catholic, moderate presbyter of the Church of England. In this way, and in this only, can I hope for a continued heart-felt enjoyment of that peace of God which passeth all understanding, whilst here on earth, and be thereby prepared to stand with humble boldness before the awful, impartial tribunal of the great Shepherd and Bishop of souls at the great day. That your Grace may shine as a star of the first magnitude in that day, is the sincere prayer of, may it please your Grace, your Grace's most dutiful, obliged son and servant,

G. W."

Thus the preparations already made, the acres obtained, and the sums collected, were likely to be turned into unprofitable labour and a dead, useless fund. But to allow matters thus to terminate was not the habit of Whitefield. In his letter to the archbishop, he had intimated his intention, as a charter for the college was refused, to "turn the charity into a more generous, and consequently into a more extensively useful, channel." What that channel was, he afterwards thus announced to the Governor of Georgia:—

"Thus, may it please your Excellency, concluded my correspondence with his Grace; and I humbly hope the province of Georgia, in the end, will be no loser by this negotiation. For, God willing, I now purpose to add a public academy to the orphan-house, as the college of Philadelphia was constituted a public academy, as well as charitable school, for some time before its present college charter was granted by the honourable proprietors of Pennsylvania in the year 1755.

“In pursuing a like plan, the present Georgia orphan-house estate, which for near these three years hath been in a state of suspense, may be vigorously and properly improved, and thereby an ample and lasting provision made for the future maintenance and education of many poor, indigent, and orphan, as well as more opulent students. Proper masters likewise may now be sent over to instruct, and prepare for academical honours, the many youths, who are at this time both in Georgia and the adjacent provinces, waiting for admission. In the meantime, a proper trust may be formed to act after my decease, or even before, with this proviso, that no opportunity shall be omitted of making fresh application for a college charter, upon a *broad bottom*, whenever those in power shall think it for the glory of God, and the interest of their king and country, to grant the same. And thus, may it please your Excellency, my beloved Bethesda will not only be continued as a house of mercy for poor orphans, but be confirmed as a seat and nursery of sound learning and religious education, I trust, to the latest posterity. That this may be the happy case, as I am persuaded is the desire of your Excellency, his Majesty’s Honourable Council, and House of Representatives, in the province of Georgia, so it shall still be, to my latest breath, as it hath been for many years, the earnest endeavour and incessant prayer of, may it please your Excellency, your Excellency’s, &c., G. W.”

After such a disappointment, Whitefield would naturally wish to change the subject, by that species of work to which his heart was most attached. This, of course, was a preaching tour, which, in the present case, extended to Scotland. What were his exertions by the way, we are not informed in his correspondence, but we may easily conceive that they resembled those of former occasions. His arrival in Edinburgh, as it was

the last visit which he was ever to pay to that capital, was also one of the most gratifying, and glad remembrances of former days seemed to mingle their delightful feelings with prospects of present usefulness. He thus writes from Edinburgh:—"Thanks be to His great name, for ordering my steps this way. You would be delighted to see our orphan-house park assemblies—as large, attentive, and affectionate as ever. Twenty-seven-year-old friends and spiritual children remember the days of old; they are seeking after their first love, and there seems to be a stirring among the dry bones." During his stay, these cheering prospects continued to increase, so that more than a fortnight after, he adds: "My journey hither was certainly of God. Could I preach ten times a-day, thousands and thousands would attend. I have been confined for a few days; but on Monday or Tuesday next, hope to mount my throne again. Oh, to die there! Too great, too great an honour to be expected. I am here only in danger of being hugged to death. Friends of all ranks seem heartier and more friendly than ever." These incessant duties, both out of doors and at home, he found very exhausting in his precarious state of health; so that, on the 9th of July, about a month after his arrival, he found a home-ward return necessary. "Everything goes on better and better here. But I am so worn down by preaching abroad, and by talking at home almost all the day long, that I have determined, God willing, to set off for London next Tuesday at noon."

Warnings seemed now to announce with a distinctness that could no longer be mistaken, that the time of his departure from the earth was drawing nigh; that the process was already in operation by which the ties that bound him to it were to be loosed. A short time after he returned to London, his wife died; and on

the following month, in consequence of hard riding and frequent preaching, he burst a blood vessel. It is a marvel, indeed, considering the life he led, that such a disaster was so long deferred. But even though his tongue was thus silenced for a time, his pen continued its active employment; and with a startling rapidity (not many days, indeed, after the accident) we find him again in the pulpit. "Though prevented by the weather from using or drinking the Ramsgate waters, nothing can prevent his (the believer's) drinking the water of life freely. No, no; in every true believer's heart the Holy Ghost is a well of water, springing up to life eternal. Hence it is, that though He killeth, he maketh alive; though he wounds, yet he heals. These words I was enabled to feel and enlarge upon yesterday morning, from my Tottenham Court throne. For some days the flux of blood hath stopped entirely. Praise the Lord, oh my soul!" A few weeks after, he was again upon a preaching tour to Bristol and Bath; after which he returned to London, and resumed his public duties. At the end of the year, he writes, "Strange, that I am now living! Fifty-four years old last Tuesday! God be merciful to me a sinner! a sinner! a sinner! 'Less than the least of all' must be my motto still."

At the commencement of the next year, Whitefield experienced such a revival of health, that he was able to preach thrice a-week, besides engaging in other public exercises; and, on one occasion at least, he preached four days successively. These, combined with prospects of success, which at this time were brighter than ever, seem to have animated him with new life. Among other conversions, he informs a correspondent: "Some more coronets, I hear, are likely to be laid at the Redeemer's feet. They glitter gloriously, when set in and surrounded with a crown of thorns." Whitefield was

well aware of the influence exercised by the example of the nobility upon society at large. With the commencement of spring, he undertook an arduous tour, which comprised Bath, Bristol, Frome, Chippenham, Castlecomb, Dursley, Rodborough, Painswick, Gloucester, and Cheltenham. Of this route, the notices though brief are cheering. At Rodborough, he says, with natural exultation, "I have been enabled to preach five times this week. It is good to go into the high-ways and hedges. Field preaching, field preaching for ever!" He also adds, respecting that town, "Never was that place so endeared to me as at this last visit. Old friends, old gospel wine, and the great Governor ordering to fill to the brim."

At his return to London, the weary, toil-worn, but still eager evangelist, felt the effect of his labours, in a partial return of his former maladies. But the sight of work to be done in the metropolis, and the prospect of another voyage to America, seem to have given strength to his spirit, and enabled it to triumph over sickness, so that he writes in one of his sportive veins: "This leaves me a little recovering from my late indisposition; consequently it leaves me singing." After making every business arrangement which he found necessary, he prepared to embark. Ten days before he expected to take his departure, one of his dearest friends, at a distance from London, wished to have a previous interview with him, to whom he wrote in reply, "Talk not of taking a personal leave. You know my make. Paul could stand a whipping, but not a weeping farewell." Weeping farewells, however, were inevitable. His flock at the Tabernacle, and that at Tottenham Court Road, must be parted with; and the attachment between minister and people was no ordinary tie. He preached at both places, what he appears

to have intended for his farewell sermon, from Gen. xxviii. 12, the subject being Jacob's ladder; and although his labours at the Tabernacle on that occasion commenced as early as seven o'clock in the morning, the building, we are told, was more than full. On the same day he set off for Gravesend, accompanied by a host of friends, in carriages and chaises. As next day was Sabbath (September 3), he was eager to improve the opportunity; and, because the use of the church was refused to him, he preached in the forenoon in the Methodist Tabernacle erected there, from John xiii. 32. The congregation was not a large one; but he says in his journal, "God gave me great freedom of speech, and made it indeed a house of God, and gate of heaven." In the afternoon he repaired to the market-place, where he preached to a much larger audience, on Gen. iii. 13. In the outskirts of the crowd, some were a little noisy, but by far the greater part were profoundly attentive; while his own animation was so great, that, as he informs us, he was enabled to lift up his voice like a trumpet. "I trust," he adds, "some penniless, bankrupt sinners, were made willing to buy gospel wine and milk, without money and without price. May the great day show that this hope was not altogether ill grounded!" On the following day, his friends accompanied him on board, where they breakfasted with him, after which came the parting. It was so bitter, that it wrung from him the words of the apostle, "What mean ye, to weep and break my heart?" "However," he continues, "through infinite mercy, I was helped to bear up; and after their departure, the divine presence made up the loss of all, even with new creature comforts. Lord, if this divine presence go not with, and accompany me all the way, for thy infinite mercy's sake, suffer me not to go one step farther."

The ship in which he was to set sail was detained nearly a month in the Downs by contrary winds ; and during this period he was busily employed, not only in writing letters to his friends, but also in preaching, whenever an opportunity offered. Some of these letters we cannot refrain from quoting, as they were affectionate farewells, no longer, as heretofore, to be repeated—the devout yet cheerful accents of a beloved one, who had ascended the vessel that was commissioned to waft him to his place of burial :—

“ TO MR R—— K——N.

“ *On board the Friendship, Sept. 8, 1769.*

“ MY DEAR, STÉADY FRIEND,—Ebenezer! Ebenezer! Hitherto the Lord helps. All things are very commodious on board, and hitherto I am comforted on every side. The captain and passengers are civil, willing to oblige, and ready to attend on divine worship. We have had contrary winds on our way to the Downs, but not violent. The young soldiers are not yet sick, though the ship hath some motion. I seem to be now as I was thirty years ago. Grace! grace! Praise the Lord, O my soul! The prayers of the dear Londoners are and will be heard. May the mercies bestowed upon us in answer to their prayers, redound to thy glory, O my God! The care of my annual pensioners, with all money matters, I must beg you to take wholly into your hands. Oh, how little can I do for Him who hath done and suffered so much for me! God be merciful to me, a sinner! Tender love to all. Cease not, cease not to pray forwards, and to pray back again, my very dear sir, less than the least of all, G. W.”

Even the setting of his foot upon deck seems to have inspired him with the vigour of youth; and the success which he left behind, to be but a foretaste of what awaited him in the other hemisphere. The next letter

breathes the very spirit of Christian love, resignation, and hope :—

“ TO MR AND MRS F—— TT.

“ *The Downs, on board the Friendship,*

“ *Sept. 10. 1769.*

“ MY VERY DEAR FRIENDS,—As we are now at our first baiting-place, and I have been thinking of, and praying for, my tried, steady, uniform friends, no wonder that you two came strongly upon my mind. Accept cordial thanks for all favours, and add to my manifold obligations by praising Him whose mercy endureth for ever. He deals bountifully with us on board, and gives us a prospect of being comfortable with all about us. You are called to stay by, but, blessed be God, you are called to live above the stuff. A pilgrim life is my lot. I am more than content with it. I shall have time enough to rest in heaven. This heaven is begun on earth. You know it, you know it. Ere long the budding flower will be full blown. Afflictions, temptations, ordinances, providences, will all concur to bring it to maturity. When this is done, death shall transplant it to a better soil, where it shall never fade, but increase in fragrance and beauty through the endless ages of eternity. But I must not detain you. This is your busy day. You have been gathering manna. A little hath fallen round our floating camp. I know you wish us a trading voyage. That you may sail into harbour with a very full and choice cargo of heavenly wares, with your top-gallant sails flying, and shouting from every quarter, Grace! grace! earnestly prays, my very dear friends, less than the least of all,

G. W.”

While he was gay with the cheerful, he was also sad with the sorrowful, as the following letter of consolation to an afflicted friend will sufficiently testify :—

“ TO MR G——D.

“ *The Downs, on board the Friendship,*
“ *Sept. 15, 1769.*

“ MY DEAR MR G——D,—I cannot forget your old readiness to serve and attend upon me. I cannot forget your last parting conversation. Alas! alas! how little do we know of the bitter cups that await us in the decline of life! May Jesus sweeten them with his love! He will, he will. This will make them palatable. This, and this alone, can make us cry from our inmost souls, ‘The cup which my heavenly Father hath given me to drink, shall I not drink it?’ Though bitter, there is no death in this cup; on the contrary, nothing but life, nothing but life. Courage then, my dear Mr G——d, courage. Yet a little while, and we shall see

‘ All our sorrows left below,
And earth exchange’d for heaven.’

Adieu. God bless you and yours. Hearty love to all that are so kind as to inquire after and pray for me. Pray go to Dr G——ns, and tell him I hope he got home well. I had a pleasant season at Deal with him and some other servants of our common Lord. What will heaven be? I am lost in contemplation of it; and therefore must hasten to subscribe myself, dear Mr G——d, less than the least of all, G. W.”

To another friend, whose amiable partner laboured under spiritual darkness and depression, that threw a heavy cloud over their mutual pilgrimage, he thus writes:—

“ TO MR R—— H——N.

“ *In the Downs, on board the Friendship,*
“ *Sept. 17, 1769.*

“ MY DEAR OLD FRIEND,—I sympathize with you from my inmost soul. What prickles have our sweetest roses’ How does God’s promise seemingly cross

hands with his providence ! We would fain direct him ; but his answer is, ‘ I know it, my son, I know it ;’ and hereafter we shall know it too. That hereafter will soon come. It is coming every moment. Yet a little while, and we shall see

‘ All our sorrows left below,
And earth exchanged for heaven.’

I have no doubt, but this will be the happy lot of your dear yoke-fellow. At present she walks in darkness, and sees no light. But God will lighten her darkness, and the days of her mourning shall be ended. Beg her to accept my most sincere and sympathetic salutations ; and assure yourselves, that neither of you are forgotten in the poor prayers of, my dear friends, less than the least of all,

G. W.”

We shall now briefly extract from his letters, the last of his public labours in the land of his nativity:—

“ *Deal, Sept. 14, 1769.*—For wise reasons we are detained in the Downs. Who knows but it may be to awaken some souls at Deal? A peculiar providence brought me here. Warm-hearted Dr Gibbons came on board to pay me a visit; was sick, lay in my state-room, and learned more experimentally to pray for those who occupy their business in the great waters. Mr Bradbury of Ramsgate, and young Mr G——ner, who was ordained here yesterday, followed after. At their request, I came ashore yesterday morning. The ordination was very solemn, and I have not been more affected under any public ministrations a great while. At the request of many, I preached in the evening to a crowded auditory, and spent the remainder of the night in godly conversation. If the wind continues contrary, perhaps I may make an elopement to Margate.”

“ *Deal, Sept. 15.*—Mr Bradbury came, put me under an arrest, and is carrying me away to Ramsgate. I

hope to arrest some poor run-away bankrupts for the Captain of our salvation.”

“*Deal, Sept. 17.*—Indeed and indeed, I believe solid good was done at Ramsgate. I preached on Friday and Saturday. I could not go to Margate.”

“*In the Downs, Sept. 19.*—Had not our captain loitered at London, last Lord’s-day, we might have been safe out of the channel. But then, perhaps I might have lost the sale of some gospel goods at Gravesend market-place. I hope you, and all my dear fellow-labourers, will meet with thousands of moneyless customers, who will come down to the price. Blessed news for bankrupts!”

Among the letters which Whitefield wrote during this long and unexpected, but not profitless detention, he sent the following to a portion of his flock, who little knew that they were receiving his last admonitions and prayers:—

“TO MR G——, AND TO ALL IN CONFERENCE.

“*The Downs, on board the Friendship,*
“*Sept. 19, 1769.*

“DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD,—Though absent in body, I am present with you in spirit. Not want of love, but of leisure, prevented my holding a conference with you before my embarkation. My hands and heart were full. Ere long, we shall go no more out. In the meanwhile, may you all be pillars in the house of our God! You are engaged in a good cause, and in a branch of the Redeemer’s work, which hath, and I am persuaded will, prosper more and more. What a mercy, that fresh instruments are raised up, to preach to poor sinners the unsearchable riches of Jesus Christ! I hope that the sound of his blessed feet hath been heard behind young Mr D——; he seems to come out in the first, old, itinerant, Methodistical way. No way like this. Light and life must go together. Principles and

power, principles and power conjointly, alone can satisfy my dear Tabernacle hearers' souls. Though dying, I should live, when I find that they and you stand fast in the Lord, and go on, and are terrible like an army with banners. This be your happy lot! Whatever becomes of ill and hell-deserving me, may you increase with all the increase of God! Most cordial love awaits Mr C——, Mr B——, Mr D——, Mr I——, or as many of them as are in town. May all be helped to give one and the same mighty gospel, all-powerful blast, till Jericho's towering walls fall down before them. Outward troubles, I am persuaded, await us; but in Jesus we shall have peace. To his never-failing mercy I commend you and yours, and all your near and dear connections. Brethren, pray for us; I know you do. The Redeemer, in answer to your prayers, deals bountifully with us. I am comforted on every side. Nevertheless alone, than when alone with my God. My anchor is cast within the veil. Though detained in the Downs, I hope we are sailing towards our eternal haven. Still help us forwards, and pray us back. Once more, God bless you all! God bless the dear Tabernacle society, bands and classes, and all that come to hear a preached gospel under that despised yet highly honoured roof! I am sure you will add,—And God bless him who from his inmost soul subscribes himself, less than the least of all,

G. W."

At length the Friendship got clear of the Downs, and after a troublesome passage, reached her destination on the 30th of November. The obstacles encountered by the way, made Whitefield exclaim, "Surely Satan foresees some signal good attending this voyage." He was, however, in excellent health and spirits, and on landing at Charles-Town, South Carolina, was received by the inhabitants with a heartier welcome than ever.

PART VII.

FROM HIS LAST VISIT TO AMERICA TO HIS DEATH.

THIS was the seventh, as it was the last, voyage of Whitefield to America; and at the end of it he found himself in better health than he had been for many years. After thanking God for such a boon, he showed his gratitude more effectually, by preaching on the afternoon of the day after his arrival at Charles-Town. He felt as if it were thus only that he could turn his renovated strength to a proper account. Other daily exertions of the same nature followed; and only a few days after, he was able to write: "I am in hopes by this last week's preaching, that some South Carolina souls are beginning to look heavenwards." And again: "So much company crowds, that, together with my preaching every other day, &c., I have scarce the least leisure. Blessed be God, I have already met with some fruits of my feeble labours in this place."

Now, however, there was one American object that pre-eminently occupied him, and for which this voyage had chiefly been made, so that his most earnest desires and aspirations pointed towards his beloved Bethesda. Only ten days after his arrival, therefore, at Charles-Town, he set off for Georgia; and as the roads at that time were almost impassable by land, he took his journey by water. He reached that place in safety, and amidst his ministerial labours, which were continued in as active exercise as ever, he matured his new plans for the development of the institution. "How are you?" he thus writes to a friend; "still in pain? still made to

possess wearisome nights and wearisome days? Well, all will be over soon: soon, yea, very soon, shall we sing:—

‘ All our sorrows left below,
And earth exchanged for heaven.’

This prospect gives songs in the night; this makes Georgia and Bethesda to more than smile: and indeed, you and yours would smile too, were you to see what a lasting foundation is laying for the support and education of many yet unborn.” In another letter, written the same day, he says, “Every thing here exceeds my most sanguine expectations. I am almost tempted to say, ‘It is good for us to be here.’ But all must give way to gospel ranging.” He commenced ranging accordingly, and the next month we find him back to Charles-Town, in pursuit of souls, with his wonted ardour. “I am now enabled,” he says, “to preach almost every day; and my poor feeble labours seem not to be in vain in the Lord.” His work so prospered, that, some time after, he wrote, “You would be pleased to see with what attention people hear the word preached. I have been in Charles-Town near a fortnight; am to preach at a neighbouring country parish church next Sunday, and hope to see Georgia the week following.” He had now settled the affairs of Bethesda to his satisfaction, and the wardens were appointed into whose hands the whole property and its management were to be transferred. In this arrangement, the modesty and self-denial of Whitefield are chiefly to be admired. The Established Church was still predominant; the name of Methodist still lay under condemnation; and at present, no one entertained the slightest idea that the colonies could by any possibility throw off their allegiance to the mother country, and commence a career of independence and universal toleration. He, therefore, the founder and

builder of the institution, was no longer to have even the shadow of authority or right in the management of its concerns—of these he stripped himself, and with his own hands resigned them. “As *my name* is to be annihilated,” he says, speaking of the newly-appointed wardens, “they may accept the trust without expecting much trouble, or suffering contempt for being connected with *me*.” Most truly and sincerely had he said, years before, when it was thought that he wished to found a sect, and aggrandize his own reputation: “Let the name of George Whitefield perish, if God be glorified!”

Having thus made arrangements to his utmost satisfaction, Whitefield did not sit down to enjoy an interval of leisure, or the luxury of success. To him, such repose would have been death: he must instantly be up and doing, as long as there was other work to do. “Oh this pilgrim way of life! To me, it is life indeed. No nestling, no nestling on this side eternity.” Such were the sentiments with which he prepared for a return to Georgia, and afterwards for itinerancies wherever Providence might guide him. At this time, too, he was animated and invigorated by a flow of health such as he had not felt for years. He was soon back to Bethesda; and from this beloved spot his letters express such happiness, that we cannot refrain from a few specimens:—

“To MR R—— K——N.

“*Bethesda, April 6, 1770.*

“MY VERY DEAR SIR,—I am waiting here for a brig that is to carry me northward, and for a letter and news from England. Your last was dated November 2: several months have intervened. I now almost despair of hearing from you again, till my arrival at Boston. But I hope that you and all remember us more frequently than you write. You are daily remembered at a throne

of grace. How glad would many be to see our Goshen, our Bethel, our Bethesda! Never did I enjoy such domestic peace, comfort, and joy during my whole pilgrimage. It is unspeakable, it is full of glory. Peace, peace unutterable attends our paths, and a pleasant prospect of increasing useful prosperity is continually rising to our view. I have lately taken six poor children, and, God willing, purpose to add greatly to their number. Dear Mr D——n and his wife are to sail the beginning of next month in the *Britannia*, Captain Dean, bound for Portsmouth. We part with great respect. Fain would I retain such an old, tried, disinterested friend in the service of the sanctuary, and near my person. But what scheme to pursue I know not, being so uncertain as to the path which I shall be called to take. A few months will determine—perhaps a few weeks. More particulars expect by the *Britannia*. In the meanwhile, I can only recommend you all to the blessed Jesus, and the word of his grace, and entreat the continuance of your prayers in behalf of, my very dear friend, less than the least of all, G. W.”

“TO THE SAME.

“*Bethesda*, April 16, 1770.

MY VERY DEAR, WORTHY FRIEND,—Hallelujah! Praise the Lord! The books and letters, both by Ball and Sunbury, are come safe. You have done quite right. Our Lord must choose his own means to bring about his own purpose. Mr Smith (the clerk) was much rejoiced by receiving a letter. Poor Mr Jacob W——t, an honest, industrious creature, was as much dejected by receiving none. If Mr G——s had added a line or two to his present, it would have been doubly acceptable. Next week, God willing, we sail for Philadelphia. I shall leave letters behind me to come by Mr D——n. All is well—all more than well here!

Never, never did I enjoy such an era of domestic peace and happiness. I have taken in about ten orphans. Prizes! prizes! Hallelujah! Join, my very dear friends, join in praising Him whose mercy endureth for ever. If possible, I shall write a line to the Welsh brethren. They have sustained a loss indeed, in the death of Mr Howell Davies. God sanctify it! Surely my turn will come by-and-by. But I must away to Savannah. Real good, I trust, is doing there. The ship that brings this is expected to sail to-morrow. I have desired Mr W——r to send you the particulars of our voyage. All send due respects. God bless you! God reward you! Cease not to add to my obligations, by continuing to pray for, my very dear, worthy friend, less than the least of all, G. W.”

“ TO THE SAME.

“ *Bethesda, April 20, 1770.*

“ MY VERY DEAR SIR,—To my very great joy, a few days ago, I received your kind letters, with all the papers. Give peace in our time, O Lord! We enjoy a little heaven upon earth here. With regret I go northward, as far as Philadelphia at least, next Monday—though I am persuaded, as the house is now altered, I should be cooler here, during the summer’s heat, than at any other place I know of where I used to go. I should be glad to treat you with some of the produce of our colony, which is much earlier than yours. The audits, &c., sent with this, be pleased to communicate to all my real friends. You have certainly determined quite right in a late affair. Everything concurs to show me that Bethesda affairs must go on, as yet, in their old channel. A few months may open strange scenes. Oh for a spirit of love and moderation on all sides, and on both sides the water! I wish some books might be procured for our infant library. But more of this in my next.

Letters may now be sent by way of Boston, New York, and Philadelphia. I should be glad to hear often, if it be but a line. In all probability I shall not return hither till November. Was ever any man blest with such a set of skilful, peaceful, laborious helpers! O Bethesda. my Bethel, my Peniel! My happiness is inconceivable. A few hundreds, besides what is already devoted, would finish all. I do not in the least doubt. I have had nine or ten prizes lately—you know what I mean. Nine or ten orphans have been lately taken in. Hallelujah! hallelujah! Let chapel, tabernacle, heaven, and earth resound with Hallelujah! I can no more. My heart is too big to speak or add more than my old name, less than the least of all, G. W.”

From Bethesda, his next journey was to Philadelphia, where he arrived on the 6th of May, and on the following evening he was in the pulpit. And still his health continued to improve, while he grew “more and more in love every day with a pilgrim life.” The two following letters will show his state of mind, and the nature of his occupations while he made Philadelphia his headquarters:—

“TO MR R—— K——N.

“*Philadelphia, May 24, 1776.*

“MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,—I wrote to you by the last New York packet, as well as by Mr D——n, who was to sail from Savannah the 10th instant. I have now been here nearly three weeks, and in about a week more I purpose to set off for New York on my way to Boston. A wide and effectual door, I trust, hath been opened in this city. People of all ranks flock as much as ever. Impressions are made on many, and I trust they will abide. To all the Episcopal churches, as well as most of the other places of worship, I have free access. My bodily health is preserved; and notwithstanding I

preach twice on the Lord's-day, and three or four times a-week besides, yet I am rather better than I have been for many years. This is the Lord's doing. To this long-suffering, never-failing Lord, be all the glory! Be pleased to excuse my enlarging. Whilst I am itinerating little leisure will be allowed for writing. The New York packet will be the best opportunity for you. The particulars herein mentioned be so good as to send by the first opportunity. I can no more at this time. God willing, you will soon have another line from, my very dear, steady friend, less than the least of all,

G. W."

"TO THE SAME.

"Philadelphia, June 14, 1770.

"MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,—This leaves me just returned from a hundred and fifty miles' circuit, in which, blessed be God, I have been enabled to preach every day. So many new as well as old doors are open, and so many invitations sent from various quarters, that I know not which way to turn myself. However, at present I am bound to New York, and so on farther northward. Help me to praise Him whose mercy endureth for ever. As yet, I am enabled to ride and travel cheerfully—the heat not greater than yours in England. Expect to hear further as we go along. The ship I find is going. Tender love to all. Cease not to stir up all to persevere in praying for, my very dear friend, less than the least of all,

G. W."

Whitefield afterwards went to New York. The important nature of his employment there, and the extensive range which it took, will be best learned from the following letter, written five weeks after his arrival:—

"TO MR R——K——N.

"New York, July 29, 1770.

"MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,—Since my last, and

during this month, I have been above a five hundred miles' circuit, and have been enabled to preach and travel through the heat every day. The congregations have been very large, attentive, and affected, particularly at Albany, Schenectady, Great Barrington, Norfolk, Salisbury, Sharon, Smithfield, Powkeepsy, Fishkill, New Rumbert, New Windsor, and Peckshill. Last night I returned hither, and hope to set out for Boston in two or three days. Oh what a new scene of usefulness is opening in various parts of this new world! All fresh work, where I have been. The divine influence hath been as at the first. Invitations crowd upon me, both from ministers and people, from many, many quarters. A very peculiar providence led me lately to a place where a horse-stealer was executed. Thousands attended. The poor criminal had sent me several letters, hearing I was in the country. The sheriff allowed him to come and hear a sermon under an adjacent tree. Solemn, solemn! After being by himself about an hour, I walked half a mile with him to the gallows. His heart had been softened before my first visit. He seemed full of solid divine consolations. An instructive walk! I went up with him into the cart. He gave a short exhortation. I then stood upon the coffin, added, I trust, a word in season, prayed, gave the blessing, and took my leave. Effectual good, I hope, was done to the hearers and spectators. Grace! grace! But I must not enlarge. The ship is going, and I keep at home to write this. Oh that you had only dropped a line by the New York packet! That is convenient for all parts of the Continent. My next may be from Boston. Pray excuse me to all; for travelling and preaching entirely prevent my writing as I would. All are continually remembered by, my very dear friend, less than the least of all,

G. W."

Boston was the next town of importance that Whitefield visited; and there, as at other places, the people received him so gladly, and were so importunate for his stay among them, that he knew not how to determine about his future route. "Never," he says, "was the word received with greater eagerness than now: all opposition seems, as it were, for a while to cease." But the malady had already returned, under which his days were numbered. Still, however, he bore up; and the vista of usefulness that stood before him was still unclosed, and almost unclouded. The following is the last letter he wrote, and as such alone, we are persuaded it will be perused with no ordinary interest.

" TO MR R—— K——N.

" Portsmouth, New Hampshire,

" Sept. 23, 1770.

" MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,—Your letters of May 2d and 22d, came to hand. New York packet is always the surest and most central medium of conveyance. Before I left Boston, on Friday afternoon, I left a large packet in the hands of a young man, who promised to deliver it to you safely. You and Mr H——y may peruse all, and communicate what you think proper. By this time I thought to be moving southward. But never was greater importunity used to detain me longer in these northern parts. Poor New England is much to be pitied; Boston people most of all. How falsely misrepresented! What a mercy that our Christian charter cannot be dissolved! Blessed be God for an unchangeable Jesus! You will see, by the many invitations, what a door is open for preaching his everlasting gospel. I was so ill on Friday, that I could not preach, though thousands were waiting to hear. Well, the day of release will shortly come, but it does not seem yet;

for, by riding sixty miles, I am better, and hope to preach here to-morrow. I trust my blessed Master will accept of these poor efforts to serve him. Oh for a warm heart! Oh to stand fast in the faith, to quit ourselves like men, and be strong! May this be the happy experience of you and yours! I suppose letters are gone for me, in the Anderson, to Georgia. If spared so long, I expect to see it about Christmas. Still pray and praise. I am so poorly, and so engaged when able to preach, that this must apologize for not writing to more friends. It is quite impracticable. Hoping to see all dear friends about the time proposed, and earnestly desiring a continued interest in all your prayers, I must hasten to subscribe myself, my dear, very dear sir, less than the least of all,

G. W."

On the day that the foregoing letter was written, he preached both at Portsmouth and New Hampshire and, onward to the 29th, he continued preaching at various places every day. On the 29th, which was Saturday, he set off for Boston, having engaged to preach next day at Newbury-Port during his journey; but on arriving at Exeter, the entreaties of the inhabitants that he should preach to them also were so urgent, that he felt himself unable to refuse. The multitudes that assembled at this short warning were so great, that the church could not have contained them, and therefore he preached in the open air, and with such earnestness, that his discourse lasted two hours. In an exhausted state he reached Newbury-Port in the evening, and laid himself down upon the bed from which he was never to rise; for on the next morning, at six o'clock, his spirit was joined to that glorious band of immortals whose numbers he had so laboured to increase. The particulars of his death are thus detailed by Mr Richard Smith, who had accompanied Whitefield from

England, and who now enjoyed the mournful privilege of attending him in his last moments :—

“ On Saturday, September 29, 1770, Mr Whitefield rode from Portsmouth to Exeter (fifteen miles), in the morning, and preached there to a very great multitude, in the fields. It is remarkable, that before he went out to preach that day (which proved to be his last sermon), Mr Clarkson, senior, observing him more uneasy than usual, said to him, ‘ Sir, you are more fit to go to bed than to preach;’ to which Mr Whitefield answered, ‘ True, sir :’ but turning aside, he clasped his hands together, and, looking up, spoke, ‘ Lord Jesus, I am weary *in* thy work, but not *of* thy work. If I have not yet finished my course, let me go and speak for thee once more in the fields, seal thy truth, and come home and die.’

“ The text he preached from was, 2 Cor. xiii. 5. He dined at Captain Gillman’s. After dinner, Mr Whitefield and Mr Parsons rode to Newbury. I did not get there till two hours after them. I found them at supper. I asked Mr Whitefield how he felt himself after his journey. He said ‘ he was tired, therefore he supped early, and would go to bed.’ He ate a very little supper, talked but little, asked Mr Parsons to discharge the table, and perform family duty; and then retired up stairs. He said, ‘ that he would sit and read till I came to him;’ which I did as soon as possible, and found him reading in the Bible, with Dr Watts’ Psalms lying open before him. He asked me for some water-gruel, and took about half his usual quantity; and kneeling down by the bed-side, closed the evening with prayer.

“ After a little conversation he went to rest, and slept till two in the morning, when he awoke me, and asked for a little cider; he drank about a wine glass

full. I asked him how he felt, for he seemed to pant for breath. He told me 'his asthma was coming on him again;—I must have two or three days' rest. Two or three days' riding, without preaching, would set me up again.' Soon afterwards he asked me to put the window up a little higher (though it was half up all night); for, said he, 'I cannot breathe, but I hope I shall be better by-and-by; a good pulpit-sweat to-day may give me relief; I shall be better after preaching.' I said to him, I wished he would not preach so often. He replied, 'I had rather wear out, than rust out.' I then told him I was afraid he took cold in preaching yesterday. He said, 'he believed he had; and then sat up in the bed and prayed that God would be pleased to bless his preaching where he had been, and also bless his preaching that day, that more souls might be brought to Christ; and prayed for direction, whether he should winter at Boston, or hasten to the southward; prayed for a blessing on his Bethesda College, and his dear family there; for tabernacle and chapel congregations, and all his connexions on the other side of the water, and then laid himself down to sleep again.

"This was nigh three o'clock. At a quarter past four, he waked, and said, 'My asthma, my asthma is coming on; I wish I had not given out word to preach at Haverhill on Monday—I don't think I shall be able; but I shall see what to-day will bring forth. If I am no better to-morrow, I will take a two or three days' ride.' He then desired me to warm him a little gruel, and in breaking the fire-wood, I waked Mr Parsons, who, thinking I knocked for him, rose and came in. He went to Mr Whitefield's bed-side, and asked him how he felt himself. He answered, 'I am almost suffocated—I can scarce breathe; my asthma quite chokes me.' I was then not a little surprised, to hear how

quick, and with what difficulty he drew his breath. He got out of bed, and went to the open window for air. This was exactly at five o'clock. I went to him, and for about the space of five minutes, I saw no danger, only that he had a great difficulty in breathing, as I had often seen before. Soon afterwards he turned himself to me, and said, '*I am dying.*' I said, 'I hope not, sir.' He ran to the other window, panting for breath, but could get no relief.

"It was agreed I should go for Dr Sawyer; and on my coming back, I saw death on his face, and he again said, '*I am dying.*' His eyes were fixed, his under lip drawing inward every time he drew breath; he went towards the window, and we offered him some warm wine with lavender drops, which he refused. I persuaded him to sit down in the chair, and have his cloak on; he consented by a sign, but could not speak. I then offered him the glass of warm wine; he took half of it, but it seemed as if it would have stopped his breath entirely. In a little time he brought up a considerable quantity of phlegm and wind. I then began to have some small hopes. Mr Parsons said he thought Mr Whitefield breathed more freely than he did, and would recover. I said, 'No, sir; he is certainly dying.' I was continually employed in taking the phlegm out of his mouth with a handkerchief, and bathing his temples with drops, rubbing his wrists, &c., to give him relief, if possible; but all in vain—his hands and feet were cold as clay. When the doctor came in, and saw him in the chair, leaning on my breast, he felt his pulse, and said, 'He is a dead man.' Mr Parsons said, 'I do not believe it; you must do something doctor.' He said, 'I cannot—he is now near his last breath.' And indeed so it was, for he fetched but one gasp, and stretched out his feet, and breathed no more. This was

exactly at six o'clock. We continued rubbing his legs and hands and feet with warm cloths, and bathed him with spirits for some time, but all in vain. I then put him into a warm bed, the doctor standing by, and often raised him upright, continued rubbing him, and putting spirits to his nose for an hour, till all hopes were gone. The people came in crowds to see him; I begged the doctor to shut the door.

“The Rev. Mr Parsons, at whose house my dear master died, sent for Captain Fetcomb, and Mr Boardman, and others of his elders and deacons, and they took the whole care of the burial upon themselves, prepared the vault, and sent and invited the bearers. Many ministers of all persuasions came to the house of the Rev. Mr Parsons, where several of them gave a very particular account of their first awakening under his ministry several years ago, and also of many in their congregations that, to their knowledge, under God owed their conversion wholly to his coming among them, often repeating the blessed seasons they had enjoyed under his preaching; and all said, that this last visit was attended with more power than any other, and that all opposition fell before him. Then one and another of them would pity and pray for his dear tabernacle and chapel congregations, and it was truly affecting to hear them bemoan America and England's loss. Thus they continued for two hours conversing about his great usefulness, and praying that God would scatter his gifts and drop his mantle among them.

“When the corpse was placed at the foot of the pulpit, close to the vault, the Rev. Mr Daniel Rogers made a very affecting prayer, and openly confessed that, under God; he owed his conversion to the labours of that dear man of God, whose precious remains now lay before them. Then he cried out, ‘O my father, my

father !' then stopt and wept, as though his heart would break, and the people weeping all through the place. Then he recovered, and finished his prayer, and sat down and wept. Then one of the deacons gave out that hymn, 'Why do we mourn departing friends?' some of the people weeping, some singing, and so on alternately. The Rev. Mr Jewel preached a funeral discourse, and made an affectionate address to his brethren to lay to heart the death of that useful man of God; begging that he and they might be upon their watch-tower, and endeavour to follow his blessed example. The corpse was then put into the vault, and all concluded with a short prayer, and dismissal of the people, who went weeping through the streets to their respective places of abode."

Thus died George Whitefield, in his fifty-sixth year. Even in the midst of his anticipations of recovered health and continued usefulness, he passed away in a single night, so that those who the day before had been thrilled with his heavenly eloquence, beheld on the following morning an inanimate countenance, a moveless corpse. At midnight, there was heard the cry, "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh!" But the warning, although so sudden and unexpected, found him with his loins girt, and his lamp in full lustre. For this movement he had been years in preparation, and therefore it did not take him at unawares; and when he was to be removed, there was but a brief pang and a single step that interposed between him and the presence of his heavenly Father.

The gloom that was cast over America by this startling bereavement, equalled the esteem in which the people had held him. Such especially was the case in that province for whose prosperity he had so devotedly laboured. "You have no conception," writes Cornelius Winter, "of the effect of Whitefield's death upon the

inhabitants of Georgia. All the black cloth in the stores was bought up; the pulpits and desks of the church, the branches, the organ loft, the pews of the governor and council, were covered with black. The governor and council, in deep mourning, convened at the state-house, and went in procession to church, and were received by the organ playing a funeral dirge. Two funeral sermons were preached by Mr Ellington and Mr Zubly." When the tidings came to England, it was as if a strong deep funeral knell had crossed the Atlantic, and made our shores reverberate. Even to the remote districts of Wales, and the more remote villages of Scotland, the tidings were speedily conveyed; and among them, a general sorrow proclaimed the loss of a universal benefactor. When the hearts of men had recovered from the shock, many a pulpit in London was clothed in mourning; while funeral sermons, from eminent ministers of various denominations, showed how a common calamity, a universal loss, can reconcile the contending differences of Christians, and send them for aid and consolation to the throne of their common Father and Comforter.

Of the numerous funeral sermons preached on the death of Whitefield, we give the following extracts from the discourses of two clergymen, well known in the religious world, as happy illustrations of the character of him whose loss they so deeply deplored. The first of these is by Venn, author of "The Whole Duty of Man."

"Though the children of Christ are all for signs and for wonders in Israel, yet do they differ, as one star differs from another star in glory. Talents, grace, and zeal, eminently dignify some, and draw the eyes of men upon them. In the foremost of this rank, doubtless, is the Rev. George Whitefield to be placed, for his doctrine

was the doctrine of the Reformers, of the apostles, and of Christ: it was the doctrine of free grace—of God's everlasting love. Through Jesus he practised the forgiveness of sins, and perseverance in holy living, through the faithfulness and power engaged to his people. And the doctrines which he preached, he eminently adorned by his zeal and by his works. For if the greatness, extent, success, and disinterestedness of a man's labour can give him distinction amongst the children of Christ, we are warranted to affirm that scarce any one has equalled Mr Whitefield.

“What a sign and wonder was this man of God in the greatness of his labours! One cannot but stand amazed that his mortal frame could, for the space of nearly thirty years, without interruption, sustain the weight of them. For what is so trying to the human frame, in youth especially, as long-continued, frequent, and violent straining of the lungs? Who that knows their structure, would think it possible, that a person little above the age of manhood, should speak, in the compass of a single week (and that for years), in general, forty hours, and in very many weeks, sixty, and that to thousands; and after this labour, instead of taking any rest, should be offering up prayers, intercessions, with hymns and spiritual songs, as his manner was, in every house to which he was invited? The history of the Church of Christ affords but very few instances of men thus incessantly employing their whole strength, and, as it were, every breath they drew, in the business of their sacred function; and the truth is, that in point of labour, this extraordinary servant of God did as much in a few weeks, as most of those who exert themselves are able to do in the space of a year. Thus labouring, not by fits and starts, but with constancy, and perseverance, and ardour unabated, his mortal

frame, about nine years since, began to sink under the weight of so much work. If, with the length and frequency of Mr Whitefield's preaching, we consider the intenseness of voice and spirit with which he spoke, the greatness of his labours will appear perfectly astonishing. He knew not how to speak with less zeal, in his whole manner, than became the subjects of his discourse. The total ruin of the human race by the fall—the complete recovery of believers in Christ—his dying love, and the unsearchable riches of his grace, to be known experimentally in this life, though fully to be displayed in the next—and the infatuation of sinners led captive by their lusts down to the chambers of death—these grand truths, of more weight than words can paint, fixed his whole soul; they transported him as much as earthly spirits are transported into vehemence, when they contend personally for their own property; he cried out, therefore, as his dear Lord was wont to do, with a voice audible to an amazing distance. Hence, in a thousand instances, when the cause of God more coolly pleaded would have been neglected, he gained it a hearing, and carried the day; for the unusual earnestness of the speaker roused the most stupid and lethargic; it compelled them to feel. The matter must be momentous indeed, which the speaker was urging as a man would plead for his own life.

“Should any one say, few in comparison, besides the low, ignorant, common people, were his followers, I would answer, the souls of the poor and ignorant are, to the full, as precious as those of the rich and learned; and the mob have shown the justest discernment, and have received the truth, whilst men of wealth, and learning, and education, have trampled it under their feet. Witness the scribes and Pharisees, who rejected both the Baptist and the Saviour, when the

common people justified God, and gave them both the honour of being sent from him. Indeed, in every age we see the Scripture fulfilled—‘Not many rich, not many mighty, not many wise men after the flesh are called;’ but God hath chosen the poor, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom.

“However, when the fierceness of prejudice was worn off, numbers who at first despised him, taught to do so by gross slanders, were happy under his ministry; and this honour was put upon him to the last. He had a much larger audience stately to hear him, than any man in the whole kingdom, perhaps in all Christendom.

“Add to this, that the letters he received of grateful acknowledgment, from persons of all ages and conditions in life, for the spiritual blessings he had conveyed to them, would fill whole volumes. Nay, it is a well-known fact, that the conversion of men’s souls has been the fruit of a single sermon from his lips, so eminently was he made of God a fisher of men. But he was not more successful than he was disinterested in his labours; for, though a vast multitude (which must ever be the case with those whom God is pleased remarkably to own) followed him, he had still no ambition to stand as the head of a party.

“The scourge of the tongue was let loose upon him; his name was loaded with the foulest calumnies. He was often in tumults, and more than once in danger of his life, by the rage of the people. He wore himself away in the service of souls, and when he died, he died quite exhausted by much speaking; but in his death he received an immediate answer to his own prayer—*That, if it were consistent with the divine will, he might finish that day his Master’s work.*

“For such a life and such a death (though in tears

under our great loss), we must yet thank God. And though we are allowed to sorrow, because we shall never see or hear him again, we must rejoice that millions have heard him so long, so often, and to such good effect; that out of this mass of people, multitudes are gone before him, we doubt not, to hail his entrance into the world of glory; and that in every period of life, from childhood to hoary age, many of his children in the Lord are still to follow, all to be his crown of rejoicing—the only effectual, everlasting confutation of his adversaries that he ran not in vain, nor laboured in vain.”

The other extract which we give, is from the funeral sermon of Augustus Toplady:—

“ I deem myself happy in having an opportunity of publicly avowing the inexpressible esteem in which I held this wonderful man, and the affectionate veneration which I must ever retain for the memory of one, whose acquaintance and ministry were attended with the most important spiritual benefit to me, and to tens of thousands besides.

“ It will not be saying too much, if I term him **THE APOSTLE OF THE ENGLISH EMPIRE**, in point of zeal for God, a long course of indefatigable and incessant labours, unparalleled disinterestedness, and astonishingly extensive usefulness.

“ He would never have quitted even the walls of the church, had not either the ignorance or the malevolence of some, who ought to have known better, compelled him to a seeming separation.

“ If the absolute command over the passions of immense auditories be the mark of a consummate orator, he was the greatest of the age. If the strongest good sense, the most generous expansion of heart, the most artless but captivating affability, the most liberal exemp-

tion from bigotry, the purest and most transpicuous integrity, the brightest cheerfulness, and the promptest wit, enter into the composition of social excellence, he was one of the best companions in the world.

“ If to be stedfast, immovable, always abounding in the works of the Lord; if a union of the most brilliant with the most solid ministerial gifts, ballasted by a deep and humbling experience of grace, and crowned with the most extended success in the conversion of sinners, and edification of saints, be signatures of a commission from heaven, George Whitefield cannot but stand highest on the modern list of Christian ministers.

“ England has had the honour of producing the greatest men, in almost every walk of useful knowledge. At the head of these are—Archbishop Bradwardin, the prince of divines; Milton, the prince of poets; Newton, the prince of philosophers; Whitefield, the prince of preachers.”

Such were the high testimonies borne to the character of Whitefield, both as a Christian and as a preacher, by those who were his contemporaries. But it was not merely by divines, or even by Christians, that his character was held in such estimation. Even Benjamin Franklin, a man of no creed, and apparently indifferent to every distinction of religious belief, was yet impressed so far by the piety and worth of Whitefield, as to court his society, and cultivate his friendship. The following is a most disinterested sketch of the character of the English evangelist, from this celebrated American, who was one of the shrewdest, most calculating, and most dispassionate of philosophers and sceptics:—

“ In 1739, arrived among us, from Ireland, the Rev. G. Whitefield, who had made himself remarkable there as an itinerant preacher. He was at first permitted to preach in some of our churches; but the clergy, taking

a dislike to him, soon refused him their pulpits, and he was obliged to preach in the fields. The multitudes of all sects and denominations that attended his sermons were enormous, and it was a matter of speculation to me (who was one of the number) to observe the extraordinary influence of his oratory on his hearers, and how much they admired and respected him, notwithstanding his common abuse of them, by assuring them they were naturally *half beasts and half devils*. It was wonderful to see the change soon made in the manners of our inhabitants. From being thoughtless or indifferent about religion, it seemed as if all the world were growing religious, so that one could not walk through the town of an evening without hearing psalms sung in different families of every street. And it being found inconvenient to assemble in the open air, subject to its inclemency, the building of a house to meet in was no sooner proposed, and persons appointed to receive contributions, but sufficient sums were soon received to procure the ground, and erect the building, which was a hundred feet long, and seventy broad; and the work was carried on with such spirit, as to be finished in a much shorter time than could have been expected. Both house and ground were vested in trustees, expressly for the use of any preacher of any religious persuasion, who might desire to say something to the people at Philadelphia.

“ Mr Whitefield, on leaving us, went preaching all the way through the colonies to Georgia. The settlement of that province had lately been begun; but, instead of being made with hardy, industrious husbandmen accustomed to labour—the only people fit for such an enterprise—it was with families of broken shopkeepers and other insolvent debtors; many of indolent and idle habits, taken out of the gaols, who,

being set down in the woods, unqualified for clearing land, and unable to endure the hardships of a new settlement, perished in numbers, leaving many helpless children unprovided for. The sight of their miserable situation inspired the benevolent heart of Mr Whitefield with the idea of building an orphan-house there, in which they might be supported and educated. Returning northward, he preached for this charity, and made large collections; for his eloquence had a wonderful power over the hearts and purses of his hearers, of which I myself was an instance. I did not disapprove of the design; but as Georgia was then destitute of materials and workmen, and it was proposed to send them from Philadelphia at great expense, I thought it would have been better to have built the house at Philadelphia, and brought the children to it. This I advised; but he was resolute in his first project, rejected my counsel, and I therefore refused to contribute. I happened soon after to attend one of his sermons, in the course of which I perceived he intended to finish with a collection, and I silently resolved that he should get nothing from me. I had in my pocket a handful of copper money, three or four silver dollars, and five pistoles in gold. As he proceeded I began to soften, and concluded to give the copper; another stroke of his oratory made me ashamed of that, and determined me to give the silver; and he finished so admirably, that I emptied my pocket wholly into the collector's dish, gold and all! At this sermon there was also one of our club, who, being of my sentiments respecting the building in Georgia, and suspecting a collection might be intended, had, by precaution, emptied his pockets before he came from home; towards the conclusion of the discourse, however, he felt a strong inclination to

give, and applied to a neighbour, who stood near him, to lend him some money for the purpose. The request was made to perhaps the *only man* in the company who had the firmness not to be affected by the preacher. His answer was: 'At any other time, friend Hopkinson, I would lend thee freely; but not now, for thee seems to me to be out of thy right senses.'

"Some of Mr Whitefield's enemies affected to suppose that he would apply these collections to his own private emolument; but I, who was intimately acquainted with him, never had the least suspicion of his integrity, but am to this day decidedly of opinion that he was in all his conduct a perfectly honest man; and methinks my testimony in his favour ought to have more weight, as we had no religious connection. He used, indeed, sometimes to pray for my conversion; but never had the satisfaction of believing that his prayers were heard. Ours was a mere civil friendship, sincere on both sides, and lasted to his death. The following instance will show the terms on which we stood:—Upon one of his arrivals from England at Boston, he wrote to me that he should come soon to Philadelphia, but knew not where he should lodge when there, as he understood his old friend and host, Mr Benezet, was removed to German Town. My answer was:—'You know my house; if you can make shift with its scanty accommodation, you will be most heartily welcome.' He replied, that if I made that kind offer for Christ's sake, I should not miss of a reward. And I returned, 'Don't let me be mistaken; it was not for Christ's sake, but for your sake.'"

From these quotations, as well as from the narrative in general, it will be seen, that Whitefield was singularly fitted, naturally as well as spiritually, in

heart, and mind, and soul, for the high vocation to which he was so especially called. But that singularly far-reaching, pervading voice of his! Ordinary speakers find it difficult to be distinctly heard even by two or three thousand auditors; and yet fifteen, twenty, or even thirty thousand hearers often formed the congregation of Whitefield. We are sometimes tempted to suspect that by a great number of these he was utterly unheard—that they used their sense of *seeing* only, and had nothing of the discourse but the remote gesticulation. But upon this point hear the testimony of Franklin, as cautious an observer of what was around and beneath him as of the electric clouds that sailed over his head:—“He had a loud and clear voice, and articulated his words so perfectly, that he might be heard and understood at a great distance, especially as his auditories observed the most perfect silence. He preached one evening from the top of the court-house steps, which are in the middle of Market Street, and on the west side of Second Street, which crosses it at right angles. Both streets were filled with his hearers to a considerable distance. Being among the hindmost in Market Street, I had the curiosity to learn how far he could be heard, by retiring backwards down the street towards the river; and I found his voice distinct till I came near Prout Street, when some noise in that street obscured it. Imagining then a semicircle, of which my distance should be the radius, and that it was filled with auditors, to each of whom I allowed two square feet, I computed that he might well be heard by more than thirty thousand. This reconciled me to the newspaper accounts of his having preached to twenty-five thousand people in the fields, and to the history of generals haranguing whole armies, of which I had sometimes doubted.”

Thus wonderfully was Whitefield fitted for the work which his heart so eminently panted after, and in which he so eminently excelled. Give him but the green field or the mountain side, with its myriads of inquiring hearers assembled upon it, and to the remotest verge of that mighty crowd his utterance could find a distinct entrance into every ear, and welcome acceptance into every heart. But his voice possessed another and still more remarkable quality than that of mere power. Such loudness of tones we are apt to associate with the idea of monotony, or even of dissonance, and are accustomed to hear open-air orators rehearsing their speeches, however varied or pathetic, in one and the loudest of their notes. Such, however, was not the case with Whitefield. His voice, that could pervade such a vast area, was something very different from vociferation. It was flexible in the midst of its greatest power, adapting itself with facility and ease to every changing emotion, whether it might be of exulting joy or pathetic sadness — whether to shake the soul with the loud thunders of the law, or melt and win it with the invitations of the gospel. It was this richness and variety of tone, more than its far-reaching influence, that made people wonder at his utterance; and when malignity could go no farther, it endeavoured to discover in this alone the secret of his power and success. It was alleged, that he could make people weep at pleasure, by the pathos with which he read a bookseller's catalogue, or pronounced the word "Mesopotamia."

One quality most essential for the work of an evangelist, Whitefield seems also to have possessed in an eminent degree. It was that of extemporaneous speaking. Without this, his life, although extended to thrice its limits, could never have sufficed for the composition of all the sermons he preached, for they

amounted to more than eighteen thousand. On foot, on horseback, or in a carriage, he selected the text, and arranged the materials of the discourse which he was to preach at the next halting-place. A sermon which he had carefully studied and composed, and the effectiveness of which he had experienced with one auditory, he could produce before another, but so modified or altered, as to suit the new emergency. As in the strange congregations, also, which he gathered in his pilgrimages, many unexpected circumstances were apt to occur, he could seize upon these in a moment, and electrify his hearers by the improvement of an event which was at that instant passing before their eyes. In these cases were generally exhibited the highest reach of his eloquence, and the great secret of his success. The appeal, whatever it might be, knocked at some individual breast, with the startling intimation, "Thou art the man." It would be wrong, however, to imagine that this facility tempted him into indolence; and that he set aside or remitted the severe duty of studious preparation, from the ease with which he could produce an extemporaneous sermon. Instead of this, he was a laborious, painstaking, study divine, writing his discourses as often as he could snatch the opportunity; and anxious that they should exhibit not only sound doctrine, but methodical arrangement, and correct and elegant phraseology.

These circumstances it is necessary to keep in mind while reading the discourses of Whitefield. We wonder, as we turn from page to page, that such paragraphs, frequently pathetic, sometimes rising to the sublime, yet always simple and unpretending, should have produced such tempests of feeling, such overflows of tears. Alas! we have no longer the eloquent look and commanding attitude with which they were delivered; the

rich, and varying, and singularly appropriate tones in which they were uttered; neither have we, in these sermons prepared for the press, those sudden bursts of extemporaneous eloquence that fell like thunderbolts upon his auditory, and were followed by trembling, or by passionate weeping. Taking, however, these circumstances into account, we can imagine the thrilling effect which such a declamation as the following must have produced, whether uttered within a common building, or in that glorious temple not made with hands—the church of God’s own rearing, in which Whitefield was so inspired a minister:—

“Spiritual sloth as well as spiritual pride, helped to throw this apostle [Peter] down. The Sun, the glorious Sun of righteousness, was now about to enter into his last eclipse. Satan, who had left him for a season, or till the season of his passion, is now to be permitted to bruise his heel again. This is his hour, and now the powers of darkness summon and exert their strongest and united efforts. A hymn is a prelude to his dreadful passion. From the communion table, the Saviour retires to the garden. A horrible dread, and inexpressible load of sorrow, begin to overwhelm and weigh down his innocent soul. His body can scarcely sustain it. See how he falters! See how his hands hang down, and his knees wax feeble under the amazing pressure! He is afflicted and oppressed indeed. See, see, O my soul, how he sweats! But what is that which I see! BLOOD—*drops* of blood—*great* drops of blood falling to the ground. Alas! was ever sorrow like unto this sorrow? Hark! what is that I hear? Oh, dolorous complaint! ‘Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me.’ Hark! he speaks again. Amazing! the Creator complains to the creature: ‘My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death; tarry ye here, and watch with me.’

And now he retires once more. But see how his agony increases—hark! how he prays, and that, too, yet more earnestly: ‘Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me.’ And will his heavenly Father leave him comfortless? No. An angel (O happy, highly-favoured angel!) is sent from heaven to strengthen him. But where is Peter all this while? We are told that the holy Jesus took him, with James and John, into the garden. Surely he will not leave his Lord in such deep distress! What is he doing? I blush to answer; alas! he is sleeping; nay, though awakened once by his agonizing Lord with a ‘Simon Peter, sleepest thou? What! couldst thou not watch with me one hour?’ yet his eyes, notwithstanding his profession of constancy and care, are heavy with sleep. Lord, what is man?”

It was by such bursts of eloquence that Whitefield prostrated not merely the multitude at large, but the most learned and fastidious. Of this David Hume was a striking instance. He, although one of the most correct of writers, and most heaven-renouncing of sceptics, and therefore of most men the least likely to be enthralled by the simplicity of preaching, was yet a wondering and delighted hearer of Whitefield, and declared that it was worth going twenty miles to hear him. One sermon he particularized, of which he said, “it was accompanied with such animated yet natural action, that it surpassed any thing I ever saw or heard in any other preacher.” “The attendant angel,” exclaimed Whitefield in the midst of his sermon, after a deep, solemn pause—“the attendant angel is just about to leave the threshold of this sanctuary, and ascend to heaven. And shall he ascend, and not bear with him the news of one sinner, among all this multitude, reclaimed from the error of his ways?” Then stamping

with his foot, and throwing his eyes and hands to heaven, he exclaimed, with a loud piercing voice, "Stop, Gabriel, stop, ere you enter the sacred portals, and yet carry with you the news of one sinner converted to God." These striking words flashed upon the mind of the infidel, and for a moment lighted up all within; but alas! it was like passing sunshine upon the lake. No ripple was produced, no ray retained. Gabriel might depart without the glad intimation that Hume had become a Christian.

Lord Chesterfield also, the elegant and accomplished, but chill and artificial high priest of fashion, seemed to forget his character, and even lose his identity amidst the sunny atmosphere of Whitefield's eloquence. On one occasion, when the peer was seated in the pew of Lady Huntingdon, the preacher, in describing the miserable condition of a benighted sinner, illustrated the subject by a blind beggar—no very attractive simile assuredly for delicate ladies and fashionable lordlings. The night was dark, the road dangerous and full of snares; and the poor sightless mendicant, nigh the edge of a precipice, is deserted by his dog, and has nothing with which to grope his way but his iron-pointed staff. But Whitefield so warmed with the subject, and unfolded it with such graphic power, that the whole auditory was wrapt in breathless silence over the movements of the poor old man; so that, when the mendicant was about to take that fatal step, which would have hurled him sheer down into the valley below, Chesterfield made a rush forward to save him, with the exclamation, "Good God! he is gone!" The noble peer had wholly forgot that the whole was but a picture. How happy had he, at that moment, been convinced that it was a veritable picture of himself!

Another striking example of his power in arresting

the feelings of an auditory, is the following: On one occasion, he was preaching before the seamen of New York, when suddenly assuming a certain nautical tone and manner that were irresistible, he thus suddenly broke in with, "Well, my boys, we have a clear sky, and are making fine head-way over a smooth sea, before a light breeze, and we shall soon lose sight of land. But what means this sudden lowering of the heavens, and that dark cloud arising from beneath the western horizon? Hark! Don't you hear distant thunder? Don't you see those flashes of lightning? There is a storm gathering! Every man to his duty! How the waves rise, and dash against the ship! The air is dark! The tempest rages! Our masts are gone! The ship is on her beam-ends! What next?" This climax of nautical horror was described and uttered in a manner so true to nature, that the sailors started to their feet, and shouted, "The long boat! take to the long boat!"

After Whitefield had opened the chapel of Tottenham Court Road—the *soul-trap*, as he allowed it to be called, not without meaning—he was attended, among other public and distinguished characters, by Shuter, the celebrated comedian, at that time at the height of his popularity, and particularly famed for the manner in which he played the part of Ramble, which night after night drew crowded houses. Whitefield, who was personally acquainted with the actor, was one day inviting sinners to the Saviour, when he suddenly exclaimed, fixing his eyes upon Shuter—"And thou, poor Ramble, who hast long rambled from him, come thou also. O, end thy ramblings by coming to Jesus." There was something so thrilling in the tone and manner, that the poor dramatist was electrified. He afterwards hastened to the minister, and said, "I thought I should have fainted—how could you serve me so?"

The self-possession of Whitefield in the midst of his public duty, and the manner in which he could endure an interruption, or even turn it to account, are rare in the history of public oratory. Who but himself could have braved and surmounted the stunning opposition that endeavoured to overwhelm him in the huge Vanity Fair of Moorfields, and have reduced even Merryandrews themselves into gravity? In the earlier part of his ministry, he was preaching in an open field, when a drummer, who was present, resolved to drown the preacher's discourse, and for this purpose had recourse to his instrument. Whitefield, although he raised his voice to the uttermost, found that the drum had the best of it; upon which he immediately altered his plan. "My friend," he said to the drummer, who, on hearing himself addressed, made a sudden pause—"you and I serve the two greatest masters existing, but in different callings: you beat up for volunteers for King George, and I, for the Lord Jesus: in God's name, then, let us not interrupt each other; the world is wide enough for both, and we may get recruits in abundance." This good-humoured address so charmed the drummer, that he put up his noisy utensil, and left Whitefield in full possession of the field.

As many of Whitefield's sermons were connected with objects of urgent charity, his power of collecting money from an audience for such purposes was wonderful; and, indeed, who could appeal with such a good grace to the Christian public, as the man who was anxious for nothing on his own account beyond his raiment and his daily bread? On one occasion, an obscure village in Germany had been burnt down, and he resolved to make a collection for the impoverished inhabitants. The subject was not a very popular one for a London audience, and therefore the greater exertion was necessary. After the sermon,

therefore, Whitefield said, " We shall sing a hymn, during which, those who do not choose to give their mite on this awful occasion, may sneak off." Not one stirred; upon which he ordered the doors to be closed, descended from the pulpit, and held the plate himself. The sum collected on this occasion amounted to £600. At another time, when he was going to preach a charity sermon in Glasgow, an officer who had heard him preach, and knew his wonderful power, laid a wager with another who was going to hear Whitefield with a prejudiced spirit, that, for all his dislike, he would find himself compelled to bestow a contribution. The wager was accepted; and to make sure of success, the gentlemen went to the church with empty pockets. He was, however, so overpowered by the sermon, that he borrowed money for the plate from his nearest neighbour, and thus lost his bet.

It was not merely to the noble and accomplished that Whitefield devoted his attention at the house of Lady Huntingdon. This truly Christian lady, independently of those of her own rank, whom she was eager to assemble in her drawing-room, that they might hear the gospel preached, was in the habit of keeping open kitchen on week-days for the poor of her flock; and these naturally came under the ministrations of Whitefield and the other ministers attached to her establishment, by whom their spiritual wants were attended to, while their temporal necessities were relieved.

It happened one Saturday morning that some ladies paid a visit to Lady Huntingdon, of whom she inquired, during the course of conversation, if they had ever heard Mr Whitefield preach. On their answering they had not, she informed them where he was to preach upon the ensuing evening, and advised them to repair thither. They attended; and on Monday morn-

ing her ladyship inquired of them how they liked Mr Whitefield. "Oh, not at all!" was the prompt reply: "of all the preachers we ever heard, he is the most strange and unaccountable. Among other preposterous things—would your ladyship believe it?—he declared that Jesus Christ was so willing to receive sinners, that he did not object to receive even the devil's *castaways*. Now, my lady, did you ever hear of such a thing since you were born?" "There is something, I acknowledge," replied Lady Huntingdon, "a little singular in the invitation, and I do not recollect to have ever met with it before; but as Mr Whitefield is below in the parlour, we will have him up, and let him answer for himself." He was called accordingly; and on entering the drawing-room, Lady Huntingdon thus addressed him: "Mr Whitefield, these ladies have been preferring a very heavy charge against you; and I thought it best that you should come up and defend yourself. They say, that in your sermon last evening, speaking of the willingness of Jesus Christ to receive sinners, you expressed yourself in the following terms: 'So ready is Christ to receive sinners who come to him, that he is ready to receive the devil's castaways.'" To this, he replied, "I certainly, my lady, must plead guilty to the charge: whether I did right or otherwise, your ladyship shall judge from the following circumstance:—Did your ladyship notice, about half an hour ago, a very modest single rap at the door? It was given by a poor, miserable-looking, aged female, who requested to speak with me. I desired her to be shown into the parlour, when she accosted me in the following manner: 'I believe, sir, you preached last evening at such a chapel?' 'Yes, I did.' 'Ah, sir, I was accidentally passing the door of that chapel, and, hearing the voice of some one preaching, I did what I never have been

in the habit of doing—I went in; and one of the first things I heard you say was, that Jesus Christ was so willing to receive sinners, that he did not object to receiving the devil's castaways. Now, sir, I have been on the town for many years, and am so worn out in his service, that I think I may with truth be called one of the devil's castaways. Do you think, sir, that Jesus Christ would receive me?' I assured her there was no doubt of it, if she was but willing to go to him." Such was Whitefield's ready and homely reply, to which no answer could be made. It is only necessary to add, respecting the poor, inquiring *castaway*, that she gave every evidence of being received indeed, by becoming a penitent, lowly, and devoted Christian.

The change that had passed upon the character and demeanour of Lady Huntingdon, and her earnest attachment to a form of religion that to the gay and the lukewarm appeared downright fanaticism, so astonished the fashionable world, that they knew not at first what to think of it, or with what species of ridicule to assail it. Some friends of the family even applied to Lord Huntingdon to interpose his authority—a request which he had the good feeling to disregard. He, however, recommended the countess to converse upon the subject of her religious views with Bishop Benson, who had formerly been his tutor, and who, he had no doubt, would set her to rights, if her views were erroneous. The bishop came—"good Bishop Benson," as Whitefield, in his Memoir, affectionately calls him—and a keen theological discussion commenced, in which the countess so effectually maintained her opinions, by arguments drawn from the Thirty-nine Articles and the Homilies, that the prelate at last had no answer, except bitterly to bewail the hour that he had bestowed ordination upon George Whitefield, to whom he attributed

her Methodism. "Mark my words, my lord," replied the countess; "when you are on your dying bed, that will be one of the few ordinations you will reflect upon with complacence." She was on this occasion a true prophetess; for the bishop, when he was dying, sent ten guineas to Mr Whitefield as a token of regard, and begged an interest in his prayers. Benson, however, was not the only member of the Episcopal bench who regarded the triumphant popularity of Whitefield, and the success of Methodism, with indignation and astonishment, as will appear by the following extract of a letter from the celebrated Lord Bolingbroke to Lady Huntingdon. Speaking of Whitefield, he says: "He is the most extraordinary man in our times. He has the most commanding eloquence I ever heard in any person; his abilities are very considerable; his zeal unquenchable; and his piety and excellence genuine—unquestionable. The bishops and inferior orders of the clergy are very angry with him, and endeavour to represent him as a hypocrite, an enthusiast; but this is not astonishing—there is so little real goodness or honesty amongst them. Your ladyship will be somewhat amused at hearing that the king has represented to his Grace of Canterbury, that Mr Whitefield should be advanced to the bench, as the only means of putting an end to his preaching. What a keen, what a biting remark! but how just, and how well-earned by those mitred lords!"

We return with pleasure from this digression, to instances of Whitefield's power in preaching, and give the following, as one among thousands of examples, how happily he could improve any public event. During one of his Scottish tours, he witnessed at Edinburgh a spectacle at that time somewhat unfrequent in Scotland—the execution of a culprit. On such an occasion, his

presence drew the attention of the crowd, who wondered at his being there. The following day being Sunday, as he was preaching to a great multitude in a field near the city, he thus adverted to the subject: "I know that many of you will find it difficult to reconcile my appearance yesterday, with my character. Many of you, I know, will say, that my moments would have been better employed in praying for the unhappy man, than in attending him to the fatal tree; and that, perhaps, curiosity was the only cause that converted me into a spectator on that occasion. But those who ascribe that uncharitable motive to me are under a mistake. I went as an observer of human nature, and to see the effect that such an example would have on those who witnessed it. I watched the conduct of those who were present on that awful occasion, and I was highly pleased with their demeanour, which has given me a very favourable opinion of the Scottish nation. Your sympathy was visible on your countenances, particularly when the moment arrived that your unhappy fellow-creature was to close his eyes on this world for ever: then you all, as if moved by one impulse, turned your heads aside and wept. Those tears were precious, and will be held in remembrance. How different it was when the Saviour of mankind was extended on the cross! The Jews, instead of sympathizing in his sorrows, triumphed in them. They reviled him with bitter expressions—with words even more bitter than the gall and vinegar which they handed him to drink. Not one of all that witnessed his pain, turned his head aside, even in the last pang. Yes, my friends, there was one; that glorious luminary" (pointing to the sun) "veiled his brightness, and travelled on his course in ten-fold night."

On one of Whitefield's itinerating journeys through

America, a young gentleman belonging to the college of Princeton, who had his curiosity roused by the numerous reports he heard of this prince of preachers, went to hear him in the neighbourhood of the town. The day was rainy and the audience small, circumstances that materially tended to damp the ardour of the speaker. After about one-third of the sermon had been finished, the young gentleman said to himself: "This man is not so great a wonder after all. His ideas are all common-place and superficial—mere show, and not a great deal even of that." He looked round, and saw the audience apparently as uninterested as himself; while an old man, who sat in front of the pulpit, had fallen soundly asleep. But now Whitefield stopped. His changing looks darkened, until the whole congregation was arrested, when he thus suddenly broke forth in an altered tone: "If I had come to speak to you in my own name, you might rest your elbows on your knees, and your heads upon your hands, and sleep; and once in a while look up and say, 'What does the babbler talk of?' But I have not come to you in my own name. No; I have come to you in the name of the Lord of Hosts," (here he brought down his hand and foot with a force that made the building ring), "and I must and will be heard!" The congregation started, and the old man woke in an instant. "Ay, ay," cried the preacher, fixing his eyes upon him; "I have waked you up, have I? I meant to do it. I am not come here to preach to stocks and stones; I have come to you in the name of the Lord God of Hosts, and I must, and I will have an audience." The hearers were stript of their apathy, and every word during the rest of the sermon was carefully attended to.

We cannot better conclude these anecdotes of Whitefield than by the simple eulogium pronounced upon him

by the celebrated sculptor, Bacon. A baronet was one day walking through the artist's studio, and examining the various works, among which he paused at a bust of Whitefield. "After all that has been alleged," he said, gazing upon the placid marble features, "this was truly a great man; he was the founder of a new religion." "A new religion, sir?" said Bacon, inquiringly. "Yes," said the baronet; "pray, what do *you* call it?" "I call it nothing," replied the sculptor, "but the old religion revived with new energy, and treated as if the preacher meant what he said."

An account of the personal appearance and manners of a public character, and especially of a distinguished orator, is essential in the completion of his history. In person, Whitefield was graceful, well-proportioned, active, and rather above the middle size; and was of a slender figure until his fortieth year, when he began to grow corpulent—a circumstance that occasioned him no little alarm, from the fear that it might impair his activity and usefulness. This change, however, as is commonly the case with those who are abstinent in diet, and, at the same time, indefatigable in their exertions, was the result of disease. His complexion was very fair, and his features regular and pleasing, as well as wonderfully expressive; and one of his eyes, which were small, and of a dark blue colour, had a decided squint, probably occasioned by the measles in his childhood. It was upon this characteristic that the malignant wits of his own day made merry, as those of the preceding century had done upon the red nose of Oliver Cromwell; and the common name by which he was distinguished in the lampoons of the period, was Dr Squintum—a name, however, with which he was so little displeased, that sometimes, in jocularly, he applied

it to himself. This peculiarity of countenance, instead of marring its effect while preaching, perhaps rather heightened it, by imparting to it a character essentially its own. We think we could name at least one eminent preacher with whom such was the case, and who riveted attention the more by that very obliquity of vision which some were apt to despise. Whitefield was remarkably clean and neat in his dress and person, and used pleasantly to observe, that a minister of the gospel ought to be without spot. His amiable countenance, the winning tones of his voice, his cheerful unaffected demeanour, and the pleasing flow of his conversation, enriched with wit and eloquence, and generally employed upon divine subjects, made him almost as much the delight of every private circle, as he was, from his preaching, with the public at large. It is truly interesting to perceive, how, even in such minutæ, his Divine Master had fitted him for his work. He lived in an age of peculiar politeness, and in no one point was found wanting; so that nobles and courtiers, who had studied its graces from the cradle, and studied little else, found themselves in these points equalled, if not eclipsed, by the natural elegance of the son of an humble inn-keeper of Gloucester—the lowly evangelist of Methodism.



TWO SERMONS.

I. PREACHED AT THE PARISH CHURCH OF BEXLEY,
IN KENT, ON WHITSUNDAY, 1739.

Published at the request of the Vicar and many of his Hearers.

II. PREACHED AT MOORFIELDS AND KENNINGTON
COMMON, IN THE YEAR 1739.



“THE INDWELLING OF THE SPIRIT THE COMMON PRIVILEGE
OF ALL BELIEVERS :”

A S E R M O N

PREACHED AT THE PARISH CHURCH OF BEXLEY, IN
KENT, ON WHITSUNDAY, 1739.

JOHN vii. 37-39.

“In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive.”

NOTHING has rendered the cross of Christ of less effect, nothing has been a greater stumbling-block and rock of offence to weak minds, than a supposition now current among us, that most of what is contained in the gospel of Jesus Christ was designed only for our Lord's first and immediate followers, and consequently calculated for one or two hundred years. Accordingly, many now read the Life, Sufferings, Death, and Resurrection of Jesus Christ, in the same manner as learned men read Cæsar's Commentaries, or the Conquests of Alexander—as things rather intended to afford matter for speculation than to be acted over again in and by us.

As this is true of the doctrine of the gospel in general, so it is in particular of the operations of God's Spirit upon the hearts of believers; for we no sooner mention the necessity of our receiving the Holy Ghost in these last days, as well as

formerly, but we are looked upon by some as enthusiasts and madmen, and by others represented as wilfully deceiving the people, and undermining the established constitution of the Church.

Judge ye, then, my brethren, whether it is not high time for the true ministers of Jesus Christ, who have been themselves made partakers of this heavenly gift, to lift up their voices like a trumpet, and, if they would not have those souls perish for which the Lord Jesus has shed his precious blood, to declare, with all boldness, that the Holy Spirit is the common privilege and portion of all believers in all ages; and that we also, as well as the first Christians, must receive the Holy Ghost ere we can be truly called the children of God.

For this reason (and also that I might answer the design of our Church in appointing the present festival) I have chosen the words of the text.

They were spoken by Jesus Christ, when, as the evangelist tells us, he was at the Feast of Tabernacles. Our Lord (herein leaving all an example) attended on the temple service in general, and the festivals of the Jewish Church in particular. The festival at which he was now present was that of the Feast of Tabernacles, which the Jews observed according to God's appointment, in commemoration of their living in tents. At the last day of this feast it was customary for many pious people to fetch water from a certain place, and bring it on their heads, singing this anthem out of Isaiah: "And with joy shall they draw water out of the wells of salvation." Our dear Lord Jesus observing this, and it being his constant practice to spiritualize everything he met with, cries out, "If any man thirsteth, let him come unto me, rather than unto that well, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath spoken (where it is said, God will make water spring of a dry rock, and such like), out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." And that we might know what our Saviour meant by this living water, the evangelist immediately adds: "But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive."

These last words I shall chiefly insist on in the ensuing discourse, and shall treat on them in the following manner:—

First, I shall briefly show what is meant by the word Spirit.

Secondly, I shall show that this Spirit is the common privilege of all believers.

Thirdly, I shall show the reason on which this doctrine is founded.

Lastly, I shall conclude with a general exhortation to believe on Jesus Christ, whereby alone we can be qualified to receive this Spirit.

And, *first*, I am briefly to show what is meant by the Spirit.

By the Spirit, or the Holy Ghost, is to be understood the third person in the ever-blessed Trinity, consubstantial and co-eternal with the Father and the Son, proceeding from, yet equal to them both; for, to use the words of our Church in this day's office, that which we believe of the glory of the Father, the same we believe of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, without any difference or inequality.

Thus says St John, in his First Epistle, chapter v., verse 7: "There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one." And our Lord, when he gave his apostles commission to go and teach all nations, commands them to baptize in the name of the Holy Ghost as well as of the Father and the Son. And St Peter (Acts v., verse 3) said to Ananias, "Why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost?" And (verse 4) he says, "Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God." From all which passages it is plain that the Holy Ghost is truly and properly God, as well as the Father and the Son. This is an unspeakable mystery, but a mystery of God's revealing, and therefore to be assented to with our whole hearts; seeing God is not a man that he should lie, nor the son of man that he should deceive.

I proceed, *secondly*, to prove, That the Holy Ghost is the common privilege of all believers.

But, here I would not be understood of so receiving the Holy Ghost, as to enable us to work miracles, or show outward signs and wonders. For I allow our adversaries that to pretend to be inspired, in this sense, is being wise above

what is written. Perhaps it cannot be proved, that God ever interposed in this extraordinary manner, but when some new revelation was to be established, as at the first settling of the Mosaic and Gospel dispensation. And as for my own part, I cannot but suspect the spirit of those who insist upon a repetition of such miracles at this time. For the world being now become nominally Christian at least (though, God knows, little of the power is left among us), there need not outward miracles, but only an inward co-operation of the Holy Spirit with the Word, to prove that Jesus is that Messiah which was to come into the world.

Besides, it is possible for thee, O man, to have faith, so as to be able to remove mountains, or cast out devils; nay, thou mightest speak with the tongue of men and angels, yea, and bid the sun stand still in the midst of heaven; yet, what would all these gifts of the Spirit avail thee, without being made partaker of his sanctifying graces? Saul had the spirit of government for a while, so as to become another man, and yet was a castaway. And, many who cast out devils in Christ's name, at the last will be disowned by him. If, therefore, thou hadst only the gifts, but wast destitute of the graces of the Holy Ghost, they would only serve to lead thee with so much the more solemnity to hell.

Here, then, I say, we join issue with our adversaries, and will readily grant, that we are not in this sense to be inspired, as were our Lord's first apostles. But unless men have eyes which see not, and ears that hear not, how can they read the latter part of the text, and not confess that the Holy Spirit, in another sense, is the common privilege of all believers, even to the end of the world? "This spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him shall receive." Observe, he does not say, they that believe on him for one or two ages, but they that believe on him in general; that is, at all times, and in all places. So that, unless we can prove that St John was under a delusion when he wrote these words, we must believe that we, even we also, shall receive the Holy Ghost, if we believe on the Lord Jesus with our whole hearts.

Again, our Lord, just before his bitter passion, when he was about to offer up his soul an offering for the sins of the

world; when his heart was most enlarged, and he would undoubtedly demand the most excellent gifts for his disciples, prays, "That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us. I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one;" that is, that all his true followers might be united to him by his Holy Spirit, by as real, vital, and mystical a union, as there is between Jesus Christ and the Father. I say, all his true followers; for it is evident from our Lord's own words, that he had us and all believers in view, when he put up this prayer: "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word;" so that, unless we treat our Lord as the high priests did, and count him a blasphemer, we must confess, that all who believe in Jesus Christ, through the word or ministration of the apostles, are to be joined to Jesus Christ by being made partakers of the Holy Spirit.

There is a great noise made of late, about the word *enthusiast*, and it has been cast upon the preachers of the gospel as a term of reproach. But every Christian, in the proper sense of the word, must be an enthusiast; that is, must be inspired of God, or have God in him: for who dares say, he is a Christian, till he can say "God is in me?" St Peter tells us, we have many great and precious promises, that we may be made partakers of the divine nature. Our Lord prays, that we may be one, as the Father and he are one; and our own Church, in conformity to these texts of Scripture, in her excellent communion-office, tells us, That those who receive the sacrament worthily, "dwell in Christ, and Christ in them; that they are one with Christ, and Christ with them." And yet Christians, in general, must have their names cast out as evil, and ministers in particular must be looked upon as deceivers of the people, for affirming, that we must be really united to God, by receiving the Holy Ghost. Be astonished, O heavens, at this!

Indeed, I will not say our letter-learned preachers deny this doctrine in express words. But, however, they do it in effect; for they talk professedly against inward feelings, and say, We may have God's Spirit without feeling it, which is in

reality to deny the thing itself. And had I a mind to hinder the progress of the gospel, and to establish the kingdom of darkness, I would go about, telling people, They might have the Spirit of God, and yet not feel it.

But to return: when our Lord was about to ascend to his Father, and our Father; to his God, and our God; he gave his apostles this commission: "Go and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." By the term, "all nations," it is allowed, are meant all that should profess to believe on Jesus always, even to the end of the world. And accordingly, by authority of this commission, we do baptize them in this and every age of the Church. And if this be true, then the proposition to be proved will be undeniable. For though we translate these words "baptizing them in the name," yet as the name of God, in the Lord's Prayer, and several other places, signifies his nature, they might as well be translated thus, "baptizing them into the nature of the Father, into the nature of the Son, and into the nature of the Holy Ghost." And consequently, if we are all to be baptized into the nature of the Holy Ghost, ere our baptism be effectual to salvation, it is evident that we all must actually receive the Holy Ghost, ere we can say, We truly believe in Jesus Christ. For no one can say, That Jesus is my Lord, but he that has thus received the Holy Ghost.

Numbers of other texts might be quoted, to make this doctrine, if possible, still more plain; but I am astonished that any who call themselves members—much more, that many who are preachers—of the Church of England, should dare so much as open their lips against it. And yet—with grief, God is my judge, I speak it—persons of the Established Church seem more generally to be ignorant of it than any Dissenters whatsoever.

But, my dear brethren, what have you been doing? How often have your hearts given your lips the lie? How often have you offered God the sacrifice of fools, and had your prayers turned into sin, if you approve of and use our excellent Church Liturgy, and yet deny the Holy Spirit to be the portion of all believers? In the daily absolution, the

minister exhorts the people to pray that God would grant them repentance, and his Holy Spirit; in the Collect for Christmas-day, we beseech God that he would daily renew us by his Holy Spirit; in the last week's Collect, we prayed that we may evermore rejoice in the comforts of the Holy Ghost; and in the concluding prayer which we put up every day, we pray not only that the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, but that the fellowship of the Holy Ghost may be with us all evermore.

But further, a solemn season is now approaching—I mean the Ember-days—at the end of which, all that are to be ordained to the office of a deacon are, in the sight of God, and in the presence of the congregation, to declare that they trust they are inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost to take upon them that administration; and to those who are to be ordained priests, the bishop is to repeat these solemn words: “Receive thou the Holy Ghost, now committed unto thee by the imposition of our hands:” and yet—O that I had no reason to speak it!—many that use our forms, and many that have witnessed this good confession, yet dare talk and preach against the necessity of receiving the Holy Ghost now as well as formerly; and not only so, but cry out against those who do insist upon it, as madmen, enthusiasts, schismatics, and underminers of the Established constitution.

But you are the schismatics—you are the bane of the Church of England, who are always crying out, “The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord!” and yet starve the people out of our communion, by feeding them only with the dry husks of dead morality, and not bringing out to them the fatted calf—I mean the doctrines of the operations of the blessed Spirit of God. But here is the misfortune—many of us are not led by, and therefore no wonder that we cannot talk feelingly of, the Holy Ghost. We subscribe to our Articles, and make them serve for a key to get into church preferment, and then preach contrary to those very Articles to which we have subscribed. Far be it from me to charge all the clergy with this hateful hypocrisy. No; blessed be God, there are some left among us who dare maintain the doctrines of the Reformation, and preach the truth as it is in Jesus.

But—I speak the truth in Christ, I lie not—the generality of the clergy are fallen from our Articles, and do not speak agreeably to them, or to the form of sound words delivered in the Scriptures. Woe be unto such blind leaders of the blind! How can you escape the damnation of hell? It is not all your learning (falsely so called)—it is not all your preferments, can keep you from the just judgment of God. Yet a little while, and we shall all appear before the tribunal of Christ. There, there will I meet you ;—there Jesus Christ, that great shepherd and bishop of souls, shall determine who are the false prophets, who are the wolves in sheep’s clothing—those who say that we must now receive and feel the Holy Ghost, or those who exclaim against it as the doctrine of devils.

But I can no more. It is an unpleasing task to censure any order of men, especially those who are in the ministry; nor would any thing excuse it but necessity—that necessity which extorted from our Lord himself so many woes against the scribes and Pharisees—the letter-learned rulers and teachers of the Jewish Church: and, surely, if I could bear to see people perish for lack of knowledge, and yet be silent towards those who keep from them the key of true knowledge, the very stones would cry out.

Would we restore the Church to its primitive dignity, the only way is to live and preach the doctrine of Christ, and the Articles to which we have subscribed: then we shall find the number of Dissenters will daily decrease, and the Church of England become the joy of the whole earth.

I am now, in the *third* place, to show the reasonableness of this doctrine. I say, the reasonableness of this doctrine; for however it may seem foolishness to the natural man, yet to those who have tasted of the good word of life, and have felt the powers of the world to come, it will appear to be founded on the highest reason, and is capable, to those who have eyes to see, even of a demonstration. I say, of a demonstration; for it stands on this self-evident supposition, that we are fallen creatures, or, to use the Scripture expression, “have all died in Adam.”

I know, indeed, it is now a common thing among us to deny the doctrine of original sin, as well as the divinity of Jesus Christ, “who is God over all, blessed for ever.” But

it is incumbent on those who deny it, first to disprove the authority of the Holy Scriptures. If thou canst prove, thou unbeliever, that the book which we call the Bible does not contain the lively oracles of God—if thou canst show that holy men of old did not write this book, as they were inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost—then will we give up the doctrine of original sin: but, unless thou canst do this, we must insist upon it, that we are all conceived and born in sin; if for no other, yet for this one reason, because that God, who cannot lie, has told us so.

But what has light to do with darkness, or polite infidels with the Bible? Alas! as they are strangers to the power, so they are generally as great strangers to the Word of God: and therefore, if we will preach to them, we must preach from their hearts; for talking in the language of the Scripture is but like talking in an unknown tongue. Tell me, then, O man, whosoever thou art, that deniest the doctrine of original sin—if thy conscience be not seared as with a hot iron—tell me, if thou dost not find thyself by nature to be a motley mixture of brute and devil? I know these terms will stir up the whole pharisee in thy heart; but let not Satan hurry thee hence—stop a little, and let us reason together. Dost thou not find, that by nature thou art prone to pride? otherwise, wherefore art thou now offended? Again, dost thou not find in thyself the seeds of malice, revenge, and all uncharitableness? and what are these but the very tempers of the devil? Again, do we not all by nature follow, and suffer ourselves to be led by our natural appetites, always looking downwards, never looking upwards to that God in whom we live, move, and have our being? and what is this but the very nature of the beasts that perish? Out of thy own heart, therefore, will I oblige thee to confess, what an inspired apostle has long since told us, that the whole world by nature lies in the wicked one—that is, the devil; that we are no better than those whom St Jude calls brute beasts: for we have tempers in us all, by nature, that prove to a demonstration, that we are altogether earthly, sensual, devilish.

And this, by the way, will serve as another argument to prove the reality of the operations of the blessed Spirit on the hearts of believers, against those false professors who deny

there is any such thing as influences of the Holy Spirit, that may be felt. For if they will grant that the devil worketh, and that so as to be felt, in the hearts of the children of disobedience (which they must grant, unless they will give an apostle the lie), where is the wonder that the good Spirit should have the same power over those that are truly obedient to the faith of Jesus Christ?

But to return. If it be true, then, that we are all by nature a motley mixture of brute and devil, it is evident, that we must all receive the Holy Ghost, ere we can dwell with and enjoy God.

When you read how the prodigal in the Gospel was reduced to so low a condition, as to eat husks with swine, and how Nebuchadnezzar was turned out to graze with oxen, I am confident you pity their unhappy state. And when you hear how Jesus Christ will say, at the last day, to all that are not born again of God, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels," do not your hearts shrink within you with a secret horror? And if creatures with only our degree of goodness cannot bear even the thoughts of dwelling with beasts or devils, to whose nature we are so nearly allied, how do we imagine God, who is infinite goodness and purity itself, can dwell with us, while we are partakers of both their natures? We might as well think to reconcile heaven and hell.

When Adam had eaten the forbidden fruit, he fled and hid himself from God. Why? because he was naked; that is, he was alienated from the life of God, the due punishment of his disobedience. Now, as we are all by nature naked and void of God, as he was at that time; and consequently, till we are changed, and clothed upon by a divine nature again, we must fly from God also.

Hence, then, appears the reasonableness of our being obliged to receive the Spirit of God—it is founded on the doctrine of original sin: and therefore you will always find, that those who talk against feeling the operations of the Holy Ghost, very rarely, or very slightly at least, mention our fall in Adam. No, they refer St Paul's account of the depravity of unbelievers only to those of old time; whereas it is obvious, on the contrary, that we are all equally included under the

guilt and consequences of our first parents' sin, even as others; and, to use the language of our own Church article, bring into the world with us a corruption, which renders us liable to God's wrath, and eternal damnation.

Should I preach to you any other doctrine, I should wrong my own soul—I should be found a false witness towards God and you. And he that preaches any other doctrine, howsoever dignified and distinguished, shall bear his punishment, whosoever he be.

From this plain reason, then, appears the necessity why we, as well as the first apostles, in this sense, must receive the Spirit of God.

For the great work of sanctification, or making us holy, is particularly referred to the Holy Ghost: and therefore our Lord says: "Unless a man be born of the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God."

For Jesus Christ came down to save us, not only from the guilt, but also from the power of sin. And, however often we have repeated our creed, and told God we believe in the Holy Ghost, yet if we have not believed in him, so as to be really united to Jesus Christ by him, we have no more concord with Jesus Christ than Belial himself.

And now, my brethren, what shall I say more? Tell me, are not many of you offended at what has been said already? Do not some of you think, though I mean well, yet I have carried the point a little too far? Are not others ready to cry out, "If this be true, who then can be saved?" Is not this driving the people into despair?

Yes, I ingenuously confess it is. But into what despair? A despair of mercy through Christ? No, God forbid; but a despair of living with God without receiving the Holy Ghost. And I would to God, that not only all you that hear me this day, but that the whole world, were filled with this despair. Believe me, my brethren, I have been doing no more than you allow your bodily physicians to do every day. If you have a wound in your bodies, and are in earnest about a cure, you bid the surgeon probe it to the very bottom; and shall not the Physician of your souls be allowed the same freedom? And what have I been doing but searching your natural wounds, that I might convince you of your danger, and put

you upon applying to Jesus Christ for a remedy? Indeed, I have dealt with you as gently as I could; and now that I have wounded, I come to heal you.

For I was, in the *last* place, to exhort you all to come to Jesus Christ by faith, whereby you, even you also, shall receive the Holy Ghost. "For this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive."

This, this is what I long to come to. Hitherto I have been preaching only the law, but "behold I bring you glad tidings of great joy." If I have wounded you before, be not afraid; behold, I now bring a remedy for all your wounds; for notwithstanding you are all now sunk into the nature of the beast and devil, yet if you truly believe on Jesus Christ, you shall receive the quickening Spirit promised in the text, and be restored to the glorious liberty of the sons of God. I say, if you believe on Jesus Christ; "for by faith we are saved; it is not of works, lest any one should boast." And however some men may say, there is a fitness required in the creature, and that we must have a righteousness of our own, before we can lay hold on the righteousness of Christ; yet, if we believe the Scripture, "Salvation is the free gift of God in Christ Jesus our Lord; and whosoever believeth on him with his whole heart, though his soul be as black as hell itself, shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." Behold then I stand up, and cry out in this great day of the feast, "Let every one that thirsteth, come unto Jesus Christ and drink." He that believeth on him, out of his belly shall flow not only streams or rivulets, but whole rivers of living water. This I speak, my brethren, of the Spirit, which they that believe on Jesus shall certainly receive. "For Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. He is the way, the truth, the resurrection, and the life. Whosoever believeth on him, though he were dead, yet shall he live." There is no respect of persons with Jesus Christ. High and low, rich and poor, one with another, may come to him with an humble confidence, if they draw near by faith. From him we may all receive grace upon grace. For Jesus Christ is full of grace and truth, and ready to save to the uttermost all that by a true faith turn unto him. Indeed, the poor generally receive the gospel, and God has "chosen the poor in this

world rich in faith." But though "not many mighty, not many noble are called;" and though it be "easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God;" yet even to you that are rich do I now freely offer salvation by Jesus Christ, if you will renounce yourselves, and come to Jesus Christ as poor sinners;—I say as poor sinners, for the poor in spirit are only so blessed as to have a right to the kingdom of God. And Jesus Christ calls none to him but those that thirst after his righteousness, and feel themselves weary and heavy laden with the burden of their sins. Jesus Christ justifies the ungodly. He "came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

Do not then say you are unworthy; for this is a faithful and true saying, and worthy of all men to be received, "That Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners;" and if you are the chief of sinners, if you feel yourselves such, verily Jesus Christ came into the world chiefly to save you. When Joseph was called out of the prison-house to Pharaoh's court, we are told, that he stayed some time to prepare himself; but do you come with all your prison clothes about you; come poor, and miserable, and blind, and naked as you are, and God the Father shall receive you with open arms as he did the returning prodigal. He shall cover your nakedness with the best robe of his dear Son's righteousness, shall seal you with the signet of his Spirit, and feed you with the fatted calf, even with the comforts of the Holy Ghost. O, let there, then, be joy in heaven over some of you believing. Let me not go back to my Master, and say, Lord, they will not believe my report. Harden no longer your hearts, but open them wide, and let the King of glory in. Believe me, I am willing to go to prison or death for you; but I am not willing to go to heaven without you. The love of Jesus Christ constrains me to lift up my voice like a trumpet. My heart is now full. Out of the abundance of the love which I have for your precious and immortal souls, my mouth now speaketh. And I could now not only continue my discourse till midnight, but I could speak till I could speak no more. And why should I despair of any? No, I can despair of no one, when I consider Jesus Christ has had mercy on such a wretch as I am. However you may think of yourselves, I know that by nature I

am but half a devil and half a beast. The free grace of Christ prevented me. He saw me in my blood, he passed by me, and said unto me, Live. And the same grace which was sufficient for me is sufficient for you also. Behold, the same blessed Spirit is ready to breathe on all your dry bones, if you will believe on Jesus Christ whom God has sent. Indeed you can never believe on or serve a better Master—one that is more mighty or more willing to save. Indeed, I can say, the Lord Christ is gracious, his yoke is easy, his burden exceedingly light. After you have served him many years, like the servants under the law, were he willing to discharge you, you would say, We love our Master, and will not go from him. Come then, my guilty brethren, come and believe on the Lord that bought you with his precious blood. Look up by faith and see Him whom you have pierced. Behold him bleeding, panting, dying! Behold him with arms stretched out ready to receive you all. Cry unto him as the penitent thief did, "Lord, remember us, now thou art in thy kingdom," and he shall say to your souls, "Shortly shall you be with me in paradise." For those whom God justifies, them he also glorifies, even with that glory which he enjoyed with the Father before the world began. Do not say, "I have bought a piece of ground, and must needs go see it; I have bought a yoke of oxen, and must needs go prove them; I have married a wife;" I am engaged in an eager pursuit after the lust of the eye and the pride of life, and therefore cannot come. Do not fear having your name cast out as evil, or being accounted a fool for Christ's sake. Yet a little while, and you shall shine like the stars in the firmament for ever. Only believe, and Jesus Christ shall be to you "wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and eternal redemption." Your "bodies shall be fashioned like unto his glorious body," and your souls fall into all the fulness of God:

"Which may God, of his infinite mercy, grant through Jesus Christ; to whom, with thee, O Father, and thee, O Holy Ghost, three Persons and one God, be ascribed, as is most due, all power, might, majesty, and dominion, now and evermore. Amen. Amen."

THE WISE AND FOOLISH VIRGINS:

A SERMON

PREACHED AT MOORFIELDS AND KENNINGTON
COMMON IN THE YEAR 1739.

MATT. xxv. 13.

“ Watch therefore; for ye know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of man cometh.”

THE apostle to the Hebrews informs us that “ it is appointed for all men once to die; after that,” says he, “ cometh the judgment.” And I think, if any consideration be sufficient to awaken a sleeping drowsy world, it must be this: that there will be a day wherein these heavens shall be wrapt up like a scroll—the elements melt with fervent heat—this earth, and all the things therein, be burnt up—and every soul of every nation summoned to appear before the dreadful tribunal of the righteous Judge of quick and dead, to receive rewards or punishments according to the deeds done in their bodies.

The great apostle of the Gentiles, when brought before Felix, could think of no better means to convert that sinful man than to reason of temperance, righteousness, and, more especially, of a judgment to come. The first might, in some measure, affect; but I am persuaded it was the last consideration—I mean that of a judgment to come—that made him tremble. And so bad as the world is grown, yet there are few have their consciences seared with a red-hot iron, so as to deny that there will be a reckoning hereafter. The promiscuous dispensations of Providence in this life, wherein we see good men afflicted, destitute, tormented, and

the wicked permitted triumphantly to ride over their heads, has been always looked upon as an indisputable argument by the generality of mankind, that there will be a day in which God will judge the world in righteousness, and administer true judgment unto his people. Some, indeed, are so bold as to deny it, whilst they are engaged in the pursuit of the lust of the eye and the pride of life; but follow them to their death-beds—ask them, when their souls are ready to launch into eternity, what they then think of a judgment to come, and they will tell you they dare not give their consciences the lie any longer. They feel a fearful looking-for of judgment, and fiery indignation, in their hearts.

Since, then, these things are so, does it not highly concern each of us, my brethren, before we come on a bed of sickness, seriously to examine how the account stands between God and our souls, and how it will fare with us in that day? As for the openly profane, the drunkard, the whoremonger, the adulterer, and such like, there is no doubt what will become of them; without repentance they shall never enter into the kingdom of God and his Christ. No; their damnation slumbereth not; a burning fiery Tophet, kindled by the fury of God's eternal wrath, is prepared for their reception, wherein they must suffer the vengeance of an eternal fire. Nor is there the least doubt of the state of true believers; for though they be despised and rejected of natural men, yet, being born again of God, and joint-heirs with Christ, they have the earnest of the promised inheritance in their hearts; they are assured that a new and living way is made open for them by the blood of Jesus Christ, through which an abundant entrance into the kingdom of heaven shall be administered to them at the great day of account. The only question is, What will become of the almost Christian?—one that is content to go, as he thinks, in the easy middle way to heaven, without being profane on the one hand, or, as he now falsely imagines, righteous overmuch on the other. Multitudes there are in every congregation, and consequently here present, of this stamp. And, what is worst of all, it is easier to convince the most notorious publicans and sinners of their being out of a state of salvation, than any of these almost

Christians. And if Jesus Christ may be our Judge, they shall as certainly be rejected and disowned by him at the last day, as though they lived in an open defiance of all his laws.

For what says our Lord in the parable of which my text is a conclusion, and which I intend to make the subject of my present discourse? "Then" (that is, at the day of judgment, which he had been discoursing of in the foregoing chapter, and prosecutes in this) "shall the kingdom of heaven" (that is, the state of Christians in general) "be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the Bridegroom." In which words there is a manifest allusion to a custom prevailing in our Lord's time among the Jews at marriage solemnities, which, being generally in the night, it was customary for the persons of the bride-chamber to go out in procession, with many lights, to meet the bridegroom. By the Bridegroom here you are to understand Jesus Christ. The Church—that is, true believers—are his spouse. He is united to them by one spirit, even in this life; but the solemnizing of these sacred nuptials is reserved till the day of judgment, when he shall come to take them home to himself, and present them, before men and angels, as his purchase, to his Father, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing. By the ten virgins, we are to understand the professors of Christianity in general. All are called virgins, because all are called to be saints. All who name the name of Christ are obliged, by that very profession, to depart from all iniquity. The pure and chaste in heart are the only persons that will be so blessed as to see God. As Christ was born of a virgin's womb, so Christ can dwell in none but virgin souls—souls made pure and holy by the indwelling of his Holy Spirit. But what says the apostle? "All are not Israelites that are of Israel." All are not true Christians that are called after the name of Christ. "Five of these virgins were wise"—that is, true believers—"and five were foolish"—that is, formal hypocrites, whited sepulchres, mere outside professors. But why are five said to be wise, and the other five foolish? Hear what our Lord says in the following verses: "They that were foolish took their lamps,

and took no oil with them; but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps." "They that were foolish took their lamps;" that is, the lamps of an outward profession: they would go to church, say over several manuals of prayers, come perhaps even into a field to hear a sermon, give at collections, and receive the sacrament constantly, nay, oftener than once a-month. But then here lay the mistake: they had no oil in their lamps—no principle of grace—no living faith in their hearts; without which, though we should give all our goods to feed the poor, and our bodies to be burned, it would profit us nothing. In short, they were exact, nay, perhaps, superstitiously bigoted to the form, but all the while they were strangers to, and, in effect, denied the power of godliness in their hearts. They would go to church, but, at the same time, think it no harm to go to a ball or an assembly, notwithstanding they promised at their baptism to renounce the pomps and vanities of this wicked world. They were so exceeding fearful of being righteous over-much, that they would even persecute those that were truly devout, if they attempted to go a step farther than themselves. In one word, they never effectually felt the powers of the world to come; they thought they might be Christians without anything of inward feelings; and therefore, notwithstanding their high pretensions, they had only a name to live.

And now, sirs, let me pause a while, and, in the name of that God whom I endeavour to serve in the gospel of his dear Son, give me leave to ask you one question. Whilst I have been drawing, though in miniature, the character of those foolish virgins, have not many of your consciences made the application, and with a small, still, though articulate voice, said, Thou man, thou woman, art one of those foolish virgins, for thy sentiments and practice agree thereto? Do not then stifle, but encourage these convictions, and who knows but that the Lord, who is rich in mercy to all that call upon him faithfully, may so work upon you, even by this foolishness of preaching, as to make you wise virgins before you return home!

What they were you shall know immediately: "But the wise," says our Lord (verse 4) "took oil in their vessels with

their lamps." Observe, "the wise"—that is, the true believers, had their lamps as well as the foolish virgins; for Christianity does not require us to cast off outward forms; we may use forms, and yet not be formal. For instance, it is possible to worship God in a set form of prayer, and yet worship him in Spirit and in truth; and therefore, brethren, let us not judge one another. The wise virgins had their lamps. Herein then did not lie the difference between them, that the one worshipped with a form, and the other did not: no, as the Pharisee and Publican went up to the temple to pray, so these wise and foolish virgins might go to the same place of worship, and sit under the same minister; but then the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. They kept up the form, but did not rest in it. Their words in prayer were the language of their hearts, and they were no strangers to inward feelings; they had savingly tasted the good word of life, and felt, or had an experimental knowledge of the powers of the world to come; they were not afraid of searching doctrine, nor affronted when ministers told them they by nature deserved to be damned; they were not self-righteous, but willing that Jesus Christ should have all the glory of their salvation: they were convinced that the merits of Jesus Christ were to be apprehended only by faith; but yet they were as careful to maintain good works, as though they were to be justified by them. In short, their obedience flowed from love and gratitude, and was cheerful, constant, uniform, and universal, like unto that obedience which the holy angels pay our Father in heaven.

Here, then, let me exhort you to pause again; and, if any of you can faithfully apply these characters to your hearts, give God the glory, and take the comfort to your own souls. You are not false, but true believers. Jesus Christ has been made of God to you wisdom, even that wisdom whereby you shall be made wise unto salvation. God sees a difference between you and foolish virgins, if natural men will not. You need not therefore be uneasy, if a like state of misery and mortality happen to you both; I say, a like state of misery and mortality; for (verse 5) "while the bridegroom tarried," that is, in the space of time which passeth

between our Lord's ascension, and his coming again to judgment, "they all slumbered and slept." The wise as well as the foolish died; for dust we all are, and to dust we must return. It is no reflection at all upon the divine goodness, that believers, as well as hypocrites, must pass through the valley of the shadow of death; for Christ has taken away the sting out of it, so that we need fear no evil. It is to them a passage to everlasting life. Death is only terrible to those that have no hope, because they live without faith, and therefore without God in the world. Whosoever there are amongst you that have received the first fruits of the Spirit, I am persuaded you are ready to cry out with holy Job, "We would not live here always; we long to be dissolved, that we may be with Jesus Christ; and though worms will destroy our bodies as well as others, yet we are content, being assured that our Redeemer liveth, that he will stand at the latter days upon the earth, and that in our flesh we shall see God." But it is not so with hypocrites and unbelievers beyond the grave. For what says our Lord?

"And at midnight." Observe, at midnight, when all was hushed and quiet, and no one dreaming of any such thing, a cry was made; the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God was heard, sounding this general alarm to things in heaven, to things in earth, and to things in the waters under the earth. *Behold*, mark how this awful summons is ushered in with the word *behold*, to engage our attention—"Behold the Bridegroom," even Jesus Christ, the Desire of nations, the bridegroom of his spouse the Church: because he tarried for a while, to exercise the faith of saints, and give sinners space to repent, scoffers were apt to cry out, "Where is the promise of his coming?" But he is not slack concerning his promise, as these men account slackness; for, "Behold, he that was to come is now come, and will not tarry any longer. He cometh to be glorified with his saints, and to take vengeance on them that know not God, and have not obeyed his gospel." He cometh, not as a poor despised Galilean; not to be stabled in a stinking manger; not to be despised and rejected of men; not to be blindfolded, spit upon, and buffeted; not to be nailed to an accursed tree; not as the Son of man, but, as he

really was, the eternal Son of God. He cometh riding on the wings of the wind, in the glory of the Father and his holy angels, and to be had in everlasting reverence of all that shall be round about him. "Go ye forth to meet him." Arise, ye dead, ye foolish as well as wise virgins, arise and come to judgment. Multitudes, no doubt, that hear this awakening cry, would rejoice if "the rocks might fall on them, and the hills cover them from the presence of the Lamb." What would they give, if, as they lived like beasts, they might now die like them that perish? How would they rejoice, if those same excuses, which they had made on this side eternity, for attending on holy ordinances, would now keep them from appearing before the heavenly Bridegroom? But as Adam, notwithstanding his fig leaves, and the trees of the garden, could not hide himself from God, when arrested with an "Adam, where art thou?" so now the decree is gone forth, and the trump of God has given its last sound; all tongues, people, nations, and languages, both wise and foolish virgins, must come into his presence, and bow beneath his footstool. Even Pontius Pilate, Annas and Caiaphas, even the proud persecuting high priests and Pharisees of this generation, must now appear before him.

For, says our Lord, then—that is, when the cry was made, "Behold the bridegroom cometh"—in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, the graves were opened, the sea gave up its dead, and all those virgins, both wise and foolish, arose and trimmed their lamps; that is, endeavoured to put themselves in a posture to meet the bridegroom.

But how may we imagine the foolish virgins were surprised, when, notwithstanding their high thoughts, and proud imaginations of their security, they now find themselves wholly naked, and void of that inward holiness and purity of heart, without which no man living, at that day, shall comfortably meet the Lord! I doubt not but many of these foolish virgins, whilst in this world, were clothed in purple and fine linen, fared sumptuously every day, and would disdain to set many of the wise virgins, some of which might be as poor as Lazarus, even with the dogs of their flock. Those were looked upon by them as enthusiasts and madmen, as persons that were

righteous overmuch, and who intended to turn the world upside done; but now death hath opened their eyes, and convinced them, to their eternal sorrow, that he is not a true Christian, who is only one outwardly. Now they find, though alas! too late, that they, and not the wise virgins, had been beside themselves. Now their proud hearts are made to stoop, their lofty looks are brought low; and, as Dives entreated that Lazarus might dip the tip of his finger in water, and be sent to cool his tongue, so these foolish virgins, these formal hypocrites, are obliged to turn beggars to those whom they once despised. "Give us of your oil." O, impart to us a little of that grace and Holy Spirit, for your insisting on which we fools accounted your lives madness, for alas! "our lamps are gone out;" we had only the form of godliness; we were whited sepulchres; we were heart-hypocrites; we contented ourselves with desiring to be good; and, though confident of salvation whilst we lived, yet our hope is entirely gone now; God has taken away our souls. Give us, therefore, O, give us, though we once despised you, give us of your oil, for our lamps of an outward profession are quite gone out.

"Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people, saith the Lord, with this." My brethren in Christ, hear what the foolish say to the wise virgins, and learn in patience to possess your souls. If you are true followers of the lowly Jesus, I am persuaded you have your names cast out, and all manner of evil spoken against you falsely for his name's sake. For no one ever did, or will live godly in Christ Jesus, without suffering persecution; nay, I doubt not but your chief foes are those of your own households. Tell me, do not your carnal relations and friends vex your tender souls, day by day, in bidding you spare yourselves, and take heed lest you go too far? And, as you passed along to come and hear the word of God, have you not heard many a Pharisee cry out, Here comes another troop of his followers? Brethren, be not surprised; Christ's servants were always the world's fools. "You know it hated him, before it hated you. Rejoice and be exceeding glad; yet a little while, and behold the bridegroom cometh;" and then shall you hear these formal scoffing Pharisees saying

unto you, "Give us of your oil, for our lamps are gone out." When you are reviled, revile not again; when you suffer, threaten not; but commit your souls into the hands of Him that judgeth righteously; for behold the day cometh, when the children of God shall speak for themselves.

The wise virgins in the parable, no doubt, endured the same cruel mockings as you may do; but, as the lamb before the shearer is dumb, so in this life opened they not their mouth: but now we find they can give their enemies an answer: "Not so, lest there be not enough for us and you; but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves." These words are not to be understood as though they were spoken in an insulting manner, for true charity teaches us to use the worst of sinners, and our most bitter enemies, with the meekness and gentleness of Christ. Though Dives was in hell, yet Abraham does not say, "Thou villain," but only, "Son, remember." And I am persuaded, had it been in the power of these wise virgins, they would have dealt with the foolish virgins (as God knows I would willingly deal with my most inveterate enemies): not only give them of their oil, but also exalt them to the right hand of God. It was not, then, for want of love, but for fear of wanting a sufficiency for themselves, that made them return this answer, "Not so, lest there be not enough for us and you." For they that have most grace have none to spare. None but self-righteous, foolish virgins think they are good enough. Those who are truly wise, are always most distrustful of themselves, pressing forward to the things that are before, and think it well if, after they have done all, being yet but unprofitable servants, they can make their calling and election sure. "Not so, lest there be not enough for us and you; but go rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves." These words, indeed, seem to be spoken with a kind of triumph, though certainly in the most compassionate manner: "Go ye to them that sell, and buy for yourselves." Unhappy virgins! you accounted our lives folly, whilst with you in the body. How often have you condemned us for our zeal in running to hear the word, and looked upon us as enthusiasts for talking about, and affirming, that we must be led by the

Spirit, and walk by the Spirit, and hear the Spirit of God witnessing with our spirits that we are his children? But now you would be glad to be partakers of this privilege; it is not ours to give; you have been sleeping, when you should have been striving to enter in at the strait gate, "and now go to them that sell (if you can), and buy for yourselves."

And what say you to this, ye foolish formal professors? (for I doubt not but curiosity, and the desire of novelty, hath brought many such to this despised place, to hear a sermon.) Can you hear this reply to the foolish virgins, and yet not tremble? Why, yet a little while, and thus it shall be said to you. Rejoice and bolster yourselves up in your duties and forms; endeavour to cover your nakedness with the fig leaves of an outward profession, and a legal righteousness, and despise the true servants of Christ as much as you please; yet know, that all your hopes will fail you, when God brings you into judgment. For not he who commends himself is justified, but whom the Lord commendeth.

But to return. We do not hear any reply the foolish virgins make; no, their consciences condemned them; they are struck dumb, and are now filled with anxious thoughts how they shall buy oil, that they may lift up their heads before the Bridegroom.

"But whilst they go to buy"—that is, whilst they are thinking what they shall do—the Bridegroom, the Lord Jesus, the Head, the King, the Husband of his spouse the Church, cometh attended with thousands, and twenty times ten thousands of saints and angels, publicly to count up his jewels; and they are ready, the wise virgins, who have oil in their lamps, and are sealed by his Spirit to the day of redemption; these having on the wedding garment of his righteousness, the covering of his holy Spirit, go in with him to the marriage. But who can express the transports that these wise virgins feel, while they are thus admitted in a holy triumph into the presence and full enjoyment of Him whom their souls hungered and thirsted after? No doubt they had tasted of his love, and, by faith, had often fed on him in their hearts, when sitting down to commemorate his last supper here on earth. But how full may we think their hearts and tongues are of

his praises, now they are sitting down together, to eat bread in his heavenly kingdom? And what is still an addition to their happiness, the door is now shut, that so they may enjoy the ever-blessed God, and the company of angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect, without interruption. I say without interruption; for in this life their eyes often gushed out with water, because men kept not God's law, and they could never come to appear before the Lord, or to hear his word, but Satan, and his servants and children, would come also to disturb them. But now the door is shut. Now there is a perfect communion of saints, which they in vain longed for in this lower world. Now tares no longer grow up with the wheat. Not one single hypocrite, or unbeliever, can screen himself amongst them. Now "the wicked cease from troubling;" now their weary souls enjoy an everlasting rest.

Once more, O believers, let me exhort you in patience to possess your souls. God, if he has freely justified you by faith in his Son, and given you his Spirit, has sealed you to be his, and has secured you as surely as he secured Noah, when he locked him in the ark. For a little while, 'tis true, though heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ, and neither men nor devils can pluck you out of your heavenly Father's hands, yet you must be tossed about with manifold temptations. But lift up your heads, the day of your perfect and complete redemption draweth nigh. Behold, the bridegroom cometh to take you to himself; the door shall be shut, and you shall be for ever with the Lord.

But I even tremble to tell you, O nominal Christians! that the door will be shut; I mean the door of mercy, never to be opened to give you admission, though you should continue knocking to all eternity. For thus speaks our Lord (verse 11): "Afterwards," that is, after those that were ready had gone in, and the door was shut, after these foolish virgins had, to their sorrow, found that no oil was to be bought, no grace to be procured, "came also the other virgins," and as Esau, after Jacob had got the blessing, cried with an exceeding bitter cry, "Bless me, even me also, O my Father," so they come saying, "Lord, Lord, open unto us."

Observe the importunity of these foolish virgins, implied in these words, "Lord, Lord." Whilst in the body, I suppose, they only read, but did not pray over their prayers. If you would tell them they should pray without ceasing, they should pray with their hearts, and feel the want of what they prayed for, they would answer, they could not tell what you meant by inward feelings; that God did not require us to be always on our knees; but if a man did justly, and loved mercy, and did as the church-forms required him, it was as much as the Lord required at his hands.

I fear, sirs, too many amongst us are of this mind; nay, I fear there are many so profanely polite, and void of the love of God, as to think it too great a piece of self-denial, to rise early to offer up a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. If any such, by the good providence of God, are brought hither this morning, I beseech you consider your ways, and remember, if you are not awakened out of your spiritual lethargy, and live a life of prayer here, you shall in vain cry out with the foolish virgins, "Lord, Lord, open unto us," hereafter.

Observe, further, the impudence, as well as importunity, of those other virgins. "Lord, Lord," say they, as though they were intimately acquainted with the holy Jesus. Like numbers amongst us, who, because they go to church, repeat their creeds, and perhaps receive the sacrament, think they have a right to call Jesus their Saviour, and dare call God their Father, when they put up the Lord's Prayer. But Jesus is not your Saviour; the devil, not God, is your father, unless your hearts are purified by faith, and you are born again from above. It is not the being baptized by water only, but by the Holy Ghost also, that must purify and perfect your fallen nature. And it will do you no service at the great day, to say unto Christ, "Lord, my name is in the register of such or such a parish," unless the laws and image of Christ are written and stamped upon your hearts. I am persuaded the foolish virgins could say this, and more. But what answer did the blessed Jesus make? He answered and said (verse 12): "Verily, I say unto you"—he puts the word "verily," to assure them he was in earnest—"I say unto you,"

I who am truth itself, I whom you have owned in words, but in works denied, "Verily I say unto you I know you not." These words must not be understood literally; for whatever Arians and Socinians may vainly say to the contrary, yet we affirm that Jesus Christ is God, God blessed for ever, and therefore knoweth all things. He saw Nathaniel, when under the fig tree. He sees, and is now looking down from heaven, his dwelling-place, upon us, to see how we behave in these fields. Brethren, I know nothing of the thoughts and intents of your hearts, in coming hither, but Jesus Christ does. He knows who come like new-born babes, desirous to be fed with the sincere milk of the word; and he knows who come to hear what the babbler says, and to run away with part of a broken sentence, that they may have whereof they may ridicule or accuse him. This expression then, "I know you not," must not be understood literally. No; it only denies a knowledge of approbation; as though Christ had said, "You call me Lord, Lord, but ye have not done the things that I have said: you desire me to open the door, but how can you come in hither, not having on a wedding-garment? Alas! you are naked as you came into the world. Where is my outward righteousness imputed to you? Where is my inherent righteousness wrought in you? Where is my divine image stamped upon your souls? How dare you call me Lord, Lord, when you have not received the Holy Ghost, whereby I seal all that are truly mine? Verily I know you not. Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."

And now, "he that hath ears to hear let him hear" what manner of persons these were whom Jesus Christ dismissed with this answer.

Remember, I entreat you remember, they are not sent away for being fornicators, swearers, Sabbath-breakers, or prodigals; no, in all probability, as I observed before, they were, touching the outward observances of the moral law, blameless; they were zealous maintainers of the form of religion; and if they did no good, yet no one could say they did any one any harm. That for which they were condemned, and eternally banished from the presence of the Lord (for so

much is implied in that sentence, "I know you not"), was this: they had no oil in their lamps, no principle of eternal life, or true and living faith, and love of God in their hearts. But, alas! if persons may go to church, receive the sacraments, lead honest moral lives, and yet be sent to hell at the last day, as they certainly will if they advance no farther, where wilt thou, O drunkard? where wilt thou, O swearer? where wilt thou, O Sabbath-breaker? where wilt thou that deniest divine revelation, and even the form of godliness?—where wilt thou and such like sinners appear?

I know very well where you must appear, even before the dreadful tribunal of Jesus Christ. For, however you may, like Felix, continually put off your convictions, yet you, as well as others, must arise after death, and appear in judgment. You will then find, to your eternal sorrow, what I just hinted at in the beginning of this discourse, viz., that your damnation slumbereth not. Sin has blinded your hearts, and hardened your foreheads now. But yet a little while and our Lord will avenge him of his adversaries. Already, by faith, I see the heavens opened, and the holy Jesus coming, with his face brighter than ten thousand suns, and darting fury upon you from his eyes. I see you rising from your graves, trembling and astonished, and crying out, Who can abide this day of his coming? And now what inference shall I draw from what has been delivered? Our Lord, in the words of the text, hath drawn one for me: "Watch, therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh."

"Watch"—that is, be upon your guard, and keep your graces in continual exercise; for as, when we are commanded to watch unto prayer, it signifies that we should continue instant in that duty; so, when we are required to watch in general, it means, that we should put on the whole armour of God, and live every day as though it was our last.

And O that the Lord may now enable me to lift up my voice like a trumpet! For had I a thousand tongues, or could I speak so loud that the whole world might hear me, I could not sound a more useful alarm than that which is contained in the words of the text. Watch, therefore, my brethren, I beseech you by the mercies of God in Christ

Jesus, watch—be upon your guard. “Awake, ye that sleep in the dust; for ye know not the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.” Perhaps to-day, perhaps this next midnight, the cry may be made. For in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, the trump is to sound. However, supposing the final day of judgment to all may yet be a great way off, yet to us it is certainly near at hand. For what is our life? It is but a vapour—it is but a span long; so soon it passeth away, and we are gone. Blessed be God, we are all here well; but who, out of this great multitude, dare say, I shall go home to my house in safety? Who knows but, whilst I am speaking, God may commission his ministering spirits immediately to call some of you off by a sudden stroke, to give an account with what attention, and to what intent, you have heard this sermon? And it is chiefly for this reason that God has hid the day of our death from us. For, since I know not but I may die to-morrow, why, O my soul (may each of us say) wilt thou not watch to-day? Since I know not but I may die the next moment, why wilt thou not prepare for dying this?

You know, my brethren, some such instances have lately been given us. And what angel or spirit hath assured us that some of you shall not be the next? “Watch, therefore; for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.”

May such reflections as these, my brethren, crowd in upon my mind. At present, blessed be the Lord, who delights to magnify his strength in a poor worm’s weakness, I am at a stand not so much about what I shall say, as what I shall leave unsaid. My belly, like Elihu’s, is, as it were, full of new wine; out of the abundance of my heart my mouth speaketh. The seeing so great a multitude standing before me—a sense of the infinite majesty of that God in whose name I preach, and before whom I, as well as you, must appear to give an account—and the uncertainty there is whether I shall live another day to speak to you any more;—these considerations, I say, especially the presence of God, which I now feel in my soul, furnish me with so much matter that I scarce know how to begin, and where to end my application.

However, by the divine assistance, I will address myself more particularly to three sorts of persons.

And, *first*, I would remind you that you are notoriously ungodly in the land, of what our Lord says in the text. For, though I have said, that your damnation slumbereth not, whilst you continue in an impenitent state, yet that was only to set you upon your watch, to convince you of your danger, and excite you to cry out, What shall we do to be saved? I appeal to all that hear me, whether I have said, the door of mercy shall be shut against you, if you believe in Jesus Christ. No; if you are the chief of sinners; if you are the murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers; if you are the dung and offscouring of all things—yet if you believe on Jesus Christ, and continue to cry unto him with the faith of the penitent thief, “Lord, remember us, now thou art in thy kingdom,” I will pawn my eternal salvation upon it, if he does not shortly translate you to his heavenly paradise. Wonder not at my speaking with so much assurance, for I know “this is a faithful and true saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save all believing sinners;” nay, so great is his love, that I am persuaded, were it necessary, he would come again into the world, and die a second time for them on the cross. But, blessed be God, when our Lord bowed down his head, and gave up the ghost, our redemption was finished. It is not our sins, but our want of a lively faith in his blood, that will prove our condemnation. If you draw near to him now by faith, though you are the worst of sinners, yet he will not say unto you, “Verily, I know you not.” No; a door of mercy shall be opened to you. Look then, look by an eye of faith to that God-Man whom you have pierced. Behold him bleeding, panting, dying upon the cross, with arms stretched out, ready to embrace you all! Hark how he groans! See how all nature is in an agony! The rocks rend, the graves open, the sun withdraws its light, ashamed, as it were, to see the Saviour suffer! And all this to proclaim man’s great redemption! Nay, the Holy Jesus, in the most bitter agonies and pangs of death, prays for his very murderers: “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.” What, then, if you have

crucified the Son of God afresh, and put him to open shame, yet do not despair—only believe, and even this shall be forgiven you. You have read, at least you have heard, no doubt, how three thousand were converted at St Peter's preaching one single sermon after our Lord's ascension into heaven; and many of the crucifiers of the Lord of glory undoubtedly were amongst them. And why should you despair? for Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. The Holy Ghost shall be sent down on you as well as on them, if you do but believe. For Christ ascended up on high to receive this gift, even for the vilest of men—for his greatest enemies. Come, then, all ye that are weary and heavy laden with a sense of your sins, lay hold on Christ by faith, and he shall give you rest. For salvation is the free gift of God to all them that believe. And though you may think this too good news to be true, yet I speak the truth in Christ, I lie not; this is the gospel, this is the glad tidings which we are commissioned to preach to every creature. Be not faithless, then, but believing. Let not the devil lead you captive at his will any longer; for all the wages he gives his servants is death—death often in this life—death always—everlasting death in the next. But now the free gift of God is eternal life to all that believe in Jesus Christ. Pharisees are, and will be offended at my coming here, and offering you salvation on such cheap terms. But the more they bid me hold my peace, the more will I cry out, and proclaim to sinners, that Jesus the son of David as he was man, but David's Lord as he was God, "will have mercy upon all that by a living faith truly turn to him." If to preach this is to be vile, I pray God I may be more vile. If they will not let me preach Christ crucified, and offer salvation to poor sinners in a church, I will preach him in the lanes, streets, highways, and hedges; and nothing pleases me better than to think I am now in one of the devil's strongest holds. Surely the Lord has not sent me and all you hither for nothing; no, blessed be God, "the fields are white, ready unto harvest," and many souls, I hope, will be gathered into his heavenly garner. It is true, it is the midnight of the Church, especially the poor Church of England; but God has lately

sent forth his servants to cry, "Behold, the bridegroom cometh." I beseech you, O sinners, hearken unto the voice; let me espouse you now by faith to my dear Master, and henceforward watch and pray, that you may be ready to go forth to meet him.

Secondly, I would apply myself to those amongst you that are not openly profane, but, by depending on a formal round of duties, deceive your own souls, and are still as the foolish virgins.

But I must speak to your conviction before I can speak to your comfort. My brethren, do not deceive your own souls. You have heard how far the foolish virgins went, and yet were answered with a "Verily, I know you not." The reason is, because none but such as have a living faith in Jesus Christ, and are truly born again from above, can possibly enter into the kingdom of heaven. You may, perhaps, live honestly, and outwardly moral lives; but if you depend on that morality, or join your works with your faith, in order to justify you before God, you have no lot or share in Christ's redemption. For what is this but to deny the Lord that has bought you? What is this but making yourselves your own Saviours—taking the crown from Jesus Christ, and putting it on your own heads? The crime of the devil, some have supposed, consisted in this, that he would not bow to the name of Jesus, when he came into the world as man, when the Father commanded all the angels to worship him. And what do you less? You will not own and submit to his righteousness. And though you pretend to worship him with your lips, yet your hearts are far from him. Besides, you, in effect, deny the operations of his blessed Spirit; you mistake common for effectual grace. You hope to be saved, because you have good desires. What is this, but to give God, his word, and all his saints the lie? A Jew, a Turk, has equally as good grounds whereon to build his hopes of salvation. Great need, therefore, have I to cry out to you, O foolish virgins, watch; beg of God to convince you of your self-righteousness, and the secret unbelief of your hearts, or otherwise, whensoever the cry shall be made, "Behold, the bridegroom cometh," you will find yourselves utterly unpre-

pared to go forth to meet him. You may cry, "Lord, Lord," but the answer will be, "Verily, I know you not."

Thirdly, I would speak a word or two, by way of exhortation, to those who are wise virgins, and are well assured that they have on a wedding-garment.

That there are many such amongst you, who, by grace, have renounced your own righteousness, and know assuredly that the righteousness of the Lord Jesus is imputed to you, I make no doubt. God has his secret ones in the worst of times; and I am persuaded he has not let so loud a gospel cry be made amongst his people for nothing. No, I am confident the Holy Ghost has been given to some on the preaching of faith; nay, has powerfully fallen upon many, whilst they have been hearing the word. You are now then no longer foolish, but wise virgins; notwithstanding I beseech you also, suffer the word of exhortation; for wise virgins are too apt, whilst the bridegroom tarries, to slumber and sleep: watch, therefore, my dear brethren, watch and pray, at this time especially, for perhaps a time of suffering is at hand. The ark of the Lord begins already to be driven into the wilderness. Be ye therefore upon the watch, and still persevere in following your Lord even without the camp, bearing his reproach. The cry that has been lately made, has awakened the devil and his servants—they begin to rage horribly; and well they may, for I hope their kingdom is in danger. Watch, therefore, my brethren; for if we are not always upon our guard, a time of trial may overtake us unawares, and instead of owning, like Peter, we may be tempted to deny our Master. Set death and eternity often before you. Look unto Jesus, the author and finisher of your faith, and consider how little a while it will be ere he comes to judgment, and then our reproach shall be wiped away; the accusers of us and our brethren shall be cast down, and the door being shut, we all shall continue for ever in heaven with our dear Lord Jesus. Amen! and Amen!

Lastly, What I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch. High and low, rich and poor, young and old, one with another, of whatever sect or denomination, for I regard not that, I beseech you, by the mercies of that Jesus whom I am now

preaching, be upon your guard. Flee, flee to Jesus Christ, that heavenly bridegroom; behold, he desires to take you to himself. Miserable, poor, blind and naked, as you are, yet he is willing to clothe you with his everlasting righteousness, and make you partakers of that glory which he enjoyed with the Father before the world was. O, do not turn a deaf ear to me; do not reject the message on account of the meanness of the messenger! I am a child, a youth of uncircumcised lips, but the Lord has chosen me, that the glory might be all his own. Had he sent to invite you by a learned rabbi, you might have been tempted to think the man had done something. But now God has sent a child that cannot speak, that the excellency of the power may be seen to be not of man, but of God. Let letter-learned Pharisees, then, despise my youth: I care not how vile I appear in the sight of such men, I glory in it; and I am persuaded, if any of you should be set upon your watch by this preaching, you will have no reason to repent that God sent a child to cry, "Behold, the bridegroom cometh!" O! my brethren, the thought of being instrumental in bringing some of you to glory, fills me with fresh zeal. Once more, therefore, I entreat you, "Watch, watch and pray;" for the Lord Jesus will receive all that call upon him, yea, all that call upon him faithfully. Let that cry, "Behold, the bridegroom cometh," be continually sounding in your ears; and begin now to live, as though you were assured this was the night in which you were to be summoned to go forth to meet him. I could say more, but the other business and duties of the day oblige me to stop. May the Lord give you all an hearing ear, and an obedient heart, and so closely unite you to himself by one Spirit, that, when he shall come in terrible majesty to judge mankind, you may be found having on a wedding-garment, and ready to go in with him to the marriage.

Grant this, O Father, for thy dear Son's sake, Christ Jesus, our Lord. Amen! and Amen!

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