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THE
WODROW CORRESPONDENCE,

M.DCC.XXIII.—M.DCC.XXXI.

VOLUME THIRD.

THE WODROW SOCIETY,

INSTITUTED MAY, 1841,

FOR THE PUBLICATION OF THE WORKS OF THE FATHERS AND EARLY
WRITERS OF THE REFORMED CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

W

THE
CORRESPONDENCE

OF THE

REV. ROBERT WODROW,

MINISTER OF EASTWOOD, AND AUTHOR OF THE HISTORY OF THE
SUFFERINGS OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

EDITED FROM MANUSCRIPTS IN THE LIBRARY OF THE FACULTY
OF ADVOCATES, EDINBURGH,

BY THE

REV. THOMAS M'CRIE.

VOLUME THIRD.

EDINBURGH:
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PREFACE

TO

VOLUME THIRD.

ON completing the Third and last Volume of this Correspondence, the Editor begs to state, that the whole has reached a size considerably beyond what was at first anticipated. This has been owing chiefly to its having been considered necessary, for the elucidation of Wodrow's Letters, to introduce so many of those from his correspondents, in the form of entire copies, or of large extracts. It was intimated in the Preface to Volume First, that Wodrow's Letters were given, in that Volume, exactly as they stood in his own Collection, without selection or abridgment. The same rule has been observed, with some slight exceptions, which have been noticed, in Volume Second. It was found impracticable, however, as the work advanced, to adhere rigidly to this plan, without either swelling the Correspondence to a bulk far exceeding the present, or excluding altogether the letters of Wodrow's correspondents. In the Third Volume, therefore, more especially towards the close, several of Wodrow's Letters, which

appeared of less importance, or the substance of which had already been given in others, have been omitted. The reader has more cause to regret the omission of many of the letters of Wodrow's friends, of which it was impossible, within reasonable bounds, to give more than a specimen. Several of these, particularly those relating to Foreign Churches, and to the Subscription Controversy in Ireland, contain a mass of information, highly valuable to the historical enquirer, though, for the purposes of general interest and edification, it would require to be digested and arranged in some methodical order.

Without presuming to anticipate the judgment of the public on the general character of the Correspondence now completed, the Editor may be allowed to remark, that, besides opening up an interesting page in the ecclesiastical history of our country, of which little is known, and gratifying our natural curiosity to see how the events of which we have read, were regarded and spoken of by those who lived at the time when they happened,—these letters afford evidence of the honourable estimation in which the Historian of the Sufferings of the Church of Scotland was held by his contemporaries. That his ministerial abilities were highly appreciated, may be inferred from his having been so frequently invited to occupy larger spheres of usefulness. He received calls, at various periods, to Glasgow, Stirling, and Renfrew; but such was his attachment to his flock, and such his desire for leisure to prosecute his literary labours, that he preferred to the last the quiet seclusion of Eastwood, a small parish in the neighbourhood of Glasgow. In this retirement, however, he was far from leading the life of a recluse.

While his time was principally occupied with the assiduous discharge of his ministerial duties, and while his heart was mainly bent on the great task of winning souls, and the promoting of true piety, (of which there is pervading evidence, though no ostentatious display, in his Correspondence,) he found leisure to devote no small share of his attention to the affairs of the Church and the public interests of truth. We find him in regular and confidential correspondence with some of the best and the greatest characters of his day—consulted by his brethren on the weightiest questions of ecclesiastical policy—and addressed by all of them in terms indicating the warmest attachment to him as a man, and the highest esteem for him as an author. He seems to have been a diligent attender on Church Courts, and particularly on the General Assembly, whether he was sent as a member or not; and it may be here noticed, that his Letters written from the General Assembly, though addressed to his wife, were evidently meant for the information of his father-in-law, Mr Patrick Warner, and his friend, Lord Pollock, who were prevented by age and infirmities from attending that Court, and were written, in all probability, with the view of being afterwards made use of.

The sentiments of Wodrow on the various questions and parties of his time it is not difficult to discover, as he takes no pains to conceal them. That he was not without his own errors, prejudices, and weaknesses, is abundantly evident,—so much so, indeed, as hardly to require pointing out; but it is presumed that no candid reader, mainly anxious for information as to facts, however much he may dissent from his statements and opinions, can fail to ad-

mire his prevailing candour of judgment, simplicity of mind, and benevolence of heart.

Some of the details and dissertations in these Letters must necessarily prove tedious and uninteresting to many of our readers ; it would, however, betray very narrow views of the useful and important in matters of history, to judge, by this standard, of the usefulness and importance of the facts thus brought to light. The public have of late shown an extreme anxiety to be put in possession of the *materiel* of history ; and they have, therefore, less reason to complain, if, while we gratify their wishes in this respect, the historian should find more to his taste in these volumes than the ordinary reader ; and if so much of the information they contain should be less fitted for the amusement of the present, than it may be for the benefit of future generations.

JULY, 1843.

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CORRECTIONS.

Vol. i. p. 323, Note.

“Several of the Episcopalians refused the oath.” It has been stated, that “*none* of the Scottish Episcopal clergymen, if we except one at Glasgow, ever took the oath, though they all took the benefit of the Toleration.”—*Struthers' History of Scotland*, vol. i. p. 149.

P. 205.

A note might have been inserted here contradicting the absurd rumour to which Wodrow refers, of Mr M'Millan and his friends having correspondence with the Jacobites; but it was deemed quite superfluous to take any notice of reports so utterly groundless as this. Lockhart hints at such a thing, (*Papers*, vol. ii. p. 212,) but his story is alike destitute of proof and of probability.

Vol. ii. p. 238, Note.

It has been suggested that Wodrow's meaning in what he says regarding Mr M'Millan's death has been misrepresented in the note; and that all he intended to say was, that he would be glad to hear whether the report was true or not. In whatever sense his language may be understood, it is certain the report was unfounded, Mr M'Millan having survived Wodrow many years.

Vol. iii. p. 33, line 4 from foot.

Wodrow is mistaken in stating that Mr G. Hutchison was one of the Scottish Commissioners to the Westminster Assembly. It may be a mistake for G. Gillespie.

P. 97.

It is stated in the note, when referring to the Scots Liturgy prepared by Falconer and Forbes in 1765, that “this is the Liturgy presently in use among the Scottish Episcopalians. It is not meant that this is the *only* Liturgy in use among them, but that this Liturgy is in use among them, and that it is the Liturgy about the use of which so much controversy has lately been raised in that communion.”

P. 216.

It has been suggested, that there must be some mistake in Wodrow's calculation as to the amount of the Excise, and that instead of L.5500 he should have written L.55,000. In the Articles of Union, the Excise is stated at L.33,500.—*De Foe's History of Union*, p. 124.

P. 218, line 4.

For Mr Woolston's read Mr Wollaston's. The names are sometimes confounded; but it is well to distinguish Thomas Woolston, a Deistical writer, who wrote against the miracles of our Lord, from William Wollaston here meant, the author of "The Religion of Nature Delineated,"—a curious and very abstruse work, being an attempt to prove the truth of religion on mathematical principles.

ERRATA.

In such a work as the present, which contains so many allusions to names and facts of an old date, it is extremely difficult to attain correctness, and after all his pains to discover and correct mistakes, the Editor feels that he needs the indulgence of the reader for those which may remain. Several of the following *Errata* are rather suggested corrections on the original Manuscript where obviously incorrect.

VOL. I.

P.	l.	<i>for</i>	<i>read</i>
48,	3, <i>n.</i> from foot,	Isle of Man,	Isle of May.
66,	12, <i>n.</i>	1793,	1693.
68,	3,	Excise Customhouse-officers,	Excise and Customhouse-officers.
85,	3,	Striekthrain,	Striekathrow.
144,	17,	[method,]	[middle course.]
158,*	19,	the House of King and Lords,	the King and House of Lords.
162,*	16,	loss nor fortune,	loss of fortune.
188,*	2,	should not hinder,	should hinder.
205,	14,	talk,	task.
304,	3, <i>n.</i>	A., J., and L., [Archibald, John, and Lorn,]	A., I., and L., [Argyle, Ilay, and Loudon.]
348,	2,	A. J. Pa.,	A. I. Pa., [Ayr, Irvine, Paisley.]
389,	2,	<i>α/1005,</i>	<i>α/1015.</i>
416,	9,	dilectus,	delectus.

P.	l.		<i>for</i>	<i>read</i>
430,	16,		Boystak,	Boysack, (Carnegie of Boysack.)
472,	15, 16,		Papistanum,	Papistarium.
479,	3,		no Jurors,	Non-Jurors.
487,	10,		they might go far. A. M. and R., it's said,	they might go far, A. M. and R. It's said.
508,	13,		weakness,	mekness.
508,	16,		nothing,	the thing.
561,	6,	from foot,	[Kilmartin-Glossary,]	[Kilmichael-Glossary.]
586,*	17,	Maphet,	Moffat.

VOL. II.

4,	2,	de Scavans,	des Sçavans.
11,	18,		Dr Frankins,	Dr Frankius.
66,	2,		hour,	honour.
70,	21,		as top,	a stop.
100,	21,		left,	right.
113,	3,	thes tench,	the stench.
124,	1,	intentions,	intrusions.
153,	2,	[your,]	[that.]
163,	3,	not to tolerate,	to tolerate.
181,	8,	Triennial,	Septennial.
210,	1,	College,	Colleges.
246,	7,		frightens me ; then,	frightens me more than.
255,	7,	Russeth,	Rossyth.
262,	11,	Little Ellies,	Little Airies.
268,	4, n.	we e ought,	were thought.
268,	5, n.	to o,	to observe.
275,	14,		coronation with,	coronation oath.
282,	11,		Stairs,	Stair.
284,	17,	infirm's tate,	infirm state.
306,	3,	Knolls,	Knolles.
341,	11,		who thinks it below them,	who think it [not] below them.
446,	14,		Rigo,	Vigo.
462,	6,		have,	be.
470,	14,		[accompt,]	[estimate.]
475,	13,		ours,	yours.
489,	3,		Sermens,	Sermens.
510,	4,		the Duke of Montrose, deputè,	the Duke of Montrose's depute.
522,	12,		beidle,	be idle.

P.	l.		for	read
606,	13,	from foot,	1644,	1664.
606,	8,		slips,	ships.
611,	6,		1651,	1561.

VOL. III.

32,	1,		his,	this.
82,	12,	happy,	unhappy.
112,	4,	slip,	ship.
142,	18,		jus quesitum,	jus quæsitum.
276,	8,		judicially.	judiciously.
373,	7,	<i>Summus Deus</i> as the,	<i>Summus Deus</i> as to the.

THE
WODROW CORRESPONDENCE.

LETTER I.

EARL OF ROTHES.—PATRICK WALKER.—WODROW'S HISTORY.

To Mr Mathew Wood, Minister at Edinburgh.

REV. DEAR BROTHER,—I had not yours of the 19th till yesterday, which is the ordinary fate of letters by private hands; therefore, I still like to have mine by post, and so I send mine this way. I long to hear what your Presbytery did last day, and am sorry for any heat at such an unseasonable time.

I am heartily glad you have writ down what you remember as to the late excellent Earl of Rothes. I wish Colonel Blackader and Mr Clow may help you with their additions, and whenever you allow any to see the account, I'll put in for a share. I have not been more affected of a long time with any thing of that nature than I was with the verbal account you gave me of it at Edinburgh.

Nobody has been so kind as to give me an account of the exceptions taken at my book, though I have publicly desired to be set right wherein I was wrong. I do not doubt but there may be several things wherein I may have been misinformed; but I hope there is nothing I have willingly erred in.

I hear no more of Mr Bruce's large Answer. In May, at Edinburgh, I heard one Patrick Walker¹ was about to print somewhat or other about the Sufferings, and take some notice of my History. I shall be very glad to see that period set in a better light than I was capable to do. I mind, before Mr Webster's death, he spoke to me about one of that name, and twice at his appointment I came to his house to have met with him, but he never came. I

¹ *Patrick Walker*—the well-known and eccentric author of the *Lives of Peden, Cameron, Cargill, &c.*, which, after having circulated far and wide through Scotland in the shape of *Chapman Tracts*, have been lately collected and published under the pompous title of *Biographia Presbyteriana*. Of his early history little is known. Wodrow does not seem to have been aware, when he referred to him as above, that he was the person mentioned in his History, vol. iv. p. 47. "July 22d, (1684.) I find Patrick Walker, a boy of eighteen years or under, before the council. He confesses he was present at the murder of Francis Garden, (Gordon,) one of the Earl of Airly's troop, and refuses to discover his accomplices." Walker, in his own account of this affair, seems to be indignant at Wodrow for "transmitting his name under the notion of a murderer;" but he studiously avoids saying by whom the fatal shot was fired, and leaves the impression that he was Gordon's executioner. Indeed, it seems to have been clearly a case of self-defence. He followed at one time the occupation of a packman or pedlar, but towards the close of his life, he appears to have adopted a wandering life, travelling about the country, mounted on a little white poney, gathering old stories, and circulating his own productions, with other religious tracts, among his early acquaintance. It is difficult to say to what religious party Patrick Walker belonged. He was evidently no friend to the "McMillanites," who, he says, are "quite wrong designed, and should be called *Hamiltonians*, after Robert Hamilton, who was the only man that led them in these untrodden, dangerous paths of positive disowning of the State and separation from the Church;" and he freely condemns their "overstretched consequences," "they making no difference betwixt our present condition, and our former period of tyranny and defection."—(*Biogr. Presbyt.* vol. i pp. 119, 230.)—He was, however, a strenuous defender of the old Cameronians, who disowned the civil government when it had degenerated into "tyranny and oppression;" and he protested, with singular zeal, against all "right-hand extremes and left-hand defections" both in Church and State. His writings, along with many shrewd remarks and much curious information, exhibit a species of craziness, in the constant reiteration of some favourite dogmas, and in the unconnected rhapsodical style of his narrative. Walker's attack on Wodrow, of which our author speaks above, did not appear till the year 1727, when he added to his *Life of Cameron*, "Remarks upon twenty-eight gross Misrepresentations and groundless and scandalous Reflections in Mr Wodrow's History, and Answers thereto." These remarks refer chiefly to the opinions expressed by Wodrow, and do not affect, in any material point, the veracity of the historian.

desired what information he had to give, but received nothing. Since, I have heard no more about him. Pray send me all the accounts you have of Mr Bruce or Walker, and give me the exceptions you hear of at as great length as you can. I shall still be ready to yield to better information. And as I believe some will be displeas'd with what I have written, so it is some comfort to me, that some very good judges are satisfied with the book in general; and I hope it may be of some use in England, where I hear severals of rank have read it, and are better pleas'd than I could well have expected. I have accounts from the Prince and Princess, who have read much of the first volume. The late Earl of Sunderland had read much of it. Six or eight of the Bishops have got it, and Sir Peter King has read it, and is better pleas'd with it than it deserves. However, send me all your accounts of it from Edinburgh.

Severals have spok'd to me about abridging it, and I will not be averse from following my brethren's advice in this matter, if once I could think what is fit to be put in an abridgment, though, indeed, I am weary of writing on this subject, as you'll easily believe. Mr Grierson, and, I think, some other of your brethren, were speaking to me of this when last in town, and I shall be glad to have their thoughts as to what is proper to be put in an abridgment; for, indeed, I cannot yet form a scheme to myself on this, but what would still be too large for common people. I am, Rev. Dear Brother, yours, &c.

January 2, 1723.

LETTER II.

LIFE OF ALEXANDER HENDERSON.

To Mr Mathew Crawford.

REV. DEAR BROTHER,—I had a letter lately from London, acquainting me that a gentleman there is upon a design to give an account of the lives of the most eminent persons of the last age, in Church and State; and he wants memoirs for the life of Mr Alexander Henderson. He desires to be informed of his family and extract; the time and place of his birth; where he studied; by whom he was ordained; what his motives were to leave the Episcopal Church; what book it is wherein Mr Gillespie confutes his pretended recantation of Presbytery; with all that I can give about him.

I hope you will be in case to gather up some hints as to the three first, of which I can give little or no account. His reasons for leaving the Episcopal Church may be easily known. I do not mind any thing of Mr Gillespie's which refutes his alleged recantation. I remember there is an act and declaration of the Assembly about the reproaches cast on him, and I have a pamphlet since the Revolution in vindication of him. If there be any of his relations alive about Edinburgh, you will get some hint from them. I'll be glad of a copy of the inscription on his stone in the Greyfriars', with every thing you can send me about him. Principal Hamilton and Mr Robert Stewart, whom I kindly remember, will, I doubt not, be in case to give you some accounts about him. I have a good many original letters of his. The gentleman who desires this account seems very inclinable to do all justice to his memory. He has published the Life of Mr Hales of Eaton last year, or the year before. I am yours.

Jan. 3, 1723.

LETTER III.

A. HENDERSON'S LIFE AND WRITINGS.

To James Fraser, Esq.

DEAR SIR,—I answered all your last next post after I received it, save what concerns Mr Henderson; and, lest you should suspect I have forgot this, though I have little material as yet to write, I thought it proper to give you a hint of what I have done and am a-doing. His family and younger years I can give but little account of, but have written to my acquaintances at Edinburgh and Fife to make inquiries, and send me what they can gather.

I am forming a short memorial about Mr Henderson, which you may expect as soon as I have returns from those I have written to; and if they be slow, as too many are in matters of this nature, I shall send you any thing I can gather from the papers I have, and afterwards transmit what I receive from others.

Meanwhile, let me acquaint you that when I came to inspect that paper I wrote to you of, quoted on the back, "Mr Henderson's Last Paper to the King," and compare it with the printed conference, I find that it is printed there, and has been wrong quoted; and it is so far from being the last, that there are two or three on each side after it. We have a tradition, how well grounded I know not, that Mr Henderson made a return to his Majesty's last paper; but, when the conference was printed, this was not insert, that in decency his Majesty might have the last paper. I fancy this tradition has led somebody in a mistake thus to mark the paper on the back.

I do not mind any book of Mr Gillespie's wherein he confutes Mr Henderson's pretended recantation. The General Assembly, 1648, wherein Mr Gillespie did moderate, emitted a declaration, which

you may have the copy of if you want it, wherein they condemn the pretended renunciation of Mr Henderson as a false, scandalous, and forged paper. But for any thing of Mr Gillespie's, in particular, if there be such a paper or passage in his books, I have not observed it.

All I can give you further at this time, is a list of what of his I have in print and manuscript. In print I have his Sermon before the Assembly, 1638, on Acts v. 32, 8vo; Government and Order of the Church of Scotland, London, 1641, 4to; his Discourse when the Solemn League and Covenant was taken at London, September 25, 1643, 4to; his Fast Sermon before the Commons, on Ezra vii. 27, December 27, 1643, 4to; his Thanksgiving Sermon before the Parliament, on Matt. xiv. 21, July 18, 1644, 4to; his Fast Sermon before the Lords, on John xviii. 36, 37, May 28, 1645, 4to; Papers betwixt King Charles the First and him at Newcastle, 8vo, 1649. And I think I have read somewhat, printed in vindication of Mr Henderson, in the answer to Dr Hollingsworth's Vindication of King Charles the First, printed at London since the Revolution, which, if you have not, I shall search for here.

In MSS. I have papers said to be his Instructions about Defensive Arms, 1639; Directions as to Voicing in Parliament, 1639; Answers to some Propositions in Defence of Episcopal Government about that time. Indeed, most of the public papers emitted that and next year were formed by his pen. These are all I have, save several of his original letters, 1641, 1643, 1644, 1645.

I long very much to hear from you, with all your news from the learned world. Let me know what new books and pamphlets are on the file, and the latest accounts from the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge, and the Missionaries in the East Indies. I would gladly know who is said to be the author of a paper I get weekly, the "Saint James' Journal;" it is written with a great deal of life. Accept of my thanks for all your favours, and write frequently to, Dear Sir, yours, &c.

LETTER IV.

M'WARD AND M'MAIN.—MR HOG'S ANSWERS.

To Mr William Hog, Merchant in Edinburgh.

DEAR SIR,—Receive Mr M'Ward's letter, which you may read to Mr M'Main; and he will see that I have cited faithfully what I have printed out of it. I had no other view in printing the abstract from it, but if the authority of so good and great a man as he was, might have any weight with Dissenters, to let them see his thoughts of the evil and hazard of separation. I had no mind to revive our debates about the Indulgence, and so was not concerned in that place, with Mr M'Ward's severe innuendos upon it, and them who embraced it. The same reason makes me decline countenancing Mr M'Main's publishing this present paper of Mr M'Ward's, since I cannot see to what good purposes it can serve. However, I am glad to hear Mr M'Main is assured it's the original he hath.

Receive also Mr Hog's Answers,¹ for which I return you thanks. It was the very best account you could give me of that affair. I heartily sympathise with him, and regret the loss of the Church of Christ by the death of his worthy brother.² It's a very peculiar loss to me, who was favoured with very useful letters from him. If you have occasion, let his sons know how much I lament their and my loss, and how readily I would serve them in any thing in my power.

Give my humble duty to my Lord Grange, whom I am glad to

¹ "When he was in town, I got the enclosed copy of his Answers to the Synod Queries to be given in to the next Synod, which return me after perusal."—(*William Hog to Wodrow.*)

² The Rev. Thomas Hog of Rotterdam.

hear to be recovered from the indisposition I heard he was under in harvest. I had several thoughts of writing to my Lord to desire his thoughts as to the method of a Biography, in case I should ever come to digest the papers and materials I have, and may further receive. But I was hindered by my uncertainty as to my Lordship's health, and now, I fear in session time he will be throng. When my Lord has done with your copy,¹ if you send it to my Lord Pollock's lodgings sealed and directed for me, it will come perfectly safe. I was guessing by the delay of Mr Hepburn's affair that it would go to the Commission. I am, &c.

Jan. 14, 1723.

LETTER V.

TROCHRIDGE'S LETTERS AND LORD LOUDON'S PAPERS.

To Dr J. Stevenson at Ayr.

DEAR SIR,—I was not unmindful of yours of August the 28th ; but have not been since at Edinburgh. Now, you'll see that MS. in Dr Sibbald's printed catalogue.

When I was at Irvine in October last, I was a-coming to you, but one knows not when you are at home. Had I met with you I would have begged a view of Trochridge's² Letters and Epistolary Dissertations, which, no doubt, will contain many curious things. It may be, perhaps, too much to desire them this length with a sure hand, whom I would cause call at you. This I must leave entirely to yourself.

¹ Mr Hog's MS. copy of the Life of Mr Thomas Hog of Kiltearn. See vol. i. pp. 188, 190, of this Correspondence.

² Probably Robert Boyd of Trochrig, Principal of the College of Edinburgh.

If you have any occasion, pray forward the putting in order my Lord Loudon's papers; for I am sure there are there some curious things little known. I have set Mr Falside on this, and I hope you will join your interest, at least to separate the private family papers from those of public and general concern. I am, Dear Sir, your affectionate cousin, and humble servant,

R. W.

January 14, 1723.

 LETTER VI.

MESSRS MASTERTON AND MAIR.—MR HEPBURN'S CALL TO EDINBURGH.

To Mr Robert M'Bride, Minister at Ballymony, Ireland.

REV. DEAR BROTHER,—Having the occasion of one in this neighbourhood coming to Belfast, though I have little to acquaint you with, I send this to the care of Mr Smith, mostly to crave an account of affairs with you since I heard from you. It's a satisfaction to us here to hear that Mr Masterton is transported to Belfast, and we are grieved to hear of Mr Mair's tampering with the Established Church. I wonder you wrote not to me of that affair. Pray let me know how it stands now. The Lord grant us grace to be fixed, stedfast, and unmoveable! It were hard to say this is a native consequence of any particular set of men's way; but I cannot help thinking that a modest and peremptory adhering to principles, a sincere fair owning them, and holding by sound forms of words, through the Divine blessing, is the safest way to be kept from wavering, and being carried away by every wind of doctrine, and the many temptations in this loose and unsettled time.

There is a new flame breaking out at Edinburgh. The magistrates, council, and several of the elders, with some of the ministers, have carried a call for Mr John Hepburn, (old Mr Hep-

burn's son,) to a vacancy there. The plurality of the ministers and elders were for Mr Smith of Cramond, and yet the council cast the scale for the other, and the Presbytery have declined to concur with the council, and remitted the matter to the Commission, and the magistrates and callers have appealed to the Synod. The difference betwixt Mr Smith and Mr Hepburn is too plain to be insisted on. However, this affair is making a great deal of noise.

At your leisure let me have all that is going among you. I think you promised me some pamphlets and papers when you were here. I would willingly see a copy of the discipline proposed some years ago, and have copies of any curious manuscripts relating to Church affairs you have; and whatever charges you are at in copying I shall willingly refund. Pray send me every thing you have or can procure as to the lives of ministers, ecclesiastical affairs, and remarkable providences. Give my kindest respects to your mother and brother, Mr Gilbert Kennedy, Mr Lang, Mr Masterton, and all brethren of my acquaintance; and write frequently to, Rev. Dear Brother, yours most affectionately.

Eastwood, Jan. 15, 1723.

LETTER VII.

CONTROVERSIAL WRITINGS IN IRELAND.

*To Mr William Livingston, Minister at Temple-Patrick, Ireland,
for present at Edinburgh.*

REV. DEAR SIR,—Yesterday, when I came home, I had yours and Mr Smith's, with the Apology for the Northern Ministers,¹

¹ This tract was published this year by Mr Masterton, under the title of "Apology for the Northern Presbyterians in Ireland." It contained a reply to Mr Abernethy's

which I set myself presently to peruse, that I might dispatch it without loss of time by this post, that Professor Hamilton might have it as soon as possible ; and I enclose it with this to our friend, Mr Gilbert Montier.

You'll easily guess I have but glanced it over, though with a great deal of pleasure and satisfaction. It's in my opinion the very best paper I have seen on your affairs, and handles the subject of subscription with a great deal of accuracy and solidity. It's a full and complete Answer to the Seasonable Advice, which I still took to be the most dangerous performance on the other side. It's done with that life and spirit, and yet free from severity and keenness, that is ready to mix in with debates of this nature, which cannot but recommend it to impartial readers. Two or three things I noticed in it of very little consequence, of which I shall talk with you when it pleases the Lord we meet again, and then write to Mr Masterton with you. The passage, pp. 16-20, about one argument in Mr Dunlop's Preface, I leave to the remarks you will probably receive from Professor Hamilton. Mr Masterton wrote to me last summer a hint, which I find here enlarged, upon Mr Dunlop's argument from the nature of societies, which, in his opinion, proves too much. I cannot say I am so ripe upon that subject as to answer the difficulty Mr Masterton moves. But the Professor, no doubt, will give his opinion upon it ; and if you think proper to communicate it with Mr Robert Stewart, Professor of Philosophy, who

“Seasonable Advice to the Protestant Dissenters in the North of Ireland ; being a Defence of the late General Synod's charitable Declarations,” which was first printed at Dublin in 1722, with a recommendatory Preface by the Rev. Nath. Weld, Joseph Boyce, and R. Choppin, as from an anonymous but judicious author. In 1724, Mr Abernethy wrote a vindication, entitled, “Reply to the Rev. Mr Masterton's in Defence of the Seasonable Advice to Dissenters in the North of Ireland, with a Postscript by the Rev. Messrs Weld, Boyce, and Choppin, in Vindication of their recommendatory Preface to the Seasonable Advice.” The disputes between the Subscribers and Non-subscribers gave rise to numerous tracts on both sides, as similar differences had done in England. “This paper war is, by all sober and thinking men, looked upon as a prelude to further mischiefs, and even to an open rupture, unless God, in infinite mercy, prevent them, and vouchsafe to heal our bleeding wounds.”—(*Letters to Wodrow*, vol. xx. No. 153.)

has had his thoughts much upon this subject of Confessions, and on whom you may entirely depend, he will give you his sentiments with all freedom. I give my kindest respects to them both, and the Earl of Buchan if in town, and Colonel Erskine.

As to the printing of this paper, my thoughts are that it is very fit for the press, and may do a great deal of service; but then I am not so far acquainted with the precise terms of your last General Synod's Act, as to know how far printing on this subject is discharged for peace sake, nor with the circumstances our Rev. Brother will be in when he comes to settle at Belfast, which may, perhaps, render it unseasonable for him to renew the debates in a public manner. These I must entirely leave to your own consideration; only I shall be sorry if the particular circumstances of your bounds make it necessary for ministers and well-affected people to lie under the misrepresentations and obloquy the Non-subscribers scatter about, without answering, and deprive us of so useful and well-formed an apology as this is. I give my kindest respects to Mr Smith, and expect to hear from you as oft as you can. I pray the Lord may support you under the frailty of your health; and am yours.

Feb. 5, 1723.

LETTER VIII.

EPISCOPAL MEETING-HOUSES.—SETTLEMENTS IN PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCHES.—THE M'MILLANTES.

To Mr David Brown, Minister at Peterhead.

REV. DEAR BROTHER,—It was with a particular pleasure that I received yours of the 16th of January this week, after so long indisposition you have been under, and some prayers and many fears

among your friends about the state of your health. I pray for the sanctified improvement of this rod to you and your people, and the confirmation of your health, and much success in the work of the Lord. May it be good for you to bear the yoke in your youth; and may you have strength and a spirit fitted to the place and time your lot is cast in. Peculiar difficulties have peculiar promises and assistances; and if we be not wanting in our dependence we will find this. Our good Master sends none a warfare upon his own charges. I am glad to find you are not without some grounds of comfort amidst many discouragements. Observe carefully the day of small things, and press after more.

I am grieved to hear of the vast number of meeting-houses you tell me of. We were in hopes the Rebellion would have eased you in part of that burden; but it seems growing. Let me know which of them use the English Service, and whether generally, as I suppose they are, they be Non-jurors, with every thing relative to the state of your Synod and neighbourhood, the growth of Popery, the measures taken by the Popish priests, and every thing you would desire to know were you here. I heard but sorry accounts of Mr Clarehugh, and never expected any other than what you tell me of Mr Hunter.

Nothing of the debates with your uncle, nor his answers, has come to my hand, save a sheet and a half in folio, he was pleased to give me at the Assembly. All other things in the debate will be most welcome. I wonder much my book has any converts in the North, especially among the ladies; one would think it's not calculate for them, and that its bulk would fright them. I shall be glad, however, if it be of any use anywhere. Most of the Bishops in England have got it, and the Low Church is better satisfied with it than I could have well promised myself. The Princess has done me the honour to read over the first volume, and the Prince has read most of it. They make me believe from London that it may be of some use among the English, who are very much strangers to our affairs. If so, whatever rude treatment I may have from our Scots Jacobites, I hope to be the easier. They are busy I hear

at Edinburgh gathering up materials for recrimination, which will not be an answer to me. But it becomes me to say nothing till I see their performance.

Very little offers from this country that I can think of worth your while. You'll have heard all our vacancies are supplied; and at last we have got Paisley planted with another minister.

Our settlements are turning extremely vexatious, and too much by our differences among ourselves, and some striking in with patrons. Glasgow is happily settled with Mr M'Laren, and his voice answers much better than was expected. Poor Eaglesham is miserably rent, Kilmarnock is not like soon to settle; Glasserton is lately vacated, by honest Mr Borland's death. Old Mr Hepburn is a-dying, and they say presses union and peace much. *Præstat sero quam nunquam*. The M'Millanites are much disjointed among themselves. Gilchrist is dead, and Taylor traversing the country, swearing all he allows to baptism never to hear any of the established ministers; but he will never make any hand. This is the shortest sketch of our affairs I can think of.

At London, the debates betwixt Subscribers and Non-subscribers are reviving, and in Ireland things are in very lamentable circumstances. I hope by my next to be in case to give larger accounts of their state. I have almost now wearied you; and I don't use to scribble so long. But as I was fond to hear from you, so it's a pleasure to me to write to you again. I remember all your relations and all brethren of my acquaintance. Be sure to write often to me by post, when private hands offer not, and send all pamphlets that are a-going. Great grace be with you! I send this in that your sister may write on the other side; and am your affectionate brother.

Eastwood, Feb. 8, 1723.

LETTER IX.

DR FERGUSON AND THE IRISH NON-SUBSCRIBERS.

To Mr John Simson, S. T. P. Glasgow.

REV. DEAR BROTHER,—I had a letter a day or two ago from Mr Gilbert Kennedy, wherein he desires me to thank the Principal and you in his name, for the declaration in his favours sent over last spring. He has little on their affairs, being in haste, and refers to Mr William Livingston, who hath been with you. Only he sends me the copy of a part of a letter of Dr Ferguson's,¹ and desires me to communicate it with the Principal and you, and earnestly desires our judgment concerning the article the Doctor objects against. You'll see the Doctor does not repeat the words of our Confession themselves faithfully, and both as it stands in our Confession, and as he turns it *united*, it contains the doctrine of all Christians I know of, save the Nestorians, for I doubt if the Socinians and Arians ought to be so called.

This letter makes me fear the Non-subscribers have somewhat at bottom against some of the articles of our Confession. And if they would speak it out, this would be much more generous and fair,

¹ The part of Dr Ferguson's letter referred to is as follows: "I see your people have not cast off their pharisaical zeal for the traditions of the fathers, more than the great truths of the Gospel. The Confession (they are very little judges of) is their Great Diana, to which the Scriptures must yield. The Bible shall be my foundation, and no confession of fallible men, especially such large ones, with some very abstruse notions as ours, of 170 articles, and above a thousand different propositions; some vain philosophy, as Chap. viii. art. 2, where 'tis averred that the two distinct natures are perfectly united without composition. Make any zealot unriddle me that, before I subscribe that notion or untruth to be the confession of my faith. Several other such I could give, but this may suffice to cool the temper of any hot zealot that neglects the Bible."—(*Letters to Wodrow*, vol. xx. No. 175.)

and liker honest men, than to keep us at long weapons, and fighting in the dark about Subscribing and Non-subscribing. This is all that offers to me in the general.

I don't question but the Principal and you will give your opinion on that article; and certainly it will be strengthening to our brethren to have our sentiments on what casts up among them. If you send it to me I shall transmit it, being to write to him in eight or ten days. You have the copy of the letter and objection enclosed. Send me all your Holland news, since P. P. went over. I am yours.

Feb. 8, 1723.

LETTER X.

SUBSCRIBERS AND NON-SUBSCRIBERS.

To Mr Samuel Smith, Merchant in Belfast, for present at Edinburgh.

DEAR SIR,—I have yours this post, with the enclosed prints from Belfast, printed since you came thence, and am very much grieved to think on the consequences of Mr Kilpatrick and Mr Halliday, their open appearing against your new erection, after, as I take it, they had yielded to that settlement, at least, had been overruled in the General, and, I suppose, the Particular Synod, who concurred in this new erection. And now, just upon Mr Master-ton's settlement there, by the unanimous act of the committee of the General Synod, to appear in such a manner, looks to me like an insulting your judicatories, and to have a great deal more in it tending to schism, than any thing I can observe in the people who sought that new erection.

The author of the Letter to a Minister in Scotland I know not;

but people will be ready to lay it at Mr Kilpatrick's and Mr Haliday's door; and be who he will, he takes no little freedom with the Church of Scotland, by his innuendos, and some very rough and pretty positive expressions, that we are unseasonably meddling with your affairs in the North of Ireland. And it's a wonder to me how our last Synod's Act at Irvine has escaped a fling.

There seems to me, in both the papers, to be plain misrepresentations of facts, as I have had them represented with you in Ireland; and a vast noise is made of a flame raised at Glasgow when you were last here, which I am a stranger to.

These things, with the most undue liberty taken with your character, make me of opinion you ought to vindicate yourself, and set matters misrepresented in a true light; and as soon as ever you hear that copies of these papers are spread at Glasgow, where, I am of opinion, they will soon cast up, though I have not yet heard of them, to have some short paper ready to be printed, and not till then. For, if it were possible to bury these matters, it were much to be wished; but, indeed, I fear things are past that, and I am sorry for it. These prints give me a more melancholy view of your affairs at Belfast than any thing I have yet seen; and I cannot but allow myself heartily to sympathise with the Rev. Mr Masterton, under the difficulties he is like to have to grapple with among you; but I hope the Lord will support him under them.

Give my kindest respects to Mr Livingston. I am glad of what you write. I see some precautions are taken in one of the papers against his coming over, as well as yours, though he is not named. I have Mr M'Bride's, and shall talk with you at meeting; and am, till then, and ever, yours most affectionately.

Feb. 18, 1723.

LETTER XI.

WODROW'S HISTORY.—MATHER'S WRITINGS.—NEWS.

To the Rev. Cotton Mather, D.D., and Minister at Boston.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,—Yours to me, of the date January 1st, was more than ordinarily welcome. Since you honoured me first with your correspondence, I was never half so long without the benefit of your letters. The last I had from you was dated May or June 1719. How uneasy I was under so great a loss I shall not express; but the pleasure of seeing yours again makes me forget my uneasiness in part, though still it must be a sensible mortification to me that I want so many of your letters as you tell me you have sent in that time.

Your favourable opinion of my History gives me much satisfaction, after all the toil and pains I have been at in collecting the materials of it. Our most gracious Sovereign King George has done me the honour to receive the copy I presumed to send him, and was pleased to say he would read it. Their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess were pleased each of them to accept of a copy, and have caused acquaint me that they have read the first volume, and will read the other. May the Lord, who has helped me through this tedious work, make it of some use to state the circumstances of this Church, and our worthy confessors and martyrs, to persons of their influence!

I most heartily thank you for the kind offer you make, to procure a request for my book in America. I have printed but a very few copies beyond what were subscribed for, and what I designed for my friends, whom I presumed to put in with the subscribers. Forgive me, Dear Sir, when I add, that you surprise me a little in what follows, when you desire to know the price of

the books, that you may remit the money. Allow me to say, you have forgot the obligations you have been laying on me year by year, and oftener, now since the 1709 or 1710. By my putting in your name among the subscribers (for which, I think, I had your allowance) I never designed you should pay for my book. Be assured I am not altogether so insensible of the uncommon ties you have laid me under. I wish I had had somewhat of more worth to have sent you. It was an uneasiness to me, that I could not send over a copy likewise to your venerable parent, as was my duty; but at that time, when the ship came off, I could not procure one at Glasgow, and so took the liberty to desire you to communicate the copy I sent you to him; and now it's too late to do it, for the first volumes are all disposed of. Pray give my most humble duty to him, if yet alive; and let him know how fond I would be to have his judgment of my History, and once more to hear from him before he get to heaven.

We were very much alarmed and grieved when, by the London prints, we found eight or ten of the ministers of New England (as they were pleased to magnify the numbers) were conformed to the Church of England. It pleases me to hear that only the treacherous rector is gone to England.¹ Those offences and defections must be; and I persuade myself holy Providence has great end to accomplish by them. You'll please to continue your accounts of these apostates.

As soon as I saw your Christian Philosopher advertised at Edinburgh, I got it, and read it with much pleasure. You have, indeed, joined Christian and the Philosopher to great advantage, and I

¹ It would appear that at the new College at Newhaven in Connecticut Colony, Mr Timothy Cutler, the Rector, who was distinguished for his learning and popular talents as a preacher, suddenly declared himself for the Church of England, and denied the validity of Presbyterian ordination. He brought over to his views one of the tutors, and they went over together to London to receive orders. His example and influence also unsettled the minds of several ministers, which excited great alarm. "But the most of the few apostates," says Dr Mather, "have reconciled themselves to their offended churches."—(*Letters to Wodrow*, vol. xx. Nos. 28 F. and 29.)

heartily thank you for your many religious and judicious improvements you have made in a subject that was still a *παρεργον* to me. I have seen nothing from America upon the Arian controversy, save your excellent letter to Mr Bradbury published.

It's time I should thank you for the valuable packet of American productions which attend your kind letter. It's but eight or ten days since I had them, and last week I was at Edinburgh, so I have not yet got through them. *The Princely Convert* is what makes me long for further accounts, from your useful correspondence with the pious and learned Frankius. Your Relation from Tercera is very entertaining. Your Nishmath-chajim contains many new and enlightening matters, which will be matter of thought and inquiry. Your Advice to a Son I design very soon to put into the hands of my eldest, if once he were a little more in case to take up the solid and strong reasoning in it. *The Right Way to Shake off a Viper* has been of use to me under somewhat of late that has befallen me. And I particularly thank you for your father's Legacy. I see he is still bringing forth fruit in his extreme old age. May the Lord bless it, and yet give some more!

My Lord Pollock came west with me from Edinburgh on the 16th; and I communicate some of yours to him; for which he returns you thanks, and gives his kindest respects to you and your parent. The rest he shall have when I next wait on him. May the Lord long preserve that worthy person!

Since my last, very little offers from us in this Church. We enjoy much peace and liberty, when our neighbours in England and Ireland are fighting one with another, and too many (alas! even among those of whom better things might be expected) against the truth, the great and fundamental truths. We have a very great share in the amazing decay of real religion, which gives too much ground for your affecting apprehensions about us. We have much ground to fear a determined consumption and a long controversy, unless preventing blessings and glorious sovereignty interpose. Continue to pray for us, as we do for the dear churches with you.

Our Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge in our High-

lands and Islands goes well on ; new schools are frequently set up, and many of those who sit in darkness are much enlightened. Our God is wonderfully appearing, in discovering, and, in part, disappointing, the dreadful plots formed against us. But, alas ! we are not bettering, but sinning more and more, and have much reason to fear the heaviest of judgments. Allow me to beg the favour of your letters, and all your accounts you can send me from your extensive correspondence ; extracts from which, by your amanuensis, would be a great favour, with your thoughts continued upon the present aspect of providences, and the state of religion through all the churches.

May the Lord continue you long at useful services for learning and religion, and bless your daily designs and efforts for doing of good and great things ! I am, Rev. and very Dear Sir, your most affectionate brother, and most humble servant.

March 18, 1723.

LETTER XII.

BAPTISM OF RABBI JUDAH MONIS.

*Benjamin Colman to Wodrow.*¹

REV. AND DEAR SIR,—Mrs Erskine has staid so long since I sealed up mine to you by her, (a large letter and two packets,) that I am obliged to write to you again ; though I have nothing new to inform you of but of the baptism of a learned and pious Jew, a fortnight ago, at Cambridge in our College Hall, by Mr Appleton, the reverend pastor of the church there. He is a great master and critic in the Hebrew tongue, a most ready scribe, and truly διδάσκαλος, most apt to teach and communicate his

¹ Letters to Wodrow, vol. xx. No. 28.

knowledge. His name is Rabbi Judah Monis, in the thirty-fifth year of his life, a very sober man, and of good conversation. His knowledge is great in the Holy Scriptures, both of the Old and New Testament, and also in the writings of the Rabbies. He both speaks and writes the Hebrew with a perfect ease and readiness, and his writing is even as the print. He wrote out the Books of Moses for a synagogue in Holland some years ago, and has sojourned with us here several years, and been gradually convinced and enlightened by study and discourse. He made a large discourse to us before his baptism, wherein he answered the arguments and objections of the Jews against our Christian Faith, and then solemnly professed his own belief in Christ, as the true Messiah, and the dedication of himself unto him as the alone Saviour. Mr President Leverett, the head of our college, required me to open the solemnity with prayer, and to give the audience a discourse upon the occasion, which I did from these words of our Saviour, John v. 46, "For, had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me." Mr Monis has already wrote two treatises on the Divinity of Christ, and on the doctrine of the Trinity. He writes but broken English. But he has also turned the Assembly's Catechism into pure Hebrew, which I think was never done before; and he seems to be much set on doing something considerable for the conversion of his nation by the will of God.

I thought, Sir, that it would not be unacceptable to you to be informed of this rare and singular occurrence among us; and, indeed, you require me to inform you of every thing that may at any time be extraordinary.

Mr Monis has taught more Hebrew here this last year than has been learned, it may be, these twenty years before; for we have no Hebrew Professor; but our tutors teach a little of it to their pupils, according to the measure of their own knowledge. How far he may be used among us, or what may be in the womb of Providence, time must show; but many of us are not without much hope.

When you pray for the conversion of that once beloved people, as I believe you daily do, I ask a remembrance for Mr Monis, whom you will put among your Christian brethren, with, Rev. and Dear Sir, your affectionate brother and servant,

BENJAMIN COLMAN.

Boston, New England, April 10, 1722.

LETTER XIII.

WODROW'S HISTORY.—INOCULATION.—MR HOLLIS.

To the Rev. Mr Benjamin Colman, Minister of the Gospel at Boston.

REV. DEAR BROTHER,—I am now run very much in your debt, and shall scarce be able to discharge it for a long time. Your two most valuable packets came to my hand towards the end of last summer, and, by their direction, I found they were by Mrs Erskine. But the letters which came with them I had not till January 1723; whether they were mislaid, or what was the matter, I have not yet learned. And about eight days ago I have yours in December, with not a few productions of yours and your brethren, which are highly acceptable to me.

In a day or two after I had your last, I was obliged to go into Edinburgh to the Commission of our Assembly, which took up last week, and this day I hear the ship that brought yours leaves us again in a day or two. I would not willingly miss her, and have only time almost to acknowledge the receipt of yours, and return my hearty thanks.

It was Mr Stirling's loss that he was so little at Boston, at least with you; and I am much obliged to you for your kind concern in him, had he given you opportunity to show it. His excellent father has been laid by from public work for some months. He is

now, blessed be God, better; indeed, for wrestling and usefulness, we have none almost that come up to him.

I am glad my book has come safe to your hand. I was ashamed to send it in sheets; but many times I am so put to it by the hasty sailing of your vessels, that I cannot do what I would, and I chose rather to send it naked than miss the occasion. It's some satisfaction to me that I was in case to send you any thing of mine (though it's a collection, and little of it I can call mine) in return for your far more important and useful performances; for I must still reckon those the most useful that most nearly concern the great interest of souls. And upon a fair balancing of accounts, I cannot yield to you the debt lies on your side. I have got beyond you, indeed, a little in bulk, but that's a poor matter. However, I'll still put in for a share in what comes from your hand and your friends, not on the score of debt, but the friendship you have been pleased to allow me.

Your favourable opinion of the History is what is very satisfying to me; but I still suspect my friends overlook my weaknesses from the regard they bear to the general scope of the work, which is certainly useful, could I have managed as I ought. It happens that your sentiments and those of my enemies for once agree, that it has given a wound to the cause of Prelacy. And though you are pleased with this, yet the people of the other side are extremely angry with me, and are very busy making up a large work (as they give out) in answer to it, (if recrimination deserves that name.) When it's published, it's time enough for me to speak of it.

Our debates with some of our brethren, that affect to speak too near the Antinomians, are not yet at an end; though our last General Assembly, by a very large act, stated that matter very fully and plainly. Our next Assembly is yet like to have some further trouble from one of them; the event of which I must leave till May next, when they sit again.

I am glad my hint as to this led you in to give me so large an account of the disturbance made at Boston on the matter of inoculating, which I wonder much how people who have any reflection,

and are in case but to cast up a common account, and balance the difference in the deaths among the inoculate to those not inoculate, can stand out against clear evidence of fact. You'll be pleased to see the exact calculations of Mons. Jurine, and another I have forgot, upon this head, in the Philosophical Transactions of December last; and I doubt not but they will reach before this.

The Lord's goodness in putting such a great and good work in the heart of Mr Hollis¹ to your College, and using you as an instrument in it, is matter of joy to me and several others, to whom I have communicate that noble benefaction. May the Lord render to him blessings sevenfold! But I don't observe that some of that society are improving so great a benefit as they ought to do, in the alterations they are making of the reasonable and just methods of managing the common affairs, which I am sorry for, and it bodes not well. However, you may have peace in the good you have done, and your reward shall be with the Lord.

You will be sorry to hear that divisions somewhat of akin to yours have been for some time in the University of Glasgow, where the regents and other masters, under pretext of mismanagements,

¹ "I do not know whether I wrote you last year of the great favour of God to our College, in the bounty of one Mr Thomas Hollis of London, merchant, to it; in the obtaining whereof, God has been pleased, principally, to use my poor hand for the greatest part. He has sent over to us such sums of money as that already has appointed ten poor students, pious and diligent, and devoted to the ministry of Christ in his church, (no dunces or rakes ever to be nominated or allowed,) annually to receive each ten pounds a-year, to assist them in their studies. To this hundred a-year, so devoted, he has added eighty pounds per annum, for a Professor of Divinity, to read public and private lectures on positive and controversial divinity; the private so often every week as to go through the courses within the year. The overseers of the College (who are the Governor, Council, and the Ministers of Boston, Cambridge, Charlestown, Watertown, Dorchester, and Roxburgh) have ordered it to be known by the name and style of the Hollis Professor in Harvard College. Our benefactor is one of the best of men, a Baptist in judgment, yet in stated communion with the Congregational church meeting at Princess Hall, London; a most pious and devout Christian, and of a truly catholic and generous soul. He allows the treasurer of the College ten pounds per annum for making up and sending over his accounts every year. I hope, Sir, we shall have your prayers for this foundation, that it may be blessed of God, and for our dear and gracious founder, whose heart God has so enlarged and inclined."—(Colman to Wodrow.)

which is not your case, by the Principal and others, of which they have given no proofs, make great outcries. They are so far broken among themselves, and lead in (quite wrong) the scholars to their parties, that, with the utmost regret I write it, that learned society are losing that reputation they once had among us. It is a very dismal sign when breaches get in among the fountains of learning. I pray God they never come to any height with you!

Your other letter takes me off this melancholy subject, and again and again I thank you for it. Nothing has offered to me, these many years, that has been more refreshing than your account of dear Mr Monis, to whom I give my most affectionate remembrance. The Lord be with him, and strengthen him to do great things for His name, and the interests of Christianity, and his own brethren according to the flesh! This is a providence I hope may have a train of consequences yet unknown to us following it. I thank you for your discourse at his baptism, which is the only thing in your last valuable packet I have yet read. I have communicate your account with a good many brethren, whose mouths are filled with praises and prayers for our Christian brother; and, indeed, I am begging prayers for him at all hands. If he shall publish any thing, I know you will send it me. When I am upon this pleasant subject, I remember a fault I was guilty of, in not sending a copy of my dear and worthy friend, the learned Mr Jameson, his *Spicilegia Ægyptiaca*, last year save one, when it was published a little before that great man's death. I know not how it fell out of my mind to send you the book; but, if you have it not already, I know it will be acceptable; and if Mr Monis has not seen it, pray communicate it with him. Had I another, I would have sent one to him; and I'll be fond to have his sentiments upon a book whose subject he is so well acquainted with.

I am grieved for the unthankful and most irregular carriage of Mr Sturgeon. I heard some account of his unsavoury carriage when a student at Glasgow some years ago, if he be the same youth, (as I think he is,) and that he was stopped in his licentiatory trials for some immorality; but I can't be distinct in matter,

for I only transiently learned of the thing. But he was not of good report; and now it seems the Lord has left him to discover himself among you, to the reproach of religion. I wish you had had more of an established order and government, and that none were received without full and particular testimonials from the places whence they come.

We had the account of the defection at Newhaven in our public prints, which grieved us much; but it's not so ill as we had it represented, though lamentable enough. By a letter from London about a month ago, I find that apostate Rector has given an open challenge to our brethren there to defend our ordination; and some of them gave themselves the trouble of a meeting with him, and found him ignorant and empty in his own cause, in a surprising measure, and a perfect braggadocio; but you'll have no doubt better accounts than I can give you thence.

Pray return my hearty thanks to worthy Mr Wadsworth for his valuable papers. I beg a room in his affection and interest at the throne of grace. Nothing at present offers to me published here, otherwise I would have sent it, save a few communion sermons of Mr Halyburton's, which I present to him. It's posthumous, and comes not up to some other of that great man's works. I was importuned to send you over his book on Natural Religion, which, if there be any room to dispose of among you, I'll be glad of it; but shall send none of them till you order. Indeed, the risk of sending them, and the discount betwixt your money and ours, and the unfrequency of occasions of returns, made me not much in liking with the proposal; but at his relict her desire I did presume to make it.

I again thank you for your accounts of good and more troublesome things in New England, and have scarce left room for any thing from Scotland to you. Indeed, blessed be the Lord, very little afflicting offers. We enjoy, through the goodness of God, much peace, and many glorious advantages. But we are under a melancholy declining state as to vital religion. Our meeting-houses increase in the northern parts by the Toleration. But if the

Lord will, after our next Assembly, I shall be in case to give you what is a-going, if a ship offer. Let me beg the continuance of your entertaining correspondence, with all your remarkables. Pardon my haste, and continue the share you have allowed me in your love and prayers. The Lord's grace and spirit be with you and your family, whose preservation I bless the Lord for; and am, Dear Sir, yours in many ties.

March 18, 1723.

LETTER XIV.

WITH A MEMORIAL OF ALENANDER HENDERSON.

To James Fraser, Esq., London.

DEAR SIR,—I am ashamed I am so long in writing to you; but the true reason was, that in the winter-time I am generally taken up in parochial work among my people; and, being of late pretty much abroad, I had not time till this week to put together what I have heard and read about Mr Henderson; and, till I could send you somewhat, though it's but very little, I was out of countenance to write to you.

I have yet had nothing from my friends at Edinburgh and Fife about him, and am put off till May, when the Assembly sits. Meanwhile, I send these lame hints, which I hope to enlarge afterwards, as I get information.

By my last, which I hope reached you, I sent you a list of what I have of Mr Henderson's in print and manuscript. If any extracts from these can be of any use, you'll command them.

This is my third to you since I have had any from you; though, you may guess, I am longing to hear from you. I know things of the nature of mine are not soon got done with great men; but, as

soon as you bring it to any bearing with my Lord Townshend, you'll please to let me know, with all your news from the learned world, and what further you have to acquaint concerning the fate of my History in England, and, particularly, when I may have the pleasure of seeing you in Scotland. This comes under my Lord Buchan's cover from, Dear Sir, yours most affectionately.

March 22, 1723.

“ MEMORIAL ABOUT MR ALEXANDER HENDERSON.”

March 20, 1723.

MR ALEXANDER HENDERSON was born *anno* [1583,] of parents of good esteem, and descended from the family of Fordel (Henderson) in Fife, an old family and of good repute, represented (at least some years ago) by Sir John Henderson of Fordel. Very early he discovered his inclination to learning, and uncommon ability for it. When at the study of the languages, he was observed much to exceed his fellow-students. He studied Philosophy at the University of St Andrews, and there was made Master of Arts; and in a very little time after his graduation, he was advanced to be a Regent or Professor of Philosophy in that University, and taught philosophy about eight years with no little applause. It was then not unusual, and, if I mistake not, there was some regulation formed about it, that Professors of Philosophy, after eight years' teaching, if found qualified, were to be licensed to preach the Gospel; and after that they were ordinarily advanced to the holy ministry; and not a few of the ablest and gravest of the ministers of this Church were such as had for some time taught in our universities; and a succession of learned men this way were, year after year, coming into the ministry.

Mr Henderson all along directed his studies so as he might serve God and his generation this way. And when he left teach-

ing in the university, he was very soon settled minister in the parish of Leuchars, two miles from St Andrews.

Whatever proficiency Mr Henderson had made in learning, and however great his gifts were at his first entry into the ministry, he used to acknowledge afterwards to his bosom friends, that he was hitherto much a stranger to the life and power of godliness and real piety, and to own that great man, Mr Robert Bruce, was the instrument of his conversion. The occasion of which was this :— Mr Bruce's fame was very great, and Mr Henderson had heard much of him, and turned more than ordinarily desirous to hear him preach. He happened, some time after Mr Henderson's ordination, to be invited to assist at the dispensation of the Sacrament of the Supper somewhere in Fife, and Mr Henderson went to hear him, but privately, and as much under disguise as possible. I have heard it reported by old ministers, that Mr Bruce, happening to handle at that time the 10th chapter of John, insisted a little upon the verses 1st and 2d, when introducing himself to the 3d verse, and that what he said upon thieves and robbers coming in not by the door, but some other way, proved not a little alarming to him. Whatever be in this, Mr Bruce's sermon was made singularly useful to him, and after that time he fell into the serious and earnest study of piety, and became a burning as well as a shining light.

The more he was exercised to vital serious religion, the more he fell into a dislike of many things common at this time in the Church of Scotland. Corruptions in doctrine, and no small tendencies to Popery and Pelagianism, were getting in among the most noted of the inferior clergy. The Bishops dipped themselves [in] to the affairs of state, followed the politics, and pursued after civil posts and offices. Mr Henderson, with many other pious and faithful ministers, groaned under these corruptions, and, after bearing testimony against them in all methods they could reach, kept frequent meetings for prayer and wrestling.

When a uniformity with the hierarchy and ceremonies of the Church of England was very near accomplished, and the Canons

and Liturgy imposed upon all ministers without exception, Mr Henderson, in the year 1637, was among the first who presented a petition to the Privy Council for relief from the burdens imposed. Without any previous concert, and perfectly unknown one to another, four of these petitioners met at Edinburgh, among whom Mr Henderson brought that from Fife, and this was the first public step to that great revolution in the year 1637 and 1638.

Upon the delays and various turns the petitioners met with from the Council and managers in Scotland and England, those who were appearing for reformation and the liberties of the nation, found themselves under a necessity of frequent meetings at Edinburgh. In these, commonly termed *The Green Tables*, composed of Commissioners from shires and burghs, and considerable numbers of the nobility and ministers from different corners, Mr Henderson bore no small share, and had a chief hand in drawing the declarations, advertisements, protestations, informations, and other public papers emitted at that time.

In the year 1638, when the King was prevailed upon to call a General Assembly at Glasgow, such was the value every body had for Mr Henderson, that he was unanimously chosen Moderator of that Assembly, where he had a large scene to exert his prudence and other abilities, necessary to one in that chair at so critical a juncture.

When the methods that Assembly took proved disagreeable to his Majesty and those about him, who were for running things to an extremity, and a breach betwixt the two nations seemed almost unavoidable, armies being raised on both sides, and the King come the length of Berwick, Mr Henderson was pitched upon, by reason of his known wisdom and capacity for managing difficult affairs, to wait upon the Commissioners who were sent to attend his Majesty and his council at Berwick. The matters now in debate very much concerned ecclesiastical affairs, and it was not unreasonable that a minister of his loyalty and prudence should be with the Commissioners sent to treat upon those and other matters. And whatever injurious consequences are drawn by some, from Mr Henderson's

being named to go along with these Commissioners, as if his were a going out of his line as a minister, and what did not become one who had so much blamed the Bishops for intermeddling with politics and civil affairs; yet these are groundless, and might easily be taken off were this a place for it. In the conferences with his Majesty and the English Commissioners, when he was called to give information as to what related to the Church, he acquired very much reputation, and was extremely useful to bring matters to a bearing betwixt the two nations.

Yea, such was the value both sides had for this great man, that when the Assembly met again with his Majesty's Commissioner, he (the Earl of Traquair) very much urged that Mr Henderson should again be chosen Moderator; and notwithstanding matters at the former Assembly were carried in manner the Earl was not so fond of, yet he gave him the highest encomiums. But the Commissioner's proposal was not fallen in with, lest it should be a handle to bring in constant Moderators, one of the first steps towards Episcopacy in Scotland, and for other reasons.

Again, in the year 1640, when the treaty betwixt Scotland and England had been for some time in dependence at Newcastle, and was transferred to London, Mr Henderson, with Mr Robert Baillie and some others, was sent up there to give just accounts of the procedure of the ministry and Covenanters in Scotland since the 1637, where he behaved so faithfully, wisely, and zealously, as much recommended him to leading men on both sides in England, and he continued at London part of the 1641.

Next year he was again sent up from Scotland with the Chancellor and others, who went up to compromise matters betwixt the King and the English Parliament. But things were come to such a height in England that peaceful methods were not hearkened to.

In the year 1643, Mr Henderson was pitched upon, with Mr Samuel Rutherford, Mr Robert Baillie, and Mr G. Hutchison, ministers, to be commissioners from the Church of Scotland to the Assembly of Divines at Westminster. There he bore that part as was very much for the reputation of those who sent him; and I am

informed that Mr Henderson had a chief hand in drawing up the Confession of Faith and Catechisms, and particularly the Directory for Worship and Ordination.

Mr Henderson being so much busied in that great work, continued at London till the year 1646, when the King returned to the Scots army. The Commissioners from Scotland waited upon him, and he and Mr Henderson entered into a reasoning by interchanging papers upon Episcopacy. The papers are printed, and speak for themselves. I have heard it from old ministers, who lived at that time, Mr Henderson gave a return to the King's last paper that is printed; but, by concert, copies of it were suppressed, that, in decency, the royal disputant might have the last word. The King expressed at that time an uncommon esteem of Mr Henderson for his learning, piety, and solidity.

At Newcastle, Mr Henderson, through the long fatigue of business, and advancing years, turned sickly, and chose to come down by sea to Leith. From thence he came to Edinburgh, and in a very few weeks got to his reward, for the services he had done to religion and liberty. I am well informed of a very remarkable passage a few days before he died. Upon his return to Edinburgh he was invited to dine with his good friend Mr, afterwards Sir James Stewart, after Lord Provost of Edinburgh, and was extremely cheerful and hearty at dinner. After dinner was over, in conversation, he asked Sir James, if he had not observed him more than ordinarily cheerful? He answered, he was extremely pleased to find him so well as he was. Well, said the other, I am near the end of my race, hasting home, and there was never a schoolboy more desirous to have the play than I am to have leave of this world; and in a few days (naming the time) I will sicken, and at such a time die. In my sickness I will be much out of ease to speak any thing; but I desire you may be with me as much as you can, and you shall see all will end well. All fell out as he had foretold. I think it was a fever he fell into, and during much of it he was in much disorder; only when ministers came in he would de-

sire them to pray, and all the time of prayer he was still, composed, and most affectionately joined. And, at the time he spoke of, he died in the Lord, with some peculiar circumstances extremely affecting to Sir James. This I had from a person of honour, who heard Sir James more than once relate it.

He was very honourably buried in the Greyfriars' Churchyard, where a monument was erected to his memory. I have elsewhere given account of the orders given, in the after times of fury and violence, to rase the inscription upon his pillar, to which I refer you. He was never married, and so left no posterity. I am ashamed to give so lame an account of this extraordinary person ; but till I have further time to make inquiry, this is all that offers about him.

I have already sent you my sentiments upon that spurious paper published after his death by his enemies, and have little to add to the pamphlet I referred you to as to this.

Only a passage or two more anent Henderson comes to my memory, upon reading over what is above. That sermon of Mr Bruce, before hinted at, was not only the occasion of his conversion, or the discovery of this to him, but an inlet to take up the evils in Prelacy ; and gradually he was brought to quit that way, and take the first public opportunity of testifying his dislike of it.

While he and many other ministers were groaning under the corruptions got and getting into the Church, they used frequently to meet in Fife, for prayer and conference. Mr James Wood, afterwards Professor of Divinity at St Andrews, was educate in the Episcopal way ; and, by his learning and great abilities, in case to say as much in the favours of Episcopacy as the argument was capable of. He came to Mr Henderson and visited him frequently. Mr Henderson, after his close observation of his learning and parts, took him with him to one of their meetings for prayer and conference in the neighbourhood, where generally the Lord, at that time, very much countenanced his servants, with a suitable effusion of the Spirit. Mr Wood was much affected with what he was witness to, and, in returning with Mr

Henderson, owned there was a singular measure of the Divine presence, far beyond what he had been witness to; and that his affections and inclinations to join himself with them were much moved; but added, his judgment was not yet satisfied, which behoved to be before he could leave the way he had been educate in. The other owned this highly reasonable, and referred him, for full conviction, to Mr Calderwood's *Altare Damascenum*, upon reading of which Mr Wood owned that his reason was fully satisfied; and, from that time, he left the prelatical sentiments.

I find, likewise, from very good hands, that during the sitting of the Assembly at Glasgow, Mr Henderson, notwithstanding of the vast fatigue he had through the day, yet, with some other ministers, used to spend the night-time, at least a great part of it, in meetings for prayer, and conference upon matters then in dependence; and that those meetings were remarkably countenanced of God; and that the Marquis of Argyle, and several others who sometimes joined in them, dated their conversion, or the knowledge of it, from these times.

LETTER XV.

DR FERGUSON AND THE CONFESSION OF FAITH.

To the Rev. Mr Gilbert Kennedy, Minister at Tullylish.

REV. DEAR BROTHER,—I have yours of November the 7th last from Mr Smith, and have done him all the service in my power for the design he has in hand. I wish more could have been done, but I hope what is done may be of use.

I communicate the copy of the letter subscribed V. F.¹ to those

¹ Victor Ferguson, M.D. See p. 15.

you desired me. The Principal and Professor give you their kindest respects, and would have written in a joint way with me our sentiments on the objections made against the Confession; but this week, to which they delayed this matter, the Synod met, and Mr Smith and Mr Livingston were just leaving us in haste to be home. In short, there appears to them or me very little in the objection. The citation is unfair, and not in the words of the Confession, which agree with the common opinion of the Reformed Churches; and the insinuated contrariety in the expressions hath been a thousand times answered. However, in this we are pleased, that the gentlemen on that side begin to deal fairly and frankly, and let us see where their objections lie, and keep not in the clouds against confessions in the general.

I heartily thank you for your account of the moving stone. It's an odd fact, and I beseech you let me have all the singularities of this kind that offer.

You have the sympathy of friends here; and I hope there are not a few who have your affairs very much at heart. Mr Livingston will give you a full account how matters are with us. And I persuade myself his coming over here hath set your affairs in their true light. To him I must refer you, having only time to beg you may write as oft as you can, and particularly after your next Synod, by post. I pray the Lord may support you, and be eminently present with you in your Master's work; and am, Dear Brother, yours most affectionately.

April 6, 1723.

LETTER XVI.

THE COLONEL'S SERVICES IN BEHALF OF THE CHURCH IN IRELAND.

To the Honourable Colonel Upton, at Upton Castle.

SIR,—I have had the pleasure of conversing once and again with your minister, Mr Livingston, upon the state of matters in the North of Ireland, of which I am sorry he has no better accounts to give.

Forgive my rudeness in presuming, when writing to him, to give you the trouble of this from one who wants the honour and benefit of personal acquaintance with you, and yet for many years has entertained the greatest value for you, upon accounts which might seem flattery to signify to yourself.

I bless the Lord, who has helped you to make vigorous appearances for the sinking interests of religion and the valuable concerns of liberty ; and cannot but esteem the stand you make for the Dissenting interest in the North of Ireland, which, in my opinion, was still upon the same Scriptural bottom with the Church of Scotland, to be an appearance both for real religion and true liberty, which I wish, in this loose age, be not turned to licentiousness.

It grieves me much, Sir, to hear of the opposition you meet with in so good a cause; and I venture to say, you want not a good many in this country who heartily bear burden with you, and pray and hope God will stand by you, and support you.

Another reason of my presuming upon this address to you, is a letter I had last week from your much respected friend, Colonel Erskine of Carnock, wherein he tells me he was to have written to you by Mr Livingston, but some way or other was hindered, and promised to send by an occasion coming to me his letters to you.

That person is not yet come, otherwise I had carefully sent the Colonel's letter with your worthy minister. But as soon as it comes to me, I will forward it by some sure hand.

The interests of Presbyterians in Scotland are so closely chained to those of the Dissenters in Ireland, that, when writing to you, I have presumed to send you a book I have lately published on the state of our affairs from the Restoration to the Revolution, which I humbly beg you please to receive from Mr Livingston, (to whom I directed it,) as a small token of the esteem I have for you. When you have leisure to look it over, I am ready to think you may meet with some new proofs of the Antichristian temper of our Scots Prelates, and the vile methods used in that period against many excellent persons of all ranks.

It's a book I can scarce call mine, except a little labour I was at in collecting of the materials, and placing them under their different subjects and periods; but the principal papers and vouchers I flatter myself may be worth your perusal. I wish I had had more time and better abilities to have put them in order.

It's now abroad, and, like other books, must have its fate. I shall only say, I had not ourselves in Scotland only in my eye in writing it. We know the facts generally; but I designed it for the information of our neighbours in England and Ireland, who, I doubt, are pretty much strangers to the barbarity of that period.

I ask pardon for this address from so mean a hand, and most heartily pray for the best blessings on your worthy family. If there be any thing in this country wherein I can serve you, please to lay your commands upon your most humble and faithful servant.

Eastwood, April 6, 1723.

LETTER XVII.

ENCLOSING THE PRECEDING LETTER.

*To the Rev. Mr William Livingston, Minister at Temple-
Patrick, Ireland.*

REV. DEAR BROTHER,—I have been thinking a little upon the motion you made this morning, and have sent both my volumes, directed to you, to Mr Smith's care. I cannot satisfy myself fully about the expediency of making a present of them to the Colonel. It looks so much, in this country, like an author putting his books off himself, when in a strait to dispose of them, which I believe you know is not my case. Could I take the same liberty with the Colonel as one might do with his equal, and were I not really apprehensive he would give himself more trouble than the matter deserves, I would be under no difficulty. The Colonel is a person, as I told you, I once had a mind to put in among my subscribers, and who certainly should have a book of the nature mine is of; but this I would not venture upon; and my inclination is yet under the former apprehensions, that you keep the books to yourself rather than put the Colonel upon the lock,¹ and send me their value in transcribing of papers relative to history and providences, such as Mr Andrew Stewart's, and Mr Adair, senior and junior, their papers, which you'll soon be in case to do, and keep up the enclosed to the Colonel. However *raptim* I have written it, and left it open to you to peruse, and act as you see cause, in the greatest sincerity I can say, that if you think Mr Upton will receive the book frankly, without putting himself to the trouble of

¹ Difficulty, dilemma.

returns, such is my real esteem for the family of Upton, and such I think my obligations are to this gentleman for his appearances for our common interests, that, were it far more valuable than it is, I would send it him. Great grace be with you! Write soon to yours most affectionately.

Eastwood, April 6, 1723.

LETTER XVIII.

RARE BOOK.—MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS.

To Mr James Anderson, Writer to the Signet, Edinburgh.

DEAR SIR,—You have not been so kind as to signify to me how your affair goes at London, and how far the managers for the town of Edinburgh have prevailed or fallen short, though there are not many of your friends who count themselves more deeply concerned in this affair, or rather the advancement of what concerns our country and learning, as well as what is justice due to you, than I reckon myself. However, I shall make no complaints; but go on to what I know you will allow me in.

I have, since I saw you, fallen upon an extract from a book which is pretty rare, “*Vita Vincentii Laurei SRE Cardinalis Montis Regalis, quarto, Bononiæ MD IO IC,*” which extremely pleases me. Very probably you may have this book, and it’s much if it has escaped your industrious diligence. But, in case you have it not, you shall have a copy of what concerns our affairs in it.

In my opinion, it’s a noble voucher for much of Buchanan’s account of the Lord Darnley, and the Queen’s unhappy concern in his death. But the passage that touched me most, and brought you to my thoughts, is what concerns the Queen’s disposing of England, from her son to Philip of Spain, a day or two before her

execution, of which I venture to send you a copy, in case it should have escaped you, though, indeed, I must make an apology for this supposition; and I ought scarce to put the case, that any thing will cast up to me that you have not already. Such as it is, I know you'll accept as what I would contribute to help forward your accounts of these matters, were any thing in my power.

You'll oblige me by giving all your discoveries and accounts from the learned world, since I parted with you, and a particular account of your health, which I pray God may preserve for his glory and the service of your country. I am, Dear Sir, yours most affectionately,

R. W.

April 10, 1723.

LETTER XIX.

COMPEND OF WODROW'S HISTORY.—NEWS.

To Mr Robert Black, Rotterdam.

REV. DEAR BROTHER,—I received the two journals for September and October 1722, and these are the last I have. I had likewise the two first Fasciculuses for the six volumes of the Bibliotheca. Continue still to send both as they come. I like the Fasciculuses very well. There are many things in them that are not to be met with elsewhere, and, for my share, I wish the collection may go on. I'll expect, by the bearer Mr Hill, what is further published of both, and whatever else you shall see proper to send that is published of late.

As to the compend of my book, I wrote to you before that I still thought it improper it should be drawn by me. I am sorry you can fall on nobody to make any abstract of it. If Mr Paisley can

find as much time, I should be glad he could get it done, as I spoke to him ; but I have not heard from him since he left us.

When the second volumes came over to you, I had not a gilded copy on the back to send to the Pensionary at hand, and, indeed, it was out of my head. You have never writ to me whether he had received my letter or the first volume ; and I fancy he is so much thronged with public affairs, that he will not have leisure to take any notice of my book when he gets it.

As to the imperfect copy, you may send it over here ; or, if it be only one or two sheets wrong, take them out and send them over, and I shall send over the sheets, or another book to you. These imperfections fall in through the negligence of the bookbinders, and there is no help for them. I think I wrote of this once or twice before to you.

The removal of your worthy colleague, when I heard of it, affected me very much, and will be a sensible loss to you and the people. I wish the Lord direct you to one to supply his room.

Matters here continue in peace ; how, I cannot say. Our fears are mercifully disappointed as to the plot ; but the Jacobites are still uppish and restless, and our parties and party work are but little abated. We have had a great bustle this winter about Mr Peter Haddin, his being admitted a Lord of Session, of which no doubt you'll have heard. They talk as if that debate were to be brought to the Assembly next week, where the Earl of Hopetoun is Commissioner, by an appeal from the Presbytery of St Andrews, whence he is chosen Commissioner ; but I hope people will not be so foolish as to involve the Church in a debate of that nature.

The affair of the Marrow will come in to the Assembly by Mr Gabriel Wilson's affair. What turn it takes, you shall hear after the Assembly, if the Lord will. The meeting-houses are growing much in the North, and a spacious one is built at Aberdeen for the English service, by contributions from England. We have multitudes of very horrid murders falling out of late. Last week, Sir James Campbell of Lawers was murdered at Greenock, by one

Campbell, when sleeping, without any provocation. A week or two before, a soldier murdered a poor man at Hamilton, and the lady of Gogar Mains was most barbarously murdered, near Edinburgh, by her own husband. The process at Glasgow anent Mr Hervey, of which, no doubt, you have full accounts, was ended by the Synod. I wish their heats in that place were at an end. You'll perhaps have heard of worthy Mr Francis Borland's death this winter; but I doubt if you have heard of Mr James Trail's death at Montrose, and old Mr John Hepburn. I mind no other things among us. I hope these hints will prevail with you to give me all that is agoing with you in Church, State, and Universities; and I am yours.

May 1, 1723.

LETTER XX.

LETTERS FROM THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, 1723.¹

Wodrow to Mrs Wodrow, No. 1.

MY DEAREST,—I have very little to write this morning, but that I am extremely well, perfectly free from my cough. When the Assembly rises, I shall give you a hint of their procedure. I hear little news, and have been so thronged with my booksellers and others, that I have been little upon the street these two days. The House of Peers are close upon the plot, but what will be the issue is not known. There is not much in the report from the Lords. The plotters have acted with that cunning, as to keep themselves out of the lash of the law. And it's said that when the Abbot Du Bois made the first full discovery, some conditions were required in favour of the bishop, which are the occasion of this lenity. That

¹ Letters to Wodrow, vol. xvi. Nos. 31-37.

prime minister is not upon the Pretender's lay, and therefore the more regard is had to his opinion. You have things as I hear them.

The Assembly met this day. We had a good sermon from Mr Mitchell, preached on Rom. xiv. 19, "Follow the things that make for peace," &c. He had, you may be sure, a good sermon on the head of peace, and some very seasonable advices at the close. When the Assembly met, the commissions were gone through. We have a general convention of the burghs; six or seven more than formerly; and they say that circular letters were written by the town of Edinburgh to all the burghs, and that some are threatened to have their stent-roll heightened in August next, if they come not in and vote, as is proposed. Mr Smith and Mr Black both were on the list for moderator. Mr Smith was voted by twenty-seven votes. The King's letter is in common form, very kind and obliging. The Commissioner's¹ speech was very obliging. He takes notice that this was the first public post ever he was in, and it was a pleasure to him to be employed first in such a relation to the Church. Then the committees were named.

We have no news I mind of, but that the King speaks of going abroad. I am your own.

LETTER XXI.

Wodrow to Mrs Wodrow, No. 2.

May 10.

MY DEAREST,—I have little this day to acquaint you with. In the forenoon the Assembly met for prayer, when Mr Blackwell, Mr David Walker, the minister of Kirkliston, Mr David Anderson, and Mr James Guthrie, were called on to pray. Principal Stirling and

¹ The Earl of Hopetoun.

Principal Blackwell are to preach before the Commissioner, who keeps a great table, and every body likes him. In the afternoon the Answer to the King's Letter was approved by the overtures, and a motion made for an address of congratulation upon the conspiracy, and a committee appointed. In the bills, Mr Gabriel Wilson's long papers were read and rejected, as full of complaints and hard words. His case, as before the Commission, is transmitted. They say Lord Charles Ker is dead at the Bath, and Sir John Swinton here. The Jacobites are still uppish in the North, and Popery and disaffection increasing. Our matters will open out to-morrow by the instructions, which I shall write, if I have any time. I am, blessed be the Lord! very well, and long to hear how you and ours are. In case I forget, desire Mr Montgomery or Mr Stark to think on half an hour for the Sabbath, after I come home, in case I win not home till Thursday or Friday. But I'll labour to be home as soon as possibly I can end my affairs with the booksellers and Mrs Watsor. I remember all with you and in the West. Grace be with you in body and spirit! God has been our help, and I hope will be.

May 11.

This day the Assembly met. The Answer to the King's Letter was unanimously voted, and an address upon the discovery of the conspiracy drawn by Mr Alston, which is florid enough. Monday is appointed for Mr Wilson's affair; Tuesday for Edinburgh affair, as to the college member. This, with the nomination of the Commission, and Synod-book revises, was all done this day.

I have yours, for which I thank you. I shall write as oft as possible. I keep my room, and can't be better in a room and landlady. I shall speak to Mrs Stewart about the cambric; and am in perfect health. Write much to your own.

Be not fashed if you miss a letter; for I am sometime not master of my time. Pray take a care of yourself; and see if you can engage Mr Stark or Mr M. for the afternoon, in case it be Thursday before I come.

LETTER XXII.

Wodrow to Mrs Wodrow, No. 3.

May 13, 1723.

MY DEAREST,—Yesterday we had an excellent sermon from Mr James Stirling, on “We are set for the defence of the Gospel;” and, in the afternoon, from Principal Blackwell, on “Glory to God in the highest,” Luke ii. 14. This forenoon, the Committee of Overtures are upon the Commissions, about which there are debates, and there seems to be a general dissatisfaction with the Burghs’ Commissioners, there being, they say, about thirty-eight, or more, than ordinary. What will be done in this, I know not. All will be sustained for this time. The Instructions complain much of the growth of Popery since the last Assembly. Lord Charles Ker, they say, is not dead. The House of Peers have not extended the tax upon the Papists and Popish Recusants to Scotland, by thirty votes. In the afternoon, the Assembly are to be on Mr Wilson’s affair. I shall write afterwards what is done. I must write by starts, as I can.

This afternoon, Mr Wilson’s affair¹ came in, and took near five hours, as every thing does from that quarter. There was some debate how the matter stood before the Assembly. In the heat of the controversy about the Marrow, this Sermon of his was preached, and the Synod did think he had taken several ways of expressing himself from that book, and drew up several articles of errors and calumnies on the government, Church, and particular ministers. It seems the Synod, at least a good part of it, were tolerably satisfied, save as to three points:—That the law of God, as to the believer, is divested of its penal sanction; that evangelical repentance does not

¹ For a detailed account of Mr Wilson’s process, in its different stages, the reader is referred to an account of the Marrow Controversy in the *Christian Instructor*, vol. i. pp. 78-82. The Sermon referred to was entitled “The Trust,” and has been frequently reprinted, being much admired for its fidelity.

go before pardon ; and that the nature of faith takes in assurance. These three the Assembly only restricted themselves to, as what was referred to them. Mr Wilson pressed much to have the other part, concerning his calumnies and other things, taken in, but that was not yielded. Mr Wilson read his answers, and explained himself upon these three points, and owned the threatening of eternal punishments were of great use to believers, though they could never be inflicted. As to repentance, he shuffled a little, and did not seem to understand that so fully ; but, indeed, that was not so much in his sermon, as he was drawn in to express himself not so safely in his answers to the Synod. The last point seemed to be pretty much waived, he declaring he was perfectly of opinion with our Confession and Catechisms as to faith. In short, the matter was referred to a large Committee,—Mr Mitchell, Principal Stirling, Principal Haddow, Professor Anderson, Mr Alston, Mr Logan, and four or five of his Synod. The ruling elders declined being named in that Committee, as being a point of doctrine.

May 14, 1723.

This day the Assembly met at ten of the clock, and till three of the clock they were upon the case of the Commissioner from the College of Edinburgh, his being chosen by the masters of the College, or the magistrates and council joining with them. The matter, as you know, came in by an overture from the Commission, that none had the power of choosing from that University to the Assembly but the masters. The parties were called, and the town of Edinburgh appeared by two of the council and two lawyers. The Professor and Mr Stewart appeared without a commission from the rest of the members, and declined appearing against their honourable patrons, but declared, in their own name, and all the masters save one, that they were desirous to have the matter determined by the Assembly. The lawyers objected, that it being a contested right, if there were no parties appearing against them, the matter should drop. This occasioned a long reasoning of two or three hours. I cannot pretend to resume the arguments. It

was alleged, for the town, that their right was a civil right, grounded on Acts of Parliament and their privileges, and without there were parties contesting this right, they being in constant possession, it could not be entered on by the Assembly. Upon the other side it was urged, that it was an affair cast up in the Assembly by controverted commissions; that the last Assembly had referred it to the Commission; the Commission had given an overture on it; and there was no need now of contesting parties; yea, it was what concerned, necessarily, the constitution of the very Assembly itself, and what was founded neither on Acts of Parliament nor the Town's Charters, but on the Assembly's Acts, who had granted powers to societies to be represented there. At length it came to the vote; Proceed at present upon this matter, or Not, notwithstanding of the difficulty cast up; and it carried by 70 votes, Proceed. When the parties were called in, Bailie M'Aulay, in name of his constituents, protested, that since the Assembly was to go on, they might withdraw, it being a point of civil right belonging to the town, and took instruments, and withdrew. The Advocate, Mr Hadden, my Lord Cullen, and others, had long speeches upon this protestation. It was represented as an attack on the constitution of the supreme court, a charging it with Erastianism, &c. Affleck and my Lord Grange endeavoured to smooth the protest, but at length it issued in this, that the clerk should not record the protest; and the town were allowed to appear before a committee the Assembly named, if they pleased, and to withdraw their protest; if not, that the committee should be ready to give in an overture to the Assembly, what censure [ought] to be inflicted on those members of the Church who protested against the Supreme Ecclesiastical Court. That committee is just now meeting. Then the Assembly came to the matter itself, read the Town's representation, though the Committee of Bills had refused it, and approved the Commission's overture. We had long and learned speeches from the Advocate and Lord Grange, who almost only spoke on that side; and when the Assembly was almost outwearied, at length it came to a vote, Approve or Not. Before the vote, it was declared, that by this vote the Assembly did

not approve commissioners coming either from Universities or Burghs, and it carried, Approve the Commissioners' overture—53 Not, 103 Approve. I think you have enough for this day, and I have not time to read it over. I am your own.

LETTER XXIII.

Wodrow to Mrs Wodrow, No. 4.

May 15.

MY DEAREST,—This day the Assembly met in the forenoon, and spent their time on a transportation of one Mr Garshow, minister in Anworth, Colonel Maxwell's parish, to Kirkcudbright. The common people seem not so much for him, and he did not appear averse from going, and was transported. I should have told you that, before the minutes were read, Bailie M'Aulay, who had entered the protest, came in, and desired liberty to withdraw his protest, which, being concert before in the committee, was allowed, and no minute was to be of it. I am glad to find a pretty general aversion from commissioners for burghs to the Assembly, and I find the Justice-Clerk and some others are very much against advocates appearing before our Church judicatories, as what loses time, and involves us in most tedious debates. But this is such a juncture, as no amendment of what is in use must be proposed. In the afternoon, the Committee of Instructions met, and had the affair of a fast before them, and it was urged by some few, and some warm reasonings about it; but the committee rested in the general usual instruction to the Commission. It was urged much, that without special and plain causes in Providence calling to these solemn times, neither Church nor State ought to appoint them.

May 16.

This day the Assembly met in the forenoon, and the Commis-

sion-book was disapproven, or rather not approven, in the matter of Mr Russell's reposition, and the Presbytery of Edinburgh being found parties by their reference. An objection against the New Edition of the Confession of Faith, for want of the Solemn League, and that with the Confession. This is referred to the Committee of Overtures; and a committee appointed for Mr Hepburn's affair to preface it. Mr John Chambers is again loosed from Duffus, and sent again to Campvere; and the Synods meet, in order to name the committee for naming the Commission. I have no news.

LETTER XXIV.

Wodrow to Mrs Wodrow, No. 5.

May 17, 1723.

MY DEAREST,—I have been so throng this day with my book-sellers, that I was not in the Assembly in the forenoon. I hear there was a considerable debate about Burghs coming to the Assembly. In the report of the committee for Commissions, it was a part that the Commission from the burgh of Rothsay should be rejected, because of some informalities, and the rest sustained, the Assembly still reserving that matter to further consideration. This was objected against by some, but very strongly argued by others. They were termed auxiliary forces; and it was observed of late that they were brought up upon particular views, and notice was taken of the circular letters wrote by the town of Edinburgh to bring them up. However, the clause was continued. This, with the report of the committee for public accounts, was all done in the forenoon. In the afternoon the affair of the town of Edinburgh's call to Mr Hepburn came in. A committee has been meeting on that these two days, and has postponed the general concerns of the Church more than ever I saw. They reported they had dealt

'twixt parties for peace, but with little success. Then the committee read their overture, in which they were not unanimous. It was ordering the Presbytery of Edinburgh to attest the call to Mr Hepburn, and in case the Presbytery of Dunfermline should vacate that parish, that they should not settle it again without the concurrence of the Synod of Fife. This was not gone into; so the Assembly then entered into the cause, and the first question was, who were parties? The Presbytery of Edinburgh and the Commission, in March, making them parties, were heard at full length, and terrible long speeches, where the merits of the cause, the strengthening the hands of the Marrow brethren in Dunfermline, giving them the vote, by taking away Mr Hepburn, and giving them occasion to license young men favouring the new scheme, were entered on.¹ At length it came to a vote about eleven at night, Approve the Commission in making the Presbytery of Edinburgh parties by their reference, or Not; and it carried Not, by twenty-two votes. This looks not so favourable to the transportation; but how that will go, will appear to-morrow.

¹ This is one evidence, among others which might be mentioned, of the zeal displayed by the Church Courts to prevent young men being licensed or ordained who held the views of the Marrow men. The Presbytery of Dunfermline consisted of fourteen parochial charges; one of the charges, viz. Aberdour, was vacant, four of the incumbents were valetudinary, or in a dying condition, and four held the Marrow doctrine. If Mr Hepburn, therefore, were transported, the Marrow men, supposing the valetudinarians absent, would equal the ministers who held the doctrine of the Church, and might soon acquire a majority, and be able to plant vacant charges with men of their own stamp. This was the ground of the opposition made to Mr Hepburn's translation to Edinburgh; and to prevent this was the design of the Assembly's decision, that, in the event of Mr Hepburn's translation, the parish of Torryburn should not be planted, but with the advice and at the direction of the Synod of Fife. "The disposition of the judicatories," says Ralph Erskine, "too evidently appeared whenever any student or candidate was supposed to be tinctured with the Marrow, that is, a gospel spirit. There was no quarter for such; queries upon queries were formed to discourage them, and stop their way, either of being entered upon trials or ordained into churches; while those who were of the most loose and corrupt principles were most favoured by them. These things are too notour to be denied; and these were some of the sad and lasting effects of the foresaid Acts of Assembly, [Acts concerning the Marrow,] and the sad occasion of planting many churches with men that were little acquainted with the gospel, yea, enemies to the doctrine of grace."

May 18, 1723.

This day the Assembly met, and the public accounts were ordered to lie on the table. The Commission, with their powers, were named, and I am sorry I am named among them. I was not named from the first nomination, but brought in from the committee.

* * * * *

I have left the Assembly insensibly, and have only time to add, that the affair of Edinburgh came in, and the town, who seemed dashed by yesterday's evidence, seemed willing to come in to what they were averse to before; and so, after long debates, and much needless confusion, the overture from a committee was read and approved by a vote, that though the Presbytery of Edinburgh had reason to decline at that time, yet now they should concur with Mr Hepburn's call, and in case the Presbytery of Dunfermline vacate that place, they do not plant it again but with the advice and direction of the Synod of Fife. The Assembly are not like to rise till Tuesday.

LETTER XXV.

Wodrow to Mrs Wodrow, No. 6.

May 20.

MY DEAREST,—Yesterday Mr Wiseman preached in the forenoon, on Philip. ii. 15, "Walk as the sons of God," and lectured on the fourteen verses. In the afternoon, Mr M'Derment preached on Jer. xviii. "If I build up," &c. This day the Assembly met at four. The affair of Lochmaben, and two other calls, and one irregular marriage of one Mr Ramsay, and some other things, were remitted to the Commission. Some very good overtures, if put in practice, against Popery, were passed, and Synod-books were taken in. To-morrow the Assembly is to rise, when you shall have a hint at what passes. Margaret Peady, Mathew Brown's wife, died of

an iliac passion on Sabbath morning. Blackhouse seems past all recovery, and I expect to hear of his death before I leave this place.

May 21.

This day the Assembly had the Synod-books, and some references, to the Commission. Then the committee made the report about Mr Gabriel Wilson. It contained a reproof and prohibition, which I shall not resume. Mr Wilson did not please [relish] the sentence, and though he owned the facts in the act, yet he would have been at a speech, after his reproof, on which the Moderator desired him to remove; and he adhered to the paper given in by the twelve brethren. Thus this matter is at a close. In the censures of our Synod the act against lawyers was opened, and the Advocate and my Lord Cullen opposed it. And it was delayed till afternoon, and I wish it come not in again. The Assembly rose this night. I am yours.

LETTER XXVI.

THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

To Mr John Evans, at the Golden Fleece, at the South Side of Paul's Churchyard, London.

Edinburgh, May 18, 1723.

DEAR SIR,—The Assembly was opened with an excellent sermon by Mr Mitchell,—“Follow the things that make for peace, and that edify.” Mr Smith of Cramond was chosen Moderator. The town of Edinburgh, and several others, struggled hard against this choice, and Mr Blackwell was set up in opposition to him; but in vain, and the chair could scarce be better filled. We have very lamentable accounts of the growth of Popery, and the increase of disaffection from the North; and unless the civil government more effectually put to their hand, our ecclesiastical remedies

will be of little force. What the Assembly will do further on this important matter, I know not.

You know the dispute that has been between the magistrates of Edinburgh and the masters of the College, about the choice of a member to the Assembly as patrons, which power they say is lodged in the community. They pretend to join in full council with the masters, and, consequently, have the choice of the member to the Assembly in their hand, being thirty-seven thereby to ten or twelve. This affair was remitted last Assembly to the Commission, whose overture was read, bearing that none save the masters of the University had right to choose a member. The town made no small struggle against this, and pretended their charter bare them to this. But it was soon found that a right to this matter was not to be looked for in charters and acts of parliament, but in acts of Assembly, and common acceptance of the words. The right of universities themselves was matter of debate, but that was waived, and by no rules the town council can be included in the university, who, by acts of Assembly, are allowed to send up a member to the Assembly. Thus, by a vast majority, the Commission's act was approved, and made a rule in time coming.

Another affair, that took up much time, was the call to Mr John Hepburn from Torry[burn] to Edinburgh. One side of the ministers are not so much for that transportation, because of the circumstances of the Presbytery of Dunfermline. When Mr Hepburn is taken from that Presbytery, there being four representers there in favours of the Marrow, and some others they have interest with, they fear that such as favour the Marrow may have a vote¹ in that Presbytery. Committees were appointed to converse parties, and try if the good town would fall from the call. When that would not do, the Presbytery of Edinburgh are ordained to concur with the call, and the Presbytery of Dunfermline ordered not to plant that parish but at the direction and by the advice of the Synod of Fife.

Little other matter was before the Assembly save Mr Gabriel Wilson's affair, which was begun before you left us, and so I need

¹ That is, a majority. See p. 51.

say little of it. He was charged with three points of unsound doctrine; that he had preached the law was divested of its sanctions as to believers—that repentance is not necessary to justification—and that assurance is in the essence of faith. He seems so to explain himself that I suppose he will be passed with an admonition, and engagements in time to come.

I have ordered a copy of Mr Dunlop's Sermons to be sent you, with some coming up to London. Write frequently by post. Send Mr Brown's Letters and Reynolds', and every thing in your present unhappy debates. You know my Athenian temper; gratify it as oft as you can. I have only time to add that I am yours.

LETTER XXVII.

LIFE OF CARDINAL LAUREA, AND MAULE'S MS.

To Mr James Anderson, Writer to the Signet.

DEAR SIR,—Your kind letter came to my hand by my Lord Pollock's servant. Since, I have been abroad at two sacraments, and till this day could not make acknowledgments. I cannot fall on the collations of Spotswood, and still entertain some hopes you may fall on them on some of your tables. In case neither you nor I can fall on them, I'll be obliged to you for a copy. When you have done with the extracts from Cardinal Laurea's Life, you'll please to send them; and whatever you think [fit] to favour me with, from your vast treasure of extracts, [send] to my Lord Pollock's lodgings, and they will come safe to me every week. I think myself and the world indebted to Mr Stuart for his frank and vigorous going on with your useful and great work, which it pleases me to hear is in so much forwardness. The charges will be vast; but I hope you and yours will be in the issue no losers, whatever vile treatment such a noble work has met with. With the great-

est pleasure I give you the title, beginning, and end, of R. Maule. His title is, *De Antiquitate Gentis Scotorum*.¹ He begins: "Ego semper in ea fui sententia, quod ea Britanniae pars quae Scotia nostris, priscis vero Albin dicitur, prima habitata fuerit ante eam quae ad meridiem est, quae nunc Anglia, quondam Britannia. Hibernia colonos suos habuisse priusquam vel Scotia vel Anglia humano generi inoluissent."

My copy is in quarto, small and close write, consisting of 699 pages. It's all written with one hand save the margins; and some rasures and pretty large additions on the margin by another hand. It ends, "Et hæc sunt quæ de quarta ista periodo dicenda duxi, cum quæ et ego volumen clauditur."

"Finis quarto Junii 1610, ad Fanum Andreae."

You'll oblige me to write frequently to me by post. I am writing, however, to Mr James Davidson, and enclose yours to him, being in some haste, which I would rather write in than delay any longer to acknowledge how much I am, Dear Sir, yours in the greatest sincerity and affection.

Eastwood, June 11, 1723.

LETTER XXVIII.

QUERIES OF SUBSCRIBERS IN IRELAND.

To Mr William Macknight, Minister at Irvine.

REV. DEAR BROTHER,—I had yours with the enclosed, which I return, to come to you by the post to-morrow, being to be at our Presbytery.² Mr Livingston's queries come unluckily now, when

¹ Maule's MS. History, alluded to here, and more fully in a letter of Wodrow, dated March 30, 1730, is unfortunately amissing. It was gifted to Wodrow by Sir Robert Sibbald. The Latin is evidently bungled in the transcription, which is in a younger hand.

² Mr Macknight had sent to Wodrow a letter he had received from Mr Livingston, Ireland, giving an account of a meeting of a few Non-subscribers in May, held at Castleupton, with a view to consider what ought to be done in their circumstances.

we are so throng at Communion, and can neither meet one with another, nor have time almost to think on them. I do not see how any thing we can write can reach our brethren before the Synod (which I reckon meets this week) rise. However, I shall endeavour to-morrow morning if I can, before I go to the Presbytery, to write a scrape to Mr Livingston, to which you'll add what offers to you in yours. But I am of opinion we can say very little till we have accounts how matters go at their Synod, and what shape matters fall into. And I think you should desire them to write over full accounts of matters to us as they stand at and after the Synod; since, as I take it, it's not abstract general questions they need our opinion in, but the present circumstantiated case in the North of Ireland, which we can only know from our accounts thence.

You should have had mine from Mr Livingston, had there been

“They expressed great satisfaction,” says Mr Livingston, “to hear of the Brethren's good disposition towards us on your side of the water, and blessed God for it, resolving that such an opportunity shall not be neglected for seasonable advice in all time to come.

“It was their unanimous opinion, that the Non-subscribers are inveterate enemies to all subscriptions, and other tests of orthodoxy in human words, and that although as yet they had not thought fit to declare so much in so many words, yet it could be proved upon them, by undeniable conviction, and probably by their own confession; and that in a private way they are leaving no stone unturned to propagate that principle, and make proselytes with some ministers, and among the people.

“This now being the unanimous opinion of our meeting in relation to the Non-subscribers, the following queries were proposed, viz.—1. Hath not the Non-subscribing principle (in the sense aforesaid) an evident and direct tendency to open a door for error in this and other Churches? 2. What may be the best expedient to suppress that principle, to obstruct the propagation of it, and to prevent the pernicious effects hereof amongst us? 3. Whereas it is the opinion of many of our ministers and people, that the best and only effectual expedient will be to make an entire breach of communion with the Non-subscribers, shall, therefore, such an Overture be proposed to the General Synod?

“We did not think it proper to come to a final resolution in relation to the queries, because we wanted some of our number, viz., Mr Hutchison, the two Kennedys, Boyd, and poor Robin M'Bride, who was in a pleurisy at the point of death, and recovers yet but very slowly. We appointed another meeting at Dungannon the day before the Synod, which is Tuesday next.” He concludes by requesting the advice of Mr Macknight, Wodrow, and other trusty brethren, which, though it would be too late for the Synod, might be of great use afterwards.—(*Letters to Wodrow*, vol. xx. No. 192.)

any thing in it; but he just refers me to yours, and to the pamphlet you send me, which he says Mr Smith will send me, (however, I am in your debt for it, and I beg you send what you receive from Ireland to me.) He is still of opinion that the Non-subscribers are against all Church authority, which I am very much persuaded of, and tells me he is much worse in his health, which I am sorry for. I pray you may have much of the Divine presence at your sacrament; and am, Dear Brother, yours most affectionately.

June 18, 1723.

I leave mine to Mr Livingston open, that in yours you may add to it.

LETTER XXIX.

ANSWER TO THE FOREGOING QUERIES.

*To the Rev. Mr William Livingston, Minister at Temple-Patrick,
Ireland.*

REV. DEAR BROTHER,—By the last post I have yours of the 13th instant from Mr Macknight, with yours to him, and a copy of Mr Clerk's answer to the Society's Letter to him. Unhappily it falls in that Mr Macknight's Communion is next Lord's day, and I am to be abroad at another Communion, and it does not appear practicable that any return can possibly come to you before your General Synod be up. However, I would not fail without any delay to make any return the shortness of the time I have this morning could allow me, (being just going abroad,) though, indeed, any thing [that] offers to me is not worth writing.

I am entirely of opinion that the Non-subscribing principle has a natural and necessary tendency to looseness and the opening a door for error, and a miserable corruption in the holy ministry, and the

covering all sorts of corruption and error already got in. I may be mistaken, but could never yet comprehend any plausible reason for Non-subscribing, but some real dislike at the doctrine declared in the confession or articles to be subscribed; and in my poor opinion it would be much fairer and more manly to declare that than to quibble about subscribing under pretence of human phrases, imposition, and such threadbare pretexts that have been exposed a hundred times.

What may be the best expedient to suppress the principle, obstruct the propagation, and prevent its effects among you, is a query of a larger extent than I dare now enter on. Your answer to me does not a little depend on the circumstances of things among yourselves. And, by the way, you'll easily perceive that the larger accounts you give us of matters with you, we will be the more in case to give our opinion as to your circumstantiate case; and after the General Synod, when we have the detail of your reasonings, and know what shape the things in dependence fall in, you shall have with all frankness my poor opinion.

As to the expedient proposed, of an entire breach of communion with Non-subscribers, all I can say at present is, it's a proposal would be very ripely considered before it be concluded, which I know I need not caution you about. Several things would appear to me necessary, or at least seasonable, to be done as to your Non-subscribing brethren, before this last remedy be gone into, for the sake of the dissenting interest in general. Could a door be shut against the spreading of the principle, and persons of loose principles coming into the ministry in time to come, and the few that set up for pretended liberty brought to own their subjection to Church judicatories, and some other things attained, I would rather wish, if a breach must be, it came rather upon their part than yours. But I must write very much at random on these things, till I have as full and particular accounts of the reasonings on both sides, and state of things, both as to ministers and people, as you think proper to send.

This is all at present that offers upon the three heads in yours. I hope Mr Macknight, if his present throng allow him, may write to you more largely. Meanwhile, I am impatient for the accounts of your Synod, whom I pray the Lord may direct, and better accounts of dear Mr M'Bride, whom I hope the Lord will preserve for further service. Give him my best wishes, and to Mr Masterton, whose papers I have got from the Professor about a fortnight ago, and he told me he was to write his remarks to himself. I shall send them, with any few remarks I have, which are very insignificant, with the first sure hand he shall direct me to. Indeed, at present our throng of sacraments is such, and my own hasting on before harvest, that I can get little thing else minded. Tell Messrs M'Bride and Masterton how much I long to hear from both after the Synod.

I am much surprised to find my two volumes are not come to your hand, and begin to fear they may have lost their way. That day you and Mr Smith left me, I wrote a letter to Colonel Upton, and enclosed it in one for you, and sealed up both in a cover for Mr Smith, desiring him to forward them and my two books to you, and sent all in to Glasgow to my bookseller, who put up the two volumes directed for you, and the second volume directed for Mr M'Bride; and, as Mr Smith desired, all were put in the hands of Mr M'Ewen's servant, to be sent with a sure hand to Belfast, to Mr Smith's care. Mr M'Ewen's servant wrote to me he had received all, and would send them according to direction. This is all the account I can give you; but I shall cause inquire further about them, and write to you by my next. Meanwhile, I am anxious to know if they be yet come to you.

I heartily sympathize with you under the recurring of your indisposition, and pray the Lord may support and recover you to his service, and be with you in it. Pray write frequently, and send all that is published on your unhappy debates. I have just glanced Mr Clark's last performance. His manner of writing seems not serious, as the importance of the argument calls for; but I don't see

how these gentlemen will answer his reasonings he mixes with his tart way of saying them. I am, Rev. Dear Brother, yours most affectionately.

Eastwood, June 19, 1723.

Give my humble duty to Colonel Upton, and kindest respects to Mr G. Kennedy, and tell him I long to hear from him.

LETTER XXX.

ATTACKS ON WODROW'S HISTORY.

To Mr Mathew Crawford, Professor at Edinburgh.

REV. DEAR BROTHER,—You have almost quite forgot your promise to write to me. I got (June 19) a pamphlet, Bishop Sharp's *Life*, the preface of which is levelled against me. I don't observe much in it needs a reply, and incline to say nothing till Mr Bruce's large work appears. Let me know who is given as the author of the *Life* and *Preface*, and if Mr Bruce's large work goes fast on. I am, Dear Brother, yours, &c.

June 29.

LETTER XXXI.

MAULE'S MS.

To Mr James Anderson.

DEAR SIR,—I have been with some sort of impatience longing to hear from you, since my last, wherein I sent you some account

of my MSS. of Maule. You'll probably have done with the extracts from Cardinal Laurea, and if you have fallen on the collations of Spotswood send them. But pray favour me with somewhat from your most valuable MSS. as to our Scots affairs. Let me know if you have fixed any time for going to London, and how all goes there, and if I may hope to see you in case I come in to town in August. When you go to England I promise myself a volume or two of your quarto MSS., which will be most entertaining. One of them will come in good season with the bearer, who is a sure hand. But I prescribe nothing. I am, Dear Sir, yours.

June 29, 1723.

LETTER XXXII.

NON-SUBSCRIBERS.—WODROW'S HISTORY.—BIOGRAPHY.

To the Right Honourable my Lord Grange.

MY LORD,—Having the occasion of Mr Maxwell, my Lord Pollock's cousin, his coming to town, I could not but make my acknowledgments for the many favours your Lordship was pleased to do with me when last with you. I am much hindered in collating my copy of Mr Blair's Life with your corrected one, by the throng of sacraments at this time in the country, and the approach of ours in this place in the beginning of August. But if your Lordship want the volume I have, let me know, and I'll haste it in.

I have had letters from Ireland some weeks ago; but they contain little considerable. The General Synod there met last week, and in a few posts I expect accounts of what they have done. Towards the beginning of May, one of the Non-subscribers went over to London, to take the opinion of the ministers of the like sentiments there before the meeting of the Synod. Their affair was to be be-

fore the Synod, both by an appeal by Colonel Upton, and a complaint tabled against Mr M. Clerk, a minister, for a pamphlet whereby the Non-subscribers think themselves wronged. The result of both I shall most willingly communicate with your Lordship when it comes to hand.

Besides the attack I have from Mr M'Main, last week I had another from the Episcopal side, in a preface to Bishop Sharp's Life. I do not perceive much in it that needs a present answer, and so resolve to wait Mr Bruce's larger work, and another (if they be not the same) I am threatened with in that preface.

Meanwhile, I am entertaining some thoughts of putting the many scattered papers I have in manuscript and print, and the larger accounts of the lives of Christians and ministers, into some kind of order. I am much persuaded we need some history of remarkable providences, and of the lives of eminently religious and useful noblemen, gentlemen, and ministers, and private Christians in this Church. Such a design would be too great a project for one man, especially of my narrow capacity; yet I incline to essay to put what I have collected for some years, somewhat nearer together than they are, that at least I may lay somewhat of a foundation for others to work upon in a history of this nature. But I'll very much want your Lordship's directions as to the method and the shape and order they should be cast in, at any leisure hour you have to think on this matter, when I'll be glad to have the pleasure of a line by post. I ask pardon for this freedom I take, and presume to give my humble duty to your lady and children; and am, my Lord, your Lordship's most humble and very much obliged servant.

June 29, 1723.

LETTER XXXIII.

BRUCE'S ATTACK ON WODROW'S HISTORY.

To Mr James Anderson.

DEAR SIR,—Yours of the 25th of June came not to my hand till ten or twelve days after its date, and since I received it have been without intermission taken up with preaching at communions and fasts before them and for the weather, that till this day I have not had time to answer any of my friends' letters ; and I begin with yours, for which I return you my most unfeigned thanks, and for Mr Bruce's ill-natured preface against me.

Hitherto I have only glanced that performance, and observe very little in it that requires any present answer. It's more pleasure to me than I can express, that I find your thoughts of that unmannerly paper so much agree with those which offered to me when I looked it over. There are a few facts that are advanced without any proof, which I am able, I think, evidently to disprove ;—that Bishop Sharp threw up his commission when at London, and some particulars as to the Bishop's murder, and the depositions thereant, which are not to be met with in the records, as the writer of his Life seems to own ; and yet Mr Bruce blames me that I have not printed these depositions. The charge of insincerity in my citations is what I would be most uneasy at, if he had any way supported it. My own heart does not at all condemn me in this matter, and I am very sure it's impossible to make it out. He has not given himself leave to observe that, in the introduction to the first volume, I expressly advertised the reader that I had only room to give an abstract of the Letters ; that I had left out some warm passages relative to the unhappy debates 'twixt the Resolutioners and Protesters, which I inclined to bury ; and some other things which I

believe will justify me in the eyes of any candid reader. But this matter may be brought to a very short and fair issue; and if the gentlemen of that side will insist, they shall have the whole of the letters *pro* and *con.*, and near a hundred more that have come to my hands, since I published my book, that will help to finish the imperfect lines I have given of the black character of Bishop Sharp, whom still I acknowledge to have been a person of uncommon abilities and parts, and wanted only some more probity, truth, sincerity, and stability, to have made him one of the greatest men of that age. However, if my friends, who are much better judges than I can allow myself to be in these matters, advise me, I at present incline to be silent, till Mr Bruce publish his large work in two folios, and give him, and any others who shall find cause to quarrel what I have writ, leave to produce all they have to say, which I shall then consider with all the calmness and disinterestedness that becomes one who, as far as he knows himself, has nothing in his eye but the truth. And I hope I shall never imitate them in their scolding and uncivil way they are pleased to treat me, which, in my opinion, does themselves more hurt than me. Forgive me for entertaining you so long upon this subject. I just signify to you my present views of things, that I may have your riper thoughts.

It pleases me to hear your singularly useful work at London is going on so well, especially the abbreviatures, which I still thought will be of vast use for understanding our old papers. I shall bring in my Maule, if I get in about the middle of August, as I design, or if any sure hand offer sooner, you may expect it. Whatever else is in my little collection, call for it as if it were your own. By no means can I fall upon the various readings of Spottiswood, and will be obliged to you for a transcript, and any of your MSS. you can spare, when my Lord comes west, which will be the day after the Session rises. However, now that you have laid down a way of writing by post, with our friend G. Montier, let me hear that way as soon as you please; and let me know if I may have any hopes of seeing you in this place, and when you think of going for Lon-

don. That will much determine my coming east, where I have nothing more attractive than Heriot's Work. My humble duty to your family and son at London. I am, Dear Sir, yours most affectionately.

July 17, 1723.

LETTER XXXIV.

BIOGRAPHY.—DISTINGUISHING EXCELLENCE OF THE SCOTS
WORTHIES.

*Lord Grange to Wodrow*¹

SIR,—This forenoon I enquired at Lord Pollock how I might send a book to you, and was well pleased to find that an occasion presented so soon, when at my coming home I got your letter of the 29th June lying on my table. I return you, with my hearty thanks, your manuscript concerning Messrs Dickson, Sempil, &c. Pardon me that the other about Mr Maule does not accompany it. I hope I shall soon return it to you. You need not at all hasten yourself as to Mr Blair, &c.

I suppose you are a member of the Commission, and I wish your sacrament may be over soon enough to allow you to attend it. I'll be very glad to learn what is doing among our dissenting brethren in Ireland. The differences among them, and likewise among the English Dissenters, affect me sensibly. Perhaps they touch one the more, because it would seem that the woeful disputes (at least in England) were ushered in with some such debates as are now among us, &c. If so, may the Lord stop the parallels going farther!

Your letter first informed me of that Life of Bishop Sharp, which

¹ Letters to Wodrow, vol. xxi. No. 125.

I'll read so soon as I get time. I think you are in the right not to write pamphlets in answer to every trifle as it comes out against you. When that party have published all they intend to say, you can, more agreeably to yourself as well as to your readers, refute at once every thing that needs to be noticed in the scattered remarks.

I'm persuaded that those who indeed relish what concerns the reality and power of godliness, will be very much pleased with a just account of those who have been eminent for religion in our nation since the Reformation; and during that period our country has scarcely been eminent for any thing but religion, and I know not any country which, in that blessed period, has been so remarkable for it as ours. I wish I could tell for what good thing we are now remarkable in the world. May the time return! You have accounts in your collection, which, I humbly believe, a real Christian would read with much savour and feeling, (but more intimate,) and with much edification as to several parts of his Christian warfare, as an experienced soldier and statesman reads the memoirs of a Cæsar, a King William, or of any others who had the true spirit of their calling. Perhaps every passage may not be fitly published to all the world, which will make the memoirs from which you publish still valuable. And were it not for this reason, the earnestness I have for some years been possessed with, of gathering up every thing I can get of this kind, would be at an end, by the hopes you give me of printing accounts of those worthies. In the lives of eminent churchmen and others, which are frequently published with applause in England and elsewhere, I meet with accounts of an eminent philosopher, historian, critic, or theologian, &c.; but except the dry, general, and almost common-place tattle of the writer, set off perhaps with good language and rhetoric, I meet with nothing of the Christian. Though many of our people have been excellently learned, yet I doubt their distinguishing excellency above most of their contemporaries lay in the Christian part; in that solid, experimental religion, access to God, and communion with him, &c., and in those signal instances of his favour and countenance where-with they were honoured. I know that to write such accounts is

not to write to the taste of our times ; but so much the worse for our times ; and neither do they relish what is most valuable in such persons as those. But Wisdom is justified of her children. That God may be with you, indeed, and in a special manner guide you in this good undertaking, is the hearty prayer of, Rev. Sir, your faithful and most humble servant,

JAMES ERSKINE.

Edinburgh, July 2, 1723.

Mr G. Wilson has not yet sent me those MSS. of Lord Warriston's. I have therefore written to him for them, and when I get them, they shall be sent to you with the first opportunity,

LETTER XXXV.

SCOTTISH BIOGRAPHY.

To the Honourable my Lord Grange.

MY LORD,—According to my promise in the last, I presume to send you this by post, which I only had yesterday from Belfast. I am expecting fuller accounts of the procedure of the General Synod very soon, which I shall either transmit to you, or bring with me, if I get into the Commission, when I hope to bring back your manuscript ; and if I come not in, then very soon after, if the Lord will, I design to be in Edinburgh.

Your last of the 2d instant was more than acceptable to me, and I humbly thank your Lordship for it. The difficulties in such a work appear very great, though the more I think of it, its necessity and usefulness appear the more ; and it will be sometime before I can satisfy myself as to the method itself, or ranking persons and particular things about them. These things I would be fondest of, and to serious persons would be most savoury, perhaps will be

most difficult to put in any order for public [view] in such a miserable age as we are fallen into. I have pretty large accounts of some, and but lame ones of others, and many desiderata after which inquiry must be made. I'll be fond to have your thoughts more fully at your leisure as to matter, method, order, and everything that offers in such a design; and am, in some haste, my Lord, your very much obliged and most humble servant.

Eastwood, July 22, 1723.

LETTER XXXVI.

WITH ACCOUNT OF THE IRISH SYNOD.

To the Right Honourable David, Earl of Buchan.

[DAVID, fourth LORD CARDROSS, son of Henry, third Lord Cardross, and nephew of Colonel Erskine, was born 1672, and succeeded his father in 1693. On the death of William, eighth Earl of Buchan, he succeeded to that title. He was sworn a Privy Councillor, April 1697, and on the accession of Queen Anne was continued in the Council, and appointed one of the Commissioners of Exchequer, and Governor of the Castle of Blackness. His Lordship was opposed to the Union with England, and entered a protest, January 7, 1707, against the change of the right of Scottish Peers to sit in Parliament, from a constant and hereditary right to an elective one; in consequence of which he was deprived of the offices he held under Government. He was a staunch supporter of George I., and the Protestant succession. At the time of the Rebellion of 1715, he joined the Duke of Argyle. He was repeatedly chosen to represent the Scottish Peerage in the British Parliament. He died on the 14th of October 1745, in the 74th year of his age.—(*Douglas's Peerage of Scotland*, vol. i. p. 277.)—ED.]

MY LORD,—Knowing your Lordship's concern in Colonel Upton,

and his affair in dependence before the General Synod of Ireland, and hearing you were come down from Parliament, I thought it would not be unacceptable to your Lordship to have the copy of the first accounts I had of the Synod last post only. I'll be fond to know what is become of Mr Fraser. I presumed to write to him last under your Lordship's cover, but have not heard since from him, nor anything of the matter I wrote to you of. I fancy somewhat has fallen in hindering Mr Fraser writing about it, and other things I expected to hear of from him ere that time. When your Lordship has a spare moment, I'll be fond you'll let me hear of him, and that you lay your commands upon, my Lord, your very much obliged and most humble servant.

July 22, 1723.

LETTER XXXVII.

BISHOP GADDERAR.

To Mr William Macknight, Minister at Irvine.

REV. DEAR BROTHER,—I thank you for the enclosed, which I return again by this post, and yours of the 19th, and long for the next, which I know will be more full. I am pleased matters have gone as I perceive in general they have. If I get any thing, but I expect most through your hands, I'll be sure to send it.

Very little offers from any quarter at present. I hear from the North that Bishop Gatherer¹ has been a second time there propa-

¹ This Gatherer, or Gadderar, was a person who came from England, calling himself a Bishop, (though his right to this title was much suspected by some of his own brethren,) and begun the schism about the Usages, which issued in a separation from the old Bishops, who died out without leaving any successors.—(*Sieveright's Principles, &c.*, p. 278, &c.)

gating his high-flying Popish notions of real presence, middle state, &c., from Bishop Campbell's book, of the propagating of which you heard at the Assembly; that he has diaconate and presbyterate great numbers in this second visit; that there is no little breach among that party on this score. And Bishop Fullartoun sent a monitory letter to the Episcopal clergy in Aberdeen, Moray, &c., discharging them to countenance Gatherer, or hold communion with him. This he was the rather inclined to do, that some people of distinction at Edinburgh undertook to prove that Gatherer is in pay from and concert with the Papists abroad; that after he has paved the way by these doctrines above, he is to return and preach some things yet nearer Popery, though these are pretty near it. I am yours most affectionately.

July 22, 1723.

LETTER XXXVIII.

COLONEL UPTON AND THE IRISH NON-SUBSCRIBERS.

*Mr Masterton to Mr William Macknight.*¹

Belfast, July 12, 1723.

REV. AND DEAR BROTHER,—I wrote to you lately by one Robert Duncan of this town, signifying my earnest desire to correspond with you and Mr Robert Wodrow, but received no answer.

Our Synod convened third Tuesday of last month, and, first and last, during our being together, we had as little satisfaction as formerly since our divisions commenced. Though we continued together twelve days, we got nothing done to any satisfactory purpose. The trial betwixt Colonel Upton and the Non-subscribers consumed almost our whole time. Colonel Upton had accused the Non-subscribers of holding principles which open a door to error, at

¹ Letters to Wodrow, vol. xx. No. 194.

the Sub-Synod in Belfast last January, and for proof of his charge adduced the paper called *The Vindication*,¹ as containing the principle of the Non-subscribers, and desired the said paper might be judicially read. Colonel Upton also signified to the Synod, that he had broken communion with the Non-subscribing ministers, upon the score of the principle mentioned. The members of the Synod being for most part either Non-subscribers or their abettors, determined against Mr Upton that he had not proved his charge, and voted their adherence to the Charitable Declarations.² From which sentence Colonel Upton appealed to the next General Synod. When the affair came to be tried at the General Synod, the first thing that was tried was the appeal, and it carried by a great majority *bene appellatum*. The Non-subscribers gave great disturbance to the Synod by their vehement and tedious speeches, so that we were not likely to get any thing done. The next thing debated was the method of the trial of the merits of the cause. Mr Upton proposed, first, to prove the high Non-subscribing principle of condemning all creeds and confessions in human words as tests of orthodoxy, to be contained in the paper called *The Vindication*; and, in the next place, to fix *The Vindication* upon the Non-subscribing ministers. The Non-subscribing ministers made violent opposition to the method of trial, and alleged it was most unjust, and that Mr Upton ought first to fix *The Vindication* upon them, which they defied him to do. But the Synod voted that Mr Upton should be allowed to go on in his own method, while the Non-subscribers protested against it, and declined answering any thing to what was alleged by Mr Upton against *The Vindication*, *i. e.* the pamphlet called so. After the Synod was tired out by the tedious harangues of the Society, who used all possible arts to inveigle the Synod, and to postpone the trial, a great part of the Synod being gone away, they came to four resolutions to the purpose following:—1. They condemned the high Non-subscribing principle above mentioned,

¹ This was “A Vindication of the Presbyterians in the North of Ireland, Subscribers and Non-subscribers,” published and recommended, in 1721, by Victor Ferguson, M.D.

² Passed in the Synod of 1721.

as tending to open a door to error in this Church. 2. They condemned *The Vindication* as containing the said principle, and pronounced the abettors and disposers of the said pamphlet disturbers of the peace of this Church, without fixing the paper upon person or persons in particular, because that part of the process was not tried. 3d Resolution pronounceth the method of admitting intrants, by allowing them to make their own confession of faith in their own words, as dangerous to this united Church. 4th Resolution defers the further trial of the process aforesaid to the next General Synod. There seemed to be a disposition toward a rupture with the Non-subscribing ministers; but, by the want of time, and the influence of menacing letters from Dr Calamy in London, and Mr Boyse in Dublin, the Synod came to no conclusion about it.

The Non-subscribing ministers use uncommon industry to blacken the conduct of the Synod, and single out some members as the butt of their prejudice, viz., Mr Upton, Mr Gilbert Kennedy, myself, as Moderator, &c. The congregations of the two Non-subscribers in this place are so disposed to believe the odious representations of the Synod's conduct, made by their two ministers and Mr Windor, a dissenting minister in Liverpool, of Non-subscribing principles, who attended the Synod, that the third congregation and I are much more maligned by our neighbours than formerly. I wish the Church of Scotland would think of any expedient for assisting those of their own principles here, against those whose charity I may say is cruel. Please to transmit this, as soon as you have perused it, to the Rev. Mr Wodrow, with my affectionate respects, and acquaint him that I expect he will write to me by the first opportunity, and send me a paper of mine by a sure hand, well sealed. I hope to hear from you soon. When the copy of the Synod's minutes comes to me, I design to write to you further. I wish what I write now be legible, being in some haste. Pray for this poor Church, and particularly for, Rev. Dear Brother, your affectionate brother and servant,

CHARLES MASTERTON.

LETTER XXXIX.

ANENT THE PRECEDING LETTER.

To Mr William Macknight, Minister at Irvine.

REV. DEAR BROTHER,—I had yours of the 22d, with the enclosed from Mr Masterton, yesternight, which was the more welcome that it came so soon. To-morrow I am to be abroad preaching at a fast, and I write this night to come to you by post, that it may be as soon as possible. Our sacrament here is to be the second Sabbath of August, when I expect your concern and sympathy; and 'twixt this and that time, if I can have as much time, I shall write my remarks, and a letter to Mr Masterton, and send you his paper unsealed, that you may peruse it; but, indeed, I doubt much if I shall have so much time; but the week after (if the Lord will) you may expect it. I wrote to you in my last, that the procedure of the Synod was very satisfying to me. I cannot yet win worthy Colonel Upton's length of breaking communion with the Non-subscribers; but there may be more in their peculiar circumstances than I know of. I am, Dear Brother, yours most affectionately,

R. W.

Eastwood, July 23, 1723.

LETTER XL.

SYMPATHY UNDER COLONEL ERSKINE'S BEREAVEMENTS.

To Mr John Erskine, Advocate.

DEAR SIR,—I had yours, with an account of your worthy mother's lowness, and in an hour or two one from Mr Dinwoody, acquainting me of her removal. While, by communions and other-

wise, I have been hindered to write to you, it was only this week that I heard of your excellent sister's death, which I own struck me most sensibly; and I cannot but signify to you, and your disconsolate father, by your hand, my most tender sympathy under such breaches upon breaches. I know he has abundance of good friends about him that can suggest, and with greater advantage, any thing that can offer to me. It's my earnest request that the Comforter may be sent to him. I know his affectionate temper, and how near the hand of the Lord has touched him, in two of the most tender places; and hope he will be jealous of himself, lest he exceed. It's my comfort, on his behalf, that more than ordinary providences have more than ordinary supports; and it's my earnest supplication those may be given him; and a sweet balance, yea, an overbalance, in sweet communion with God through Christ; and the clear views, that when he has served God and his generation, he is to meet with those excellent ones of the earth, now inexpressibly happy and glorious, never to part, yea, with Christ, which is best of all. May this sharp trial be sanctified to you all, and to your families, and to dear Davie, whom I most kindly remember. I presume to send my kindest respects to Mr Lesly; he has lost what only God can make up, and I pray he may there have and find his portion. My own loss is more than I shall at present speak of; but that of the public and multitudes is what, in these cases, sometimes makes me silent.

I design, after our communion, the second Sabbath of August, to see your father. I will mind what you said when I spoke of this to you, that you did not know what changes might be ere then in your family. If your circumstances allow, it will be a pleasure to see you here. However, write to me, before or at that time, and let me know how your father and all of you are; and where he is to be at Culross, or Edinburgh, towards the middle of August or end of it. I thought the [contents] of my last letter about Irish affairs would not be unacceptable to you and your father, whom I again most tenderly remember. I am, Dear Sir, yours in all the sympathy I can.

July 23, 1723.

LETTER XLI.

HEBREW LETTER OF RABBI JUDAH MONIS.

To the Rev. Mr Benjamin Colman, Minister at Boston.

REV. DEAR BROTHER,—I had yours of the 11th of June by Captain Brodie, and hope, before he sail, to write to you at more length. I have also your valuable packet, with Dr Rabbi Monis' letter.¹ My Hebrew is rusted, and there are some words for which I must consult the Dictionary, which I have not time for at present, for your letter came just the day before the dispensation of the Sacrament here; and I write this the day after, being called next day to go to Edinburgh to a meeting of the Commission of the last Assembly. And the bearer, Captain Ferguson, favours me with a line signifying he is to sail in two days, so that I have only time to thank you for your accounts of matters with you, and to return my kindest thanks to Rabbi Monis. I dare not undertake to write in Hebrew; and since he has not the Latin, I shall be at a loss how to make a return, unless he make a shift to understand my English. I communicate some parts of his letter I understood to Principal Stirling, and six or seven ministers who were helping me at my sacrament, who all have him most kindly remembered; and, indeed, our prayers for him and his letter were accented by his letter, which is like Athias' print. The Rabbinick, I fear, I shall not be able to master. The Lord confirm and refresh his soul, for he has much refreshed and comforted us, by his coming under the Messiah's wings. The mouths, I assure you, of many are full of praises in Scotland for his conversion, and he has the prayers of thousands. I design to write

¹ The Rabbi's Letter, in Rabbinical Hebrew, Wodrow has preserved, but the reason he assigns for not answering it may suffice for not inserting it here.

at more length to you by the next occasion. Nothing of importance at present offers to me from this country. Only I would not miss this occasion of signifying how much I am in debt for yours, and to beg you continue your prayers for me, this people, and the Church of Scotland. Great grace be with you! I am, in haste, Rev. Dear Brother, yours most affectionately.

Eastwood, August 12, 1723.

LETTER XLII.

IRISH CHURCH AFFAIRS.

To Mr Charles Masterton, Minister at Belfast.

Eastwood, August 19, 1723.

REV. DEAR BROTHER,—I am in your debt for the accounts of your last Synod by Mr Macknight's hands, and am glad of the resolutions you have come to. It's hard to judge of the effects of things, be they never so well laid and designed, in an age of such looseness and licentiousness as we are fallen into. But what you have concluded appears to me the most proper expedients at this juncture; and I pray the Lord may bless them for preservation of truth and purity, and, if possible, for putting a stop to your present distractions.

You need sympathy, in your present circumstances at Belfast, and in part you have it. I hope as your day is, so shall your strength be. I do not observe that plain open dealing, and a firm attachment to professed principles, is ordinarily one of the worst ways of dealing, even with enemies and observers. May the Lord conduct and lead you to such measures as, with wisdom, you may walk in a perfect way!

By Mr Livingston I signified my opinion of your papers, in an-

swer to the Seasonable Advice; and the returns you have from Professor Hamilton, and other friends at Edinburgh, may supersede any remarks of mine; and, indeed, very little offered to me on reading them through. I think any show of argument in that paper recommended from Dublin, is more than taken off by you. When you handle the practice of your excellent predecessors in Ireland, I wish you would, from the records of Presbyteries, and other papers in that time, labour to state the matter of fact of their subscribing the National Covenant, which is, indeed, a Confession of Faith, as I suppose you may easily do, at least it was our practice here; and I suppose Presbyterian ministers in Ireland, before the Restoration, came very near us in their practice. The remark you make on Mr Dunlop's reasoning, in my opinion, wants not ground, and he lays his argument a little too large; but you'll have, no doubt, from Edinburgh, the sentiments of those who know his opinion in this matter. The exceptions of the Presbyterian people with you against the Non-subscribers will, I fancy, be one of the most gravelling parts of your papers to those gentlemen; and what reply they can give to them is beyond my reach. But how far it will be fit, on the whole, to publish them, depends so much upon your present circumstances, that I cannot allow myself to judge ament the expediency. If there were any room to hope that your hearts were allaying, I would not be much for rankling matters. But if it be proper any thing further be printed on this unhappy debate, without the least compliment to you, I like your papers better than any thing I have seen.

There is nothing here I can think of worth your notice. Our Jacobite meeting-houses in the North are very much growing; and last week the Commission addressed the Lords Justices on this head. Pray let me hear frequently from you, and lay your commands on, Rev. Dear Brother, yours most affectionately.

Send me all your pamphlets.

LETTER XLIII.

SAME SUBJECT.

To Mr William Livingston, Minister at Temple-Patrick, Ireland.

REV. DEAR BROTHER,—I thank you for yours in July, by Mr Macknight. The proceedings of your Synod are very acceptable to us here, and, for my share, I heartily approve of them. I was at Edinburgh last week at the Commission, and endeavoured to convene some brethren to discourse on your affairs. All I can say is, they approved of the conduct of your Synod. What follows is only to yourself, that you may, in time coming, take the more care of your letters. When I talked at first with Professor Hamilton, I observed a little dryness which I had not noticed before. In a little, I asked if he had heard from you since the Synod. He told me he had, but that there were copies of the memorial directed for him going through the town three weeks before yours came to his hand, and asked me if I had a copy of the memorial. I told him I had a letter from you, and let him see it, which he told me was the same with his; and asked me if I had sent a copy of it to my L. G., [Lord Grange,] or Mr G—t, [Gusthart.] I told him I had not, nor showed it to any of them. He seemed to return to his old temper when I assured him I had given no double of it; and told me, he could not understand the management of Mr Montier, for he had, it seems by mistake, given Mr Gusthart his memorial, and that copies of it were going up and down the town some weeks before he himself had received it; and when he challenged Mr Montier, his answer was, that he believed I might have sent in a copy of it to my Lord Grange, and the doubles might come from that. I assured him again that was false, and had not communicate a copy of it to any, and had seen none of that side. This is a little com-

mentary on what I was hinting to you at our first meeting; and it will be very proper you endeavour to have accounts conveyed more cautiously. And because our sides continue, and you judge it necessary to keep in with both, I only propose, whether it may not be proper to send what comes to the Professor, &c., some eight or ten days sooner, than to the other, or at least prevent the communication of what goes to Edinburgh, directed to the Professor, to the other side. I need not tell you, it's not fit I should be seen in this. You'll scarce think what a dryness this incident bred as to me, till I had, and well it was I could, vindicate myself of communicating yours.

You know how matters stand at Edinburgh; and I am of opinion, that what comes to Mr Gusthart and my Lord Grange would come as well direct to Colonel Erskine, as immediately to themselves; and it might perhaps come as well from Colonel Upton to them. I have yet the happiness to be in tolerable liking with the Professor, notwithstanding of this incident; and whatever you send to Irvine, if you order so, I shall send to the Professor; and what you send by post, let Mr Montier be cautioned to give to none but to whom it's directed.

I hope by this time my books and letters in March are come to hand, for they were sent some weeks ago to Mr Smith, by Mr Mac-knight. I long much to have the papers you are causing transcribe for me. I am extremely pleased to hear Mr M'Bride is recovering. Pray write frequently to me, and send all your pamphlets. Give my most humble duty to Colonel Upton. I send with this a letter to Mr Kennedy, which you'll transmit to him when you have occasion. I am yours most affectionately.

Eastwood, August 19, 1723.

LETTER XLIV.

MR KENNEDY'S SERMON.—EPISCOPALIAN MEETING-HOUSES.

To Mr Gilbert Kennedy, Minister, Tullylish, Ireland.

REV. DEAR BROTHER,—I had yours of the 3d of July only last post. It has certainly been mislaid. I thank you for it, and sympathise with you under your maltreatment for your Sermon.¹ I fancy you'll be obliged to publish it for your vindication, and then I hope to see it. For my share, the procedure of your Synod is most acceptable; it's the best you could do. The Lord himself interpose and heal the many evils among you. I wrote lately to Mr Livingston of Temple-Patrick my opinion of the queries he sent on your affairs, which I doubt not he would communicate. It's but guesses we can give at this distance; but we desire to have your circumstances much at heart. Pray miss no occasion of writing to me.

I was at Edinburgh last week, where we had several settlements of parishes, now much encumbered with patrons, before us. But the main thing before us was a terrible increase of Episcopal meeting-houses in the North; ten or twelve set up since May. These

¹ Mr Kennedy had, during the time of the General Synod in June, at Dungannon, preached a sermon on these words, "See that ye love one another," in the hearing of the Non-subscribers, which was found fault with. "The Sermon," says he, "was censured by them in the Synod as railing. They never so much as spoke to me, or told me that they were offended; but, from the notes taken from my mouth by one Mr Simson, accused me, and threatened to print it, without allowing me the liberty to review and consider what I had said; to such a height matters are now come. What the event will be, I know not; but that God rules in the raging of the sea, and stilleth the noise of its waves, and the tumults of the people."—(*Letters to Wodrow*, vol. xx. No. 189.)

rendezvouses of disaffection concern the civil government so much, that we judged it proper to address the Lords Justices on this occasion. What redress we shall have, I know not. The Lord be with you in your work, and support you in your difficulties. My kindest respects to all my old comrades with you. I am, Rev. Dear Brother, yours most affectionately.

Eastwood, August 19, 1723.

LETTER XLV.

PRACTICE AS TO SUBSCRIPTION IN SCOTLAND.

To Mr William Livingston, Minister at Temple-Patrick, Ireland.

REV. DEAR BROTHER,—I had yours this day without date, but, by the matter of it, I perceive it's about the end of September, which is exceeding welcome. That incident of the spreading of that memorial I hope will be forgot; and I shall not be wanting in any thing in my power to cultivate your correspondence with friends there, and remove mistakes. However, it was very happy that our friend, Mr Gusthart, should have given out copies of the memorial. You, as to your writing to my Lord Grange, I think I hinted before that that branch of correspondence would do as well to be managed betwixt Colonel Upton and Colonel Erskine, who will communicate whatever is needful to my Lord. The information you have is very just, that the last named is perfectly at variance with your friends at Edinburgh. Could I allow myself to believe the reports spread of him, I should have very ill thoughts of him; but in charity I cannot. This far is owned by his enemies, that he is a great man, and certainly a person of as great abilities as we have in Scotland. Whatever you think proper to communicate to Colonel Erskine or

him, you may send it to me, and I shall take care of it. But as matters stand at present, I think Colonel Upton may write to the Colonel.

It pleases me to hear that at length my book has come to your hand, and I am glad any thing you have read of it satisfies you. It's like to raise a terrible storm, from the Episcopal side, upon me. They threaten three folios against me, and are much fretted. I expect no quarter from them, and shall be silent till I see what they have to charge me with. You have my mind fully about the books I sent, and I leave the matter entirely to you. I hope you received mine to the Colonel.¹

I had a short line from Mr Masterton, by the Commissioner from Carrickfergus, who has a collection appointed for him through this Synod; but the multitudes of these collections make them turn to nothing. I was much longing for the accounts of the Committee at Dungannon, and thank you for the hint you gave me about Mr Halliday's challenge, and Mr Frank's acceptance, and long to hear the issue. But I was expecting to hear a complaint tabled before that Committee, of that singular step of calling the people together at Belfast, and reading the Synod meetings to them, and haranguing against them.² This is as odd a treatment of a Supreme Judiciary of Christ as ever I heard of, and such an unmannerly appeal to the people, as, in my opinion, deserved the Committee's serious consideration. Besides, it appears, by any view I have of it, to have been very unfair and ungenerous to talk against the Synod, in a place and company where nobody was to answer them. Had I been in their case, I would have invited the Moderator of the Synod to have been heard when they made her a party and pannel.

¹ Colonel Upton.

² "Mr Kirkpatrick and Mr Halliday convened their congregations, and read over the Synod's minutes; and Mr Kirkpatrick, in a discourse of four hours' length, condemned the conduct of the Synod, and exposed every step they took against the Non-subscribers, as notoriously partial and unjust. This unusual piece of management has made great noise, and very much increased the flame in this place," [Belfast.]—*Masterton to Wodrow.*

This had been material justice ; and I am persuaded he would have been too hard for them.

The story you are informed of, as from Mr Wright, has no foundation at all,¹ and I fancy it has its rise from what I wrote to you about the Episcopal Ministers in the North going in to Popery. Upon inquiry at Glasgow, I find that the Professor has not got any MS. account of your last Synod, and he has no account of your affairs but what he has from you by me. I am very much longing for the MS. you are about to cause transcribe for me. Pray let it come as soon as you can.

The query you propose to me about our practice here before the Restoration, and in our suffering times, requiring a subscription, and assent to the Confession of Faith,² is what I am sorry I cannot give you that satisfaction that I incline to, since my inquiries have not led me to any exact view of our practice as to that. If this may be of any use to you in your present circumstances, I'll endeavour to be more particular in my after accounts, if the Lord will, and shall make some inquiry ament it, if you desire me. At present what offers to me is this :—Our National Covenant, you know, is properly a Confession of Faith against Popery, and accordingly was sworn and subscribed by all ministers and intrants, till Prelacy came in 1610. Then the Articles of Perth were urged, and, as I think, though I cannot be positive about it, the conform clergy were urged to sign them, at least they did swear and sign the Oath of Canonical Obedience. When, in the 1636, our new Canons were framed, it was designed they should be signed by all ministers and intrants ; but this was happily prevented by the second Reformation,

¹ "I was told by a sensible man, lately from Kilmarnock, that some Presbyterian ministers in the North are going in to the Popish tenets. He said he had his information from the Rev. Mr Wright, who, from the character I have of him, I believe would not report such a thing without good intelligence."—(*Livingston to Wodrow.*)

² "I would gladly be informed of one thing concerning the Church of Scotland, and I know no hand so proper as yourself, viz., if, in the licensing of candidates, and ordination of ministers, any subscription or assent was required to the Westminster Confession of Faith, or the doctrines contained in it, before the Restoration ; and likewise if any such subscription or assent was required in their private admissions and ordination during the time of the persecution."—(*Livingston to Wodrow.*)

1637 and 1638, which you know began with swearing and subscribing the National Covenant, and that with the explanation of the Assembly at Glasgow, declaring that Episcopacy was renounced in that covenant. This continued to be the Confession of this Church, in consequence, as you know, of the Solemn League and Covenant, 1643. Whether that Confession was then formally signed, and ministers and intrants required to give their explicit assent, I cannot so well inform you; but of this I can, that till the Restoration, the National and Solemn League and Covenant were still subscribed by intrants; and the Solemn League and Covenant binds down to that uniformity of doctrine, &c., that was to be agreed upon by both churches, and, consequently, was a material subscribing of it when approved by the General Assembly. In licensing and ordaining *sub cruce*, I cannot be positive whether there was a formal subscription; but I know there was a verbal assent required to our doctrines contained in the Westminster Confession; and the ministers, 1690, who framed the act for subscribing the Confession, were just the suffering ministers in the period 'twixt the Restoration and Revolution. This is all that offers to me at present.

Pray write frequently to me, and send me all that passes. We hear you are to have a day of prayer and fasting on account of your present differences, November 5, but you write nothing to me about this. My kindest respects to Mr Masterton, Mr M'Bride, Mr Gilbert Kennedy, and all other brethren of my acquaintance. I am troubled to hear that your bodily infirmities are not lessening. The Lord support you, and continue you at his work! I am, Rev. Dear Brother, yours most affectionately.

Eastwood, Oct. 29, 1723.

P. S.—Give me a history of your parliament, especially as to what relates to Presbyterians in the North. We have a story spread here by the friends of the Non-subscribers, that your Synod would have gone greater lengths against Non-subscribers than they did, had they not got a message from the King threatening the removal of his royal gratuity for the Dissenters. Let me know if there be any ground for this.

LETTER XLVI.

MONUMENT TO STEUART OF PARDOVAN.

To Lady Pardovan.

DEAR MADAM,—I spoke to my Lord Pollock anent putting up a monument in remembrance of your husband, and he gave his consent most frankly that a marble inscription should be placed in the outside of the wall, directly answering to the place where Pardovan lies, signifying that his corpse is depositate within, with whatever you shall be pleased to put on it. And, indeed, after I have considered this matter, were it my case, I would rather choose to have the inscription without than within the wall; and, I cannot but think, this is better than a little head stone of marble within.

So, if you please, you may order the stone from Holland, as I think you were speaking, and advise with your friends upon the inscription to be cut upon it. As soon as I come to town, I shall wait on you. Meanwhile, I thought it my duty to acquaint you with my Lord's consent, and to beg you'll still believe me to be, Dear Madam, your very much obliged and most humble servant.

Eastwood, Nov. 2, 1723.

LETTER XLVII.

WORKS ON CHURCH GOVERNMENT AND HISTORY.

To Mr Thomas Aikman, at the Ross.

DEAR SIR,—I had your obliging letter about eight days ago, and delayed to make a return till I could send you that volume of my pamphlets which some time ago you desired to see. Please now to receive it, and call for any other you please. I have got

them all bound up and titled now, and ready for my friends' use. —The two books you write me of, I have them both. The Apology for, and Vindication of, the Oppressed Presbyterians, &c., 1677, is writ by a predecessor of mine in this parish, Mr Hugh Smith. He was a man of very great success in his work in this place. He was, in his opinion, against the Indulgence, but he was also against the Separation, and unhappy heights that afterwards were run to upon that head.

I have likewise Thorndyke on the Primitive Government of Churches, with some other of his pieces. He is one of the writers that run to the heights, which afterwards turned so fashionable in England, and his thoughts are improven by Dr Hicks, and our modern Tory writers. Dodwell, you know, follows him in giving up the Scripture times to us; and while they yield us this, they yield much, if not all; for then we must turn to the maze of antiquity, and every thing is left at an uncertainty; and, which is harder in my opinion, the Scripture is no longer the rule of government in the Christian Church, and so is not a sufficient rule, at least for our practice, in the most important matters. And giving, but not granting, that the Apostles, at least John, the last of them, did appoint overseers and bishops; this is still but a supposition and hypothesis of theirs, and must be proven; and all the proofs they bring are from writers two or three hundred years after John, which contradict themselves and one another. Thus, we are sent a wandering, and, instead of having God's will as to the government of his house conveyed to us in the certain channel of his own written word, we must go, I do not know where, to look for it. But I check myself, considering I write to one who knows these things as well as I.

I know of none that have written a connected History of our Church since the 1625. Spang, in "Historia Motuum in Scotia," gives an account of the Revolution 1637, 1638, and 1640; and Bishop Burnet, in his History of the Dukes of Hamilton, draws our History some way down to the 1650, as you know. Mr Bruce, I am told, in his answer to me, is about to draw down our History from the Reformation in three folios, the last whereof is principally

to refute what I have written. You'll oblige me by letting me hear frequently from you, and giving me an opportunity to make some small returns for the many favours you have done to, Dear Sir, yours most affectionately.

Eastwood, Nov. 11, 1723.

LETTER XLVIII.

MANUSCRIPTS AND PAMPHLETS.

To James Fraser, Esq., at Grangehill, near Forres, Moray.

DEAR SIR,—It was with a great deal of pleasure I received yours a post or two ago, with the account of your safe arrival at Grangehill. You owe me no thanks, I am sure, for seeing you at Edinburgh and Glasgow. It was my great loss that I had so little of your company. I have not forgot the transcribing Mr Kirkton's MSS.; but I am in some pain how to get it done for you. My two writers, that used to transcribe for me at Glasgow, are dead since I saw you. I am in quest of another, and shall use my best endeavours to have it for you against you come south; but I have not yet fallen upon one whose hand satisfies me.

I have spoken to two or three of the masters of the College at Glasgow about your collated Spottiswood, which they all seemed pleased with. Professor Simson, who gives you his service, desires you may write me an attested account of the collation of it with the manuscripts, and where the manuscripts are in England, to be a voucher to it, and, as far as I can see, the Library there will take it at your rate.

Your pamphlets are very entertaining, and the most part of the six volumes are what I want in my large collection, which consists of near four hundred volumes folio, quarto, and octavo; and, since

they bear no connection with those at Edinburgh, I'll give whatever price you set on them. We shall settle this at meeting, which I very much long for.

I can think of very little to entertain you with from this place. I am going through my MSS., and making some kind of collections for a Scots Biography of ministers and others; but whether I shall ever be able to bring anything of this to a bearing, I know not.

From Edinburgh, I find Mr Bruce is going on in his large work against my History, and proposes to print three folios. It becomes me to be silent, till I see what he has to advance; but it's more than I can guess what he can advance in defence of that black period I describe from undoubted vouchers.

I have not these pamphlets you left with Mr Chambers, and will be fond to see them. We hear that Duke Hamilton is to go up this winter to Court, and that is all the news I can think of from this barren place.

Pray write frequently to me, and give my most humble duty to Grangehill and his lady. I am, Dear Sir, yours most affectionately.

Nov. 11, 1723.

I have ordered our carriers, which go to Edinburgh weekly, to call at Mr Dunbar's shop for "Beza's Histoire de France," or any thing you send me too bulky for the post.

LETTER XLIX.

MANUSCRIPTS AND PAMPHLETS.

*Lord Grange to Wodrow.*¹

SIR,—The person I employed to transcribe Mr Maule's *Life*, which you lent me for that purpose, was too slow; yet I had re-

¹ Letters to Wodrow, vol. xxi. No. 135.

turned your copy sooner had I found an occasion. My old friend, Mr Reid, minister of Stevenston, being to pass by your dwelling, I take the opportunity of returning it to you, with my hearty thanks for your favouring me with it.

It is an inconveniency that men who, like you, are curious in making such collections are liable to, that their acquaintances prove troublesome by asking to borrow those pamphlets and MSS. which can hardly be found elsewhere. I do not like to be in the class of the troublesome; but your communicative temper will, I hope, induce you to pardon me for ranking myself once more in that tribe. You told me that you have in print an old Explication of the National Covenant. I have often inquired after it since you told me of it, but could never fall upon it. If you would please to allow me to have it for a few weeks, I would carefully restore it; and this I will always reckon an additional favour conferred upon, Rev. Sir, your faithful, most humble servant,

JAMES ERSKINE.

Edinburgh, Nov. 16, 1723.

LETTER L.

REPLY TO THE FOREGOING.

To my Lord Grange.

MY LORD,—I had yours of the 16th, with Mr Maule's Life, from Mr Reid. Anything from me to your Lordship cannot deserve thanks, since I am so far in your debt for much more valuable things you have been pleased to communicate, that I know not when I shall get out of it, especially since I still must be further in, when anything comes to your hand that may help on my collections.

It is then a pleasure to me that I have anything that your Lordship wants to see. That Explication of the National Covenant I

spoke of was in manuscript, as far as I remember, at least I have one in pretty old write, as far as I can guess at least about the 1638, if not before the 1600, which I shall send in, if your Lordship desire, by the first sure hand.

But, in case I may have forgot the printed pamphlet you tell me I spoke of, I have sent your Lordship a list of all my pamphlets, and books, and manuscripts, according as they are classed in my catalogue of subjects, which cost me much pains to form out of my pamphlets, which I have now got bound up, in some more than three hundred volumes. If there be any of them that hits what we were talking of, please to pitch upon it, and I'll send in the volume it's in to you.

If your Lordship has got any new additions to your excellent collection relating to our history, or diaries, or remarkable providences, I'll be fond to hear of them ; with all other accounts of matters you have the leisure to give to, my Lord, your Lordship's very much obliged and most humble servant.

Eastwood, Nov. 22, 1723.

P.S.—I do not yet hear that Mr Bruce has begun to print his large work against my book. Only I am told he is going on writing. I am beginning my rude design of collections as to our biography, with a draught of my father's Life ; and am gathering up some of his remains from his loose papers. He had some very uncommon thoughts about the law of nature and other subjects, of which I would be fond to have your Lordship's thoughts ; but I fear Session time is a wrong time to ask this favour. As soon as I know of any leisure you have, I presume to communicate them with you. I have some hopes of getting a copy of Mr Calderwood's large History this winter. I know not if it be a thing to be asked of my Lord Polton, to have the liberty of collating it with the original in his hands. Forgive all these little things I give you the trouble of, and lay your commands on me.

LETTER LI.

IRREGULAR DOINGS OF THE NON-SUBSCRIBERS.

*Mr Masterton to Mr Macknight.*¹

Belfast, Nov. 12, 1723.

REV. AND DEAR BROTHER,—I received yours by a woman who came from Irvine the other day. Our Committee met the 3d Thursday of last October. They ordered the Presbytery of Belfast to inquire into what was done by the Non-subscribers, ministers of that place, in reading and animadverting on the minutes of last Synod. When this came to our Presbytery, the Subscribing members, who are still the smallest number, were for appointing a Committee of the Presbytery to examine into this affair; but the Non-subscribing members alleged the state of inquiry mentioned by the Committee was ambiguous, viz., whether the two ministers of Belfast had not unduly reflected upon the General Synod; for if they said that the Synod had erred, and done injustice to the Non-subscribers, that was no more than asserting the Protestant principle, that Synods and Councils are fallible; and, therefore, the only state of inquiry (said they) must be, whether these two ministers gave a true narrative of what passed at the Synod, *pro* and *con*. This state of inquiry carried by a plurality of voices. Mr Fraser and I dissented. Mr Kirkpatrick proposed that he would make his defence upon the plea of exculpation, *i. e.*, he would prove by good evidence that he had not misrepresented facts at the Synod. This was also charged, but I still excepted against the state of inquiry; but the day was appointed the last Wednesday at two afternoon, when Mr Kirkpatrick (for Mr Halliday spoke very little) repeated all that he had said in July, before a vast audience in this town, and the

¹ Letters to Wodrow, vol. xx. No. 67.

audience was no smaller last Wednesday, and when he had exposed the Synod to the last degree, as unjust in all their conclusions, under pretence of giving a true narrative, he called upon his witnesses, which were mostly his own and Mr Halliday's people, and asked them, if his narrative now and before was not true and just. They all answered that it was just. As I remember, Mr Kirkpatrick spoke with little interruption for nine or ten hours; bitter reflections were cast upon several members of the Synod, and especially myself, for my calling the committee. It carried in the Presbytery that they had exculpated themselves, which, according to the state of inquiry, was true enough; for they said no worse (I believe) of the Synod at home, than they said to the Synod themselves, for which reason, I desired that my exception against the state of inquiry might be recorded along with my vote, which was accordingly done, though not one member joined me, and so the exculpation carried, which occasioned a great triumph to the Non-subscribers. Thus our condition stands in a most doleful plight, and I expect no better while Non-subscribers and Subscribers continue in Synods and Presbyteries. Time doth not allow me to add more till I hear from you. Please to communicate this to Mr Wodrow. There was a general fast appointed for our present divisions; that appointment was made by last Committee, and has been or will be observed accordingly. Which, with wonted respects, is from, Rev. Dear Brother, your affectionate brother and servant,

CHARLES MASTERTON.

If it was possible to obtain what is deficient in your collections for my congregation, there is great need for it; though we are very thankful for what is done.

LETTER LII.

THE SAME SUBJECT.

To Mr William Macknight.

REV. DEAR BROTHER,—I thank you for yours of the 22d, with Mr Masterton's. Receive Mr Masterton's enclosed, which gives a new *vidimus* of the temper of the Non-subscribers; and it seems, had they the plurality, as they have in the Presbytery of Belfast, they would be as imposing and hectoring as any, for all their loud complaints against imposition and outcries for liberty, I am still of the mind their treatment of the Synod was unaccountable as well as ungenerous; and this last step of repeating all again appears to me to be, if I may use a Scots proverb, as scorning the Kirk, and a plain insult on Synod and Committee. It's impossible, I think, they could conceive the Committee's mind to be that they should react their insults on the Synod. At least I suppose the Committee had no great question about the agreement betwixt what they said at Dungannon and Belfast; perhaps they might guess they could say little worse at Belfast than they had said in face of Synod. But the question is plain, whether it was fit, in an appeal to the people, to repeat their harangues before the Synod, and so raise a flame, and twenty other obvious consequences. However, I wonder the Committee, considering the state of Belfast Presbytery, remitted the inquiry to them, or if to them, that they did it in a general way, without particular injunctions and directions what and how to inquire. But I trouble you with these obvious things. Give my kind respects to Mr Masterton, and tell him how much I sympathise with him. I had his print from Glasgow;¹ but did not know

¹ His "Apology for the Northern Presbyterians in Ireland," which was printed at Glasgow.

it came from Mr Hemphill. I wish I had seen him when at Glasgow. I have got about fifteen shillings more for Belfast, and the deficient is ordered to bring it in against next Presbytery. Continue your accounts to, Rev. Dear Brother, yours most affectionately.

Nov. 23, 1723.

LETTER LIII.

COMPLAINTS OF THE TIMES.

To Colonel Erskine.

MY DEAR COLONEL,—I have yours of the 2d, and am grieved to hear of your son's illness, &c.

The Duke of Orleans' death is like to have great consequents, and though they speak of Bourbon's being on the same lay, yet I know not what to look for.

My last letter from Ireland I send you with this. Mr Boece has lost his only son, a student of divinity, of good abilities. I have heard from him since, but he is not able to write, and has the same distemper of the flux his son was ill of, but does not yet appear to be in hazard. His son died most Christianly, and in a rapture of divine light, towards the beginning of October.

I heartily regret our present dead, divided, and lamentable circumstances. You give the only reason of our sparing. Let us adore sovereignty in it, and lay our account with the worst, if we shall go on, and meanwhile wonder at the mercy in our lot. There has been much sickness and death by the flux in this country since harvest, greater than ever I saw. Profanity is dreadfully increasing at Glasgow, and vile women inviting men to wickedness in the very streets. Provost Bowman is dead, and matters are in very sad circumstances with the youth in that city. Write frequently to

me. The Lord support and comfort you, under his way to you!
I am, Dear Colonel, yours, &c.

Dec. 4, 1723.

LETTER LIV.

GADDERAR AND THE USAGES.

*To Mr George Chalmers, Principal of King's College, Aberdeen, for
present at Edinburgh.*

REV. DEAR BROTHER,—I had yours, December 3d, last post save one, and thank you most heartily for the enclosed paper of Mr Gatherar's.¹ It's not worth your while to have my remarks on it; but, indeed, to me he appears pretty just in his reasonings from the principles he goes on, and I don't see how the Bishop of Edinburgh, as sometimes he calls him, will easily evite them, unless he a little more openly declare the ancient usages to be modern Popery, and come off a Diocesan Prelate's being the centre and principle of unity, and frankly own the Old Scots Prelacy, which I know was once *his* opinion, in opposition to the English usages and ceremonies.

I wish you could procure me a copy of the circular letter, if there be any more in it than Mr Gatherar takes notices of; and pray fail not to send me all your further accounts of this affair from Aberdeen, and all other remarkables.

I thank you for your news. I doubt a little whether the presentee will be acceptable to all the masters of Marischal College.

¹ "Meantime, I have sent you the enclosed manuscript, which is a copy of the answers by Gaderer and his brethren in the North, returned to Bishop Fullarton for his presuming to give directions to those not under his jurisdiction."—(*Principal Chalmers to Wodrow.*)

Favour me with another letter before you leave Edinburgh, with all your novels. I am so much for reformation and amendments, as essential to real conviction and repentance, that I pass all former omissions; only, I am as clear for perseverance.

I send you on the other side my last letter from Belfast, which you may communicate with my Lord Grange when you see him, and do me the favour to thank him for his, last post, and tell him I'll send in the MSS. he desires by the very first sure hand; and humbly beg he may procure me the favour of Calderwood's MSS. from my Lord Polton. I shall write to my Lord at more length when I send in what he desires.

When you return to Aberdeen, you'll mind Rabbi Monis' Letter, and the two pamphlets; and give my respects to Mr Gordon, and my cousin, D. Warner, who is unaccountably backward to write. I am, Dear Brother, yours most affectionately.¹

Dec. 11, 1723.

¹ "The *Usages* mentioned in this letter were imported from England by Gadderar and others, and consisted of the following innovations: 1. Prayers for the dead. 2. Mixing the wine in the Eucharistic cup with water. 3. Praying for the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the bread and the cup, in virtue of which they became the spiritual and life-giving body and blood; the priest having previously to this offered them up as symbols of the sacrifice of our Saviour. 4. Making intercession, in virtue of the bread and cup thus made to become the body and blood of Christ, not only for the living, but also for all the faithful departed this life." These *Usages* led to most unseemly debates among the Scots Episcopalians, which issued in a schism. The old Bishops who adhered to the English Liturgy soon died out, leaving the schismatics to propagate themselves and their principles, which they have done in pretty regular succession to this day. The *Usages* were afterwards embodied into the old Scots Liturgy, (Laud's,) by Mr Falconer of Leith and Mr Forbes of Edinburgh, two of the Usage Bishops, in an edition of the Communion Office, published by them in 1765, in conformity with the instructions of one Rattray, who was a violent advocate for the innovations. This is the Liturgy presently in use among the Scottish Episcopalians.—*Skinner's Eccl. Hist.* ii. p. 622; *Sievwright's Principles*, p. 169, App. No. 2.

LETTER LV.

SETTLEMENT OF MR AINSLIE.—SCOTTISH BIOGRAPHY.

To Colonel William Maxwell of Cardinnes, at Bardarroch.

DEAR SIR,—I had yours of the 9th. It's a satisfaction to me, after all the toil I had in collecting the Sufferings of this Church, that you and many others, whose judgment I value, are not displeased with it, when it is printed. I am, they say, to be answered by Mr Bruce, in three large folios. How he will be able to disprove the facts that I have advanced, I do not yet see. But it becomes me to be silent till that work appear. Mr M'Millan's party, on the one side, and the Episcopal people on the other, have attacked me in two or three pamphlets, wherein I do not observe much strength of reasoning; and resolve, before I make any return, to wait the coming out of his larger works.

Upon the receipt of yours and Ardwel's, I went in to Glasgow yesterday, but missed Mr Ainslie; but find every body to whom I speak about him give him a very favourable character; and certainly you may very much depend upon Mr M'Laren's opinion of him, who is a good judge.¹ I have had a general acquaintance of Mr Ainslie for several years, and never knew any thing to his disadvantage. But, since you are pleased to put me on giving you information about him, and I love still to give any recommendations desired from me from as much personal knowledge as I can have, I have invited him out to preach with me on Sabbath come eight days, when I'll have some occasion to talk with him; and after that I shall write by post, to Mr Martin's care, what offers to me, which is all at present I can say on this subject.

¹ Mr M'Laurin of Glasgow, the celebrated author of the Sermon on *Glorying in the Cross*, &c.

I have heard, indeed, that Mr Wright was not active as to his settlement at Kilmarnock; but having never conversed with any who knew how that matter stood, I can give you nothing save my own conjectures. I never heard that Mr Wright had ever any personal objections against Mr Ainslie. He (Mr Ainslie) was urged by the family of Kilmarnock upon the Session. Whether the Session at that time had their eye upon another, or whether they were not fond of having one that was in the family, and on that score pushed on them, or whether his voice did not answer their large church, I cannot tell you. There are a hundred small things fall in, in the case of a competition of rights, and in a large Session, that hinder settlements. And Mr Wright, I believe, resolved still to be entirely one with his Session, and that they would jointly act as to his colleague. But, as I said, I never heard of any thing that Mr Wright objected [in] Mr Ainslie. This is all I know in that matter.

I hear, and I was expecting some complaints, of omissions in the History of our Sufferings, and I doubt not but there is some ground for it; though the charge does not fall on me, since I hope I have omitted no families nor persons the accounts of whom came to my hands. Indeed, I could not but wonder at the negligence of many concerned, who, though they had abundance of time to send them to me, yet neglected this. However, if I be spared, there may be yet a time to supply some defects this way, and correct some names and circumstances I may have mistaken or been misinformed about. And, therefore, I wish, especially in the South and in Galloway, where there was a very broad scene of suffering, some pains might be taken yet to supply defects, and to set me right wherein I may be wrong.

I have been for many years making collections for a Biography,¹

¹ The idea of this work was first suggested to Wodrow by a conversation he had with his father, some time before the old man's death. They had been conversing together about the distinguished ministers of the Church of Scotland during the Reformation and after that period, when Wodrow's father, after narrating to him some striking accounts which he had received from godly ministers, said, "Robin, I am

and the Lives of many noblemen, gentlemen, ministers, and Christians, with a history of the Lord's remarkable providences to this Church, remarkable deliverances, judgments, conversions, answers of prayer, and the like, well attested. Whether ever I shall be able to bring such a collection to any shape and bearing, I cannot say; but I wish some pains were taken by ministers and well-affected gentlemen, in different corners, to gather up what can be recovered, or they have observed relative to those. It's in my opinion both a sin and a shame that the Lord's singular ways with this Church, and many particular persons in it, should be buried; and I know none in the South [to whom] I could make the proposal with so much advantage as to yourself; and I doubt not the ministers about you—Mr Monteith, Messrs T. and William Campbell, Mr Ewart, Mr T. Kennedy, Mr Robert Ferguson, Mr Wilson, Mr Anderson of Kirkmaiden, to whom I give my kindest respects, and others who do not offer to me just now, will be able to afford many materials for so good a design.

For instance, what possibly can be recovered of the great Mr Rutherford in your parish, his manner of preaching, his success, his interview, of which I have heard, with Bishop Usher; what can be recovered of worthy Mr M'Clelland, of whom Mr Andrew

very much persuaded that the Lord hath stooped to manifest himself in as singular a manner, in behalf of the Church of Scotland, and to multitudes of Christians and ministers in it, if not in a more peculiar manner than to any of his churches since the primitive times; and yet all this, his goodness and grace, is in a great measure ungratefully buried by us; and there is no account of the Lord's way with particular persons, save a few scraps in *The Fulfilling of the Scriptures*; nor of his remarkable providences and appearances in this church, recorded and transmitted to posterity." He added, with much serious concern, "I have many omissions and failings in my former life to lament over; but there are not many things more grievous to me than my sinful neglect of setting down in write, what I have had occasion to hear from old ministers and Christians, concerning the Lord's singular way with them and this church; for 28 years before the Revolution, Presbyterian ministers had not many public opportunities of preaching, and spent much of their time in conversation, one with another; and there I had opportunities to hear many remarkable things, which I fear now will be utterly lost." "And he advised me," adds his son, "in my youth, to set down what I happened to hear from good hands, and well attested of this kind, which advice I have in part followed."—(*Life of Prof. Wodrow*, pp. 3, 4.)

Cameron promised me some accounts, but now is at better work, and his remarkable life and strange death. I would fain have all the accounts that can be had of Marion M'Naught, of which Mr Blair and Mr Livingston write in their lives. I know there was an excellent set of religious gentlemen and worthy ministers in the Shire and Stewartry before the Restoration, and under the suffering times; and I hope many remarkable providences may be recovered since the Revolution, beside the diaries and well attested accounts of those before it. I presume to lay this matter before you, and hope, on consideration, you'll think it worthy of some pains and search; and I am persuaded ministers will join with you in it.

Forgive me this long scroll, which is not my ordinary, and give my wife's and my humble duty to your lady and family. I am, Dearest Colonel, in the greatest sincerity, yours most affectionately.

Eastwood, Dec. 19, 1723.

LETTER LVI.

BISHOP BURNET'S HISTORY.—SCOTTISH BIOGRAPHY.

To Mr John Anderson, Minister at Kirkmaiden.

REV. DEAR BROTHER,—I had not yours of the 8th of November till two months after the date, and yet by post, which I wonder at. However, when it comes, it's very welcome, as yours still are. I am satisfied my book does not displease you. I had nothing save complaints in the general, as to the list of fines, and mostly from the South. All corrections will be acceptable, and I may have occasion to publish them, if I live, as also additional accounts of suffering persons and families omitted by me. Mr Bruce, I hear, is insisting in his large work against me, to consist of three folios, but

is not yet begun to print; but vast pains are taken by the Episcopal clergy to furnish him with materials. I am of opinion Bishop Burnet's History of that period I have described will yet more gall that side than what I have written. As far as I have yet read of him, there is no interfering 'twixt us; and in his secret history he discovers multitudes of facts which I had no knowledge of, which will, in my opinion, confirm very much what I have said, and expose that horrible period. The Bishop spares nobody, and sets up very much for impartiality; and, indeed, I have a high opinion of his candour; only in some circumstances I see he has been misinformed, as no doubt I have been; but he gives no vouchers, except for the private passages he relates. But I'll be so vain, almost, as to say my book will be a voucher for him; and he is one of the best seconds I could have desired.

As to the Biography, I want not many thoughts about it; and since I saw you, I have put my manuscript and papers in such an order as I am now tolerably master of them; and I have many scraps here and there that relate to lives and remarkable providences. But whether I shall ever look to the press, unless it be in my own necessary defence, I cannot say. However, I do resolve, if the Lord will, to put what I have in as good order as I can; and am this winter writing my Father's Life, which has led me out to several things I was not thinking of; and will be fond to have all the accounts from your bounds that you can gather, of which I have written to Colonel Maxwell lately, and desired him to communicate what I wrote to you with other brethren in your Synod; and if materials come up to me, this will much direct me what use to make of them. But really, when I think on the private temper of too many of my brethren, and their listlessness as to any thing of a public nature, I want not some melancholy views. I had too much occasion to observe this in the History of the Sufferings, when, for all the pains taken by Assembly and Commissions to get informations, all that came up to me from all the ministers in the Church was within twelve sheets of paper; and I believe there might be six or seven of these from Galloway.

I thank you for your list of ministers in Kirkmaiden. Had I such from every minister, which were very easy, since the Reformation, it would be a great help to a Biography, and useful for other purposes.

You have singularly obliged me with your account of Mr Gordon. I heard of him some sixteen years ago in this country. Mr William Lindsay of Dundonald, whose judgment had great weight with me, had a high opinion of him for piety. Before I give you my poor thoughts upon him, I would have some of the many facts you have heard of him, with which you say you can fill some sheets, for saving his great knowledge, and his telling somewhat done in America, I do not observe you come to particulars. Pray send me all you can gather, and let me know if he is still in your bounds, or where he is. I shall mind to talk or write to Dr Stevenson about him.

I mind nothing from this country to gratify you with, in return to yours. The affairs of Ireland are still more and more melancholy; but you lie near it. The divisions among the Episcopal clergy in the north continue, of which, if you have not the accounts, I shall give you them at more length by my next. Send me all remarkable before your judicatories, remarkable providences, account of the state of the separatists, your accounts from Ireland. Give my kindest respects to all the brethren of your Presbytery of my acquaintance, and write more frequently to me. I wish you much of the Lord's presence in your work, and all its branches; and am, Rev. Dear Brother, yours most affectionately. I send this direct to Stranraer, having no other way I can think of.

January 20, 1724.

P. S.—The only passage wherein I observe Bishop Burnet differs from me, in point of fact, is what I am reading this night, p. 234, where he alleges the first rising before Pentland, in the parish of Dalry, was premeditated, and not the effect of heat and hardship, which he owns the Whigs gave out and printed; but says, the story

was made to beget compassion. All the proof of which that he brings is, that when afterwards the report of hardships in the country was made to the Council, and particularly from that parish, there was entire silence as to that, and he read the report. I have published the report, I suppose he means in Sir James Turner's business. But there were many reasons why the particular hardships in Dalry that begun the rising could not fall under the inquiry made anent Sir James Turner, far less the report. However, I wish you may put Colonel Maxwell, Mr Boyd, and others, upon getting all the vouchers can, at this distance, be had to verify my account, which will, I think, be found fact in all its circumstances, and no story coined to breed compassion.

LETTER LVII.

MILLAR'S HISTORY.—CALDERWOOD'S MS. HISTORY AND PAPERS.

*Lord Grange to Wodrow.*¹

SIR,—I am much beholden to you for your letter of November 22, and the list annexed to it of books, pamphlets, and MSS. concerning the covenants. I have some of those which are in print. I'll be obliged to you if you allow me, for a small time, the use of the MS. entitled, A short Clearing of the Popish Errors in the Confession of Faith, with a Commentary on the National Covenant.

If any thing come to my hand that I conceive may be of use or agreeable to you, on any of the subjects of your collections, I will not fail to acquaint you. I often wish that business of a different nature allow me to be more in the way of hearing or inquiring about such things.

I seldom hear your adversary Bruce mentioned; and, so far as

¹ Letters to Wodrow, vol. xxi. No. 136.

I can learn, he is in small esteem even among some of his own party. The late account of Archbishop Sharp is said to be his. In my opinion it is a poor piece. He bestows great praise on that man, and yet narrates such facts, as show him to have been a base, time-serving, treacherous fellow. If he proceed thus in his other book, he will go a good way in anticipating the work of any who would answer it.

I have not yet got much read of your neighbour Mr Millar's book.¹ I like the design of it. I would humbly think it a proper and useful following to it, to handle the decay of Christianity in certain countries, with the springs, occasions, and furtherance of it; and the rise, progress, and present state of Mahometism. A learned man, acquainted with the Oriental History, and with the History of the Christian Church, especially some time after the taking of Constantinople by the Turks, might teach us a great many useful things in treating of this subject, and have occasion to vindicate Christianity from the calumnies and objections, not only of the Turks, but also of some of the latest Deists, and of the Socinians and Arians, whom I suppose one could not miss to notice, when writing of the decay of Christianity and growth of Mahometism. The history of Christianity and Heathenism completes not the general history of the principal religions, nor gives the reader a satisfactory view of the present situation of religion in the world, when nothing is said of Mahometism, with which so very many are deduced. If you think such a work would be useful, and that Mr Millar could prosecute it successfully, your giving him the hint might perhaps set him about it.

I'm glad to hear that you are writing your Father's Life, and revising his papers. Your offer to communicate to me his thoughts upon the law of nature, &c., is a favour that I value very much.

Lord Polton says, he has a copy of Calderwood's large History, in three volumes folio, on which is written, that one volume for

¹ His Lordship refers to a "History of the Propagation of Christianity and Overthrow of Paganism. By Mr Robert Millar, Minister of the Gospel at Paisley." Edin. 1723, in two vols.

the press should be collected out of them. He knows not whether this be the original copy. You would judge better of that. He appears willing to lend you it; and if you please I'll endeavour to get it from him, that I may send it you. He says, that from this were the copies transcribed which he gave to the libraries of Edinburgh and Glasgow. He still tells me of a large chestful of Mr Calderwood's papers which fell into some people's hands, against whom his (Lord Polton's) father raised a process for them. But his Lordship seems not to know what became of the process or papers. I'll do what I can to stir him up to inquire after them more earnestly than he has done hitherto. I am, Rev. Sir, your most humble and faithful servant,

JAMES ERSKINE.

Edinburgh, Dec. 5, 1723.

LETTER LVIII.

CALDERWOOD'S PAPERS.

To the Right Honourable my Lord Grange.

MY LORD,—I blame myself very much that I have not answered your last, which was extremely acceptable. The reason has been, I wanted a sure hand to send that MS. explication of the covenant which you wanted to see, and no other thing of importance offering from this country, I did not presume to trouble you till I could find a hand to send the book, which comes by Mr James Anderson's hands to your Lordship; and I have only an account this night, late, of his wife's returning to Edinburgh to-morrow early, so that I have no time to say any thing about other things. I sent a copy of my last accounts of the lamentable and growing differences in Ireland, upon the proceedings of their last Synod, to Principal Chalmers, and desired him to communicate it to your Lordship, which, no

doubt, he would, if my letters reached him before he left Edinburgh. If it's not come to your hand, I shall send it by post; and, it may be, some further accounts, which I expect every week from the particular Synod of Belfast, which was to sit there in the beginning of this month.

In my last, I had almost forgot to return my most humble thanks for procuring me the favour of a loan of my Lord Polton's Calderwood. I have now got four volumes of it, (and the rest are doubling,) and long to have that which is the fountain whence the copy at Glasgow was taken. I'll guess, by some original letters of Mr Calderwood's in my hands, if my Lord's copy be written or corrected by Calderwood. I presume earnestly to beg the favour of a loan of them from my Lord Polton, and shall undertake for their safety, and to return them at his Lordship's call. If your Lordship procure them, and send them to my Lord Pollock's lodgings, they will come safe to me. I have only room to subscribe myself, with all possible respect, my Lord, your most humble servant.

Jan. 22, 1724.

LETTER LIX.

BURNET'S HISTORY.

To Mr James Anderson, Writer to the Signet, Edinburgh.

DEAR SIR,—I have been entertained these eight days with Bishop Burnet's History of his Own Time. You may be sure I am pleased to find very little interfering with me. He is bloody in his characters, and will draw down the whole posse of Tories on him. I only wish he had given some more of his vouchers, and not suffered all to lean so much on his own authority; which, though

it's of the greatest weight with me, yet will not be so with every body. I am not yet half through. It's a lively, masterly book. I am yours.

Jan. 24, 1724.

LETTER LX.

BURNET'S HISTORY.—COLLECTIONS OF LIVES AND COINS.

*To the Honourable Colonel William Maxwell of Cardinnes, at
Bardarroch.*

DEAR COLONEL,—I have yours of the 16th of January by the bearer. I wrote in yesterday with him to Mr Ainslie, whose answer to your reverend Presbytery will no doubt come with this. Any thing I could do to give you and the parish a character of the young man, is what does not merit your acknowledgments. If he come to you with a Divine blessing, and your way be cleared to him, and his to settle among you, I shall heartily rejoice.

My back friend, Mr Bruce, has now another and heavier author to deal with than I, Bishop Burnet in the History of his Own Times. Had that book been published before mine, it had saved me much trouble, and I would not have chose to come after so masterly a pen. Allowances must be made for his education and known opinions, and the informations he had of Presbyterians, few of whom he knew personally. But, bating these things, he differs very little in facts from what I have advanced, as far as I have yet read him, save in one point, wherein I am of opinion he will be out; and you'll be in case to help me to further vouchers, and that is, he alleges the beginnings of the rising before Pentland in the parish of Dalry were not incidental, and from Sir James Turner's barbarities, but from a prior concert. I have given

a large account of that matter from the papers I had, and suppose, upon further inquiry, it will be found agreeable to truth. The Bishop makes those times yet blacker, if possible, than I have done ; and sets down a vast number of private springs of affairs I was ignorant of, and many passages of secret history never before known. He wants vouchers, indeed, and has no public papers insert to support what he says ; but unless it looked like vanity, I would say that my book will be a voucher for him ; and his, in my opinion, supports mine in the most important passages of it ; though I am very sensible I ought not to offer at any comparison with the brightest historian of this age ; and had the Bishop's History been published before mine, I should either have suppressed my book, or referred very much to him. But the world will easily see there could be no concert.

Very probably, the Bishop's History will extremely inflame the Tories, and I may expect my blows from them jointly with him. So, by all means let me have all the corrections, additions, and further accounts of the sufferings of persons and families in your shire and Nithsdale. The ministers you name will give all the assistance they can.

I am glad my proposal of collections for a Biography and a History of Providences has your approbation. It's certainly a necessary and useful work, wherein we have already lost a vast deal of materials by delays, or rather a sinful neglect. I am now so far acquainted with myself, I hope, and the difficulty of writing and publishing, that I see my unfitness to do any further that way. But I earnestly wish a beginning were given to the design, by making collections of materials in different corners, and preserving and recovering as much as possible ; and what is sent me I shall labour to preserve with what I have already on that head, and bring things as near a shape as may be ; and though nothing should be published, yet this may be materials to work upon.

So, pray send me all you can gather as to Mr Rutherford, Mr M'Clelland, whose letter to Lord Kirkcudbright I have, and some other letters also of his ; and beseech Mr Ewart, whom I most

kindly remember, to gather all he can about him; and write to Captain Fullarton, and recover all that can be got about his gracious grandmother, M. M'Naught; and send me what you get at your conveniency. The ministers whom I named, and those in Nithsdale, will, I am persuaded, give their assistance, though I wish we were all more active in what concerns the public interests and concerns, where there is too much slackness.

I'll be very much obliged to you for one of every kind of your old coins. They will be a considerable accession to my collection of about two hundred of old Scots coins, and some Roman ones. My wife and I give our humble duty to your lady, and the Lady Castle-Stewart. I remember your son most affectionately. Let me hear as frequently from you as may be. You see I have cut you out abundance of troublesome work, for which you'll forgive me. I am, Dear Colonel, yours in the most sincere affection.

Jan. 25, 1724.

LETTER LXI.

BURNET'S HISTORY.

To the Rev. Mr John Evans, Minister of the Gospel at Deal, to the care of Mr Evans, Golden Fleece, south side of Paul's Churchyard, London.

REV. DEAR BROTHER,—I had yours of 4th of December in due time. One reason of my not writing sooner is, that I might be in case to tell you I had read Bishop Burnet's History of his Own Time; and since his period is precisely the same which I have described in the suffering part of it, I was the more concerned to see it; and now, when I have read him to the 1685, you may be sure I am satisfied. There are no differences 'twixt us, save what may be

easily accounted for, nor any as to facts of any importance. I have kept much by vouchers and public papers; the Bishop gives the same things from private information, and lets us into the secret history and hidden springs, which he had occasion to know more of, I think, than any other in that time. These I neither knew, being of mostly before I was born; neither durst I have published, without vouchers, on my poor authority. I am so vain as to think the public papers I have advanced (I speak as to our Scots affairs) will be vouchers of what he has written, and what he has published from personal knowledge; and the informations he has had from persons of the highest character will very much strengthen my relation, and some few passing reflections and observes I presumed to make *en passant*. His characters are generally very just, as to Scotsmen, though I doubt some will reckon them severe. He has exposed the blackness and iniquity of these times in Scotland in a most touching and masterly way; and though I know he has been misinformed in some lesser things, (as probably I have been likewise,) yet it's impossible to convell the material facts he has set down. In short, had his History been published before mine, it had saved me a vast deal of pains, and I should very much have referred to him, had I written at all. But now the world will see there was no collusion, and I hope have other views of our affairs in that period than they had. And you may be sure I am pleased that I am seconded by one of the finest writers in Europe, and of the other side too, a person every way indeed superior to me, save in principles, which I must still reckon better than his. But our difference in these, I hope, is a proof of both our impartiality as writers; and, save in that respect, I shall never offer at any comparison with so great a man.

I resolve to leave the other side for the resolutions of the Synod of Ireland, which I send you, since you desire it; since the Synod matters are no ways better, but rather worse, of which more by my next, if you desire it. I have the discourse on preaching, recommended by Mr Watt, and like it well. Let me know what that good man is doing since your last. I did not hear of these lectures

of the nature of Mr Boyle's, in which young Mr Calamy is concerned, before. If any sermons at them be published let me know. Mr Calamy was so kind as to see me here. If you see him, give him my thanks for it, and my best wishes. Send me the state of the differences at London; all your news from abroad, the settlement in the East Indies, the University of Halle, &c. You know my temper. I have nothing from Scotland worth while. We are in much peace, but religion dwindling away sadly. Pray write frequently to me, especially as to the state of religion. I heartily pray you may have great success attending your labours; and am, Rev. Dear Brother, yours most affectionately.

Eastwood, Jan. 31, 1724.

LETTER LXII.

OF MR GOWAN.

To Mr Robert Black, Minister at Rotterdam.

REV. DEAR BROTHER,—Give my humble duty to the Rev. Mr Gowan, your neighbour, at London. I don't know whether it was he, or another of that name, I knew a little of at Glasgow, about twenty-five or thirty years ago. But I remember his excellent father, the author of the *Logicks*, kept a close correspondence with my father, and there was a peculiar friendship 'twixt them. What I have of Mr Gowan's, when in Ireland, on Presbyterian ordination, and the large character Mr Paisley brings me of him, makes me fond to continue this friendship that was betwixt our parents. If that worthy person will let me know by post or a slip, wherein I can serve him here, I would be very fond of it; with all his accounts of the present state of the reformed churches, and learning, and new books, in which I hear he is very much seen. I'll be far from

grudging the postage of a letter, either from him or you. I hear the affair of a colleague to you, Mr Baillie, is before our next Commission. I am yours.

Jan. 31, 1724.

LETTER LXIII.

PROPOSALS OF MR BRUCE'S HISTORY.

To G. Stewart, Bookseller, Edinburgh.

SIR,—I thank you for Mr Bruce's Proposals, which I had last post. He undertakes a good large field, and I shall be heartily glad if he set matters in a just and fair light, from records and papers that will be good vouchers. Real truth, and true matter of fact, should be acceptable to every honest man, and shall be, if I know myself, to me; and I'll certainly, if I be spared, take his book.

I am longing for Doctor Cockburn's Remarks on Bishop Burnet, who, I see, confines himself much to Scots affairs. I am, Sir, yours, &c.

Eastwood, Feb. 12, 1724.

LETTER LXIV.

BURNET AND BRUCE.

To Mr Mathew Crawford, Edinburgh.

REV. DEAR BROTHER,—I have read Bishop Burnet's History. I see he confirms the accounts I have given, and we differ very

little. But his characters are bold, and some of them without ground; and he is out in some circumstances. I wonder what has led him to speak so disrespectfully of King William. I think him unjust to the late Advocate. But few escape his satire. Pray let me have people's sentiments on his performance, and your own. At length I see Mr Bruce's Proposals. He undertakes much, and I am expecting a very partial and unfair representation of matters, if he go on as he has begun in the two pamphlets he has published. He seems very fairly to proclaim himself a partyman in his Proposals, if I do not mistake him. Send all your accounts from your town and college, from North and South; for I have heard nothing almost all this winter. I am, yours, &c.

Feb. 15, 1724.

P.S.—I hear Mr Bruce gives it out that he has Mr Baillie's Letters. I thought that had been prevented. Let me know if Matthew Baillie has given him them, and when Mr Fraser is expected from Grangehill; and if there be any thing of importance to be before the Commission in March. Send that manuscript of Mr James Stirling's you have, which he desires me to get from you to my Lord Pollock.

LETTER LXV.

MS. LIFE OF JAMES MELVILLE.

To my Lord Grange.

MY LORD,—I had yours of the 12th last post, and am extremely in your debt for your care about Calderwood's manuscripts, and return my most humble thanks to Lord Polton for the loan of them. As soon as I come east, I'll wait on my Lord, if in town,

as I am bound by this obliging favour, and make my acknowledgments to himself. I do not doubt but the box will come to me in a day or two hence, by Lord Pollock's carrier.

Meanwhile, having the occasion of a young man coming from this to my Lord Pollock's family, I could not but acknowledge your Lordship's goodness in this matter.

Mr James Melville's Life I have never before heard of, and I am glad so valuable a remain of so great a man is in your hands.¹ He was a nephew, or first cousin, of Mr Andrew Melville; and, if I have not forgot, was processed with Mr Welsh, Mr Andrew Melville, Mr Forbes, &c., at Linlithgow, 1606, for their keeping the day appointed for the Assembly at Aberdeen. However that be, he was one of the most sufficient ministers then in Fife, and a person of great piety, learning, and zeal. I have his manuscript History from the Reformation to the 1610, consisting of about thirty or forty sheets, containing several principal papers that I have not observed even in the large Calderwood, which I'll send your Lordship, when you please to call for it. I am extremely fond to see Mr Melville's Life, when your Lordship has perused it. It will be no small accession to the Lives I have already.

And, when on this head, I presume to signify to your Lordship, that since my last I have ended my Father's Life, with the papers I design as an Appendix to it. It may be about twenty or twenty-four sheets. And I am of opinion Lives read the better, and may be the more useful, when mixed with some of the remains of the person, when worth the preserving. And I have, with my last letter from Ireland, enclosed a fragment of my father's upon the Law of Nature, which I am sorry is imperfect; but I have some other large papers of his on that subject, together with some transient remarks of his on scholars and learned men, which, it may be, appear to me of more importance than really they are, because my father's.

¹ The MS. of this work Lord Grange had received from Lord Polton.

It becomes me to be very silent as to Mr Bruce's work¹ till I see it; but if he write that History in as unguarded, loose, and unmannerly a way as his Behemoth and Preface to Bishop Sharp's Life, it will not be much for his reputation, nor of the party who employ him. I see he is to take Bishop Burnet in task; and, indeed, the Bishop has confirmed many of the accounts I have printed, and is an adversary of far greater name for Mr Bruce to grapple with than I; and I am content I have so masterly a writer, (though, in some of his characters, very keen and severe,) some way to stand betwixt me and the *stour*, so to say.

I wish I knew wherein I were capable to make any return for the many favours you have done to, my Lord, your Lordship's very much obliged and most humble servant.

Eastwood, Feb 15, 1724.

LETTER LXVI.

REGISTRATING LANDS FOR NON-JURANCY.

To Mr William Wright, at Kilmarnock.

REV. DEAR BROTHER,—I have yours of the 13th, and am glad Mr Paisley's call will be harmonious.

As to the other affair of registrating your lands upon your Non-jurancy, I wish I were in case to give you advice in it; but it de-

¹ "Proposals are published here [Edinburgh] for printing by subscription, A History of Scotland, chiefly as to Church affairs, from the Reformation till the Revolution, by Mr Alexander Bruce, advocate, an author by no means equal to the work. But they say there is a club about it. If I be rightly informed of the persons, it will probably, in every sense, be a malignant piece. The Proposals bear, it is to be collected from Mr Robert Baillie's Letters, Records of Parliament, Council, General Assembly, and its Commissions, Particular Narratives, &c."—(*Lord Grange to Wodrow.*)

pendes so much on points of law, that it's above my reach. Your disposing to a qualified person seems the safest way. But then I imagine that he or they must be fully invested with a legal right to your estate; and then the difficulty will be as to the back-bond they give to you, unless you can fall on a person you can trust, without any legal re-conveyance. But lawyers can only direct you here.

The argument against your registrating from informing rogues, I own is strong. But I do not see but both you and I lie open to those people for the L.500; and we are convict of a transgression already, by our names not being in the Sheriff books, or others appointed by law, so that the only difference seems to be by registrating they know we are worth so much.

I have not heard what my brother-in-law, or Colonel Campbell, are to do. I fancy they wait the procedure of the present Session of Parliament, of which I know nothing save what is in the Edinburgh Newspaper.

The last point is what is common to all in our circumstances; and, considering your age and superior abilities to me, it's what I ought rather to seek advice in than offer any to you. Had you stated the difficulty, however, you should have had my thoughts, such as they are. I can now only tell you what has been my practice. I never saw it my duty to preach in public on the subject of the oaths, save only in time of our heats, to guard people, the best way I could, against schism and separation. In the 1708, before it came to ministers' doors, I did speak upon that subject in private to our gentlemen that spoke to me on that head; and all our resident-ing heritors, I think, spoke with me. Of late, the feuars who are now reached spoke to me, and I have given them all the acts referred to and imposing that oath; and desired them seriously to ponder them, and labour to understand the terms of the oath, and consider its importance, and propose their difficulties, if they have them, and promised to give them what I have heard *pro* and *con*. upon these. Such as have not come I have not sought after; neither have I stated any difficulties to them. I do not find our

people are like to fall in with, but will submit to double taxes if they come, rather than take an oath they think contains matter above their reach. I am, yours most affectionately.

Feb. 17, 1724.

LETTER LXVII.

COCKBURN'S REMARKS ON BURNET'S HISTORY.

To the Right Honourable Earl of Buchan.

MY LORD,—Since your Lordship allows me the liberty of writing to you, I presume to trouble you with this, though I have little of any importance or worth your while.

Matters in Ireland continue in great confusion betwixt Subscribers and Non-subscribers. I have nothing since my last to Colonel Erskine, which I believe he would communicate with you before you went up to Parliament.

I'll be glad to know the tenor of the act at present in dependence as to the oaths upon Scotland; for, though I hope I shall not personally be concerned in it, having no lands nor money upon heritable security, yet several ministers and others I am concerned in may be comprehended under it.

No doubt, your Lordship has read Bishop Burnet's History. I am much pleased there is no difference betwixt him and me as to facts, and that he has indeed confirmed most of the facts I have advanced. I wonder how the illegal and harsh procedure against my Lord Cardross has escaped him. His characters are generally bloody and severe, and many of them, I suspect, may be true. I see he is misinformed as to some lesser circumstances.

I am fond to know if his second volume be printing, and how soon we may expect it;¹ and when your Lordship's leisure allows,

¹ Burnet's History was first published in two volumes folio; the second volume did not appear till 1735, eleven years after the publication of the first.

I'd be glad to have the sentiments of people at London upon it. I see, about ten days ago in the London prints, a pamphlet, entitled, "Some Free and Impartial Remarks on Public Affairs, especially as to Scotland, occasioned by Dr Burnet's History. By Jo. Cockburn, D.D. Printed for T. Warner, at the Black Bow, in Pater-noster Row."

I reckon myself someway concerned in what is published against the Bishop; for in most things as to Scotland, I must stand and fall with him; and, therefore, if it be not too much presumption, allow me to beg the favour your servant would call for that pamphlet, and that your Lordship please to send it at two or three times, (for I doubt it will be too bulky at once,) under your cover, to the care of the Postmaster at Glasgow. It will be a singular favour.

This liberty I take needs a long apology; but, indeed, I have none save your Lordship's goodness. I should be glad of every thing your Lordship sees fit to communicate to, my Lord, your most obedient and faithful servant.

Feb. 17, 1724.

LETTER LXVIII.

MR BRUCE'S ATTACK.

To Mr G. Stewart, Bookseller.

SIR,—If Mr Bruce write in the style and manner of the Behemoth and Preface to Bishop Sharp's Life, I am of opinion he will gain little reputation by his large work. The Billingsgate in the one, and looseness in arguing in the other, will not suit the character of an impartial history, and perfectly spoil his account of matters. But, being so nearly concerned, at least in the latter part of his work, it becomes me to be silent till it appear. I am yours.

Feb. 25, 1724.

LETTER LXIX.

ON THE LOSS OF AN ONLY SON.—ABJURATION.—SIR JAMES TURNER.

To the Rev. Mr James Boece, Minister at Campbeltown.

REV. DEAR BROTHER,—I have yours from James Craig, who told me about a fortnight before he came over that he was coming; and I promised to write with him, but he did not call, or, if he did, I was abroad. Indeed, I was in a strait to write to you, after so sore a chastisement from your Father, in the most tender part, otherwise I would have writ when I spoke to Mr Stirling; and I still think it unfit for me, such a stranger to what I ought indeed to know as to the Lord's dealings with his people, that are singular to write much about, especially to one of your experience and standing. But it's my earnest desire, that the Comforter, and that anointing whereby believers know all things, may be with you—that He who has the tongue of the learned may speak a word in season to the faint and weary soul, and that his consolations, that are not small, may be with you. Dear Sir, you know better than I, that it was to an apostle that Christ said, "The things ye know not now, ye shall know hereafter;" and that the Priests under the Old Testament were, by a particular law, guarded against excesses upon the death of their relations. I do not incline to put you in remembrance of the occasion of your downcastings at present. I remember Jacob would not have the memory of his sorrow for his wife kept up, and altered Ben-oni to Ben-jamin; and I shall only observe, that now that you have all the moral evidence you can wish for of the Lord's grace in, and goodness to, your son before he took him to himself, it may be some way satisfying to you to consider that he is removed now only from the evils that are growing among the youth of his age; but evils, that if I do not mistake

his temper, he might have had some peculiar temptations not to resist; and now he is happy and eternally above them.

As to the re-imposition of the oath, I know no measures taken by ministers for evading the penalties. The government, as far as I know, have no suspicion of any Presbyterian ministers that have hitherto stood out, and this re-imposition is not designed against ministers, but heritors; and it's said, that it was against the mind of the Court that it was extended to Scotland, and I am very much assured, that, in the execution, the government will make a difference 'twixt friends and enemies. I hear of no ministers in this Synod included in this last act, save Mr William Wright at Kilmarnock. No other Non-jurant, I hear of, has any heritage or heritable security for their money. It was my opinion he should register; but, by advice from lawyers, he is not to register, but to dispose his lands to a friend, who has or will qualify. I shall be sorry if you be in his circumstances, and certainly the same method will be safest. For gentlemen, I hear of none that have registered, save Crawfordsburn. But they are in no strait save that of double taxes, which is uncertain; but ministers' case differs, because in law they are delinquents, and an informer may put in for the L.500. This is all I know of this matter.

I have read Burnet's History with much pleasure. He gives yet a blacker account of Scots affairs than I have done, and confirms what I have said almost in every page, and differs in no facts at all (save trivial circumstances of Pentland and Bothwell) from me. What he delivers upon hearsay and information, in a masterly and charming style, I have vouched from public papers and records. In short, I am sure he will please you, abating some allowances must be made for his education, and his being a prelate, and his unaccountable character of King William, and some little things on Presbyterians, and a palpable mistake as to Gowrie's conspiracy.

Pray continue your endeavours to get a loan of Sir James Turner's papers from Mr Turnbull. If he will not part with them, your remarks on our times are just and savoury to me. I have nothing of late as to the state of religion or the churches of Christ abroad.

Pray continue to write frequently, and direct me to a way how to send mine. Send me all your remarkables as to Providences, and the Lives of Ministers and Christians in your bounds ; for I am much pressed to give an account of the Lives of our eminent Ministers and Christians, and remarkable Providences ; and if you come to the Assembly, give me some nights of you. I have a load of letters on me, and do not use to write so long, and yet have much more to say, had I time. But pray write often and at length, and continue your sympathy with me and mine. My wife remembers you and Mrs Boece, and so does Colonel Erskine, who writes frequently to me to know how you are. I am, Rev. Dear Brother, yours most affectionately.

Eastwood, March 2, 1724.

LETTER LXX.

PRESBYTERIANS IN IRELAND.

To Mr William Macknight.

REV. DEAR BROTHER,—When I was in Edinburgh at the last Commission last week, I spoke to brethren there about the state of matters in Ireland, and our brethren's pressures there ; and, to influence them the more, I took in with me Mr Halliday's Reasons,¹ (which I had a loan of,) and Professor Hamilton glanced it, and Mr Smith. You will be pleased to hear that they have a deep concern for our brethren there, and desired me to signify to Mr Livingston that they much wonder that he has not written to them. Mr Smith, in particular, desired me to acquaint Mr Livingston

¹ This work of Mr Halliday's, published this year, was entitled, "Reasons against the Imposition of Subscription to the Westminster Confession of Faith, or any such human Tests of Orthodoxy ; together with Answers to the Arguments for such Impositions."

that he has not heard from him since June or July ; that since he has had any letter from Ireland he has written to Mr Livingston twice ; that he has sent near a sheet of paper in answer to the three queries which were sent over, and wrote a large letter since, in September or October, and gave them both to Mr Montier, according to direction. He professes the greatest earnestness to continue the correspondence. In short, anything like a mistake upon the incident that happened is entirely off, and I wish our brethren in Ireland may not fail on their part in writing. Pray send this, or the substance of it, to Ireland as soon as may be ; and since I am apprehensive letters on both sides have miscarried, I wish they may lay down a safer way in time to come, and let them send over to you, if they see good, and what you send to me I shall take care of. I see very little in Mr Halliday's book but harangues out of the road, which I wish they may answer in short, and without following him in his maze of words ; and, in my opinion, they need little assistance from us in this work. However, as soon as they send over any copies from Belfast, I shall take care to transmit them to Edinburgh. The Commission had nothing of great importance before them. I am, yours most affectionately.

March 19, 1724.

LETTER LXXI.

LETTERS FROM THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, 1724.¹

Wodrow to Mrs Wodrow, No. 1.

Edinburgh, May 15, 1724.

MY DEAR PEGGY,—I came safe here yesterday about six, and stay with Mr Robert Stewart. Yesterday Mr Smith opened the Assembly with a good sermon, which was not well heard. I hear

¹ Inserted among Letters to Wodrow, vol. xvi. No. 120.

nothing singular in the King's Letter, or Commissioner's speech, save the last was long, and full of expressions of kindness to the Church, which are all the mends for his last dissolution of the Assembly without a day. The lect for Moderator was Professor Hamilton, Principal Wishart, Mr Linning, Mr Gilchrist. Principal Wishart was added to the Moderator's list by Mr Linning, and was carried about 105 to Principal Hamilton, who had 65. The Moderator, after his choice, had a long speech. * * * * *

Duke Hamilton waited on the Commissioner, and, in a very solemn way, marked the votes for the Moderator. The Earls of Morton, Annandale, Cassillis, and others, were in the Commissioner's train. I mind no more, but my kindest respects to my Lord and his family.

LETTER LXXII.

Wodrow to Mrs Wodrow, No. 2.

Edinburgh, May 16, 1724.

MY DEAREST,—I have but very little to write, since I wrote yesterday by the boy. We had the draught of the answer to the King's Letter before the Committee of Overtures, where it, at length, passed unanimously. But the first draught was like to make a considerable noise. It was formed by the Moderator, and not laid before the sub-committee. When brought in to the committee for it, the expressions with relation to the King sending the E. of S.¹ to be Commissioner were much higher than usual; whereas, considering the last time he was on the throne, an excess here was the less to be gone into. When this came to be known there was a considerable grumble, and a good many declared flatly they would not vote it. This produced another meeting of the sub-committee, where it was smoothed, and brought just to the repetition of the King's words in his Letter. Some say yet it wants that life that uses to be in those letters. However, it probably will pass.

¹ The Commissioner was James, Earl of Findlater and Seafield.

The Assembly is like to have little before them, save the affair of Lochmaben, whereon no small heat seems to appear against the Commission. And, considering that the Commission will not vote, the Earl of Annandale reckons himself sure to overturn Mr Carlisle's settlement. But a few days will discover that. They talk of an overture to be brought in for laying aside both. The Earl has printed his case, as I am told ; but it's not yet published.

They say soldiers are sent in to the south to keep the peace of that country. The Presbytery of Kirkcudbright have published a paper from their pulpits, exhorting to peace, and complaining of the irregularities of the people, and the irritation given by the gentlemen enclosers.¹ I write this in the morning. If anything offer this day from the Assembly, I shall write in the afternoon.

Mr Hunter of Ayr and Mr Thomas Davidson are to preach tomorrow before the Commissioner. I hear the publishing of Mr Hepburn's testimony is disowned by his son, and the deed of some mountain people. This day the Assembly approve the Answer to the King's Letter. Mr Thomas Paterson had a speech upon the clause relative to the Commissioner, that the Assembly had all reason to be satisfied with the King's choice, since he was an excellent judge, but wished the Assembly might consider if the expressions used in this case had been used to other Commissioners, whom he would not incline to reflect upon. The Moderator answered, that they were used in former cases, and the matter was hushed, and the vote harmonious. The Commissioner had a speech upon his being desired to transmit the letter,—that he would do it, thanked them for their kind expressions as to him, and said he would do all in his power to make everything easy in the progress, and the issue comfortable. A committee is appointed for the Commission book, and another for the Instructions ; Synod books are

¹ In the preceding year, the practice of enclosing lands for agricultural purposes was introduced for the first time into Scotland. The immediate consequence was, that multitudes of poor cottars, dispossessed of their small plots, cast out unmercifully to starve, and distracted by the cries of their wives and children, rose tumultuously in Galloway, and destroyed the enclosures.

given out; a letter of thanks from the Synod of Lithuania for appointing bursars. I am your own.

The dyke-breakers, they say, are increased to upwards of a thousand, and have been very tumultuous this week, especially Tuesday last.

LETTER LXXIII.

Wodrow to Mrs Wodrow, No. 3.

Edinburgh, May 18.

MY DEAR,—Yesterday the sermon was, forenoon, by Mr Hunter in Ayr, on Heb. iii. 15, “While it’s to-day, hear his voice;” his lecture, Isaiah xxvi. 8—13. We had a grave solid discourse by Mr Davidson in the afternoon, on Isaiah xlv. 24, “In the Lord we have righteousness and strength.” This day the Overtures were upon the form of a licence transmitted to the Assembly by the Commission, made up of the clauses of Acts of Assembly, the neglect of which was made a nullity. This alarmed Mr Linning very much, and it was mostly through his influence remitted to Presbyteries, to send in their remarks on it, against next Assembly. The Instructions have nothing material, save a general cry upon the Commission, and new limitations to be put upon it, from the Synod of Argyle, because Mr G. D. was left out last year; the Synod of Moray, and some neighbouring Presbyteries, upon the account of the Commission’s procedure as to Mr John Ramsay in March last; the Synods of Merse, because Mr Ramsay was kept on, and Mr Gandy turned out; and the Presbyteries of Middlebie, Penpont, Lochmaben, and Galloway Presbytery, because of the affair of Lochmaben. What the Assembly will do with them, I know not. If a door be opened, as to the Commission, I am apprehensive it will draw deeper than we apprehend. The Assembly sat this afternoon, and had little before them but private affairs; Dr Nicol’s

petition for New York recommended; a new erection ordered in Tyrie; Mr Baillie refused to go to Rotterdam, and the Assembly signify so much to the Consistory. This is all I mind. The reports spread of the King's indisposition I hope are groundless. The levellers go on in the south; they are increased, have thrown down Baldoon Park quite, and killed fifty-three Irish cows, just in terms of law, which I believe will fright the gentlemen as much as anything. These cattle may be all killed by any who find them, and their bodies given to the poor.

May 19.

This morning the Committee for Instructions met, and went through what relates to Popery, disaffected meeting-houses, both which were referred much to the Commission. There are some hopes of getting a new law made, that may make probation against Papists easier, and a fund to prosecute Papists on. There are prayer-books printed with the Pretender's name in them. Bishop Gatherer declares the Church of England schismatics, and all that support not their suffering Prince, the Pretender, in a state of damnation. * * * * *

LETTER LXXIV.

Wodrow to Mrs Wodrow, No. 4.

Edinburgh, May 20, 1725.

MY DEAREST,—Yesterday at five [p. m.] the Assembly met, when the affair of Crossmichael, in Galloway, came in. It's a competition betwixt two probationers, Dick and Falconer. The Synod laid aside both, and the sentence was reversed merely for want of support by the members of that Synod, who made a very poor appearance. I mind little more, but the tabling of the affair of Lochmaben, the bone of contention in this Assembly. Heat enough appeared in it in the entry, and the question came in, who were

parties? That was laid aside, and all parties concerned cited to attend Thursday.

This day, in the morning, the Committee of Instructions met, where Mr Drummond had a long stated speech for a regulation of the Commission, according to many instructions come up on that head. Mr Linning and Sir James Campbell, and some others, joined in that side, and proposed the nomination of the Commission by Presbyteries, and the Assembly to approve them when come up. This, it was said, would prevent constant members, (of which not above eight are pretended,) and assert the equality of representation, and retrieve the sinking interest of the Commission. Professor Hamilton, Mr Chalmers, and some others, answered pretty largely. At length the King's Advocate¹ came in, and had a long and pointed discourse. He showed that a Commission thus named would be a new Assembly, not a Commission; that the Assembly's approbation would not alter the nature of it; that it would be a new judicatory; that we have the connivance of the King for our Commissions; but if their constitution were altered and brought to this channel, we were not to expect it. Several warm speeches were made, and it was urged to sub-commit it, at least in order to put it into a shape to reason on. But that was not yielded, and it was said not to be ripe, and adjourned till next diet, when any person who pleased was allowed to put his thoughts in write, and give in to the Committee. This is one of the boldest attacks on our constitution for these many years, and I wish the Assembly may extricate themselves well out of it. The Commissioner is much alarmed, as I hear, and it's he that can best bring the cry against the Commission to some period.

In the afternoon the report of the Committee for visiting the Commission book was said to be ready, and called for. One of the Synod of Moray complained he had not been called before the report was finished, as they had promised. Upon a complaint in the case of Mr J. Ramsay, against the Commission's procedure, it was moved they should yet meet and concert that. The Commission urged to

¹ The Right Hon. Robert Dundas of Arniston.

be heard at the bar upon what they had done, and the Synod desired it; but that was not allowed. The affair of Lochmaben was excepted. So the committee were appointed to meet. Then came in Mr M'Cormick's affair, one of the ministers of St Andrews, on whom a young woman in St Andrews alleges a promise of marriage, and if he would not marry, threatened she would accuse him of fornication. The Presbytery had adjourned to Easter Wemyss, where the woman had fled because of a mob threatened, upon which Mr M'Cormick appealed to the Assembly. He is reputed innocent, but the magistrates are for Mr M'Cormick's succeeding to the eldest minister, and Principal Haddow for Mr D. Anderson's coming there, that his brother-in-law may go to Falkland; and this story is trumped up or taken hold of to mar that transportation. It's remitted to the Presbytery, and appeals allowed from the Synod to the Commission. An act ordering such as are disorderly at communions to be censured was passed, and an act against Popery; and then Mr M'——'s call to Cumbernauld, from an Irish parish, was allowed by the Assembly. It was said there was no hazard of the Assembly's dispensing with their own acts as to Irish places.

May 21.

This day Lochmaben affair comes in at nine before the Assembly. We have spent till near three of the clock on Lochmaben, and are scarce entered. We meet again at five. There is nothing in the letters. Mr Halden has gotten his post.

LETTER LXXV.

Wodrow to Mrs Wodrow, No. 5.

May 22, 1724.

MY DEAR,—In my last I gave you no account of yesterday's long meeting of the Assembly upon Lochmaben, from nine to three, and from five to ten at night. And now, when it's past, I can scarce

say they are come to the merits of the affair itself, neither can I pretend to give any account of the long pleadings on both sides ; for it requires a much better memory than mine to resume such long work, and one harangue loses the former to me. After some debate as to the manner of the Assembly's entering on that perplexed and complicated affair, it was agreed, in the entry, that the Assembly should hear all sides, and what they had to say, before they determined who were parties in the cause. And so the complaint of the Presbytery, and the part of the parish who were for Mr Bunckles, against the Commission, were read ; to which Mr Smith, Moderator of the Commission, made an answer, *viva voce*, in about an hour and a quarter, which was owned by all, even the other side, to be one of the best discourses, and best said, of any that has been before an Assembly. The lawyers on both sides were heard for the parties ; in all which, not only the Commission's procedure, but that of the Presbytery and Synod, were fully heard. Mr Wightman, who seems to be the spring of all this debate, was heard, and appeared to be out in two or three important facts he advanced. In the afternoon, Sir James Stewart, too, a member of the Commission, made a speech against it, for which he was severely checked by the Advocate, who had a speech upon the Commission's power, and their actings, for about an hour and a half, which to me seemed unanswerable, and was very severe upon the Presbytery's actings. Then the actings of the Synod *pro more* at Dumfries, where eleven turned out near twenty-eight in their Synod, on pretext of being parties, were heard on both sides ; and then Mr Mitchell had a long speech, but little was left to him by the Advocate and Mr Smith. The procedure of the Synod of Dumfries, *pro re nata*, and their committee in settling Mr Carlisle, was delayed till this day at nine. This affair is of no great importance to divide the Church, as it's like to do, and seems to be what is insisted on by one side, to give a thrust to the present set of people in office, under the King, and have a thrust at the Commission, and the whole reasonings run against all commissions of Assembly.

This day the Assembly met at nine, and continued till two. The

Synod of Dumfries were heard, and the Committee and the minority, who outvoted the majority, and the Presbytery of Lochmaben. At length the Assembly, parties being removed, entered on their method, which took a long time ; and, in my opinion, the Commission had a right to vote, but that was not granted. And after the reasoning, the vote came, Consider the Commission's procedure, or the State of Lochmaben. One would have thought that they should first have considered the matter on which the Commission went, before they had considered the actings thereanent. However, it carried by a strait vote by seven, Consider the Commission, with a reserve that the Presbytery, the Synods, and settlement, should be considered. In the afternoon, the Assembly had a very needless loss of time, whether the Moderator of the Commission should be heard ? The Moderator of the Assembly, *pro tempore*, proposed that he should be heard, which it seems he did not desire, but was standing in the area. Upon this a flame rose, and in the flame, Mr Smith desired but one word, and he would end it. This heightened the flame, being, as was thought, contrary to a resolution yesternight, that parties should not be heard. It run to such a confusion, that the Commissioner interposed, and very kindly exhorted the Assembly to unity and harmony, and promised them as much time as they pleased to sit, and desired it, as a favour, that Mr Smith might be heard, and the Commission not concluded in a vote till fully heard. Upon this, the Assembly unanimously heard Mr Smith, who, after he had thanked the Commissioner, signified he came in to hear the minute ; that he had no design to speak ; but when the Moderator, without his desire, had been so kind as to propose he might be heard, and the Assembly appeared so violently against this, he craved to be heard, to put an end to their trouble, by telling them he had nothing to ask, and wondered that such a heat should be. On this all calmed. Indeed, this is a proof what need the Assembly have both of a Commissioner and a Moderator, and several members in, that know the forms better than most now in the Assembly. And I never saw such confusion as this day, and the reason was, because the Commission being out as parties, the re-

maining members did not well know the usages of the Assembly, and the Moderator, Mr M. Reid, had no management. Then the Assembly reasoned upon the actings of the Commission for some hours, with pretty much calmness. The matter was pretty much opened, and I thought the Commission fully vindicate in their not exceeding their powers. But at length, about nine, the question was put, Whether the Commission had exceeded their powers in their actings as to Lochmaben in August and November? and it carried, Exceed, by thirteen votes, some say thirty. The plurality of ministers in both votes approved the Commission. But the Synods of Argyle, Moray, and Merse, that thought themselves injured at the last Commission, with a few others, as Mr Brown of Abercorn, Mr Lookup, Mr Orr, went over in this question. Saving this incident, I am of opinion the bulk of this Church are just where they were.

As to the greater question by far, not yet come in, about the regulation of the Commission in time coming, they say the Commissioner has interposed with Mr Drummond, whom some name the Moderator, with the velvet coat, to desist, since it's such an alteration in our constitution in Church that cannot be gone into, without other instructions than he has. How far this is true, or what influence it will have, a few days will now show.

May 23.

This day the Assembly met, and the Moderator was called on to pray, by a private concert, with the Commissioner. Whether through mistake or design, I cannot tell, since Mr Reid was chosen Moderator in Lochmaben, he concluded the meeting, and prayed next day, and so on since Wednesday. It was objected that the Moderator had not power so to do, till the members were called in, and the Moderator, Mr Wishart, called to the chair. This was done without debate; and then some papers read about the calls, &c.; and then Mr Glass proposed an overture, which the Advocate went into, being allowed to speak, and the Commissioner backed from the throne in the King's name—that a new trial should be made whom the people were for; and it was promised in the King's

name, that he would be for the person the Christian people were for. The only debate was, whether the Presbytery should be judges, or some adjoined; so a committee was named—Mr Glass, Mr Blackwell, Mr Primrose, Mr Brown, Abercorn, and two others, to bring in an overture on the whole. Thus, this unhappy affair ends, as Mr Carlisle's friends think, to his advantage. The Instructions met at five. I have no news. Forgive escapes. I have not time to read over this.

LETTER LXXVI.

Wodrow to Mrs Wodrow, No. 6.

May 26, 1724.

MY DEAR,—After I wrote on Saturday, the committee met in the afternoon. The Assembly had committed the affair of Lochmaben to some ministers and elders, Mr Blackwell, Mr Hunter, Mr Glass, my Lord Kimmerngam, and Sir Gilbert Elliot of Minto, and some others. When they came to meet, Sir Gilbert asserted, in the Advocate's name, that he was content to pass both the nominees, Mr Carlisle and Mr Buncles, and leave the people to their free choice; and my Lord Kimmerngam asserted the same in the Earl of Annandale's name; and so it was proposed that the matter should be left to a new choice of the people, according to what had been reasoned in the Assembly. But then, considering the flame in that country, it was proposed by the elders that the Assembly should lay aside both the calls, and declare both the relations dissolved; or, at least, Mr Buncles' not good, and the other dissolved, and exclude them two for the time to come. This was alleged to be what the Advocate was content with. Against this it was urged, that this would not be to give the people their free choice, since they were certainly for Mr Carlisle; and it would involve the Assembly in disannulling a call that was, according to the

rules of this Church, as Mr Carlisle's was, and would be liable to a new flame. But for peace sake, it was still urged both should be excluded. The ministers stood much at this, particularly Mr Blackwell, who, when concluded by the mind of the meeting, desired liberty to declare his dissent from the overture in the Assembly. And thus they say the overture is to be transmitted; but how it will take, this day must determine; for many are of opinion, the Advocate will not stand to what was delivered in his name.

The other committee was that of Instructions, where the affair of the regulation of the Commission was handled, which is indeed of far greater importance. Sir James Campbell, Mr Linning, and Mr Drummond, were for new regulations, and they urged that Commissions had been of great hurt sometimes to this Church; that many were constantly upon it; that the representation was not equal. In the general it was answered, that Commissions in King James the Sixth's time were not regulate as now; that if members come up, it was impossible the Commission could be more dangerous than an Assembly, being just the same numbers and representation, save the supernumerary members, which the other side allowed, that is, the Nobility, Lords of Session, Advocate, and Justice-Clerk; that the cry against the Commission was only from some particular places, which were disgusted at the choice and acting of the Commission last year. Then the regulations came to be spoke of. 1. That Presbyteries should choose the members of the Commission. That was scarce tenable, because it was a pre-limiting the Assembly, and made it a new Assembly, not a Commission, and against the liberty of the Assembly. 2. That the Commission should be just the members of the Assembly turned to a Commission, with the supernumeraries. This was easily answered, and what was scarce insisted on. 3. That the committee for choosing the Commission should be limited to the lects given by Synods at the Assembly. This was shortly answered, that then [there was] no need of a committee, and they might as well give them to the Assembly; if the committee had not power to alter, why were they under their consideration? And it was impossible

that the Commission could be named in so numerous a Court as the Assembly is. All these Mr Linning quitted as not tenable, and proposed a fourth, which was not in the instructions from Presbyteries, but he alleged it was the sum and substance of them all; that the Committee of Assembly, for nominating the Commission, should be made up of one out of every Presbytery, chosen by the members of the Synod at the Assembly, because the present way, by three named out of every Synod by the members here present, was most unequal; for instance, three from the Synod of Ross and Galloway, and three only from the Synod of Glasgow and Lothian. To this it was answered, that that nomination of members would be better made for the Assembly's Committee by Presbyteries, than by the Synod members met at the Assembly. The proportion of elders in that nomination was a thing likewise to be settled, and would take time to state. But the main thing, though not so plainly, yet spoke to, is the opening of that act about the Commission, and making any alterations at all; and were it not for this, I think this last proposal perhaps would be given way to. But, besides, that if once the act were opened, it's scarce to be said where the amendments would end; and that act was made when the old Presbyterian ministers were alive, and now, for twenty-four years, it's found to be the way least liable to difficulties; and every difficulty imaginable will be answered by the members of Commission their attendance; and that it's necessary that some who know the Church's affairs, and are really of greater efficiency than others, should still be members, providing they be freely chosen, and the Commission still accountable; and from this no hazard results to this Church; but much disorder would ensue if they were left out, as I am sure I have seen these three or four days past, when the Commission were out of the Assembly as parties.

Besides all these I saw, one great thing to be considered is our present state since the Union. It may be remembered, that a design was formed in the end of the Queen's reign to deprive us of Commissions, and to question the legality of that Court, our enemies knowing that, by taking away the Commission, our As-

semblies, which cannot sit long, could be of very little use to us; and the only argument that prevailed was, that the Sovereign had owned Commissions as lawful Courts, by receiving addresses and sending answers, and giving the civil sanction to their acts; and that, by the Union act, our privileges, as well as judicatories that we had at that time, are secured by law to us, and under privileges and judicatories the Commission, then and since allowed as above, is comprehended. And to make an innovation in the constitution of this is a matter of the very last consequence to this Church; and, though the King would allow, of which we have no assurance, is what we ought not to ask, till it be ripely considered, and lawyers advised with, not only here, but at London, how far it may affect our constitution, and destroy that judicatory. This is the sum of what passed on Saturday, as far as I mind. There was no conclusion come to, but all delayed till next meeting. I hope a right nomination of this Commission, the putting in of Mr Drummond and Mr Linning, and some others that were left out of the last Commission, will a little calm our heats as to the affair; and, indeed, I thought last year there were too many changes made at once in the lists given. If persons' morals be fair, I would have some on both sides taken in, till the flame abate a little.

Yesterday, Mr Gilbert Anderson lectured before the Commissioner on Romans xii., and preached an excellent Gospel sermon on Psalm xciv. 8, "He that planted the ear, shall he not hear?" He had some things about divisions and siding with state parties, as unsuitable to ministers in judicatories.

This day, Monday, the Committees met at ten. The act requiring all ministers and elders to subscribe the Formula, 1711, was to be transmitted as an overture to Presbyteries. The commanding officer of the army here was applied to, to give orders against the profanity of the army. In the afternoon, the Assembly met after four; then adjourned till five, because the sub-committee about Lochmaben were obliged to meet again. When the Advocate came to town, he positively declined Sir Gilbert Elliot's declaration in his name, and asserted he had said only, if the Assembly

forced the laying aside, he would submit. They had a meeting before the Commissioner, which ended in the sub-committee's meeting, and leaving out what they had put in on Saturday, laying aside both, and now the people may choose any they will. The Assembly had the Commission book and approved it. There was a little struggle about Mr John Ramsay's affair from the Synod of Moray, but it was overruled. Then a collection for Arbroath was recommended; and a mortification of L.1000 made by a Scotsman, Raining, or Renwick, to the Assembly, or their deputies, for a school, schoolmaster, and other things; and L.1200 more if his youngest daughter decease before twenty-one years of age. The Assembly made it over to the Society, who are to be accountable every year. Then the affair of Lochmaben came in, and the overture was read and approved, laying aside both the calls, and declaring both relations void and null, and all that passed in these calls, and leaving the future choice to the people, and the Presbytery to go on to a speedy settlement. The procedure of the Presbytery was declared irregular and hasty, and they to be reprov'd, and the Synod exhorted to peace, and burying what is past, and the protests deleted that were not inserted in the registers. Then the Synod books were approved. I forgot that the Commissioner produced the King's return to the Assembly's Answer, declaring how acceptable it was. The Synods met and chose the Committee for the Commission. The Advocate was thrown out by the members of the Synod of Lothian, and Mr Hugh Dalrymple put in by one vote.

This day, Tuesday, at eight, the Committee of Instructions met and waived the affair of the registration of the Commission, and transmitted the overture from several Presbyteries, that persons who join in communion with the Church of England should not be members of judicatories. This will take time to ripen. They had many other private things. The Assembly met at eleven, and passed several things transmitted to them—an overture about the Presbytery of Kirkeudbright, their warning against the levellers, that they be cautious in what public warnings they give, and show the people their sin in their irregular meetings; and went through the

rest of the Synod books at four. The Committee for the Commission met and turned out Mr Smith, the last Moderator, from the Commission, and brought in their nomination, a pretty singular one indeed.

At six, the Assembly met, and the nomination of the next Commission was read, after which the Advocate had a speech, very pointed and severe, as to the new Commission nominated. He said, there were several things appeared in the nomination that showed the particular spirit of a party; that the things that were reckoned grievances, and loudly complained of, were just fallen into by themselves; that of the six members of a Presbytery (Edinburgh) five were thrown out; that the Moderator of the last Commission, for whom the Assembly would allow him to have a peculiar honour, (Mr Smith,) since he owed a great deal of his education to him, was left out, which wanted a precedent. These, he said, were reasons he could not well get over in voting, Not Approve; but he had stronger reasons against this nomination, and he thought the liberty of the Assembly was directly infringed by this nomination; for the burghs were brought in to this Commission, twenty-six more than used to be; and the next Assembly the whole sixty-seven burghs might be brought in, which he took to be a matter of that consequence as the Assembly ought to provide a remedy. He noticed that the supernumerary members were put in among the ordinary members, when it answered their purpose that nominated them, and others of them were reserved to their own room, just according to the sides they were supposed to be of, which was a new discovery of a party spirit. This was answered by Mr Hugh Dalrymple:—As to Mr Smith, he had no right to be in, by being Moderator. As to the Presbytery of Edinburgh, they had held out many of the eldest members from Commissions and Assemblies, and, therefore, they had put in those. As [to] the burghs, they were to be regarded as having appeared for the Reformation, and for their good affection to Presbytery. It was likewise objected by the Advocate, that several members for burghs were brought in to the Commission who had no representation in the Assembly, which was

contrary to all forms ; and there could be no legal evidence that they had signed the Confession, &c. ; and a member's saying so did not evidence this. To this he was answered, these were but few. Mr Walker, in the Canongate, raised an objection against the nominators themselves, that representatives for burghs ought not to be in that committee, since, according to the act of Assembly, they were not members of Synods, as is required. He pointed at Mr Drummond and Mr Hugh Dalrymple, who were both from burghs, and yet were the great nominators of the Commission. To this it was answered, that the Assembly had come over that, by approving the Committee in the forenoon, and now it was not competent to make the objection. At length the vote was stated, Approve or Not, and there were about eighty Approves and seven or eight Nots. I scarce ever saw such a dumb vote. Two parts of the Assembly were Silent or *Go on* ; and had these voted Not, as certainly they were Not, the nomination of the Commission had been cast. In short, the former year there were stretches in throwing out members from the Commission ; but this was the best modelled Commission for one side that I have almost ever seen. To-morrow the Assembly rises, and I suppose will have nothing but ordinary forms.

May 26, 1724.

I have given a large account of the procedure of the Assembly till their last meeting. In short, the great debate was, and a poor debate it was, whether Mr D. and Mr H. Dalrymple, or the former managers, should have things in their hand. And it's very plain, party humour appears in very great measures, which will undoubtedly weaken our reputation in this Church. A great deal of strictness was pretended as to the Commission ; and yet the very same things before loudly complained of were practised by Mr D. Dalrymple and Mr Linning, when they got the power in their hand. But what most stunned me was, Mr Linning's appearance against the act for regulating licences to probationers, which I think gives the greatest handle to bring in insufficient men to the Church ; and we may be assured patrons will still pitch upon these in settlements.

I am well informed, from the first hand, that the matter of the King's grant of L.500 more to this Church is in a good way of forwardness. Mr Walpole has consented, and the King has remitted it to the Treasury; and I am told that the Commissioner, in his speech to-morrow, is to intimate so much to the Assembly. And Mr Smith's influence with the Advocate, and his diligence when last up at Court, is the spring of all this. I hear it noticed that the Advocate, in his pleadings before the House of Peers, has brought himself to speak very slow, for as quick as he speaks in this country. I am yours.

LETTER LXXVII.

IRISH PRESBYTERIAN AFFAIRS.

To the Rev. Mr William Livingston, Minister at Temple-Patrick, Ireland.¹

REV. DEAR BROTHER,—I have yours of the 22d of April, and Brother Macknight's of the 24th, at the same time. The meeting of our Assembly being just the day after I received them, I delayed to answer till I came home from Edinburgh. With some difficulty I procured a meeting of our friends there, Mr Smith, Mr Mitchell, Mr Craig, Mr Robert Stewart, and Professor Hamilton, who sent me their return to yours by this day's post. Yours to Professor Hamilton is not come to his hand, but that to Mr Smith is. I can assure you they all have your case very much at heart, and all the umbrage is over; and they, as you see by the enclosed, incline to alter the channel of correspondence, and to send what they write by me, and I am to send all by Mr Macknight to you. I find them

¹ Mr Livingston is said to have been a relative of the celebrated John Livingston. He was ordained in Temple-Patrick, March 30, 1709; resigned the active duties of the ministry in 1755, and died at Temple-Patrick, September 1, 1758. A Sermon of his on the death of Mrs Upton of Castle-Upton has been printed.

very nice that no other than those you know of be admitted to this correspondence, and they do not so much as know of Mr Mac-knight's being privy to it, except as the transmitter of the letters, though I use still the very same freedom with him that I do with you, and send all open to him, because I know you allow of this, and he and I have no reserves at all. It will be proper you write a full account of the proceedings of your Synod as soon as possible, and write as often, either by post or otherwise, as you find proper, and I shall take care to transmit all safely to Edinburgh. I wish some of Mr Halliday's papers had been sent over, as you made us expect, from Belfast. Fail not to send Mr Abernethy's Answer to Mr Masterton, and every thing on both sides, as soon as they come out. I glanced at Mr Halliday's performance in March, and communicated it with Professor Hamilton. He and I both were of opinion there was very little new or straitening in it; and having it only in loan, I waited till I should have it from you or Mr Masterton, when I designed to have given you what offered on it. But, indeed, you are at no loss, for his reasonings are so general and loose, that you need no assistance to an answer.

The enclosed contains the substance of what passed in our short conversation at Edinburgh, and the joint sentiments of all there, so that it will be very needless for me to add anything to the two queries you sent to Mr Macknight and me. However, that you may see my readiness to communicate whatever occurs to me upon anything you propose, the first proposal is, to oblige all your ruling members to subscribe the Assembly's Shorter Catechism, because the Non-subscribing ministers and some elders speak diminitively of some doctrines. I take it for granted, that by your act 1705, all ministers and elders that sit in judicatories are obliged to sign the Confession of Faith. Now, as far as I have observed, there are very few doctrines in the Catechism but what are in the Confession. You will consider, then, how far any small difference here will counterbalance the difficulties that will result from the extending your subscription at this juncture, to anything not formerly used, which, without some very evident necessity, does not appear so very advisable. The Non-subscribers, no doubt, will make a

loud cry after they have come up to the terms of your pacific act, that you are enlarging the matter of subscription, and ask when and where you will end? If the Confession do not satisfy, neither will the Catechism. Besides, their friends in England will very probably make yet a louder complaint. As to your second proposal, that all members of Presbyteries and Synod sign their acknowledgment, that Presbyterian government is agreeable to the Word of God, &c., I am of opinion such a Formula as we have appointed by act of Assembly, 1711, of which I would send you a copy, but you have it in the Abridgment of the Acts of Assembly, is of very great use; and I cannot perceive any hazard of proposing a voluntary subscription to it, or another form equivalent, with the words of the Confession of Faith, chap. iii. sec. 3, as you propose, to all that are already in office, and in time to come to require it of all new intrants. To me, indeed, there appear difficulties in enlarging the terms of subscription upon members whom you have already taken in to your judicatories, except in a voluntary way, because they have a kind of *jus quesitum*, and have come up to the terms of the society, when they entered into it, and may complain of new terms which they had not under their view when they joined being imposed upon them. But as to intrants in the time to come, it's fair and just, and if they be not willing to enter upon these terms, they must abstract from you, and blame themselves. However, you will best know circumstances among you, and whether it will be fit such a proposal be first transmitted to all your Presbyteries, to think upon and ripen, against the following Synod, as we do here in cases of public standing rules; though I own you have the less need of this, that your general synod is not a delegate meeting, but all your ministers are present. This is what occurs to me, and Mr Macknight will add what he thinks proper.

I heartily thank you for the account of matters in your parliament. Let me, at your leisure, have the present state of Papists among you, and what influence the late regulations have upon Papists; what their numbers may be; and if Priests, &c., be still coming among them; if they be fully disarmed? &c.

My obligations to the Rev. Mr A. Crawford are extremely great

for transcribing the MS. (I suppose of Mr Andrew Stewart) for me, and I wish I knew what return to make to him. You may be sure I am a little impatient till it come to me.

I had Bishop Burnet's History from London in the end of last year, and read it with much pleasure; bating his flings at King William and the Presbyterians, sometimes, and extemporary prayer, and two or three facts he is out in, it's an excellent, masterly performance.

Pray give my dearest respects to Mr Masterton, Mr M^cBride, Mr Gilbert Kennedy, Mr Lang, and all other brethren of my acquaintance. I would willingly have written to each of them; but what I write to you, you will communicate. Tell them I expect to hear from them at and after your Synod, and long for their accounts and yours. I give my most humble duty to Colonel Upton. I am yours, &c.

June 2, 1724.

LETTER LXXVIII.

CALDERWOOD'S MS. HISTORY.—IRISH AFFAIRS.

To my Lord Grange.

MY LORD,—I reckoned myself at a very great loss that I wanted the benefit of your Lordship's conversation when at Edinburgh, during the Assembly. Since that time, I hear you are safe returned from London, and could not but take the occasion of one coming to my Lord Pollock's to return you my humble acknowledgments for the pleasure I have of collating near three volumes of the original manuscript my Lord Polton has done me the favour to allow me. Our Communion is throug at this season, and the History is large; but I shall make all the dispatch I can, and either bring back, or send with a sure hand, this valuable remain of our Scots History.

I am sorry to observe the last volume is wanting, there being only four sent by my Lord Polton to you; and I find, at the close of the last, this note, *This History followeth in another volume which beginneth at the year M.D.XCVI., and continueth till the death of King James the Sixth.* The three volumes I have gone almost through are perfect and entire. How this fourth volume, which is in worse case, will be, I cannot say till I come to it; but I am in pain to think that the last volume is not sent, and want not my fears that it is amissing, since, had it been in my Lord Polton's hands, I can scarce conceive but may be he would have sent it with the rest.

My copy, which is in five large folios, has a gap 'twixt the 1595, where the original ends, to the 1607; and then I have a volume of 624 pages, from the 1607 to King James' death. I am hopeful the copy in the College of Glasgow has this gap, though I have not had occasion to inquire of late, so that this valuable History will yet be made up. But if the other volume of the original be in my Lord Polton's hands, I hope your Lordship will yet get it from him.

If by this time your copy of Mr James Melville's Life be finished, I'll be very fond of it. By the glance I had of it from Mr Hog, it appears a very valuable manuscript, and there may be some others, not much observed, where this was.

It's too great presumption for me to desire any account of new books, or of the state of the Arian controversy, and other things among the Dissenters, which, no question, your Lordship would have when at London; and I have no excuse but my own Athenian temper, and the freedom your Lordship has been so kind as to allow me to use with you. When your Lordship has any spare moment to allow this way, it will be a singular favour.

The General Synod of Dissenters in Ireland meets to-morrow, where it's to be feared the heats among them will come to some head. Their state continues very lamentable, from the constant endeavours of the Non-subscribers to strengthen themselves. The body of the people there are upon the brink of breaking communion with the Non-subscribers; and several things of late have fallen out

that inflame their differences. Those, if your Lordship has not had better accounts since I had the honour to wait on you, with what I expect after the Synod rises, I shall take care to send you by post. Meanwhile, I am, in the greatest sincerity, my Lord, yours, &c.

June 15, 1724.

LETTER LXXIX.

MR NEVIN AND THE IRISH PRESBYTERIANS.

To Lord Grange.

MY LORD,—Last post I had letters from Ireland, with some accounts of their last General Synod, which met at Dungannon, June 16th. I expect larger accounts afterwards. Meanwhile, the hints I can now give I hoped would not be unacceptable. The Synod sat, as generally they do, two full weeks; and their whole time almost was taken up in warm debates with the Non-subscribers, which was the great subject of debate; last Synod, as your Lordship knows, was soon over. The Colonel [Upton] was necessarily kept at Dublin upon some public business, and sent his excuse for not waiting on the Synod, which was sustained. The Non-subscribers craved that his charge against them might be dismissed; but that was not yielded, and they protested. But the affair which took up most of their time was the case of one Mr Thomas Nevin, minister at Down, which would take longer time to deduce from the printed letter he has published than is worth your Lordship's time. In short, Mr Nevin, for several years, has been a violent opposer of Confessions,—human compositions, as he calls them,—and subscribing to them. In a public company, December last, he was giving his reasons against subscription, and advanced one from that paragraph

of our Confession, which allows the magistrate power to punish blasphemy. This power he thought in many cases was hard, and he said he would not yield that the Jews should have been put to death for denying the Deity of Christ. This is the state he himself gives of the matter; but the affidavit which he himself publishes gives no reference to the case of the Jews. But the witnesses swear that he said that it was not blasphemy to deny the Deity of Christ.¹ However, Mr Nevin thought fit to publish a letter of his upon the affidavit that had been given against him in a criminal process before the Civil Judges, and he vindicates the best way he can what he said at that time. This paper of his was put in the hands of the members of the Synod by himself, that day they met. It contains many expressions in it very bitter and unbecoming a minister, and the gravity and importance of the subject, particularly one which seemed a resiling from the declaration made by the Non-subscribers in the Synod, 1721, of their belief of the eternal Deity of the Son of God.² In short, it's an unguarded, provoking paper, which one

¹ "That brother [Mr Nevin] for some years past hath had a very active hand in our debates against creeds, confessions, and tests of orthodoxy, and not from under some suspicions in relation to the supreme Divinity of our blessed Saviour. He had used too much liberty in conversation, by disputing on the wrong side of the question, insomuch that one Eckline, a gentleman of the Established Church, accused him openly of Arianism, for which Mr Nevin brought a writ of defamy against him, and the suit is now in dependance before the next assizes. In the meantime, a few weeks ago, there was an affidavit made before a justice of the peace by three deponents that Mr Nevin had, in conversation with them, said that it is no blasphemy to say that Christ is not God. As soon as Mr Nevin got this affidavit, he wrote a letter in his own defence, directed to a neighbouring minister, [Mr William Smith of Ballee,] alleging that their conversation at that time being about the magistrate's power in suppressing error and blasphemy, his words aforesaid were understood only in relation to the Jews, and of that particular sort of blasphemy which comes within the sphere of human laws, and exposes man to capital punishments; in which sense, therefore, it is not blasphemy in a Jew to say that Christ is not God. This letter, with the affidavit, Mr Nevin printed some days before the Synod, brought it along with him, and dispersed it amongst the ministers the first day of the Synod."—(*Letters to Wodrow*, vol. xxi. No. 91.)

² At this Synod an overture was brought in, asserting the absolute and eternal Deity of Christ and the Holy Ghost; and that any under the authority of the Synod, who should deny the said article of Christian faith, should be excluded from Christian communion with them; and every minister who should deny the said fundamental doc-

would think was designed to insult the Synod, and adapted to make them think he was an Arian. A complaint is tabled upon that printed letter the first day of the Synod, and a committee appointed to hear him, and bring in what they thought culpable in his letter. To-morrow they brought in their remarks, which he craved a copy of to make his replies. His replies were very long, six or seven sheets of paper, and full of bitterness and petulance. He was supported by the whole Non-subscribers with great keenness. An overture was made, in the entry, that he should make a voluntary declaration of his sentiments as to the proper Deity of the Son of God to the Synod; but this he declined, and instead of that, brought in his prolix answers, which still gave more and more ground to suspect him in that great matter. After long and tedious disputes upon every article of the Remarks and Answers, wherein the Non-subscribers exerted themselves at great length in his defence, at length, after going through the articles and answers, and Mr Nevin's declining the declaring his sentiments on that important truth, the Synod came judicially to require a peremptory declaration from him. His brethren, the Non-subscribers, complained heavily of this, as imposition, inquisition, &c. However, at length, it was demanded, and he, with great peremptoriness, refused to give it. Upon which the Synod came by a vote to declare that Mr Nevin should not be allowed ministerial communion, nor be any longer entertained as a member of their body, till such time as he should satisfy them of his soundness concerning the supreme Deity of Christ. The Non-subscribers protested, and declared they would keep communion with him.

By this time, I fear, I have wearied your Lordship. The case of our brethren in the North of Ireland is very lamentable, and, as far as I can see, if matters come to a rupture, the Non-subscribers will force it on themselves. The press there is also sweating with pam-

trine should be deposed. The whole Synod went into this overture, except the members of the Belfast Society, who said that they heartily believed the foresaid article of faith, but denied that any Synod or Council had authority to impose that or any other article of faith.—(*Letters to Wodrow*, vol. xxi. No. 147.)

phlets on this unhappy debate. It's scarce worth while to give their titles.

I have scarce left room for what it was my duty to have begun with, my hearty thanks for yours of the 30th June. I shall be sorry if any distant view I may have of trying to do what I can for recovering, as much as may be, of the remains of our Christians and Ministers, shall any way hinder any thing of that nature by any proper hand. I am more and more impressed with the necessity of a work of this nature; but the difficulties in it will not be few, and it's certainly a work of time and labour. It will be a loss, if the last volume of Calderwood be lost. I hope you will continue your pains to recover it, and what else my Lord Polton may have, unobserved, and send me Mr Melville's Life, when ready.

When your Lordship's leisure allows, I'll be fond of every thing you'll please to favour me with from England, where I am sure you would meet with much, in conversation and otherwise, that would be singularly useful to me. Forgive me this tedious letter; and allow me to subscribe myself, my Lord, your most humble and very much obliged servant.

July 15, 1724.

I have heard nothing how far Mr Bruce is advanced in his large undertaking.

LETTER LXXX.

PIOUS CONGRATULATIONS AND ADVICES.

To Rabbi Jehuda Monis, at Harvard College, New England.

REV. DEAR BROTHER AND LEARNED CHRISTIAN RABBI,—When I had the singular favour of your letter dated June 5, 1723, by the hand of my reverend and worthy brother, Mr Colman, last year, it was sorrowful and painful to me that I could not make a return by that ship, and I presumed to desire the Rev. Mr Colman to make my excuse to you, which I hope he has done.

And when the opportunity of another ship returned this year, it was particularly pleasing to me, that I should be in case with my own hand to express my best wishes to you.

Yours, in the holy and pure tongue in which the lively oracles of God were committed to your fathers, was what was most welcome to me. You write so fairly and beautifully, that the reading was easy to me, though some abbreviations stopped me a little. The Rabbinical copy of your letter was a little harder to me, having for many years been unaccustomed to that study.

I am not able to correspond with you in your own language, and would be ashamed to write, though I could, to one whose hand is so beautiful and equal to print; and it's a pleasure to find, by yours, that you understand the English tongue.

Permit me, dear brother, for my own part, and in the name of many others here, to bless the Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, your fathers, and our God, who hath enlightened your mind, and brought you from the mistakes and prejudices of your education, and led you to profess your belief and subjection to the Messiah, whose day Abraham saw and was glad. Allow me, with all my heart, to welcome you into the shadow of the wings of Jehovah,

our righteousness, where you are come to trust, in whom all the seed of Israel shall be justified, and in whom they shall glory.

I persuade myself, learned and dear Rabbi, that this is from the inward and firm conviction of your mind, wrought by the Spirit of Christ, the breath of the Lord's mouth, who made the host of the heavens, the same Spirit who was on our Redeemer, and anointed him, whose work is to show him to us and glorify him. May the same power of God keep you, through faith, unto salvation !

I almost envy you the pleasure you have, and I hope shall have more and more, in comparing the Old Testament and the New, with greater distinctness and clearness than we who are much strangers to the holy idiom and force of the Old Testament ; and thence you'll wax stronger and stronger in the firm faith that our Jesus is the Messias. Of him Moses spake, and to him gave all the prophets witness. In him you have righteousness and strength, and to him men shall come. All your springs are in him ; he is the fountain of Israel. May you be rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith, grounded in love, and complete in him !

You desire the prayers of ministers and Christians with us, and I assure you you have them most heartily. Since we have heard of your faith in our Lord and Redeemer, innumerable prayers and praises too have been humbly offered to Him who sits on the throne, and the Lamb, on your behalf, in secret, in private, and in several places in public.

Comfort us, my dear brother, with the accounts of your being built up in our most holy faith, and your being in the grace that is in Christ Jesus, strong, stedfast, and immoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord ; your labour shall not be in vain in the Lord.

The crooked serpent who deceived our common parents in Eden is an adversary that goeth about seeking whom he may devour. Resist him, dear brother, stedfast in the faith ; and commit yourself, in the way of well-doing, to the faithful Creator. You know whom you have believed, and to whom you have committed the good thing, who is able to keep it to that day.

You know much better than I, learned Rabbi, and regret it with a more piercing compassion than I am capable of, that some of your nation, who have given up their names to Jesus, have left him, and returned to the first prejudices of their education; and there have not been wanting instances, even in our own time, of lamentable leaving of our glorious Redeemer. Far be it from me to entertain the least suspicion of you this way. God forbid! I have elsewhere given an instance of one of my own nation that made defection from our holy religion, to the errors of your brethren according to the flesh. But we all need, when we stand, to take heed lest we fall. Permit me to be jealous over myself, with a holy jealousy, and to assure you I entertain none of you, but hope that your path shall be like the morning light, which shineth more and more to the perfect day. As your sweet and royal singer of Israel says, "But as for me, thou upholdest me in mine integrity, and settest me before thy face for ever. Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting. Amen, and Amen."

I cannot conclude without expressing my utmost concern for your dear nation, dear to us Gentiles, as from whom our Redeemer, as concerning the flesh, Christ, came, who is God over all, blessed for ever, Amen. Your fall has been our rising, and how much more your fulness? We believe, that if God hath concluded all in unbelief, he will have mercy on them all. We pray for this; we long for it; and that happy time will be as life from the dead to us. And we hope the time is not far off, when, in the place where it was said of your own beloved people, Ye are not a people, it shall be said of our dear elder brethren, Ye are the children of the living God.

Yea, we humbly plead that your enlightening in the truth as it is in Jesus, and the conversion of some others of your learned brethren in Holland, which we hear of, may be the first fruits of a great harvest; the little handful of corn that is cast into the earth, that shall grow up and shake like the trees which are in Lebanon.

My Dear Brother, I know much is in your heart to do for your nation, yea, it's in your heart to build a house to the Lord, and promote the Redeemer's kingdom. May he strengthen and furnish

you for great services to him, and the people beloved for the fathers' sake! The blessings of Abraham, now come on us Gentiles, be upon you, even the promise of the Spirit, through faith! May the arms of your hands be made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob, even the God of your fathers, who shall help you! The blessings of your Father be on the head of my brother, on the crown of the head of him who is happily separated from his brethren! So prayeth, my dearest brother in the faith which is in Christ, yours most affectionately.

Eastwood, July 23, 1724.

LETTER LXXXI.

DEATH OF MATHER'S FATHER, AND OF WODROW'S FATHER-IN-LAW.
—MILLAR'S HISTORY.

To the Rev. Cotton Mather, D.D., and Minister at Boston.

REV. DEAR SIR,—By Captain Ferguson, to whom I am indebted for many valuable packets from you, I have yours of the 1st of May, which was much longed for. A good while ago, by our London prints, we were here afflicted with the removal of your excellent and now glorified father, one of my most venerable and most valued friends, if I may put myself in so high a rank. I know he allowed me, and the two letters I had from him I keep by me, among my *κειμήλια*, as proofs of it. He was drop-ripe for heaven. May his mantle fall on us, even a double portion!

I was expecting such an account of him as your Parentator; it became such a son to give such a father a memorial, and raise up the name of the dead. Bear with me in complaining of its shortness, and in wishing for yet a larger account of so valuable a personage.

You have done me too much honour in taking so public notice

of my History, and the expressing your friendship for me in so kind a manner in your Father's Life, makes this an obligation which I shall never be able to repay. The lovers of the name of Mather, who are of equal extent with all good men who have heard of them, and seen what God has enabled them to do, will reckon unworthy me among their friends, which is more by far than I deserve. May the Lord preserve you to your parent's years, and strengthen you to fill up his room in the Church, and to do yet more and more for pure and undefiled religion!

This Church is in your debt for your favourable opinion of us. Continue your prayers for us and concern in us. May the Lord graciously create a defence over us, and strengthen what he has wrought for you and us!

Your remarkables in your Father's Life were the more acceptable to me, that I have been drawing up my Father's Life from loose scrawls of his he left behind him, this last winter. I don't know if ever I shall publish any more than I have done; but if ever I come any length in my Biography and Collections concerning the Lives of our eminent Ministers and Christians in Scotland, my Father's Life will bear some part. He was a good, great, and singularly useful person in this Church. In April last I lost another parent, my wife's father, Mr Patrick Warner, the eldest minister in this Church for many years, and just about your father's age, going in his eighty-fourth year, a holy man of great learning, and one of the most powerful wrestlers I ever knew. New England had a share in his prayers, and you are at a loss, as well as we.

My Lord Pollock is at present at Edinburgh at his public work. He is now towards the end of his race. He was born January 1648, and so about nine years younger than your father. I have still his orders to remember you most affectionately. In eight or ten days, I hope to put your Parentator in his hands, which I am sure will be most acceptable.

As soon as your Christian Philosopher comes to Edinburgh, you may be sure I would not want it. Whether it is in our College

Library, I know not. I thank you for it, and the heart-warming remarks in it.

There is nothing remarkable from this Church I can mind of worth your notice. I send you a second collection of some sermons of the late excellent Halyburton. Pray favour me with your latest accounts from your beloved Glaucha and the University in Halle, and the East Indies Missionaries, and the state of things among you.

The God of your fathers be remarkably with you and yours, to all generations! Pray miss no occasion to let me hear from you. I am, Rev. Dear Sir, yours most affectionately.

July 29, 1724.

P. S.—While I am writing to you, my worthy and learned neighbour, and dear brother, the Rev. Mr Millar of Paisley, who has lately published a valuable and large History of the Propagation of Christianity, desires me to introduce him to you, and send you a copy of his book. You have his own letter enclosed and his books, which I'll venture to say are worth your perusal, and above any testimony of so mean a hand as mine. Mr Millar and I now have had neighbouring charges for near twenty years. He is a serious, diligent, and laborious minister, and his book will show his acquaintance with learning, in most of its valuable branches. I am glad to be employed once in sending you what I can say is worth your while, and again repeat my best wishes, and seek the continuance of your prayers and friendship.

LETTER LXXXII.

WARDEN ON BAPTISM.—SINGING OF PSALMS.

To Mr John Warden, Minister of the Gospel at Gargunnoch.

DEAR BROTHER,—About eight days ago I have the present of your Essay on Baptism, which was very acceptable; and I shall only in return give my best wishes that it may, through the blessing of God, be made remarkably useful for the interests of practical religion, and the revival of the decays in relative godliness. I never had any difficulty about it's publishing, save its bulk, which puts it beyond the reach of country people, who need an essay of this nature most, and yet never buy, and scarce ever read, any thing that goes beyond your *Widow's Mite*.

I have been long under the thoughts that some short essays should be printed on the most common and ordinary duties of Christianity, and they will follow well from you, after what you have done upon the two sacraments. The duty, that sublime and heavenly exercise of singing psalms, is what I am afraid is as ignorantly and perfunctoriously gone about as any part of our worship. I would likewise have somewhat upon parents' education of their children, and both the matter and method of that duty set before them. Your hand is in, as folk say to me as to your [my] History, and your style plain, easy, and adapted to thir practical subjects. If you can entertain any thoughts upon these necessary subjects, you shall not want any thing I have on them, or can command. I have some thoughts of publishing an Essay of worthy Mr James Ferguson's on Singing of Psalms; it will be but two or three sheets, but am not yet determined.

I have no news, unless it be the lamentable state of Ireland, where the flames are rising, and papers publishing in shoals. Our

old con-disciple, Mr Gilbert Kennedy, has published a Vindication of their Synod against Halliday's Reasons against subscription. He is a little keen, but the subject needs it, and is very large. Pray let me have a long letter from you after your Synod, with a full account of every thing that is going; and at length, some time or other, make good your resolution of staying a night or two here. I am, Dear Brother, yours most affectionately.

Eastwood, Oct. 3, 1724.

LETTER LXXXIII.

COLLIER.—COLLINS.—CALDERWOOD.—GEORGE BUCHANAN.

To Professor Hamilton, Edinburgh.

REV. DEAR SIR,—As soon as the above from our friends in Ireland comes to hand, I send it by post as the surest and safest way. When you and others concerned in [it] think fit to make a return to this and the former, I shall do my best to get it safely conveyed.

I take this occasion most heartily to thank you for your last, (Sept. 19.) The report of Collier's attempt with the Patriarch of Constantinople¹ is very probable, and designed, I fancy, to continue their ordinations, for which they are not yet ripe to go to France. I know not whither they will turn next, unless it be to Moscow, where it may be they may meet with better quarters, if the Czar's resentment against our King continue.

¹ Wodrow refers here to the correspondence, into which the Usage Bishops, with Jeremy Collier, the historian, at their head, attempted about this time to enter with the Bishops of the Greek Church, and which ended in smoke.—(See *Skinner's Eccl. History*, vol. ii.)—Finding that their ordination was repudiated by the old Bishops, who adhered to the Pretender as the source of their jurisdiction, their object was to connect themselves with some *Apostolic* Church, to sanction their usurped orders. The Greek Church would have nothing to do with these Usagers, from whom the present Scots Episcopalians are descended.

I wish the Bishop of Lichfield's Answer to Collins be well done. It's but lately that I have got Collins, who has cunningly enough laid his attack against prophecy; and yet I see little in him but what has been again and again answered, even in our systems, and anti-Socinian writers. However, I fear his unlucky turns he gives things, and his partial and disingenuous representations, have a sad influence upon our gentry and cursory readers, who undervalue systems and other books, where what he advances has been taken off. The preface is a refining on Locke's Letters on Toleration.

What you send me as to our affairs is all news to me, and I beg you'll continue to allow me what's a-going. Our Synod had nothing but our common affairs before them, of which it may be you have accounts from other hands. The unhappy state of the Presbytery of Ayr breeds us much trouble, and they have appealed from us to Assembly on our prosecuting the Assembly's Letter to us, as to their bursar; but I hope they may cool against our next Synod, and take up their appeal. Indeed, we ought to be separated from them, and turned to two Synods. We have appointed a day of thanksgiving and prayer for the remarkable turn in the weather this harvest, which has been as favourable as I have noticed these twenty years.

Pray continue your accounts from London, when your leisure allows you, and send what comes from Mr Calamy, who, I hear, is concerned in a lecture set up last year at London, in imitation of Boyle's Lectures.

What you communicate this way, must come purely on the foot of charity and your communicative temper, since I can pretend to no returns from this retired corner. I have now finished my collating of the original copy of Calderwood's large History, with a copy I have in six large folios. This is a most valuable collection of papers, rather than a digested history, and contains a great many papers and letters, I believe no where else preserved. The printed copy is a very lame compend, till the 1596, where it turns larger; but the original being lost after 1586, I can say less about it.

I met with a passage in it which is scarce worth troubling you

[with,] were it not to be a spur to my friend Mr Stewart to go on with his design for vindicating George Buchanan, who, it seems, got little thanks from his pedantic pupil for his care about him. The author had been giving an account of the proceedings of the Assembly, 1592, and their articles ordered to be presented to the King by some of their number, and then adds: "The brethren who were appointed to present the articles unto the King went to him upon Wednesday, the 24th of May. The King was hot against the ministers for speaking so freely in the pulpits against him and his nobility, and defending Mr Knox, the good Regent, and Mr George Buchanan; and said he could not be defended but by traitors and seditious theologues. They replied soundly and calmly. Afternoon, Mr Andrew Melville was so earnest in defence of those worthy men, that the Chancellor said that was not his errand to come for. Mr Andrew answered, he would take no discharge at his hand, nor at the hand of any subject in Scotland, in that matter, except his Majesty. The King found fault with Mr George Buchanan's book, *De Jure Regni*, and with sundry other things in these worthy men. Mr Andrew answered, 'These men set the crown on your head.' The King said it came by succession, and not by any man. Mr Andrew replied, 'They were the executioners and instruments, and whosoever informed him sinistrously of those men, were neither true to him nor the common weal.' The King said, Mr Knox called his mother a whore, and allowed the slaughter of Davie in her presence. Mr Patrick Galloway said, If a King or a Queen be a murderer, why should they not be called so? After supper, Mr Robert Bruce and Mr Patrick Galloway were called for, at which time the King was somewhat colder in conference. On Thursday the 25th, he promised to the Commissioners of the Assembly, that the acts against the Kirk should be annulled. Mr David Black, preaching in the Little Kirk, May the 28th, in presence of the Chancellor, said, The slaughter of Davie, so far as it was the work of God, was allowed by Mr Knox; and no further."

This large work gives a pretty distinct account of Knox's History, and the first printing of it, and of Mr John Davidson's His-

tory, in a letter of his own to King James; and a great many other things both as to the persons and writings of our Reformers, and their successors.

I'll be impatient till I see the Critical History of England. I fear he meddle little, in a five shillings book, with our Scots affairs. It's time now to ask your pardon for so long an interruption from better employments; and with my earnest requests for all your accounts of Synod and Commission, when they sit, and what you have from abroad and from the learned world, to subscribe, Rev. Dear Sir, yours, &c.

Eastwood, Oct. 12, 1724.

LETTER LXXXIV.

THE NON-SUBSCRIBING CONTROVERSY.

*To the Rev. Mr Charles Masterton, Minister at Belfast.*¹

REV. DEAR BROTHER,—I have yours of the 16th of September on the 10th instant, for which I return you thanks. You have my

¹ The Rev. Charles Masterton was a licentiate of the Presbytery of Linlithgow, and came over to Ireland in the year 1703. He was ordained to the pastoral charge of the congregation of Connor, in the county of Antrim, on the 17th of May 1704, and continued there for eighteen years. When Mr Halliday was settled in the first Presbyterian congregation in Belfast, and refused to sign the Westminster Confession of Faith, a considerable number of his hearers withdrew, formed the third congregation, and called Mr Masterton from Connor to be their first minister. He was accordingly installed in that important charge in the latter part of the year 1722. He continued to be a very active and influential minister in Belfast for about twenty years, and an able defender of the doctrines of grace against the Arian party. He resigned the active duties of the charge about the year 1745, and died in Belfast on the 15th of July 1750. He published two sermons, one of them his farewell discourse to the congregation of Connor; two pamphlets connected with the Non-subscribing Controversy; and a small but excellent little work, which has been frequently reprinted, on the Doctrine of the Trinity.

poor thoughts upon the accounts from the Presbytery in Mr Livingston's business, which are not worth repeating. Pray continue your accounts of all that passes, by every occasion that offers, to Irvine or Glasgow, and I am ready to think you will have many.

You ought, in my opinion, to answer Mr Abernethy's Defence of his Seasonable Advice,¹ and I wish it may be as short as possibly you can form it. His style is fuse, and reasonings, as far as I have read, pretty magisterial, and his turns irritating; and, if you follow his large paper, *κατα ποδαζ*, your answer will swell terribly. I suggested my thoughts last year as to the publication of your Apology, and yet cannot help wishing that your debates from the press being a little sopited, the first new appearance had not been upon your side; and I see Mr Halliday makes a pretext of its publication for printing his pamphlet. I imagine Mr Hemphill, of whom I have no acquaintance, pushed the printing of it. Our brethren at Edinburgh, as far as I know, were of the same sentiments; not but we had all an entire satisfaction with the paper, but doubted of the expediency of printing any further till the Non-subscribers made another attack. But now it's necessary you should give an answer, which, in as far as I have read, will not be very difficult. The truth is, I have as yet read only forty or fifty pages of it. It's but about a month since I had seven or eight papers from your presses all at once, and being at present taken up in collating the large History of Calderwood, in six folios, with the original, I have the less time to spare. And, really, Mr Abernethy is so prolix and minute, and his letter so small, that I weary. I wish you may set him right in several facts, wherein, if my information be good, he is out; and notice particularly his account of the Non-subscribers' carriage at the time of making the pacific act, which confirms me in the opinion I had formerly inclined to entertain, that your Synod went a little too far in that concession, especially if what he says

¹ This production was entitled, "Reply to the Rev. Mr Masterton, in Defence of the Seasonable Advice to the Dissenters in the North of Ireland; with a Postscript by the Rev. Messrs Weld, Boyse, and Choppin, in Vindication of their recommendatory Preface to 'The Seasonable Advice.'"

of the reasonings of the Belfast Society at that time hold. But I am sure you need no remarks I am capable to make ; and sufficient, and, I apprehend, too much, matter of a reply will offer to you.

We enjoy a calm here at present. The Lord grant we improve it well ; and nothing remarkable offers that I can think of. I wrote several weeks ago to Mr Macknight, that young Mr Millar, who was with you, flatly denies the story that some with you give out of him. I fancy the occasion of the mistake is the opposition that was made against re-subscribing the Confession of Faith, which was proposed in one of our Committees of Assembly, 1722, if I mind right, and dropped without a vote. But that is a quite distinct question from subscribing, which none among us ever opposed, that I know of, and they would soon be taken up if they did. Your aunt is very well. I expect her to stay some days with my wife, in a week or two, and shall put her in mind of her promise to send you my book. I think it's not so proper for you to answer Mr Kilpatrick's Scripture Plea,¹ which seems to me very open to an answer ; but you'll have occasion, in your return to Mr Abernethy, to give him a material answer. Pray write frequently to, Rev. Dear Brother, yours, &c.

Oct. 14, 1724.

I thank you for the last Synod minutes, which I suppose come from you. I see not perfectly with what view Mr M'Bride entered his mind as to the grand vote, as it stands in the minutes.

LETTER LXXXV.

IRISH PRESBYTERIAN AFFAIRS.

To the Rev. Mr William Livingston, Minister at Temple-Patrick.

REV. DEAR BROTHER,—I have yours of the 22d of September, as your former, after your last Synod, with the enclosed to our

¹ " Scripture Plea against a fatal Rupture and Breach of Christian Communion amongst the Presbyterians in the North of Ireland."

friends at Edinburgh, both which I instantly transmitted; and when their return comes I'll forward it to you by Mr Macknight.

My opinion, upon the whole you give, as in your two last, is not worth your while. And, indeed, all we can do almost here is to sympathise with you under your present unhappy circumstances, from a set of contentious men who first provoke and bully the Synod in print, and then dispute every inch of ground and little formality as *pro aris et focis*; and when you exert that power Christ has given you upon the most important occasions, and plain calls for preservation of purity and peace, they raise one of the most unreasonable cries of imposition, and what not. For my share, I cannot see that your Synod could have done less than they did, without being blame-worthy. A bare refusal to hold communion is none of our censures; and I fancy, in such a case, our Assembly would have gone into a sentence of deposition. But I will not blame your lenity. You know your circumstances best, and what is most proper to a tolerated state.

The procedure of the Presbytery of Down, I mean the minority of ministers, is the plain road they naturally fell into; and if any thing prevail with the Non-subscribers and their favourers, to think with more temper and less affectation of a boundless latitude, it will be their people's deserting them. Your people are better natured than many here, who leave ministers upon far less provocations than a refusing to sign our Confession, or to give a declaration of their sentiments as to Christ's Deity. This is all that offers upon what is passed. As to future events, I hope Providence will so state things, as your way will be clear. May your strength be as your difficult day is!

You have singularly obliged me by sending from Mr Crawford the papers of Mr Andrew Stewart, I receive from Mr Govan of Mains. I could do no less than express my grateful sense of his goodness to himself, which I hope you will transmit to him, with my humble duty. The third part, of which I was most fond, ends abruptly. I take it for granted, Mr Stewart wrote no more than is sent me, for which I am heartily sorry. Pray let me know how this came,

and if it may be supplied from any other papers among you. I reckon the account of the Scots in Ulster, and the wonderful success of the Gospel there, before the Rebellion and Massacre, 1641, to be a branch of our ecclesiastical history of this church, upon the matter ; and I see Mr Stewart has been a close observer of things, a solid reasoner, and of great learning, and seen in our antiquities ; which makes me extremely regret that I have only two leaves I think on what I was so desirous to see. However, I am very thankful for the valuable present I have received.

I have transmitted all your accounts to Mr Macknight. I'll be fond to know what becomes of Mr Orr's at Comber. If I mistake not the person, he was licensed by our Presbytery some few years ago ; and if he, all his new light has come to him in Ireland, for while here there was nothing extraordinary about him.

Upon reading over your letter again, I begin to hope there may be a sheet or two yet to come to me of Mr Stewart's papers, which will be most acceptable. But it may be I mistake your narrative. My copy has only two leaves and a side of the third chapter, as to the state of things after the settlement of the Scots in Ulster. I could wish there were twenty sheets to come, though I were to pay a shilling for the sheet. You will set me right here by your next.

Pray give my humble duty to Colonel Upton. I shall not fail to let his friends, my Lord Buchan and the Colonel, [Colonel Erskine,] know of his welfare. Write frequently to, and lay your commands on, Rev. Dear Brother, yours, &c.

Oct. 14, 1724.

LETTER LXXXVI.

MR A. STEWART.—SUCCESS OF THE GOSPEL IN IRELAND.

*To the Rev. Mr Andrew Crawford, Minister of the Gospel at
Carnmoney, near Belfast.*

REV. DEAR SIR,—I am favoured with yours of the 7th of September, with the valuable papers of the Rev. Mr Andrew Stewart, on the state of the Church in Ireland, from my reverend brother, Mr Livingston. You have extremely obliged me in communicating with me so valuable a remain of so great a man, as I see by looking over these papers your uncle has truly been. When Mr Livingston told me of these papers, I presumed to desire him to use his interest with you to get me a view of them, because I reckon the settlement of the Scots in Ulster, and the wonderful progress of the Gospel about the Six-mile-Water, is a branch on the matter of our Church History, as to which I have been for some years collecting. But I could never have had the confidence to have asked this favour, had I imagined you would have taken the trouble to write over these papers with your own hand. This, indeed, makes your kind present doubly welcome to me, and I wish I knew what return I can make for so much labour as you have been at, and wherein I can be useful to you here.

I'll be extremely fond of as full an account of the worthy Mr Stewart as you can send me, though I am ashamed to put you to any farther trouble ; and of his father, of whom, if I remember, there are some hints in Mr Robert Blair's Life, and Mr Livingston's. Both he and his father come directly in upon a design I have had for some time in my view, if the Lord continue health and strength with me, and that is, to gather what I can as to the lives of our eminent Ministers and Christians in this Church, and of the Lord's

remarkable providences towards them, and by them, for the good of souls. And the wonderful appearances of Providence in your first settlement, and the remarkable success of the Gospel about the Six-mile-Water, and all the accounts you can favour me with as to the first eminently countenanced Presbyterian Ministers in Ireland, and their successors, to the Restoration, will be a very necessary part of that work. My life and labours are in a better hand than mine own. And whether ever I shall be able to bring this design to any bearing, I know not; but I'll endeavour to put what papers I have, and my brethren send me, in such an order, as if I be not able to finish such a large and yet necessary work, I hope it will be easier to others after me to finish it.

The papers you send me are abundantly legible, and a very considerable addition to my collections. Allow me, Sir, since you, by your goodness, embolden me to beg you'll go on to favour me with all you can possibly send me as to the lives of your faithful and useful ministers in Ireland, especially those who were a sort of apostles, if I may say so, in the first settlement, and down to the Restoration; and hint at the Lord's remarkable providences, singular conversions, answers of prayer, remarkable preservations, accomplishments of promises, and threatened judgments, of Ministers and Christians, their lives, diaries, &c. I the rather request for this that, to my great sorrow, your uncle's valuable papers have very little upon the third chapter, which I was particularly fond of. I know my brother, Mr Livingston, will join with you in his endeavours this way.

I would fain hope that a well vouched account of remarkable providences, and the exemplary and useful lives of our eminent Ministers and Christians, through the Divine blessing, might be useful for the reviving of decayed piety and zeal, and advancing the life and power of godliness, and taking us off hurtful contentions. I beg the continuance of your prayers for me, and beg the Lord may preserve you long to be useful, and be remarkably present with you in his work. Again I return you my unfeigned thanks for your valuable papers, and beg you'll lay your commands upon,

Rev. Dear Sir, your very much obliged and most affectionate brother and servant.

Oct. 14, 1724.

LETTER LXXXVII.

CALDERWOOD AND THE MELVILLES.

To my Lord Grange.

MY LORD,—Having the occasion of my Lord Pollock's returning to Edinburgh, it's my duty to send my acknowledgments of your many and undeserved favours. I am not quite done with Calderwood's MSS. I wish the last volume could be recovered in the original, which is two good large ones in my copy. In a little time, I design to give you the trouble of a rude draught of Mr Calderwood's Life, which I have very near finished. As soon as I can get it transcribed in a better hand than this, it shall be sent in, that I may have your opinion upon the form and manner of it. Next, I incline to try what I can do as to Mr Andrew and Mr James Melville's Life, and will be fond to have the MSS. of Mr Melville's your Lordship was pleased to promise me. If it can come west with my Lord Pollock's servants, it will be soon at me.

Our accounts from Ireland continue melancholy enough. I wish your Lordship may have got my last, with some hints of the procedure of the last General Synod. When your leisure permits, it will be an honour to receive your commands, and whatever you shall please to communicate to, my Lord, &c.

Eastwood, Oct. 31, 1724.

LETTER LXXXVIII.

COLLECTION OF SCOTTISH PAPERS.

To Mr James Anderson, Writer to the Signet, Edinburgh.

DEAR SIR,—I send with the bearer Maule's MSS. I am almost tempted to give over my requests of hearing from you.

A notion has been in my head for some time of a Collection of Scots Papers, as Rushworth has done for England. I find a great many in Calderwood's Large History, which I have lately been collating with the original, from 1558–1624. I know you have many others; and, from that time till 1660, I have a good store. When you favour me with a line, I'll be glad to have your thoughts of it, with all your novels; and am, in haste, saving quarrels, yours.

Oct. 31, 1724.

LETTER LXXXIX.

LIVES OF THE REFORMERS.—IRISH AND ENGLISH NEWS.

To my Lord Grange.

MY LORD,—I am now in your debt for two, the one in November, and the other with Mr Melville's MSS. and my own, which I received only two days ago; and, indeed, it put me to the blush, when I reflected that I had not made my acknowledgments for so kind a letter as the former was. I know your Lordship's time is precious, and I'll not spend it in my poor excuses. I was causing

transcribe Mr Calderwood's Life; and two youths that used to write for me being dead lately, I have not yet got it written out; and I was waiting on my brother-in-law, his coming into Edinburgh with your Lordship, and my Lord Dun's assistance, to put an end to the differences between him and the Earl of Eglintoun, and he wait on my Lord's call. I wish now he may stay till I get both Calderwood and Mr John Davidson's Life transcribed, which I am hoping for in two or three weeks; and they shall come by him.

It was my duty (in some respect) to begin with Mr Calderwood's Life, since I have from him considerable materials for the rest in his time. Your Lordship has obliged me, by signifying to my Lord Polton that I was essaying his Granduncle's Life, though, indeed, his Lordship, to whom I am extremely obliged, has very little to expect from any small hints I can glean up at this distance, but a proof of my good inclinations to recover as much as I could of that great man. I humbly thank you and my Lord Polton, for giving me some hope of some more of Calderwood's papers. I have scarce had time to glance at Mr Melville's Life, having been abroad yesterday and this day. I begin to stagger a little in my thoughts about the History your Lordship returns me with it, and suspect another than Mr Melville may be the writer of it. The style of the Life, which is undoubtedly Mr Melville's, and that History, seem at first sight to be a little different. When I compared them at first, I began to suspect what I sent you might be the second part of Mr Melville's Life, since what you send me comes but to the 1600, and Mr Melville lived till the 1613; and Calderwood's MSS. give a large account of his death at Berwick in 1612 or 1613, with a sweet account of his expressions on his death-bed. But, by the glance I have given it, it does not appear to be written like his Life. I hope, in a little, to make a better judgment as to this, when I have read it over, and compared the passages cited out of *Mr Melville's Observations*, by Calderwood and Petrie. As far as I can guess, there must have been another volume of his Life during the last twelve years of it. However,

this is a valuable record as far as it goes; and your Lordship may have the pleasure to reflect, that its preservation is in a great measure owing to you.

I have formed my first draught of Mr Robert Bruce's Life, which is swelled very much; and, with the vouchers of it in the Appendix, may be near twenty sheets, and Mr John Welsh's, which may be about eight or ten sheets. This is all the length I am now come. Several of the most important parts of our History in these times come necessarily in upon these great men, who bore a share in the weighty transactions of that period; and from Calderwood's MSS. and other writers, I endeavour to set them in the justest light I can. And, in comparing Calderwood and Spottiswood, and other papers of that time, I am surprised to find such palpable disingenuity and unfair dealing in the Bishop's smooth and cunning History. When he speaks of these good and great men, he artfully misrepresents their words, picks out sentences and broken periods, and puts them together, to expose them, as I perceive by Calderwood, who gives what passed at full length.

These things lead me out sometimes beyond my inclination, and yet I cannot but notice them. In short, I see our Biography would employ several hands, and profitably, too, in my opinion. And any thing I can do will be but very little. However, I am proceeding slowly the best way I may.

Very little has come to my hand from Ireland since the Synod. Mr Nevin has made several attempts to be received into the Presbytery, but in vain. He made a declaration of his sentiments on the Trinity in the words of our Confession, but declined to express himself in those of our Lesser Catechism, *equal in power and glory*. His defences before the Synod are by this time printed, and I expect them in a few weeks. He is to make an attempt to be received a member of the particular Synod in Belfast. This month, I hear the Non-subscribers are sending over some of their young preachers to London, where Dr Calamy and the Non-subscribers ordain them indefinitely, and they return ordained ministers. This is a practice that may quickly affect others, as well as the

ministers in Ireland. It grieves me to hear that grave symptoms of this infection are spreading among us. I hope we are in this country, at least as to ministers, free. I know not how matters stand in the east. *Principiis obsta* was never more applicable than in this case.

What the MS., you are pleased to tell me you have about our government and worship since the Reformation, may be, I cannot guess; but your account of it, and its ending about the 1630, makes me conjecture it may be Mr William Scot of Coupar, his Apologetical Narration, which I have a copy of; and it's a very valuable remain. If your Lordship send me the first paragraphs, with any hint at the method he takes, I shall soon compare it with my copy.

I thank you for your hints about Mr Watts and Bradbury. The first, in his Dissertations, speaks with uncommon warmth in favour of communion with the Arians; and he writes so much, that he cannot take much time to consider it. I have got Mr Shields' Life, the preface to which is a repetition of what Mr M'Main hath told once or twice in print before. When Mr Bruce's large work comes out, which I do not hear is yet gone to the press, I shall consider the thrusts I have from both sides. To be sure, by this time I have wearied your Lordship; and it's time to conclude, with my humble desires to hear any thing you judge proper for me, when you have a quarter of an hour to spare to, my Lord, your very much obliged and most humble servant.

Jan. 5, 1725.

LETTER XC.

IRISH AND ENGLISH CHURCH NEWS.

To Professor Hamilton.

REV. DEAR SIR,—Yours of the 16th was extremely welcome, containing a great many of our own little affairs, which I did not know; and your accounts from London are curious, and most obliging. I am truly ashamed to ask the continuance of them, because I well know your load of letters, and other business; but I leave the time to your leisure, and when it happens you have half an hour to spare, there's nobody you write to shall be more thankful, because few or none can make so poor returns.

I had sent this by post, by which road I still incline to have yours. But Mr Maxwell coming east to-morrow, I thought Mr Nevin's trial might be acceptable to you, which is too bulky by post. I had it but two or three days ago, and rather glanced than read it. It gives me a more melancholy prospect than even I had before of the state of Ireland. I would fain hope several facts in it are misrepresented, and aggravated. The Non-subscribers seem to have put the full force of their cause in their Reasons of Dissent; and I wish we may have answers to them well formed. Mr Nevin does not here appear so mean a man as I have had him represented, though, even in this, his laboured appearance, there is a great deal of bluster and loose reasoning. It's an odd way that their Synod suffers the reasonings to be taken in characters, and this method of publishing reasonings of that nature by the party himself I hope will be considered, as what naturally cannot but be with a bias, especially when he writes with so much keenness and virulence. And as facts are here represented, one would think the Synod might have taken methods less liable to exception, in some of their steps.

You'll observe what stress they lay upon our forms in Mr Simson's process. But I hope, when we hear the Synod, they will take off the most of the objections, some of which, as they stand here, appear a little strained; and I am sorry so few voted in this important affair. Pray let not thir hasty thoughts of mine hinder you to favour me with your remarks upon this trial, which, as soon as you can conveniently peruse, you may return by post, where I have the favour of getting pamphlets of this bulk franked, when given in open to Mr William Reid in the post-office. I hear of none of them in this country as yet, though I fear we have them too soon to corrupt our youth; and, therefore, the sooner you return it, I'll get it communicate the sooner to some of our brethren at Glasgow, none of whom have seen it.

When this paper came to my hand, though I was about to have written to Ireland, and to have signified your approbation, as hinted in your last, yet I chose rather to delay till brethren with you have time deliberately [to consider] and make a return to the last accounts you received from Ireland. Though I see nothing unsafe in what you allowed me to send as the opinion of a few, yet, perhaps, you'll agree with me, that it may not be improper to delay it till you and they agree in what may be proper to send them deliberately. And, in my poor judgment, it were to be wished you could meet as soon as may be, for our brethren in Ireland stand much in need both of advice and sympathy. If you have occasion to send the trial to Mr Smith, whom I kindly remember, and he can return it to you in eight or ten days after you have perused it, pray let him have it, that he may have the better views of the state of things, and let him know how glad I'll be of his remarks upon it.

I have nothing from any of our brethren in Ireland this long time. This pamphlet comes to me another way.

Mr Morison is fairly in to Le Clerc and Pere Simon, and I am sorry Bishop Chandler drops strict inspiration; if true, as I doubt it may be, since multitudes of the English writers seem to be going that way, which gives me melancholy views, and I am of opinion

is a very ill way of dealing with Collins and the Deists. I have S. C.'s Essay. It was at first, to make the Deists read it, given out, as I was told, (about the 1716 or 1717,) to be written by Collins, but they soon found the mistake, and bought up most of the copies that came from Holland, and suppressed them. When I read it five or six years ago, I was extremely pleased with some of his reasonings; but in some places he was so abstract and out of my dull way of thinking, that I could not reach him. I thought, upon infinity, he was running into Sir Isaac Newton's notion of infinite space being the divine sensorium, or what is said to be his; but, indeed, many times I lost him. The paraphrase on the Colossians you write of, I suspect is Pierce's; at least I was informed from London he was printing on it.

Allow me to long for your accounts of the lecture at Old Jewry, only when you have leisure to send them, and any other accounts you have; and to subscribe myself, Rev. Dear Brother, yours most affectionately.

Jan. 25, 1725.

LETTER XCI.

ENGLISH DISSENTERS.—ANTIQUITIES.—KIRKTON'S MS.

To my Lord Grange.

MY LORD,—It's merely the occasion I have of Mr Maxwell's coming in that brings this trouble to you, and not that I have any thing worth while since my last. In every one of your Lordship's, particularly the last, of the 7th, you lay me under so many new obligations, that it would take too much of your valuable time, even particularly to acknowledge them.

I still took Dr Calamy, whatever reasons he may give for his ab-

sence at Salters' Hall, the day of the unhappy difference, to be a vigorous Non-subscriber; and those in Ireland who stand for our Confession have found him so in more instances than that mentioned, particularly in one, a threatening to get a stop put to the King's Bounty. The place (for I have it not by me even now) where Mr Watts, in his three Dissertations, to me seemed to be for communion with the Arians, is at the end of the preface. His Logic I have not read save a very little. The passage you point is pretty odd, and of akin to some flights he falls sometimes to. I shall be extremely careful not to mention any thing your Lordship pleases to hint to me. We are fallen to odd times indeed, if a concern for what I thought we had been perfectly agreed about must be imputed to party views. God himself pity our case!

By the passages you send me, your Lordship's MS. jumps exactly with mine; so I have no doubt it's Mr William Scot of Coupar's Apologetical Narration, which, in my opinion, is extremely well done. I humbly thank you for your kind offer to send it to me. I have Mr Gordon's Proposals from my Lord Pollock's servant. I wish the two first parts be well done. The third lies a little off my gout. I had a letter from him, dated at Aberdeen, and made a return to a friend of mine who sent it me six or eight weeks ago. Mr Gordon was informed I had some Roman Scots Antiquities, and desired me to send them in to some friend at Edinburgh, that he might see them. It's very little I have in my small collection worth his while, and most of what I had I communicated with Sir Robert Sibbald, who has given them in copperplates. Besides a coin or two found in Graham's Dyke, a stone securis, which, whether Roman or Scots, I know not; a sacrificing spoon, a fragment of a Roman urn, found at Arthur's Oven, a marriage ring, are all I at present mind. If Mr Gordon happen to be in this country, where I don't know if he has observed any remains of the Romans on the west side of Clyde, as I imagine there are some, he shall see any thing I have. I am ashamed to trouble your Lordship with these things, were it not that I fancied Mr Gordon, by coming south, may have missed my return, and hath given your Lordship the

trouble of sending me his Proposals. If I be mistaken, I am the more in your Lordship's debt for sending them. He is well paid, and I wish he may do his work well.

Your Lordship's care in dealing with my Lord Polton is extremely kind, and you may be sure I am with some greediness waiting for my Lord's return from the country.

From the hint I had many years ago, that the pamphlet of Mr Welsh's Life, printed 1703, was written by Mr Kirkton, and some passages in his MS. History, and the accounts I have had of his searches into our Scots History, I came to take up a fancy he had written some things as to the lives of our Scots Divines; and applied to his grandchild, the Lady Monkton, in this country, to know if there were any papers of his in her father's (his son's) hands, and she wrote to me they were all in Jerviswood's hands; and many years ago I had (through Mr Bannatyne, minister, then at Lanark) Mr Kirkton's original manuscript history from Jerviswood. And so I am persuaded if he has left any more than his history, it's in Jerviswood's hands; and I presume earnestly to beg your Lordship may use your endeavours to understand from Jerviswood what MSS. Mr Kirkton, his uncle-in-law, has left either of his own or of others. Forgive me all these repeated troubles. You allow me so much to presume on your goodness this way, that I believe nobody gives you so much fashery as, my Lord, yours, &c.

Jan. 25, 1725.

LETTER XCII.

WODROW'S AND OTHER HISTORIES.

To James Fraser, Esq.

DEAR SIR,—I had, perhaps, written sooner to you, were it not that I know you need not be put in mind of my little affair in de-

pendence; neither do I now give you the trouble of this, from the least inclination to think you have forgot that matter. I persuade myself, if anything could have been done in it, you would have acquainted me ere this time. But I know well great people take much onwaiting and patience in little matters of this nature. And though difficulties fall in, and the King's gracious orders, which, indeed, I never looked for, should never take effect, I adore Providence, and hope I shall be easy. This I am sure of, I shall never have his Majesty or you to blame for it.

I do own I am a little fond to know if ever the King has had so much leisure as to look on my book. I think you wrote to me, the Princess had read some of the first volume, and it may be his Royal Highness the Prince may have glanced at it; and I can say, beside, the honour and pleasure I had in my bound duty to send them a book that concerns this part of his Majesty's dominions, it will be a great satisfaction to know that they have any information from it of the villanies of a persecuting, Popish spirit, that raged in this poor country during the times I describe.

The excellent Bishop Burnet, I don't question, they have read; and though I cannot but hope my Appendix, at least, will vouch him in many things, yet it's a pleasure to me to think that his History will open the eyes of England more than ever as to our Scots affairs; and had his book been published soon enough, he had saved me much labour.

Pray let me know when we may expect the Bishop's second volume. I hope he will speak with some more temper and decency of Presbyterians in Scotland since the Revolution than he has done of us before the Restoration. But I can forgive several things he says without ground of us, through misinformation, for the sake of the many truths he has told. The Critical History of England has done him justice, and is a sturdy, honest Whig, and justly lashed Clarendon and Echard, though I see he has a blunder or two in our Scots affairs; which is our own fault, for we have not given the world any full account of them.

Mr Bruce, who has printed Proposals for his Impartial History, has not yet begun to print. I hear he has finished his papers; but

he runs so very high, that his own people incline to smooth and take him down a little, before his book is published.

I am going through my original letters and other papers, the list of which you saw, and dashing down things as to the lives of our remarkable learned men and ministers ; but whether ever I shall bring anything of this nature to a bearing, I cannot say. Pray give my humble duty to the gentleman, your friend, who sent me the specimen of the *Life of Mr Hales of Eaton* ; and let me know when we may hope for his designed work.

I'll be fond to hear what new books and pamphlets are publishing with you, and all your news from the learned world, which you are so perfectly acquainted with. If you knew how much I value your letters, you would now and then favour me with what is going when you have leisure, though by this time you may know what lean and poor returns you must expect from this retired place.

I only hear yesterday that our friend, Mr Anderson, is come up to London. Pray remember me kindly to him, and tell him how much I long to hear from him.

I have no answer from the College about the copy of Spottiswood of yours that I have. They all say they will take it, but put me off till money come in. I'll soon go in, and put that matter to an end, and if they embrace not the reasonable offer at L.5, I'll take care very soon to send it to London with the first sure hand. I am, Dear Sir, yours, &c.

Feb. 3, 1725.

LETTER XCIII.

ON BREACH OF PROMISE OF MARRIAGE.

To Alexander Archer Hamilton.

DEAR SIR,—Your brother's letter of the 4th, and yours of the 12th, puts me on a hard task. The matter is quisquous enough,

and the manner of proposing it is general and unclear ; whereas, one would need all the circumstances, before they can give their opinion in a case of this nature. I should know the terms of Mr Arnot's promise, if only a proposal of marriage, which leaves room for retracting, or an absolute promise, and if in write, which draws deeper ; and yet, even in that case, there seems room for retiring, upon after discoveries—which leads me to the other thing which your brother leaves in the dark, and says only that he came to know things that made him think he could not live comfortably with her. It seems plain enough, that promises, not sinful in themselves, and gone into hastily, and through inconsideration, when they infer only hurt to us, and not sin, do bind ; and casuists gather this from those two places of Scripture, Psalm xv. 4, "He that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not ;" and Prov. vi. 1, 2, "If thou be surety, thou art snared with the words of thy mouth." But the advice in the following verses, to use all means to be freed by those that can free them of the promise, is certainly the way to be taken in this case. You see, unless I had then a fuller view of circumstances than I have, I can only talk at rovers in it. This case, as proposed, appears to me in two shapes ; either as to Mr Arnot's part, or as to the part of judicatories when it comes before them in this affair. As to Mr Arnot's part, I suppose he is at an issue, and determined not to marry, from the discoveries he has had since his promise ; and if he has found his promise not only hurtful, but sinful, in the matter of it, I think he needs be in no strait. The case is plain, an unlawful promise does not bind. If it be only views of inconveniences that follow, I own it's harder to me to determine what in conscience he ought to do ; but I suppose this is not what your brother wants my opinion in. As to the part of judicatories, I think the Presbytery are in the right road, at least as a judicatory ; but they will consider whether any thing might be proper to be done in a private way, for putting a stop to this vexatious process, by dealing with the woman and her brother, who, it seems, is a minister, to let this business fall ; and certainly all methods ought to be taken this way

that are possible, and the inconveniences of marriages with reluctance, and especially in Mr Arnot's circumstances, should be insisted on. If no private dealing will do, then the woman cannot be hindered to give in her complaint; and in that case she must prove his promise, and the Presbytery must judge of the relevancy of his after discoveries, which have made him alter his resolution. If they find the promise given absolutely, he should, in my opinion, be rebuked for his rashness in giving it, and his rebuke recorded, if it will please the woman. And, if he insists that he reckons it was sinful, and the going on a plain inlet to sin, which I believe he will do, after his rebuke, the Presbytery may give their judgment in this complex case, that the woman ought not to insist. And the opinion of superior judicatories, the Synod or the Committee of Overtures at the Assembly, or the Commission, may be taken where there are lawyers and commissars, who understand thir matrimonial cases better. But, considering Mr Arnot's former illness, this matter would [should] be softly handled; and the woman and her brother look like cruel and inhuman, as well as foolish people, in violenting the good man in this matter, if there be no more than I know of. I am yours.

Feb. 15, 1725.

LETTER XCIV.

PROPOSED ELECTION OF COLMAN AS PRESIDENT.

*To the Rev. Mr Benjamin Colman, President of Harvard College,
Cambridge, New England.*

REV. AND DEAR SIR,—When I was writing to you on Saturday by Mr Coulter, yours of the 7th of December came in to me, which made me delay till this day, that I might have your reverend Professor's letter, which would have been highly welcome;

but as yet it's not come to my hand, though I am told it's come to Glasgow. But the person that has brought it by sea from London is out of the way, and Mr Coulter's goes off early to-morrow, so that I must want the pleasure of writing to Professor Wigglesworth till another occasion offers. Meanwhile, you'll make my excuse to him, and thank him for the valuable favour he has done me, in beginning a correspondence with one who can make him poor returns, of which you have now several years' experience.

I was agreeably surprised in January, by finding mention made of you in our London prints, as chosen President in your College, in room of Mr Leverett. And now, when you give me the state of this matter, I partake with you in your sorrows and difficulties that throw up in this remarkable turn of your life.¹ I know somewhat of the heart of a stranger in thir cases, having been under two processes of transportation, one to the town of Glasgow, and next to the town of Stirling. In both, the affections of my people, and my own unfitness for and aversion to public posts, made me do my utmost to continue where I am; and our judicatory refused the desired transportation. I heartily sympathise with you under the stretch and rack you have been under in this competition of rights, and hope and pray that the Lord may send forth his light and his truth to lead and guide you.

In my opinion, the prophets ought to be subject to the spirit of the prophets; and I cannot but regret the narrowness of the constitution among you, that churches should pretend a dominion over those that ought, by our Lord's rule, to be their guides and governors; and in the nature of things, as well as by our Lord's institution, ought to judge of what is for the public interest. By no rule that

¹ " Shall I let you know that the corporation of the College have chosen me into the place of the worthy head, [President Leverett,] lately taken from us. Mr Professor [Wigglesworth] has, it may be, had too much a hand herein. You well said in yours to me, that those who least thought of being chosen might be. It has so happened, and I am under very great clouds. My dear people now let me see that they love me. Yet they speak calmly and resigningly."—(*Colman to Wodrow.*) Colman declined to accept of this situation in consequence of the weak state of his health.

I can think of, parties can be good judges in their own cause ; and I see not how competing claims among you can be brought to an issue, save by the interposition of the magistrate, which I take to be against the Congregational principles.

By this time, I hope your settlement in the college is perfected, and I earnestly pray that you may be a long and great blessing there. My friend, Dr Mather, it seems, is disappointed in his expectations, and you know his way better than I. He is a good and useful person ; but you'll bear with his peculiarity and freedoms that he uses when in a pet. The electors and you differ in your thoughts, and I incline, as we Presbyterians are accustomed, to go in with the majority of votes, and believe they have been well guided in their choice of you ; and I hope you shall find that the Lord has chosen out for you this part of your life.

I remember Mr Monis most affectionately, and rejoice in his settlement in a married state, and the door opened to him to live comfortably, in case he continue not in the college, where, I think, if possible, he should be kept. I'd be fond of some of his essays on some of the subjects you once wrote to me of ; and if he publish any thing, I know you'll send it me.

The Bishop of London's letter is just and kind, and I hope will have good effects. I am troubled to think on the hardship of any brethren with you, by the growing fall of money ; and bless the Lord for the success of your army against the Indians.

When I am got this length, your worthy Professor's packet comes out to me from Glasgow by an express, which obliges me to break off, that I may acknowledge the benefit of it ; for which I have but little time, the ship being to sail to-morrow.

Indeed, there is nothing remarkable with us since my last, that I can think of, though I had more time. My answerer, Mr Bruce, has not begun to print his large work ; but they say it's ready for the press. Nothing is published this winter among us. Pray continue your accounts with all the opportunities that offer to Scotland. You'll be persuaded, I'll be a little impatient till I hear what the Upper-House does in your affair, and the issue of your Gover-

nor's complaint. I fancy your occasions are frequent to your great benefactor, Mr Thomas Hollis, that worthy and excellent person, from whom it seems this packet comes. And, when opportunities to Scotland don't offer, he may send your letters to me by post. Assure yourself I'll not grudge the postage. And if you send packets with them, I shall cause some of our merchants, who go up frequently to London, once in the two months, call at his lodgings for them, when you acquaint me how to find them. Great grace be with you and yours! I am, Rev. and Dear Sir, your affectionate, obliged, brother and servant.

March 29, 1725.

LETTER XCV.

EPISCOPACY IN AMERICA.—THEOLOGY IN SCOTLAND.

To the Rev. Mr Edward Wigglesworth, Hollis Professor of Divinity at Harvard College, New England.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,—Yours, with your valuable present of the Sober Remarks, the Modest Proof, and Mr Dickinson's Defence, come to me just when I am writing to your worthy friend, the Rev. Mr Colman, and when my time is limited by the sailing of the ship for Boston to-morrow; so that you must accept of my general acknowledgments for so great and undeserved a favour; but you may be assured they are both sincere and hearty.

It's a singular pleasure to me to begin a correspondence with one who deserves so well at the hands of all lovers of the truth as it is in Jesus, as you do; but it grieves me that I shall not be able to make the returns I would wish. By this time, Mr Colman might have known me better, than to have made you expect any thing almost worth while from such a hand as mine; though I shall ever own his goodness, in being the occasion of the advantage I justly promise myself from your obliging letters. But, above all, I humbly

reverence the kind Providence of our common Lord and Master. May he make us useful for his glory, the interests of truth, and one another!

I must now, for want of time, waive any thing on the controversy you send me.¹ The former edition of your book did appear to me, at first view, a little unequal in the style, though the matter was excellent, and made me quite overlook it, thinking with myself that the same pen is not alike at all times; if I might presume to judge of others by myself. But now you let me in to a better reason for this. When I have again looked it over, after reading the Modest Proof, you shall have my thoughts most frankly on all. Meanwhile, I'll humbly expect what comes abroad in the progress of this controversy. *Mr P. Barclay's Persuasive*, as far as I know, was not published in Scotland. We have many of those people that publish their virulent pamphlets in England and Ireland. Had it been going in Scotland these twenty-five years, I imagine it would not altogether have escaped me.

I would willingly gratify you with a larger account of the stated business of our Divinity Professors among us in Scotland, had I time for it by this ship, as I have not. My worthy father was Divinity Professor at Glasgow, till he got to heaven, 1707; and his method I could give you at some length. But I choose rather to give you a hint at present of our Professors since; though there is no great difference, save in the systems on which they prelect. Mr Simson reads Markius' Little Compend, so does Professor Hamilton at Edinburgh, and explains it in Latin once a week, so as to throw it in a Session of the College. The rest of the days are taken up in the various discourses of the students' exegeses in Latin; after which there are public disputes, where the Professor presides; homilies, lectures, Presbyterial exercises, and catechetical discourses.

¹ "I perceive by your letter to Mr Colman, which he was pleased to oblige me with a sight of, that he hath (without my knowledge) sent you some remarks of mine, upon an Episcopal pamphlet, published and spread last year in this country. I perceive, also, that you are desirous to see the pamphlet I made my remarks upon. I have, therefore, sent you the whole of that controversy, so far as it hath proceeded yet amongst us."—(*Wigglesworth to Wodrow.*)

This is the general business in our divinity halls here. If you want any more particular account, I shall labour to satisfy you upon any thing I know of the methods in the Protestant universities abroad. But it is probable you'll have accounts from these better than I can pretend to.

We have nothing in print as to our forms in Universities. As to our Church forms, I know nothing gives so full an account of our practice as the collections I sent over to Mr Colman some years since. That book is turning a little scarce; but, if you want one of them, I'll endeavour to procure it. We have our old Books of Discipline, of which no doubt you'll have copies, and our Acts of Assembly, which come out every year, and are now turning bulky. There is a little thing written by our great Henderson, 1640, under the title of the Order, Discipline, and Government of the Church of Scotland, reprinted at the Revolution, which, if I can fall on a copy of it, I shall send, since it gives a short view of our constitution pretty distinctly. But it's like you may have it in your library.

I am humbly of opinion that you will find it necessary to come in to measures for widening your methods in New England, that in some things appear to need this, and if I can in any measure be helpful to you in communicating any thing in my power, you'll find me most willing; though, indeed, I am much a stranger to your way, except in so far as I have glanced many years ago some of your Congregational writers, after the first settlement in New England.

You'll oblige me the more the oftener and more fully you write to me; and when occasions do not offer directly to us, any of your friends at London will easily give in yours to the post-office, which will come safe to me, by the direction you use on the back in your first, and you may persuade yourself I'll not grudge the postage.

I earnestly wish you much of the Divine presence in your important station, and that the Lord may long employ you with much success to polish many shafts for his use. I beg your prayers for this Church and my flock and family; and am, with my

most unfeigned thanks, for your undeserved favour of yours, Rev. and Dear Sir, yours most sincerely and affectionately.

March 29, 1725.

LETTER XCVI.

CUMMING'S WRITINGS.—ENGLISH AND IRISH ARIANISM.

*To the Rev. Mr John Cumming, Minister of the Scots Congregation in Founders' Hall, at his Lodgings, Hanover Court, Grub Street, London.*¹

REV. AND DEAR SIR,—I have been for a considerable time passionately anxious of the benefit of a stated correspondence with London; a favour one in my retired circumstances can scarce expect, unless it be from a person of your generous temper, who will deal purely in charity, and without any expectation of returns worth your while. There is none I would have so soon pitched upon for a favour of this kind as yourself, had I been master of so much assurance. How my dear friend Mr Gray came to presume on your goodness this way, without the least motion from me, he is best able to tell. I can guess at nothing but his knowledge of my Athenian temper, and your communicative temper. If he has made you to hope for any thing in return from a barren place, save the utmost gratitude and good wishes, and our inconsiderable transactions here, I fear you'll be much disappointed.

You have, Sir, laid me under obligations I shall never forget by your frank offer, by my friends to maintain intercourse with me by

¹ Mr Cumming received the degree of D.D. from the University of Edinburgh in November 1728. He died the following year, as appears from a notice of that event by Dr Calamy: "There died this year, (1729,) September 7, Dr John Cumming, minister of the Scots Church at Founders' Hall, Lothburgh. He left a wife and several children in very destitute circumstances, but God raised them up many friends. His funeral sermon was preached by Jabez Earle, D.D."—(*Calamy's Life*, vol. ii. p. 524.) His writings are mentioned in the following Letter.

letters, and send me from time to time what passes at London. This, I assure you, was a very agreeable surprise to me by the last post; and what I humbly and greedily embrace. Though I want the benefit of your acquaintance, yet, I dare not say I am altogether a stranger to Mr Cumming. It's eight or nine years ago since I was agreeably entertained with your remarks on Dr Bentley's Sermon, Nov. 5, where you have attacked the Doctor in his own castle, to say so, in our proverb, and defeat him with his own weapons, criticism, and in the Greek too, wherein he vaunts most; witness his project to give us another New Testament, of which I hear nothing these two years or more. A little after I had a Sermon of yours on the 5th of November, where I found more scripture and just reasoning from it to please a Scots, I hope a Christian taste, than in the Doctor's florid sermon. But, above all, you endear yourself to me and many others here by your excellent share in the unhappy debate after the Salters' Hall affair. I thank you for your Sermon on Jude, 3d verse, and yet more for your *Scripture Consequences*, against the material arguments in which Mr Evans¹ has said so little in his second letter, and the debate was turning so much personal, that, in my poor opinion, you were in the right to drop the controversy; at least for any thing I have since seen. I hope you are much better employed since than in replying to any thing I could perceive in that second letter.

Somebody since either told me or wrote to me, that you had some design to have defended Mr Dunlop's Preface to our Confession, in Answer to the author of the Occasional Paper,² but was hindered by the expectation of an Answer to that pamphlet from Scotland. I wish you had not quit that good design; for, though I can see no difficulty we need to have from any arguments used by that

¹ Dr Evans, the author of the well-known "Discourses on the Christian Temper." A short Life of him is prefixed to an edition of this work by Dr Erskine.

² "The Occasional Papers were written by a Club composed of Mr Lowman, or Lawment, Mr Grosvener, whom some suspect of Arianism, and Mr Evans. Mr Lowman, a minister a few miles from London, is the author of the answer to Mr Dunlop's Preface."—(*Wodrow's Analecta*, vol. iv. p. 128.) A collection was made of the "Occasional Papers," which commenced in 1716.

fuse and ill-natured writer, yet several things have fallen in amongst us, which probably you'll know from better hands than mine, that have hitherto stopped any thing of that nature; and it seems to me no nearer, if not further off, than it was some years ago. How far it were proper now to resume your thoughts on that subject, when there seems to be some sopiting of the debates among you at London, I am at too great distance to give my opinion. For my share, I would be glad to see any thing Mr Cumming would write on the side of subscription.

Sure our brethren in Ireland need somewhat at present in defence of subscription. I take it for granted you have a full account of the odd conduct of the Non-subscribers at the Sub-Synod in January last, and the state of anarchy in which that meeting dissolved, otherwise you should have my accounts from Ireland. But now they will be stale.

I humbly pray the Lord may preserve us in this Church from these unhappy flames, the warm opposers of Confessions have raised to the wounding of the reputation of the English Dissenters, and the breeding terrible confusion among our brethren in Ireland. I hear the opposers of Confessions allege they have friends in the Church of Scotland. I hope it's otherwise among the ministry, though I cannot promise for all. But this I cannot help thinking, that such among us who have subscribed should, in the first room, profess their conviction of their sin in subscribing, and acquaint us with the grounds of their change, before they go over to the other side.

You see what a rambling letter you are troubled with. Pray favour me with the state of things with you at London, as to the Deists, the Arians, the followers of Dr Clarke and Mr Whiston, and your own debates among the Dissenters. You cannot want matter enough to gratify one of the most unworthy of your friends,—the state of real religion amidst all your wranglings, and the unhappy errors that are breaking out,—the state of your Universities, and all your accounts of new books, and the state of learning,—the accounts you have from the Protestant Churches abroad,—

the Italian Council,—the Jansenists in France,—in a word, whatever you would wish to know were you here and I at London.

There is nothing at present amongst us that I can think of worth your notice ; but if you'll lay your commands upon me, I'll essay to answer them as I can. I heartily wish you much of the Divine presence in your ministerial work among our countrymen, and much usefulness for the interests of religion, pure and undefiled. When you favour me with yours, direct for me, minister at Eastwood, to the care of the postmaster at Glasgow. Allow me, my family, and flock, a room in your prayers ; and believe me to be, Rev. and Dear Brother, your very much obliged and most affectionate

R. W.

March 29, 1725.

LETTER XCVII.

RYMER'S REPRESENTATION.—ARIAN CLUB.

To Mr Andrew Gray, at London.

DEAR SIR,—I am now in your debt for two letters. The two books are acceptable. Mr Rymer is far from answering his professed design,¹ to remove prejudices against religion, neither do I think it possible to do it upon his principles. The Pelagian scheme, which he and all our modish writers give into, cramps them in dealing with adversaries ; and to me it appears unreasonable to expect that Revelation can stand but upon its own bottom, and Scriptural

¹ He alludes here to Rymer's Representation of the Prejudices against the Christian Religion. " He seems to remove those prejudices," says Mr Gray, " very indifferently, and I think the book tends rather to beget prejudices in people's minds than to remove them."

principles must be defended in a Scriptural way, which is vastly different from that of the Arminians. Mr Collins handles his point in a more masterly way, and though he has many innuendos against articles and creeds, it's but what we are to look for from him. Let me know his profession and business. He must be old, if the same that corresponded with Mr Locke.

I can only make my general acknowledgments for the instructive particulars in both your letters, and in a particular manner for the conversation at the Arian Club.¹ You surprise me with the accounts of Mr Ridpath. I took him to be another man than it seems he proves in his old age. The King's bounty of L.1200 a-year to the Highlands for schools, as I take it, is worthy of himself, and will be for the interest of the Government. You have added [to] your favours the opening a door for my writing to Mr Cumming, which I heartily embrace, though I shall be able to give him poor returns from this country. Pray give him my kindest respects and thanks. It's only his diffusive goodness and com-

¹ *Arian Club* —“ I had an opportunity last week to be introduced into a Society, which meets usually once a week, and they go commonly under the name of the Arian Club. Mr Whiston and Mr Emeleyn are constant members of it. They meet every Tuesday evening at one Wright's Coffeehouse in Aldersgate Street, they meet by themselves in a private room in that house, and I got admittance to the company by means of one Dr Scot, who is a clergyman of the Church of England, and a countryman of ours. He constantly attends this meeting, and is much upon the Arian scheme. It was a very mixed company, consisting of people of different employments, denominations, and opinions. There was present a son-in-law of Mr Whiston's, Mr Emeleyn's son, who is a chancellor of law, a young man who preaches to a dissenting congregation in the country, and several others, of whose particular characters I could learn but very little. The conversation did not run much upon the Arian controversy, but there were some there who were inclined to Deism, others who owned themselves Socinians, and they started several objections against some places of Scripture, in talking upon which, most of the time was spent that evening. Both Emeleyn and Whiston did very strenuously defend the Scripture account of things against the objections of the Deists and Socinians; and Whiston particularly spoke with abundance of warmth, and some seeming seriousness, about men's arrogance in refusing to submit to Divine revelation, unless they were able to assign reasons for it, and he said that he was against disputing with such people as were always calling in question God's commands, and seeking a reason for them.”—(*Gray to Wodrow.*)

municative temper can engage him in a correspondence with so barren a soil as this is.

The sacrament is next Sabbath at Glasgow, where I wish there be no feasting for strife. Mr Wallace of Moffat, Mr Talfair of Hawick, Mr A. Anderson, Mr Taylor of Tillicoultry, they say, are to be helpers in the Laigh Church. Three of them are spoken of as members of a club at Edinburgh, where creeds, &c., were not much defended. Whether they come or not, I know not. *Hæc inter nos*. The oftener you write you'll find the more matter, and the more you'll oblige yours.

March 30.

LETTER XCVIII.

VARIOUS PUBLICATIONS.

To Professor Hamilton.

REV. DEAR BROTHER,—You may be sure I am longing to hear from you, though I have very little worth your while. Had I any thing, you have a right to it. My last from Ireland you had, and I have nothing since, save Mr Halliday's Answer to Mr Gilbert Kennedy's Preface, where he seems to promise a large defence of his Reasons of Non-subscription. We have the substance of what can be said on that matter in the Protesters' Reasons you read in Mr Nevin's case. I expect little more till the General Synod in June, (from New England, see letters.) Our Synod had little thing of importance before us last week. Mr Smith, a probationer, presented to Cardross, is in a fair way, I hope, of settlement there. We have in our Presbytery taken Mr Black on trials.

I had a letter from London lately, with some accounts of Whiston, which, perhaps, may be a small entertainment to you.

I have lately got Rymer's Representation, &c., which it's likely you have seen, and it's one of the oddest medleys of good and ill things that I have seen. I have read Collins' Essay on the Twentieth

Article, which, bating his flings against the Confessions and Creeds, seems to exhaust the subject, and exposes the Highflyers extremely well, and seems fully to prove that the Dissenters are not obliged in law to sign the articles about government and worship. The Religion of Nature, no doubt, you have seen, and I need not say anything about it. Indeed, were it not to draw better accounts from you, I ought not to say anything of the books that come to my hand, which you have much sooner than I can pretend to. Pray let me have what's remarkable in your letters since your last, and a hint of what is to be before the Assembly. We know not yet who is to be Commissioner. I would gladly know the truth of what we hear of the King's additional bounty to the Church and the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge. I hope, if the Lord will, to have the pleasure of waiting on you at the Assembly, but I'll be fond to have a hint at all your remarkables 'twixt and then, which will add to the many ties I am already under. Believe me to be, Rev. Dear Sir, yours most affectionately.

April 13, 1725.

LETTER XCIX.

LETTERS FROM THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, 1725.¹

Wodrow to Mrs Wodrow, No. 1.

MY DEAR,—When I come to the post-office to write to you, I find a letter this post from Mr Fraser, with an order for L.100 from the Treasury, which is a surprise, and what I own the hand of Providence in, and hope he will help us to improve a Providence we did not look for.² It's well it came when I was here, otherwise I had been obliged to come in.

I have no more time but to tell you that Mr Alstoun is chosen Moderator. The King's Letter is extremely kind, and refers to the

¹ Letters to Wodrow, vol. xvi. Nos. 231-237.

² The original order on the Treasury for this sum has been preserved, and may be inserted in the Appendix as a curiosity.

Commissioner's instructions.¹ He, in his speech, signified the King's having ordered L.1000 a-year to the Church, (besides the L.500 a-year we had before,) for catechists and helpers in the North and Islands. Mr Wishart's sermon was on 2 Kings ii. 12, "The chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof," a very good sermon. I am, with my respects to my Lord [Pollock,] and all the family, your own.

Edinburgh, May 6, 1725.

LETTER C.

Wodrow to Mrs Wodrow, No. 2.

Edinburgh, May 7, 1725.

MY DEAREST,—I wrote to you yesternight in some haste, being surprised with the King's warrant I wrote to you of. I shall now give you a larger hint. Yesterday the Assembly was opened with Mr Wishart's sermon on 2 Kings ii. 12. He took notice of some general doctrines from the words, and insisted a little on the veneration elder ministers ought to have from younger, and made some pretty affecting remarks on the advantages this Church at the Revolution had from the old ministers then living, and then insisted on the doctrine he handled, that duly qualified ministers were the safety and strength of a church and nation. He insisted upon the due qualifications of ministers from the case of Elijah, and named knowledge, holiness, faithfulness, zeal, public spirit, eminency in prayer, and some other things very sweetly; and he proved the doctrine from the interest such ministers had with God, for preventing, moderating, and removing strokes, and continuing mercies. I wish he had taken in religious people, on which his Scriptures generally

¹ The Commissioner was Hugh, Earl of Loudoun.

ran, and his assertion would have stood in a fuller light, that the safety and strength of a church and nation depended more on them than on armies, navies, and councils. In the improvement, we had a hint at the King's good design of doing much for this Church, pointing to his Royal Bounty, and a warm call to take heed whom we admitted to the ministry.

The Assembly is very full; and after the choice of the Moderator, Mr James Alstoun, more harmoniously than I have seen for some years, (Mr David Anderson of Aberdeen had about fourteen votes; Mr Neil Campbell two votes; and the Moderator about 146,) the Commissioner presented his Commission in common form, and then the King's Letter, full of kindness. There is little singular but commendations for former unanimity, and a declaration of his design to give a new proof of his kindness, in which he had instructed his Commissioner; and in the close, he guards against some among us who would divide and rent us. The Commissioner had a long and handsome speech, which, besides what is common, bore that his Majesty having had representations from former Assemblies and their Commissions, of the ignorance and the hazard of perverting many to Popery in the North and Highlands, was to give L.1000 a-year, to be made use of for settling of helpers to ministers and catechists in the large and Highland parishes, to be disposed of by this and succeeding General Assemblies for these ends alone, and to be continued during pleasure; the accounts of which are yearly to be laid before the Treasury of Great Britain, that his Majesty may see how it's applied for the purposes designed. The Moderator made a very handsome return, well worded. He took notice, in a particular manner, of the Royal Bounty, and hoped that the good effects of so charitable and Christian a grant would be one of the glories of his Majesty's reign, and would be returned sevenfold on his head and that of his progeny. The Committees for answering the King's Letter, for Overtures, Bills, and Commissions, were appointed. The Assembly looks as if it would be harmonious, and things go on comfortably.

This day the Assembly met at ten for prayer. The Moderator,

Mr William Millar, Mr Matthew Wallace, Mr John Muirhead, Mr Blackwell, Mr David Anderson, prayed. Mr Chambers, Mr James Dick of Carluke, preached before the Commissioner. Mr M'Laren and Mr David Anderson preach before him Sabbath come eight days. In the afternoon, the Answer to the King's Letter came in, and was approven without any alterations. Mr Matthew Crawford is Moderator of the Bills.

Mr M'Ewen comes home this week, and some say Mr Ridpath with him. The warrant is come down this post for the Church's L.1000.

LETTER CI.

Wodrow to Mrs Wodrow, No. 3.

May 10, 1725.

MY DEAREST,—I had not time to write to you any thing of Saturday's procedure; and truly there was so little remarkable, that I was not in the house, but dispatching other business, which, as far as I see, will keep me till Wednesday come eight days at soonest. The Answer to the King's Letter was approven unanimously; only one person, Mr H. Davidson, said his approbation was still in a consistency with the pressing for a remedy to the Church's grievances. Many of the grievances of the North are in a fair way to be removed by the King's Bounty. The act for appointing the Confession to be signed by all intrants, ministers, elders, and deacons, is like to carry in the Assembly. * *

This day the Committee of Instructions met, and did little, but remitted several things. The Overtures had an overture approving the Commissions. One from the Synod of Merse, where two of the twelve Subscribers, or Marrow people, as called, Mr G. Wilson and Mr H. Davidson, had a singular Commission, with a declaration that they signed the Confession of Faith as agreeable to

our old Standards, by which they meant the article of the National Covenant that relates to their notion, as they think, about Assurance, and as explained in the Act of Assembly, 1647. It was thought the design of this was to make a noise, and to be taken notice of as to their adhering to their former doctrines, after the Assembly's determination about them; and so it was thought best to overlook it for this time, with a disapprobation of the form of several Commissions, and to appoint a new form of Commissions to be drawn up; to which, if Presbyteries and other Commissioners do not conform, their Commission is declared void in time to come. There were overtures about the poor, about school-masters, and calls *jure devoluto*, read and remitted. In the afternoon, the affair of Morebattle was delayed, and another; and the Assembly entered upon an appeal in a transportation from Dunkeld to Kinclaven, where the Presbytery were sustained in acting according to the act, 1694, and refusing to concur with a call, because both parishes were in their bounds, and the disproportion very plain. This is a direct approbation of one great step complained of in the case of Mr Anderson's transportation to Glasgow.

LETTER CII.

Wodrow to Mrs Wodrow, No. 4.

May 12, 1725.

MY DEAR,—After I had writ to you yesterday, the Committee of Instructions met, and the matter of the Assembly's appointing of a fast upon the affair of Thorn was considered, and about four hours were spent upon it. The reasonings upon it were long, and at length it was agreed that the Commission should appoint a fast as soon as might be. It seemed agreed on all hands that there was ground for fasting; that the Assembly had power, but the difficulties cast up against it were, that in the North the fast could

not be kept without the civil sanction, to get which there was not place; that to appoint it in time of session, which, *de die in diem*, must sit by law, was inconvenient; that it was the same whether the Assembly appointed it, or required the Commission to appoint it; that there was no need, neither was it proper to do it for preserving and asserting the Church's rights; that when the transactions abroad opened up against the Commission in August, matters would appear plainer.

This day the Assembly met at ten, and sat till after three, on a settlement of one Mr Strachan, in the Presbytery of Garioch, in opposition to one Lisk, who was deposed some years since for drunkenness, and reponed. The President and his friends were thought to favour Mr Lisk, to be a precedent for "the Moorcock," Mr A. Muir, his settlement. But they were much balked, and had but fifteen votes against near 150. At five the Assembly met again, and the papers about Aberdeen were read, where the flame is very great; and they say the design of Mr Ogilvie's being brought in is to get out Provost Stewart, Gordon, and Fordyce, the three that maintained the Revolution interest in that town. The reasoning is referred till to-morrow. This is all I mind.

May 13.

This day the Assembly met at nine of the clock, and sat till about half seven at night. After such an unmerciful sederunt, I believe you do not expect I should write a detail, since I behoved to take dinner, and at eight the post-office closes, and so I shall only tell you that the Assembly, by a vote, carried by a considerable plurality, that a new call be moderate at Aberdeen, where the magistrates and council are to vote with the elders; and the inclinations of the people are to be tried, and all laid before the Presbytery, who are to act according to the rules of this Church. I am yours.

LETTER CIII.

Wodrow to Mrs Wodrow, No. 5.

May 14, 1725.

MY DEAREST,—I wrote yesternight the issue the Assembly came to, after sitting about nine hours and more. I shall now resume, as far as my memory serves me, though it's but very little I can mind, after nine hours' debates. The Advocates, Mr Stewart and Mr Murray, [spoke] on the side of Mr Chalmers, who had a call to Aberdeen, by the magistrates and nine elders, and Mr H. Dalrymple, junior, who appeared with B. Forbes for Mr Ogilvie, who had not a call; but eleven elders, whereof three are controverted, one for deserting the Session twenty years; another for being absent twelve years, and concerned in a ship that carried over Popish boys to be educated; and a third for being at Campbeltoun residing there. The different sides from the bar, both lawyers and ministers, contradicted other in facts, the most flatly I ever saw; so that I pitied those who were to vote in that matter. Mr Campbell, minister at Aberdeen, had a moving speech as to the inclinations of the people for Mr Ogilvie, and was answered by Mr Blackwell, not without a decent denial of some of his facts. I fear such debates, in so public a place as the Assembly, do our common concerns no advantage. About one of the clock, the parties were removed, and the members spoke. The generality of the ministers seemed to speak upon Mr Chalmers' side; and against the Synod, who laid aside Mr Chalmers' call, so as to exclude the magistrates and council from voting; and that, as was said by virtue of the act of Assembly, 1649, lodging the call in the Session, exclusive of magistrates and council, and sustaining the three controverted elders. We had three observable speeches from my Lord Grange, the Advocate, and Grant of Easter Elchies. The two first were near an hour the

piece, and yet I did not weary. Mr M. Crawford, a little before, had a speech agreeable enough to his office of History, wherein he observed, the act 1649 was the only act in that time protested against, by Mr Rutherford and Gillespie, on the foot that they would have the power of calling lodged in the body of the people ; and by Mr Calderwood and Mr Baillie, who would have the power of calling lodged in the Presbytery ; and that act was never put in practice ; and the act of Parliament, 1690, abolishing patronages, was not precisely a civil act, but an act of the Church with a civil sanction ; for the Parliament framed that act by advice of the general meeting of ministers ; and, indeed, it was their opinion.

To return to my Lord Grange. He reasoned at great length against the settlement, by the calls of heritors and elders, and that of magistrates in burghs. He said it was not our ecclesiastical law, but the act 1649, which was directly founded upon the Book of Discipline, B. ii., ch. 3d and 12th, which was signed and sworn to ; and he declared himself absolutely against magistrates, as representing the town, or heritors, except as heads of families. He said the act 1690 was repealed by that of the restoring of Patronages, and concluded in favour of the Synod of Aberdeen. The Advocate answered in a clear, neat discourse, near an hour. Both must lose extremely, by any hints I can give of them. The Advocate said many things against the act 1649, as what had no warrant, and was rescinded. As to the act 1690, he urged it was what was the use and practice of the Church, and had the force of a law by custom ; that though rescinded by the Queen, yet it's ratified by the Union, with our other customs ; and this he reckoned the foot we were to set this matter on ; and a foot that a posterior act of Parliament could not easily affect, if contrary to so solemn a treaty, and many other things ; and so that the magistrates and elders had a good right to vote.

My Lord Cullen was of opinion, that the Act of Parliament, 1690, as to calling, was not rescinded ; that the directions in it to heritors, magistrates, and elders, stood firm, though the legal right continued now in the patrons to give the stipend. * * * * In

short, a previous question was put on the state of the question, whether it should be Affirm or Not? or Moderate or Approve? The last carried, and the moderating a new call was carried, as you have heard in my last. In short, the matter to me seems to stand yet in the magistrates and elders in Aberdeen; and if they have the plurality of the people for Mr Chalmers, as they say they have, he may yet be settled there. Both sides spoke strongly for the people's power of choosing their ministers; only the debate was whether *per capita*, every one by his vote, or by the eldership? So much for yesterday's work.

LETTER CIV.

Wodrow to Mrs Wodrow, No. 6.

May 17, 1725.

MY DEAR,—After I sent off mine on Saturday, the Committee of Instructions met, and what was agreed to on Thursday, as to the Assembly's appointing a Commission to indite a fast, was altered. The Commissioner signified he was straitened in his instructions about appointing a fast by the Assembly; and that, as I am told, he had talked about it, and the King desired time to consider it, and promised to satisfy at the next Assembly, when he had thought on it. They say that last Assembly the Commissioner had instructions for a fast, and it was waived, and that he was so open-minded as to signify so much to some ministers. What truth there is in these stories, I know not; but some pains were taken with Mr Allan Logan, my Lord Grange, Colonel Erskine, and some others that had been, at my Lord Grange's motion, for the Assembly's appointing the Commission's inditing a fast, as equivalent to their doing it themselves, to fall from this. And in the forenoon, the Commission being instructed to indite fasts as they saw convenient, (though, indeed, I see little difference,) they agreed that the former

motion should be dropt, and the thing run in its ordinary channel. Mr Wilson, Mr Davidson, and Mr Noble, did not yield ; but wanting the rest to support them, they were not much regarded. I must add, that all present declared, that in the Commission they would be for appointing a fast in the beginning of August.

When this was over, another instruction came in, which made a very warm debate. There were instructions from two Synods of Fife and Stirling, that, unless the Act of Assembly, 1647, and the Covenant, were put in the editions of the Confession of Faith, the Assembly should declare them the deed of private persons, and that the Church had no concern in them. To this it was objected, that this was a censure on that edition, and that without a ground, for it was not much spoken out about the Covenant and act 1647 ; and next, that the friends of non-subscription would take this a receding from subscription, and a condemning of the Preface. My Lord Grange proposed to the first, that, in the Assembly's Declaration, a clause should be added approving subscription, and declaring it our allowable practice ; and after that, declaring the edition the work of private persons. To this a clause was added, signifying the powers of the Committee were only as to correcting this edition. My Lord Grange, Mr Logan, and that side, opposed that, as what was not fact. When the powers granted to the Committee were considered in the acts 1719, it was found that these were only as to the correcting the edition ; and it was urged, there was no need of declaring the edition a private deed, though it was so, and behoved to be so, by these powers ; and so one might have thought there was no need of any clamour what was in it, or what was out. But the declaring of this might be of ill consequence, because it would affect the Preface and Subscription. The one side opposed this addition, and the other insisted ; and when not granted, the overture, without it was transmitted without a vote, to the Overtures, where I believe it will be opposed, and in the Assembly also, unless it be compromised. I offered in private, that it should go to the Commission, which was proposed, and a new clamour raised on this, that it would continue the flame. To

which the answer was, that the flame will soon be stayed, by going into what was desired next Assembly. And it might be that the act 1647, and Covenant, might be in the third volume. But in the heat of the debate nothing would be heard. How it will go on Monday, I must leave till then. My landlord is reflected on for sticking; and I believe, if he had not been ill treated and fretted, all had been easy, and both had been put in; but wrong methods have been taken. I wish we may get them righted.

The plain state of this case, as far as I can gather it, is this:— I find some people, and it's said my Lord Grange is the chief, are displeas'd with the Preface, particularly some reasonings in it, though the bulk of reasonings there, they say, are good. On the other hand, the act 1647, which explains the Confession, and the Solemn League and Covenant, are not printed. The first is not taken notice of by the Act of Parliament 1690, ratifying the Confession of Faith; and that and the Solemn League and Covenant are said to have been dropt by the meeting of ministers at that time. There is a clause in the act 1647 that seems to restrict the King from calling what ministers he pleases to consult with, which some think not tenable; and the Solemn League stands condemned by an unrescind'd act of Parliament. Now, the Preface is declared to be the deed of a private hand, published by the gentlemen concern'd in the correction of the Confessions. And it would be dangerous to say any thing that might seem a retracting of that Preface at such a juncture. To say that the Preface is the deed of a private person, is to say what is said by the publishers already, and to say a thing that is needless, and may infer a blot on the edition. To say that this edition is the deed of private persons, is to say a lie; for all the rest is precisely done by the Committee appointed by the Assembly and Commission; and the advertisement restricts this entirely to the corrections that are named in the advertisement. As to the act 1647, it's referred to in the title-page; and it may come in very well in the third volume. The Solemn League and Covenant is not yet come in in the order of it; for the Commission's Committee did agree that the publishers

should begin with the Confession, Catechisms, and other things published in the first volume, because of an act of Assembly ordering these to be in every family; and the second volume comes down only to the year 1639; and the third volume may have the Solemn League and Covenant, though it be neither a Confession, Catechism, Book of Discipline, under the head of Policy; and it may be published, though condemned by law, as well as the National Covenant was published. I find Mr Mitchell and Mr Millar were against publishing the Preface in the Committee, but the rest yielded to it. Mr Dunlop would not suffer it to be published, unless it were published with the Confessions for preservation; and Mr Stewart insisted on it as necessary to be published as a private deed. And now his publishing it is what is quarrelled; though the Committee did consent, save these two, as he says.

Thus the facts stand, and the Commissioner is extremely earnest that it may not come into the Assembly. How it will go, will be soon seen now. This morning, at eight, the Committees met, and before the Instructions, the publishers of the Confessions desired to be heard, and were heard. Mr Stewart had a long discourse, the substance of what is above, and showed how inconsistent with truth the declaration made above, and offered to be transmitted, was; asserting that there was nothing published by the editors, but in an agreeableness to the Committee concerting what was to be published, and how it may be published, and in what order; for which he vouched them present, and was not contradicted; though my Lord Grange put them to answer for themselves, they were all silent. He took notice of his being excommunicate from the Lord's table by Mr Darling, and by some of the Marrow folk. He disclaimed any design of suppressing the act 1647. He said, he never heard the want blamed till an honourable member, my Lord Grange, did it; that he had referred to it in the title of the Confession; that he had no editions of the Confession, with the Scriptures, where it was published; that it was not published by the Assembly, 1690, when they required subscription; that he had transcribed part of it in the third volume; that

it was too soon yet to take umbrage at the neglect of it; that he had little thanks for the pains he had been at. In short, an overture was agreed to transmit it to the Commission to inquire into that matter, and declare what was of a private and what of a public nature; and all agreed to this. The Assembly met at ten, and passed an act about the disposal of the King's bounty, and an act about the Form of Commissions to the Assembly, and remitted many other things to the Commission; and, after the Moderator's speech to the Assembly, and the Commissioner's speech, the Assembly closed with prayer, and singing the 133d Psalm.

May 18.

LETTER CV.

Wodrow to Mrs Wodrow, No. 7.

May 19, 1725.

MY DEAREST,—After I wrote to you yesterday, the Commission met at four; and we had the affair of Morebattle before us, which took up till ten at night. The case was perplexed enough. After Mr Simson's death, who was one of the twelve Subscribers in favour of the Marrow,¹ the Duke of Roxburgh presented one to the parish, and fell from it. Then Mr Christie, a youth of very good character, minister at Simprin, was presented, and gave his consent in the terms of the act of Parliament 1719, if he had a call and consent of the people, and the decision of judicatories. This, by the by, was insisted on by my Lord Grange, with some warmth, as a most unaccountable thing in ministers or probationers; and he observed, that that act of Parliament requiring the ministers' consent to the

¹ Mr Simson of Morebattle was not one of the twelve Representatives, though favourable to their views.

presentation was designed to relieve the Church from the burden of patronages; it being thought by our friends that no minister or probationer would give his consent to a presentation; and, consequently, that the six months would expire, and the right fall into the Presbytery's hand; and so he complained loudly that we ourselves were to blame for not going into what was the only method to relieve us from patronages, that is, standing out against accepting presentations contrary to our principles; and, indeed, no other method could be fallen on, save repealing the act. But to return to Morebattle. After Mr Christie was presented, the Presbytery sent a committee to try the inclinations of the parish. The heritors were for him; all the elders but one were against him; the people were very mobbish and irregular. Another committee was sent, and matters stood as before; and the people, impressed by the Marrow people from many places about, continued to oppose. Thus matters continued near a year. Then, upon the petition of thirty heads of families and the heritors, the Presbytery met and resolved to go on to take the steps necessary for the comfortable settlement of Mr Christie there; and the affair was brought before Mr Christie's Presbytery of Chirnside, who unanimously transported him. The Presbytery of Kelso served his edict, where was another mob; and at his settlement the greatest mob of all, where Mr Pollock was struck, and Mr Ramsay, and another. The appeal was not renewed after the first time; and so regularly did not come before us but by a reference from the Synod. The vote was, Reverse the sentence of the Presbytery of Kelso, or Not; and it carried seventy-five Nots, and eleven Reverse. There was certainly no call in the case, nor could be, as in the case of Kilsyth, Kilspindy, and others; yet the person being settled and unexceptionable, and the confusion in that country moved us to come over that.

May 19.

This day the Commission met in the forenoon, and the affair of Mr Archibald Muir, called "the Moorecock," came in, and after the reasonings from the bar, the Commission entered upon the matter.

Mr Muir undoubtedly had the people's consent as one man; but it was through malignant and Jacobite influence; for he being deposed for Jacobitism, that recommended him. The Presbytery and Synod, as one man, opposed him. The reasonings run, that the Presbytery could not concur to settle a person in a Jacobite country who was neither loyal nor prudent; and they had a discretionary and judicatory power; against which, it was argued, that the Commission's act reponing him had purged him; that judicatories acting thus was a negative and an arbitrary power. Being put to a vote, all the ministers voted almost for affirming the Synod's sentence, save a very few. Fifty-nine Affirms, and nineteen Nots.

In the afternoon, we entered on the fast, and appointed one, July 1, through the whole Church. The causes and act are pretty long; and the artful devices of many to turn us from the form of sound words are made a cause, which the Non-subscribers, I imagine, will take very ill.

On Thursday the Commission met, and we had several of the affairs of the North before us, particularly from Ross and Moray; and then the case of Mr Ebenezer Erskine in Portmoak his call to Dunfermline¹ was tabled. The people and magistrates were for him, as was said from the bar unanimously. His colleague in that place, Mr Drysdale, was against him. Several things were cast up in the debate—that Mr Erskine was a Non-juror—that he was against keeping of fasts and thanksgivings appointed by the King, that he altered the day—that he was one of the twelve who signed the Representation for the Marrow—that he had never signed the Confession of Faith. To the first it was answered, that he had no difficulty about the oath to the Sheriff, but his wife, a dying woman, could not hear of it—that it was to satisfy his scrupulous people that he had altered the day of the fast—that he was willing to sign the Confession of Faith—that the Marrow affair was ended. But I did not hear answers as to his preaching contrary to the minister there, and other ministers, nor to what was objected, that, though he had not signed the Confession of Faith, and the Presby-

¹ This is a mistake for Kirkaldy.

tery had not known but what he had signed it ; he brought a Commission to the Assembly bearing he had signed it, and when straitened at some expressions in it, he yet answered, Let those who have signed it answer for them. On the whole, unanimously the Commission did vote to affirm the sentence of the Synod and Presbytery in refusing to put Mr Erskine in the leet for a minister of Kirkealdy, though magistrates and elders and people were for it. This is three determinations anent the discretionary power of judicatories of refusing a call where people and heritors are unanimous, almost, in a call, which some call a negative ; and, indeed, cases are so various about settlements, that scarce one rule can be laid down. I am yours.

LETTER CVI.

THE ROYAL PRESENT.—NEW PUBLICATIONS.

To Mr James Fraser, London.

DEAR SIR,—Yours of the 3d of May was equally surprising and agreeable, with the warrant from the Treasury for his Majesty's gracious present, to one of the most unworthy of his subjects that ever had the honour to dedicate a book to him. As it was satisfaction enough to me to have his Majesty's allowance to inscribe my History to the greatest and best Prince at this day upon the earth, and by you humbly to present a copy to him, so I neither expected nor desired any more ; and when you signify to me, that my gracious Sovereign, without the least suggestion from any great man, but merely from his own goodness, ordered my Lord Townshend to give me L.100, I had the same thankful resentments that I have now that the warrant is come ; but, considering the difficulties in getting thir small things expedie amongst a multitude of vastly more important matters, I must own to you I did not reckon

much upon it ; and as you were the first who put me upon dedicating this work to the King, so, next to his Majesty's gracious condescension to notice so small a matter, I owe this present entirely to you. The kind manner of the warrant, and the King's being pleased, with such incomparable goodness, to express his satisfaction with the author and the work, is what vastly increases my satisfaction in what I receive. And I could not but notice, that the King's bountiful present to me, and his royal gift of L.1000 yearly to our General Assembly, for the propagating knowledge in the North, came the same post to Edinburgh, and I suppose the warrants are dated the very same day. This is a trivial observation to trouble you with ; but I could not but make it, as what heightened my pleasure, and affected me very sensibly.

After my acknowledgments to kind and Divine Providence, which I humbly, and in the first place, adore, I can only wish, were it worth the King's while, that he knew my grateful sense of such kind and undeserved goodness to me. I have no way left me, that I can think of, to express it, but in my earnest prayer, to the King of kings, for his Majesty and his family, which I made some conscience of in secret and public, even before his seasonable accession to the throne, when we were at the brink of ruin, and constantly since ; and now, I were an ungrateful wretch, if this royal favour did not quicken and accent my concern in them.

Next to our gracious Sovereign, I owe my most affectionate acknowledgments to you, Dear Sir, for your kindness in this affair. I can easily believe, that had the present been to yourself, you had not been at the half of the labour you have taken in the thing ; and this brings me so much the more in your debt. I wish I knew wherein it were possible for me to make any returns.

It needs an apology, that I have been so long in making my acknowledgments. The true reason was, that yours came to me at Edinburgh while our Assembly and Commission were sitting, and I delayed writing till I came home, that I might send you a bill for the L.3, 2s. as above, which I had only yesterday. And I could not think of writing to you till I got that. I hope you'll

easily find Messrs Leddington and Food; and I am sure it will presently be answered.

I heartily thank you for your accounts of books and learning. I have glanced Winwood's Memoirs; and besides the treaty betwixt King James and Spain, 1596, which, by the way, I wish we had farther vouchers, I see not very much relative to our Scots affairs, though I doubt not but there are many incidental things in the letters, which I have not yet got time to peruse. Rapin's Collection, I hear, is mostly out of Rymer, and will certainly be curious and useful. The Bishop of Coventry's answer to Collins I have. I beseech you continue your accounts from the commonwealth of learning. Let me know if your worthy friend, the gentleman who gave us the Life of Mr Hales of Eaton, whom I most affectionately remember, be going on in his designed Biography.

Little offers from this country worth your notice. The King's bounty will be of great use in the North and Highlands. A committee is named for the management of it, and receiving representations from Presbyteries concerning the state of parishes. And no doubt the utmost care will be taken to make the noble gift answer its design. Our Assembly was very harmonious, and had little but the common affairs of transportations, and other things that come before that meeting, as the *dernier resort* of inferior judicatories.

The Answer by Mr Bruce to Bishop Burnet's and my History is not yet in the press, though it is given out at Edinburgh that it's ready for it. I shall say nothing till I see it. I wrote to you at some length, when I sent up your Spotswood of the divisions of our neighbours at Glasgow, which hindered their keeping of it. By my next I shall acquaint you where to call for it at London, when it comes, in case it be not delivered to you, as I hope it will.

I beseech you let me know your receipt of this, with all your news from the learned world; and lay your commands upon me, and let me know wherein I can show myself, Dear Sir, yours under the greatest obligations.

Eastwood, May 25, 1725.

• LETTER CVII.

LIFE OF MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS.

To Mr James Anderson, Writer to the Signet, at present at London.

DEAR SIR,—When I am here at the Assembly, I want the pleasure of the conversation of one of my dearest friends, and you'll give me leave to say, Edinburgh is not to me what it useth to be when Mr Anderson is out of it. However, it is a satisfaction to me to think you are in a place where I doubt not you are ripening matters for the public service of your country, and I hope getting somewhat done for your personal concerns:

Every thing that touches you, I reckon, nearly concerns me; and, therefore, when I observed a passage in a book, which no doubt you know is printed here, but not yet published, of which I got a view in a private hand, I thought it worth transcribing and communicating with you. It's Pierre Le Pesant Sieur Du Bois Guilbert his Life of Queen Mary, translated by Mr James Freebairn, or rather the translator's preface, (for the book you know well enough,) which, if I mistake not, points at you, pp. 14, 15. Speaking of the Queen's accession to the murder of her husband; and criminal correspondence with Bothwell, and the scandal cast on the Queen this way, the Prefacer adds, "I am told we are shortly to be regaled with a dish of this kind; I cannot call it fresh, though it be newly served up, since it's but the old one dressed up in cleaner lining, with the advantage of some pieces of the same kind, lately raked out of all the kennels and common stews in Britain. So, here will be plentiful entertainment for gentlemen of the strong digestion; but as there may be some delicate constitutions in the world, I will make a discovery to them, which the industrious collector confessed to a friend of his in secret,—that he believed Le-

thingtoun and Wood, the Earl of Murray's Secretary, had a great hand in the composure of some epistles, which are to be found in the collection, and Buchanan equipt them with a French dress. This friend is alive, and may be found, if inquired after."

This base propagating of secret history for scandal is mean and wicked, and, indeed, below your notice. However, I thought you would wish to know of it, when, as I am told, in a few days, it's to be published to the world.

I hoped to have seen the three volumes in quarto you have printed, when I came into town. But Mr Leech tells me you are printing the Preface at London, and this must be sent down before your excellent collection be published here. As soon as they are published, I promise myself a great pleasure from them.

Your time, I know, is precious, and I am but in a hurry, after our Assembly is up yesterday, in a peaceable manner; and so I shall only earnestly beg you'll let me hear from you by post, with all your news from the learned world. I am sure you have a large field to communicate from London, where you have the best of conversation, to one of the most unworthy of your friends; and I beg you'll not altogether forget me.

I give my humble duty to our worthy friend, Mr Fraser. I had his of the 3d of May, to my very great and pleasing surprise; and as soon as I have settled that matter here, I'll write to Mr Fraser, to whom I am under inexpressible obligations.

May the Lord preserve you, and make you useful to the interests of religion, reformation, and liberty, and return you safe to your country and friends; among whom allow me to put myself, and to assure you that I am, with the greatest sincerity, Dear Sir, yours most affectionately.

Edinburgh, May 18, 1725.

LETTER CVIII.

DEATH OF COLONEL UPTON.—SUBSCRIPTION IN SCOTLAND.

To the Rev. Mr William Livingston, Minister at Temple-Patrick.

REV. DEAR BROTHER,—Yours of the 1st of March was most acceptable. I am sorry Mr Stewart's papers are unfinished. They are valuable as they [are.] I would be fond to see his Diary, if possible; but send me as large accounts of the remarkable providences as possible. I wish the Rev. Mr Crawford would send me the further hints he promised me, as to the ministers of Ireland.

Yours of the 10th of June to Mr Macknight was exceeding heavy to me. It's needless to signify to you my value for worthy Colonel Upton. Your loss by his death, which is very great, bulks not with me in comparison of that of the public. I know none would have made such a hole as he. The Lord sanctify the stroke to you, to the North of Ireland, and make it up by much of his own presence, which only can balance it.¹

The idle story you have about some Commissioners refusing to sign the Confession at the Assembly is groundless. Mr Wilson and Mr Davidson, two of the twelve Marrow brethren, have subscribed without any explication; but their Commission to the last Assembly was out of the road, and contained a clause of their adherence to it, as well as subscription, according to the National

¹ Colonel Upton, whose death is here so deeply lamented, was the father of Clotworthy Upton, first Lord Templetown. He served under King William in Flanders, and was frequently member of Parliament for the county of Antrim. He was, as may be seen from this Correspondence, a staunch Presbyterian, and warmly attached to Orthodox principles; he officiated as ruling elder in the congregation of Temple-Patrick till his death. Castle Upton, his residence, adjoins the village of Temple-Patrick, and is still the Irish family seat of Lord Templetown.

Covenant and Old Confession of Faith, which they professed also their approving of. I shall send you a copy of their Commission, if you please. The Committee of Commissions blamed this, declared it informal, and, as is usual, that, with some other Commissions with informalities, were waived at this time. But the Assembly brought in an act to prevent such novelties in time to come, and passed it, prescribing a form of Commissions to future Assemblies, with the clause of subscription to the Confession, without any explications and senses.

The Overture last year, about elders and deacons their subscribing, was approved by most Presbyteries, (all but two, Haddington and Edinburgh,) but because the Commissioner's lady was a-dying, the Assembly were straitened in time, it was not brought in, but restored to Presbyteries who had not sent up their opinion, to send it up next Assembly, when I doubt not it will pass.

Our act for a fast, July 1st, this year, has a clause that directly points at Non-subscription, and was unanimously approved the day after the Assembly by the Commission. It is in the petitory part of the act—"That the Lord may preserve us in this land from the danger of Deism and the Arian heresy, and other errors, drawing aside from the grace and faith of Christ, and practical godliness; and likewise keep us from the subtile arts of those who undermine and lead off from the form of sound words received in this and other reformed Churches, all which abound so much elsewhere." I am yours.

June 28, 1725.

LETTER CIX.

SUBSCRIPTION CONTROVERSY.

To the Rev. Mr Charles Masterton, Minister at Belfast.

REV. DEAR BROTHER,—When at Edinburgh in May, I had Mr Macknight's desiring an answer to the passage about the Marrow, in the Appendix of Mr Abernethy's answer to you. I see very little of argument, and somewhat of ill nature, in that passage ; and as soon as I came home, I sent in the pamphlet to some friends at Edinburgh, who agree with me.

I do not question but you have already said all that is necessary to be said upon that subject, though I wish you had, and I hope by this time you have, the Acts of Assembly relative to these twelve brethren, from which you'll easily see the words the Dublin ministers put in the mouth of the objector, in a very unfriendly manner in my opinion, not only to this Church, but to some important branches of the doctrine of Christ, are altogether without any foundation from the Assembly Acts.

In short, you'll easily see there is nothing of argument in what the brethren adduce. Is it any strange thing that the twelve Marrow brethren should adduce passages of our Confession for their own support ? Do not Socinians, &c., act in the very same way with Scripture, and *argumentandi gratia*, with Confessions ? Nothing is more common than differences of this kind as to the meaning of propositions ; and if the Assembly and the twelve Representatives differed as to the sense of some propositions in the Confession, what can be inferred thence ? What is put in the candidate's mouth as to the Assembly's condemning some pages *in cumulo*, seems no way to affect the question as to subscriptions. It is obvious from the Act of Assembly, that they do not condemn every

proposition in the pages they point at, but mark those pages only as containing some propositions contrary to the truth stated in the title of the Assembly's act, which the Assembly found contradicted in the Marrow. As to the allegation that propositions in the Confession are taken in different senses by orthodox divines, the common rule must certainly take place, when the Confession is subscribed, that is, those propositions are to be taken in the sense of the imposers. And if the candidate scruple, your pacific act provides a remedy. I only add, that one of the twelve brethren never signed the Confession, which came to light only in May last. But, for what I know, he and the other Marrow brethren are for subscription.

These general hints are not worth your perusal ; and I only send them to let you see how ready I am to assist you, were there need, as indeed there is none as to this passage. It's my opinion your answer should be short. The truth is, Mr Abernethy is so tedious, that I doubt if ever I read him fully. Mr Halliday's last paper against Mr Kennedy is fulsome on such a head ; only he opens out his scruples against the Confession, which is generous, and much more manly than keeping in the clouds, and wrangling about Confessions in general. Send all the pamphlets published on both sides. The Lord be with you, and strengthen you in your difficult situation and labours, public and private. I am, yours most affectionately.

June 28, 1725.

LETTER CX.

MALT-TAX.—MOB IN GLASGOW.

*To the Learned Dr James Fraser, Doctor in Laws, at his Lodgings
in the Haymarket, at the Golden Angel, London.*

DEAR SIR,—I had yours of the 3d of June, which was extremely acceptable ; and I would have answered it long before this, if I had had any thing worth troubling you with by post. But, having the occasion of a worthy friend of mine coming up to London, who earnestly desires to be introduced to the honour of your acquaintance, I greedily embraced the opportunity of giving you this trouble.

The bearer of this is Mr Andrew Ross, Professor of Humanity in the College of Glasgow, a gentleman that understands the business of his profession extremely well, and comes up during the vacation to converse with learned men, and observe what may be of use to his country, in the method of teaching humanity in England. He will not be the less acceptable to you that he is a relation of my Lord Ross, your acquaintance ; and I persuade myself, that you will point him to the learned gentlemen of your acquaintance at London, and give him your kind assistance to get into conversation with them. This I can say for him, that he is of that ingenuous disposition, that though neither he nor I shall ever be able to make any return for your favours, yet I never knew him forget a favour ; and I am persuaded he will never forget yours. As for myself, I am in so far in your debt, that you know it's long since I have almost given over acknowledgments ; though I shall never want the kindest resentments, and your kindness to my friend will add to my score.

I have been for a month confined to my house, with a fit of the sciatick, [sciatica,] which has laid me by from public work ; and the present pain I am under hinders me from writing to you at the length

I would on the unhappy confusions in Glasgow, of which, by the accounts I see in the London prints, I see very unjust and false representations have come up.

In a very few words, you shall have the view I have of the present state of things among us, in which I am troubled exceedingly, with ill effects of the severities used, to the discontentment and souring of the King's friends in the West Country, which is greater at present than ever I saw it since the happy Revolution.

You know, Sir, how heavy a burden the malt-tax is upon Scotland, and the West in a particular manner; and to let you see the inequality in this betwixt Scotland and England, and, consequently, how far it's contrary to our stipulated Union, I shall only observe what I am informed of by very good hands:—That the malt-tax in England is calculated at L.700,000 yearly, and the Excise at L.2,100,000. In Scotland, the Excise is calculated at L.5500, and the malt-tax, though said to be L.20,000, yet is really, at three a bushel, fully L.55,000. Now, you'll see at this calculation, that the malt-tax is treble to the English malt-tax, even at three a bushel. In short, Sir, our barley, *communibus annis*, is not ten shillings our boll; and we have five shillings and sixpence on every boll of Excise; and, by the malt-tax, you'll easily judge how gravaminous, yea ruining, this must be in a little time to us. I heartily wish our great men knew our circumstances; and I am sure, for L.20,000, as they reckon it, they would never risk the alienation of people's spirits from the best of Kings.

The malt-tax, and the disarming of the Highlands, are reckoned by many here too much to do in one year upon poor Scotland.

But to return to our unhappy circumstances at Glasgow. The Commissioners for the Customs got the soldiers brought west, and the mob, upon their coming, most villanously and wickedly spoiled Shawfield's¹ house, which every body of any sense abhors and abominates as an act of horrid disorder. But you may be assured of it, that nobody of any fashion had, as far as I can learn, the least

¹ Campbell of Shawfield, their representative in Parliament.

share in that riot. The Provost did all in his power to prevent it, but to no purpose; for who can stand before a mob? The next day Captain Bushel, unprovoked, and without reading the proclamation, and contrary to his concert with the Provost, shot sharp-shot, without the least care, to dispel a poor contemptible mob, not of a hundred women and boys. Your accounts, I know, of this at London differ in each of these circumstances; but they are false. Had not the soldiers come, I believe there had been no mob in the least; and when the captain came to shoot sharp-shot, it was a wonder he and his two companies were not cut in pieces, for eight or ten were killed, and about eighteen wounded, and the whole town got together in arms. I send you enclosed the Magistrates' account of this affair, which, in every part of it, was taken from persons present.

In eight or ten days the troops came west, and the Advocate,¹ who carried very strangely; and many go the length as to suspect a design to raise another mob, and upon that of military execution upon the town. Indeed, things looked this way, though I cannot think a man of sense could have any such view. But, indeed, I cannot account for his imprisoning the magistrates, refusing bail, sending them under a guard to Edinburgh. These extraordinary steps, without the least ground that we can learn of, are perfectly beyond our comprehension. I am sure the magistrates were as free of accession to the mob as those who live at London; and it's impossible that it can ever be landed on them, or any body of sense. The Justice Court have liberate them upon bail, and the Lords seemed all of opinion their imprisonment was illegal and wrongous.

What troubles me most is, that such treatment of the town of Glasgow, who are such hearty friends to the Government, and have made such appearances at the Rebellion, and who, I am sure, yet will venture their all for the King, is improven by the Jacobites, and a disgust spreads insensibly at the administration, greater than I thought to have seen. I pray such measures may be fallen upon as to calm people's soured tempers, and I hope they will.

¹ Duncan Forbes, Esq., who succeeded Dundas as Lord Advocate.

To leave this melancholy subject, allow me to beseech you to continue your accounts from the learned world, with which you are so well acquaint, and of all new books and pamphlets. I have read Mr Woolston's Religion of Nature. I am longing extremely for the pamphlets entitled the Paradox, which you give me good ground to expect from you. Pray spare me not by post, and give my humble duty to Mons. Maizeaux.¹ I'll be fond to see his Life of Chillingworth, and of serving that worthy friend of yours and mine. I am, Dear Sir, yours.

July 30, 1725.

I heartily congratulate you on your degree from Aberdeen. Forgive, if there be any thing wrong in the address; if not, I'll continue it when I write by post.

LETTER CXI.

ANIMADVERSIONS ON WODROW'S HISTORY.

To Mr John M'Main, Schoolmaster, at the Foot of Libberton Wynd, Edinburgh.

SIR,—I had yesterday a packet from the Rev. Dr Mather, at Boston, in New England, and among some things, he sends me the enclosed directed for you, come to my hand. It seems to be of some importance and haste, by his note on the back of it, and I know no other way to direct to you than by post. I wish it may find its way to you.

You have seen proper, in three or four pamphlets and books, as I am told, published by you, to attack the History of Sufferings I published some years ago. I find nothing in what you have advanced, but what I am of opinion I shall very soon set in its proper light, if the Lord please to spare me.

¹ M. Des Maizeaux, author of Historical and Critical Account of the Life and Writings of William Chillingworth.

I am heartily sorry, for the sake of truth, and your own sake, that you have repeated more than once in print several wrong reasonings, misinformations, and mistakes, in point of fact.¹ Attacks from the prelatie party were not very surprising to me; but I did not expect that persons of your profession would have discovered so much resentment against that History.

You may be the less displeas'd that I have taken no public notice of what you have written, when you'll easily observe that I have not answered the several bitter and envenomed pamphlets against me by the Episcopal side. I am waiting for Mr Bruce's large work, which he calls his Impartial History, wherein I expect the utmost he and his party have to say against my book. When I have the whole that both sides have to advance against me, it will then be the most proper season for me to say what is necessary in defence of the truth.

Having no personal acquaintance with you, and this providential occasion of transmitting this letter to you offering itself, I thought it not improper to signify this much to you, to prevent your mistaking my silence. I am, Sir, your real friend.

Eastwood, July 30, 1725.

LETTER CXII.

REPLY.—SEVERER TREATMENT THREATENED.

*Mr John M'Main to Wodrow.*²

Edinburgh, August 3, 1725.

REV. SIR,—I received yours of the 30th past, enclosing one from New England, whereby you've laid upon me an obligation to gra-

¹ These mistakes might have been pointed out, particularly the erroneous constructions which M'Main puts upon Mr M'Ward's papers, and the groundlessness of his charges against Wodrow; but it is hardly worth while.

² Letters to Wodrow, vol. xxi. No. 166.

titude, which I acknowledge, and return you my hearty thanks for your kindness.

Sir, you allege that, in three or four books and pamphlets said to be published by me, I have attacked your History. I own I published Mr M'Ward's book, entitled Earnest Contendings, &c. 2. Mr Renwick's Testimony against the Toleration, this I printed. 3. His Life and Death, as written by Mr A. Shields. I know not a fourth wherein any thing is advanced against your History, that I published.

In each of these there is somewhat briefly, but very little, by me said anent your History, touching only at some passages and expressions therein, which may afford an abler pen ground and matter for a larger volume than either of these said books. And yet the said two books and pamphlets, in the opinion of some, not your antagonists, say more against your History, (though written many years before it,) specially on these heads and points wherein the Lord's cause and truth, and the faithful contenders for the same, are wronged, to conciliate respect unto, and justify decliners therefrom, and compliers with their opposites, than all that I or any such blunt and obscure pen have done or could do. And yet, Sir, because I like not dissimulation, I must tell you, if you consider not what is said by the above three worthies, the authors of these books, and that we can say or do nothing against the truth but for the truth, I, and others too, do, and will see cause to say much more with particular application, in publishing the papers, (whereof I have some store,) relative to Bothwell affair, and the consequents thereof, more impartially than we yet see done.

However, I shall (and I presume many others will) be glad to see you set, in a true light, the good cause and testimony of that suffering period, without any respect of persons, or partial bias toward the indulged or other compliers. If this may be expected from one of your station and involvements, it might also be expected that you would employ your parts to refute much of your own History, which yet is rather to be wished than hoped. As to what you signify, that I have repeated more than once in print se-

veral wrong reasonings, misinformations, and mistakes in point of fact, I know not the particulars. If you had been pleased to point out these, or any of them, I should either have showed my authorities for the same, or else, being first convinced thereof, retracted them. It was for the sake of truth, not of men, or of private or party interest, that I wrote any thing; and if you show me that I have wronged the truth thereby, or that truth stands on your side, wherein soever we differ, I shall humbly submit and acknowledge my fault.

I shall not (as I think I did not) oppose anything you have written, or shall write, against any error or extravagancy, Popery, Prelacy, tyranny, or Erastianism. I rather think and complain that you have been too sparing against the last three, and have so far espoused the interest or complied with the practice of the last of all, that little is said by you, or expected from you in your present course and circumstances, in favours of the truth, against that pernicious and prevailing error.

I am hopeful, Sir, you will not take my freedom in ill part; which I could not well forbear to use upon such an occasion, that I did not presume to expect, and which, if I had not used, you might justly have charged me with flattery and dissimulation.

Sir, in regard I find great difficulty, at this distance, in getting letters transmitted to New England, there being no packet-boat that I hear of ordinarily passing *hinc inde*; and, understanding that you have some occasion to send answers to Boston, I make bold to desire and entreat you to admit of this piece of trouble, to send off the enclosed with your own. Expecting your compliance with this request and excuse for the trouble, I am, Rev. Sir, your much obliged and humble servant,

J. M'MAIN.

Sir, if no occasion of sending off the enclosed offer in a month or so, be pleased to remit unto John Millar, merchant in Trongate, Glasgow, his hand.

LETTER CXIII.

NEW PUBLICATIONS.—SCOTTISH NEWS.

*To the Very Rev. Cotton Mather, D.D., Minister of the Gospel
at Boston, New England.*

REV. DEAR SIR,—I had the great satisfaction again to hear from you three or four days since, when I received your most welcome letter of June the 15th, with a most valuable packet, for which I do return you my kindest thanks.

Gratitude obliges me to begin with the acceptable extract out of my book, whereby you have communicated to the world some of the sweetest things in it, in your Palm-bearers. I blush to see your eulogiums of me in print, both here and in your Parentator, in both which you express an esteem and value for me that I own I never merited; and yet cannot but rejoice to find that laborious Collection of mine finds acceptance with one whom all will allow to be so good a judge. May the dying expressions of our witnesses be of use among you in America; and you'll have the satisfaction of communicating their savoury memory, where otherwise it would not have reached. This gives me also an opportunity of thankful acknowledgments to the glorious God, for your recovery from that sickness which gave you occasion to make that Collection, which I assure you I offer with the utmost seriousness; and beg your valuable and useful health may be confirmed and lengthened out for many years, for much service to the Redeemer and his churches everywhere.

I am surprised to find your Parentator is published at London, in so imperfect a way, especially when, if I have not forgot, it was advertised in the English newspapers that this edition was sent abroad by Dr Calamy. He can best say what has made him leave

out what related to your regards to the Church of Scotland. His last appearances against Confessions and Subscriptions show that he is not willing to have your good opinion of us, who own our adherence to those necessary hedges and preservers of purity in doctrine, known in England. I'll talk with the booksellers at Edinburgh, and see if I can get justice done to you and ourselves, in a new edition of the Parentator here; and if there be anything you think proper to be added to it, and said in your name, I pray you send it me with the very first opportunity.

There is no door I can think of, whereby your grand "Voix du Ciel a la France" may have access, whither it's designed; but if any offer, I'll be sure to send it.

It rejoices me to hear of the increasing and flourishing state of the dear Churches with you in New England. May they for ever be kept free of the woeful leaven of Arianism, which so much spreads in England and Ireland; where, I fear, the Established Church may be reckoned among the most corrupted and unreformed churches who have separated from Rome. Indeed, the looseness in principle and violent opposition to the necessary and old compositions of Creeds and Confessions, and the subscribing of them, which of late has got in among too many who profess to separate from the corruptions of these Established Churches, frightens me more than anything I have been a witness to in my time. May God prevent that leaven's coming in among us! We need your prayers for this end.

I congratulate you on the fruitlessness of the attempts of the Church of England against you, and pray that Providence may still write foolishness on their attempts. I hope your wars with the Frenchified Indians shall at length end comfortably. I am sorry to hear of the ill treatment of your good Governor, and the hard circumstances my brethren in a special manner are reduced to by the rise of the value of silver.

My good Lord Pollock is not yet come to this place; but I dare say, when he comes, will be pleased to hear again from you; and still lays on me to give dearest respects to you, when I write.

Mr Millar, my worthy co-presbyter, will no doubt be much pleased with your valuable packet. I hear he is abroad. I wish he may come home before the ship return; he is a laborious, faithful, useful man, and if you have not a return, I am sure it will be uneasy to him.

Matters remain with us, in the general, intuch as in my last. Our excellent Sovereign has, last May, granted a valuable token of his affection to the Church of Scotland, and appointed L.1000 sterling, yearly, to be remitted, to be made use of by our General Assembly for maintaining of preachers and catechists in the North of Scotland, among the large Highland and Popish places; which, through the blessings of Him who has put this generous design in his Majesty's heart, will be of very great use for the interests of religion, and the benefit of his own excellent Government.

People here are soured at the extending of the malt-tax to Scotland, which has not been exacted since our union with England; and several unhappy confusions and breaches of the peace have fallen out of late, particularly at Glasgow, which, if the mild management of the Government prevent not, is like to have its consequences. People are too ready to fret at impositions of this nature, which, indeed, we cannot easily bear. We forget the great blessings we enjoy under our excellent King, and do not so much observe harder things insensibly coming upon us, for which we need not blame the best of Kings, but ourselves; such as the constant flow of our money to England, the corruptions we got from thence, and the general sending our youth of quality to England, with other things of that nature, which frightens me much more than our heavy taxes.

Pray fail not to let me hear from you by every opportunity, for I have none but when ships come from you. There is none of your correspondents values your letters more than I, though I believe [there are] few or none who can make such poor returns. And send me all your accounts of your affairs, and continue to favour me with your valuable productions, and those of your worthy brethren that come to your hands.

May the beauty of the Lord be upon the churches of Christ with you! May a returning God and glory be your mercy! May you and we be retrieved from our sinking declinings in vital religion; and may the glorious Redeemer preserve and strengthen you long for great services, and bless you and yours with his best blessings! I am, Rev. and Dear Sir, your most affectionate brother and servant.

August 9, 1725.

LETTER CXIV.

NEWS.—M'MAIN AND THE CAMERONIANS.

*To the Rev. Mr Benjamin Colman, President of Harvard College,
Cambridge, New England.*

REV. DEAR SIR,—About three months ago I wrote to you and worthy Professor Wigglesworth, by Mr James Coulter, merchant in Glasgow, who was coming by New England to Boston, where he left his family. I hope these are come to your hand by this time.

I fear you have not heard of this ship come in from Boston to us ten days ago, otherwise I would have had the benefit of your letters. However, I can omit no occasion which offers to write to you, even when very little matter suggests to me.

At our last General Assembly in May, we had the honour and pleasure of a very remarkable instance of the royal bounty to this Church. The King in his letter intimate the provision he had made in answer to representations sent up to him of the lamentable circumstances of the remoter parts of this Church, where ignorance and Popery very much abound, which he had left to his Commissioner to lay before us. The Earl of Loudoun, in his speech to us, opened up the King's gracious favour more fully, that his Majesty

had ordered L.1000 sterling yearly, during pleasure, to be paid to the Procurator for the Church out of the Exchequer or Treasury here, to be employed by the Assembly and their Committees for supporting of preachers and catechists, where they are wanted in the Highlands and remote places in the north and remote isles. This was received by the Assembly with the utmost gratitude and affection, and next day a warrant came down in form.

As this royal grant will be of very great use to his Majesty's Government, and the weakening of disaffection and Popery in these remote corners, so, through the Divine blessing, it will be of vast advantage to the interests of religion, and the good of many perishing souls. In our Highlands and Islands the parishes are extremely large, some twenty, thirty, some more, miles in length. The Irish¹ language is only there understood, and ministers who have that language are hard to be got, and able to do little in such spacious and intolerable parishes. This grant will be a fund for sixty or seventy youths under the inspection of the minister and Presbytery, to preach and catechise on these wide parishes, and take pains on the superstitious and ignorant inhabitants. I know you will join with us in praising God for putting this good work in the heart of our excellent Sovereign, and in prayers for a blessing upon the labours of those to be employed. The blessing of multitudes of souls ready to perish come upon the King and his family!

As we have mercy, so we have judgment to sing of; and as you are partaker of our joys, so I communicate some of our sorrows to you. Since the union with England the malt-tax has been still imposed; but the gathering of it has never been essayed till this summer. It's indeed a burden very grievous to us, and what the inequality of our grain will not bear the half that England bears. Our boll, or seven bushels, is in value, *communibus annis*, about ten shillings; the duty upon ale and this upon malt come near to six shillings. You'll easily see that our barley will never bear more than the half of its intrinsic value. The gathering of this tax has created much dispeace and confusion through the country, and

¹ The Erse or Gaelic.

especially at Glasgow, where the mob got up and overpowered the magistrates and a few of the military, and spoiled Mr Campbell of Shawfield's house, their member of Parliament, whom they blame, though he denies it, as being active in bringing on the imposition. The effects of this have been and yet are very gloomy. Several people have been killed, and what the after consequences may be we do not yet know. What grieves me most is the souring of people's spirits against the Government, and the best of Kings. I hope the Lord will direct to such measures as may in part calm matters, when his Majesty returns from Hanover.

No other thing offers, that I mind of, worth your notice. I am very much longing to hear from you, and how matters are going as to your governor, your college, and churches, with all remarkables. I give my most humble duty to Professor Wigglesworth, and pray the Lord may every way strengthen you for the duties and difficulties in your station, as head of that learned society. I send my most affectionate remembrances to Mr Monis, whose good circumstances I'll still be fond to hear of. Continue your prayers for this Church, and the part of it I have the charge of, with your concern in me and my family and work; and believe that I am, Rev. and Dear Brother, yours most affectionately.

August 10, 1725.

P. S. To Dr Mather.—I took care to forward the letter you sent me to Mr M^cMain, from whom, last post, I received the enclosed. He is a schoolmaster at Edinburgh, who, upon the Cameronian lay, separates from us and all other churches upon earth. He has writ some books and pamphlets, wherein he attacks the History of the Sufferings, and printed a protest against King George coming to our throne, because he hath not sworn our National and Solemn League and Covenant. These high-flying wild people deserve our pity and compassion. Some of them seem serious and pious.

LETTER CXV.

WODROW'S ILL HEALTH.—LORD BARRINGTON.

To Professor Hamilton.

REV. DEAR SIR,—I had yours of the 21st of August, and though in it you are so kind as to desire the trouble of my letters, yet it's with a diffidence, suitable to the poverty of my funds, that I venture to continue a correspondence so singularly instructive, on your part, to me. Near these four months I have been much confined to my house with the sciatick, which is not like to leave me, and except my friends let me know what is agoing, I cannot go around as I use to do. Your accounts then of all that you have, from your extensive correspondence, will be more compassionate and useful than ever.

I had letters this summer from New England. *Vide.* I doubt by this time you are wearied with the paradoxes of this pious and useful man, otherwise I would add some other things he writes of in his way.

This stricture of his, I know not well how, brings me in mind to thank you for the account of Barrington's Miscellanies.¹ Somebody

¹ "Lord Barrington's Miscellanea Sacra, newly published, being an abstract of the History of the Apostles, with four Critical Essays, 1. Upon the teaching and witness of the Spirit in the first ages of Christianity, from which he draws a strong argument for the truth of the Christian religion; 2. The Difference between Apostles, Elders, and Brethren, Acts xv.; 3. When Paul and Barnabas commenced apostles; 4. That the decree of the council, Acts xv., was only for the proselytes of the gate, not the idolatrous Gentiles. He thinks he has found out three grand periods in the Acts of the Apostles; the first, from A.D. 33 to A.D. 41, wherein the Gospel was preached to Jews only; the second, from A.D. 41 to A.D. 45, in which it was preached also to the proselytes of the gate; the third, from 45 to 70, wherein it was preached to the idolatrous Gentiles. This last, again, he divides into other three; but it were too tedious to repeat them, especially since the booksellers here will shortly have the book."—(*Professor Hamilton to Wodrow.*)

or other told me, some time since, that Lord was the head of a party in the House of Commons, termed the *Whimsical Club*. Whether his advances on the Acts be the fruit of their conversation at that club I know not; but I would gladly see the book.

You'll have heard of our elections at Glasgow. The Revolution party, as they called themselves last year, have carried their scheme without losing one foot.

Our Synod had nothing before them save Mr M'Taggart's affair, and ordered him to be settled at Glasserton. Mr Rowat was moderator.

I long to have your accounts from all our Synods this month, and your Synod when it sits, and what is to be before the Commission, where I shall not be able to [be present] if I grow not better. I am, yours most affectionately,

Oct. 8, 1725.

LETTER CXVI.

BIOGRAPHY.—PATRICK WALKER AND M'MAIN,

*To my Lord Grange.*¹

MY LORD,—I had yours of the 3d instant in due time, and it was more welcome than I can express. Your Lordship has touched that subject that I was most fond to have your sentiments of, the extraordinary communications and intercourses the Lord frequently vouchsafed to these great men whose lives I am essaying to give some account of. The reasons you bring for not concealing this part of their lives you set in so strong a light, that I am much encouraged to hope there will not be such inconveniences in narrating them as I once feared. However, my fears this way never hindered me from collecting everything this way I could meet with, and

¹ Lord Grange's Letter, to which this is a reply, is printed in the *Christian Instructor* for 1827.

I determined with myself, when I began to dash down my collections as to their lives, to set down these as I met with them, with the vouchers and satisfying evidence I could find at this distance, and then subject all to better judgment than my own. Indeed, there are difficulties as to the vouchers. Some of them are written down by themselves, others by their contemporaries, others are handed down by ministers and others, and I am of opinion, a full judgment can scarce be made what is and what is not to be published, till a considerable collection be made, and as much as may be of this nature be put together, and the whole, with what vouchers we have for it, be seriously considered. And that will be a work of time, which calls for more and much better hands than mine. However, as I am giving a beginning, I incline to creep on, as my health and other things allow me.

I own Patrick Walker's pamphlet last year on Mr Peden's Life, containing a heap of singular things, without sufficient vouchers to some of them, and others of them very different from what I have from, I thought, good hands, and some of them not in my opinion agreeable to the spirit of Christianity, with a promise of a great many other lives to come, gave me some thoughts of the danger of publishing rude and indigested things of this nature.

I heartily thank you for the remarks you gave me on what I have as to Mr Davidson. I shall carefully review anything that may seem to be doubtfully narrated. I, indeed, thought I had rather erred upon that Life on the side of peremptoriness. I remember in his Life, (which I cannot at present look,) I have something to this purpose, which, indeed, will come better in upon a preface, that I could no more doubt of these extraordinary things than I could that there was a scuffle at Langside, or that our Assemblies met at such times. However, I know my temper is diffident; and if I have been doubtful in the time, I would probably express myself according to my present thoughts. But then doubtful things ought not to be published.

Make no haste with Nevin's Trial. It's a blustering paper, and contains the strength of that party. I have seen Marshall on

Daniel some time ago, and thank your Lordship for the offer; but, indeed, I have not time to enter much on that epocha. Owen, I thought, satisfied me much on it in his Exercitations. I'll be fond of your Lordship's thoughts on the Lord Barrington's Miscellanies, when you have read them.

As to that designed collection, as I guess by Mr M'——n [Main] and others, of Authentic Papers, Short Pieces, as Warnings, Letters, &c., as may give a true account of our Reformation in its different periods, it's perfectly new to me, and I can make little judgment of it, till I know their periods, and the papers they design to publish. I have long been of opinion, and sometimes wrote to some of my friends about it, that there was no great difficulty to form Historical Collections for Scotland, since the Reformation, as Mr Rushworth has done in his period, by a Collection of Authentic Papers, and multitudes might be added, both in Church and State, that have never yet been published. I own, this way of writing History is what I like best; though it be diffuse and large, yet it's natural and just. And I think I could afford, and point where materials are to be had, for as large a collection for Scotland as Rushworth. But these people's design seems to be restricted to our Reformation. I fancy they mean from the 1637 to the 1660; and if so, I doubt if they have considered it fully, when they expect to bring in the Warnings, Letters, &c., in a sizeable octavo, suppose it be like their edition of our Confessions. I know not what funds they have of the papers of those times; but, if I mistake not, the pamphlets I have of these times, and I want many, would afford two octavos and more, of Warnings, Declarations, &c. If their design ran from our first Reformation, and they, as I imagine they will, put in the public papers of their own side, in the suffering times, which they have in part collected in their second edition of the Informatory Vindication, and other of their books, they will find several sizeable octavos will not contain them. You see I must write upon this subject in confusion, till I see their list. Only one thing offers further upon this head, which I am afraid the person I guess is concerned, will not be so proper for, and that is some

historical hint at the particular incidents that were occasion of the particular Warnings, Declarations, &c., without which they will not be so intelligible at this distance. These, indeed, ought to be very short, but would take one who has a pretty full view of the thread of our history in his head. I heartily go in with your Lordship's observations upon the subject, which are very just. The work, in the general, is good and necessary; and if I know myself, differences of parties shall never hinder me from contributing my mite to any thing I think may be for the public good. Neither shall the contrary temper I found in those that separate from us, when they were applied to for materials to the History of our Sufferings, nor their displeasure at what I have written, bias me here. I hope still to be guarded by better principles. Indeed, it's hard mixing in with self-willed and peremptory people. This is all offers to me on this you are pleased to ask my opinion in. I am, my Lord, yours, &c.

Nov. 11, 1725.

LETTER CXVII.

BLACKWELL'S SACRED CLASSICS.

To the Rev. Principal Stirling.

REV. DEAR SIR,—I have been agreeably entertained since Monday, with reading over Blackwell's Sacred Classics, which I return you, with thanks. I am glad any in this loose age are appearing in defence of the Scripture style, majesty, and dignity, and can bear with the author in his flight, that the Scriptures will be part of the saint's entertainment in heaven. I am sure the great things in them will. It's satisfying to me to find him so warm and earnest for our Redeemer's Proper and Supreme Deity, which he

seems to love to insist on, even when his subject does not absolutely call for it. But I am sure the times do. The Lord, for his Christ's sake, keep out from this Church looseness, or whatever may tend to lead that way, on this grand article of our holy religion. I tremble at the thoughts of any thing this way, and know you do so likewise. Were I able to visit you, it may be I would say more.

Receive my receipt for Knox's MS. I'll collate it with my own, if I can get any body to read with me. I heartily sympathise with you under your frailties, and reckon myself called to this duty by the remaining trouble, I have been for some time under, which is far less than I deserve. I am yours.

December 22, 1725.

LETTER CXVIII.

CALDERWOOD'S MSS.—BRUCE'S LIFE.—SIMSON'S ERRORS.

To my Lord Grange.

MY LORD,—Yours of the 12th I had, after I had given you the trouble of one by Mr Warner. It brings me the hopes of more of Mr Calderwood's papers, from my good Lord Polton.¹ I am beginning to flatter myself Mr Bruce's Diary, or his large collection of letters from him and to him, which Mr Livingston says he saw, and out of which Mr Calderwood has some of his best things about Mr Bruce, may be that which my Lord has; and if so, it will be a rich treasure of Christian exercises and experiences, as well as of important facts. I need not desire your Lordship to look after

¹ "He [Lord Polton] tells me, he has fallen on more papers of his uncle's, and hopes to get more still, and also something of Mr Robert Bruce's; all which I am to have from him, and will send you."—(*Lord Grange to Wodrow.*)

them and the other papers my Lord can recover. I hope from them to put Mr Calderwood's Life in a far better shape than it is, from many new materials they will afford ; and, indeed, he deserves much at the hands of this Church ; and his History is the great fund of materials for my poor Biography, which, if ever it come to any bearing, this will be more owing to your Lordship and my Lord Polton, than any other, at least as far as Mr Calderwood goes. I cannot but blush when I consider how lame Mr Calderwood's Life is. It was the first that I wrote, and is just a collection of what I could gather about him. My Lord must make great allowances in reading it ; and whatever further helps he is so kind as communicate shall be faithfully added. I presume to give my most humble respects to my Lord, and my most hearty acknowledgments for his undeserved favours.

The account your Lordship gives about Newhaven perfectly satisfies me about my difficulty ; and I humbly thank you for the inquiry you have made thereanent. That circumstance gravelled me, but now you have perfectly accounted for it.

I presume to send you Mr Robert Bruce's Life, which, specially at the close of it, will let you see that I neglect not the extraordinary passages of these great men. I wish the write were better ; but I am at a loss for writers hereabout : I hope you'll get it read. I make no apology to your Lordship for sending these Lives just as they fall from my pen. They must be carefully retouched, both as to style and the transitions. Several additions come to my hand, and things that fall in upon the Lives I have writ since, give light to those I had scribbled before. I fear this throng time of the Session be an ill season to divert your Lordship with these *παρεργα*. But pray do not straiten yourself with any thing I cast in, and please dash down any thing that is proper for me to help.

I did not doubt but the melancholy accounts of P. S.¹ [Professor

¹ " If it were not so much talked here, [Edinburgh,] (and as I am informed by some who regret it, lest it disparage the doctrine he was already called in question for,) I would not mention any such report, and I do it only to yourself ; but it is talked here that your neighbour, Professor Simson, has discovered himself to be for Dr

Simson] would soon find the way to Edinburgh, and I am troubled to think what noise they will make in England and Ireland, and in what a light they will place this poor Church. But what is this to the dishonour resulting from thence (if true) to the great God our Saviour? I freely own to your Lordship, this matter has affected me more than ever any thing I have observed since I could notice what passed in this Church. I have been confined to this place since October, and been nowhere abroad. It's but second-hand reports I have; and for several reasons I did not, nor do much, dip into Mr Simson's method. I am told, in conversation he denies what his scholars report, and says he never taught any thing against our Confession; that he asserts the Son to be *Summus Deus*, the Supreme God, of the same substance with the Father; that he teaches his Proper Divinity and Eternity; and yet he owns in conversation that he does not think the Son's Independency, his Self-Existence, and Self-Origination, consistent with his being begotten. Inconstancy, and frequent changes in this foundation-article, are

Clarke of St James's scheme. I heartily wish it may be a misreport; and if not, surely every one who loves our blessed Lord Jesus has cause to mourn for it. I cannot forget that the Committee of Instructions some years ago, when earnestly urged to receive and transmit an instruction for expressly asserting and giving testimony to the Supreme Godhead of our Lord Jesus Christ, refused to do it; and to evade it, crowded a word or two into the Act for Preaching Catechetical Doctrine, which was indeed to elude the thing, and to give no express noticeable testimony to it. And it was plainly so intended, as appeared from refusing obstinately to give it in another way, and from the arguments then made use of. Since that time I have been particularly afraid of a stroke to this Church from that great error. Not that I suspected, or yet do suspect, some who joined in opposing that seasonable and useful testimony, as if they were fallen away from the faith on that point. But I thought the refusal provoking to God; and by letters from London, and things here, there was too much ground to believe that the opposition proceeded from unwarrantable motives. It is dangerous, for pleasing great men and political views, to refuse to give honour to our glorious Lord Jesus, and to warn his people of seducers from him, when seasonably called to it. It is much more so in a public capacity, and acting in the name of the Church of Scotland; and I cannot yet but think it noticeable that the words they slipt into the Catechetical Act, though I believe they really meant them to express our Lord's Supreme Deity, yet did it not, and left room for evasion, as if the Lord had refused to accept of any testimony from those who refused him an express one."—(*Lord Grange to Wodrow.*)

loudly charged upon him by his scholars. At first he taught for twelve or fourteen years the ordinary doctrine with much zeal; for the two last years he seemed almost Sabellian, and upon every turn censured Dr Clarke; and this winter, they say, he is gone in in several things to Dr Clarke's scheme. He himself, I am told, says that he, till of late, did not understand and like the Doctor, and yet he still refutes the Doctor's (or rather Sir Isaac Newton's) notions as to God's nature, which he takes to be the foundation of all the Doctor's mistakes. That which makes this matter the more strange is, that he appears still weaker and weaker, and to be in a dying condition, his flux recurring twice or thrice a-week to a great height. The very first thought I had when I got the melancholy accounts, about the beginning of November, was, that his disease had affected his head. Yet those who talked with him say he is connected and sensible to every thing he says, only brings in the subject of Dr Clarke, the Fathers, and Council of Nice, in all conversation. Of late, I hear that the ministers of the town that converse with him begin to think that his head is really affected. The low state of his health, and the exceeding weakness of his body, (and yet he still teaches in the Hall,) are given as the reasons why the Presbytery as yet have not had him judicially before them. Next week, I hear, they are to take this matter into their consideration. The Lord direct them!

This is the state of that matter your Lordship is pleased to write to me on; and you are the first ever I used this freedom with, and what I write is only to you. This is a subject I don't at all love to say any thing of; and the more, that he succeeds my father, and hath taken a quite different route from his way, and for other reasons I need not trouble you with. I desire to be found among the mourners in secret for this and many other wrathlike tokens in our present circumstances. I hear and understand not; what shall the end of all these things be? I mind well the remark you make on the Assembly, 1720. As I took it, the members did not think it seasonable to mix in with the English debates at that time, being under no apprehensions of any hazard from ourselves. But your

remark is too true, that the words cast in do not express what I hope they were aimed at. The Lord pity us, and plead not his just controversies with us, for the Man, his equal's sake! I am, my Lord, yours, &c.

Jan. 26, 1726.

LETTER CXIX.

SUBSCRIPTION.—PROFESSOR SIMSON.

To Mr Macknight.

DEAR BROTHER,—Yours of 28th February was acceptable. I return the inclosed. Give my kindest respects to Mr Masterton, and thanks for his distinct accounts. I wondered anent the General Synod's overture anent yearly subscription to the Confession of Faith. You know our practice as well as I, and Mr Masterton is perfectly right. Subscription of confessions, in my opinion, has far fewer difficulties than re-subscription, which, without a process, at least very plain grounds of suspicion of a departure from what is subscribed, will be very difficult to defend; and annual subscribing would be both useless and hard, if not hazardous. I don't think our brethren will find it proper to insist upon this; and I much doubt if it be advisable in their present circumstances to insist upon any thing at the next General Synod, unless the Subscribers be harmonious in it. A split in this juncture among themselves is what to me cannot be balanced by any advantage of a new regulation, be it otherwise desirable, as I think yearly subscription is not.

As to the other query about Mr Simson, I believe you know I kept myself abstract in his former process, for reasons I believe will satisfy you when you hear them; and in what has passed this winter I keep the same method, especially when confined to my house,

and have things only by report. I only wish your unbelief be well-founded. To-morrow the Presbytery of Glasgow are to receive written answers to written queries proposed to him. I am yours.

March 1, 1726.

LETTER CXX.

ERSKINE OF DUN.—DEATH OF RIDPATH.—WARRISTON'S DIARY.

To my Lord Grange.

MY LORD,—I have not much from abroad since my last. See Letters from Ireland. As to our affairs at Glasgow, of which I never write save once to your Lordship, Mr Simson, on Wednesday last, gave in his Answers in write to the Presbytery of Glasgow's written Queries, in about a sheet of paper. I cannot give any exact account of them, not having seen them. Only, I am told he denies what he was charged with, and owns the Son's Proper Independency. One can make nothing of reports, unless they agree with his precise words, in a case of this nature. They say he is better in his health.

I am advancing slowly, as I best may, in my draughts of our Lives. I have formed four or five more, and among them, that of your relation, (at least I suppose his family was a cadet of your Lordship's family,) John Erskine of Dun, who was a good and a great man, and a firm opposer of corruptions. I thought to have got it copied over and sent in to you, but I cannot easily find hands to write for me. I don't know if my Lord Dun, his direct representative, as I am told, will find time to glance any thing of this nature. If ever I should publish his great-grandfather's Life, I would reckon it a branch of duty to offer my Lord the perusal of the papers; but it will be some time before I come to entertain thoughts of publishing any of them.

If my good Lord Polton has found leisure to look out what he made me hope for, I'll be fond of what he sends, with my Lord Pollock's servants. I had a strong inclination to have ventured in to the Commission next week, and a greater to have come in this week to the Sacrament. But the continuance of my trouble forbids me. I bless God I am no worse. But though I durst have ventured to ride so far, I can scarce see how my sciatick would permit me to walk from a chamber to the church. I retain a grateful sense of all your favours to, my Lord, your very much obliged and most affectionate servant.

March 4, 1726.

P.S.—I see by the house papers Mr Ridpath is dead. I wish means were fallen on to recover our Assembly Registers which were in his hands, and which I was told he was to bring down with him last summer to Edinburgh. He had got them, as I heard, to make a little money of them here. But, in my opinion, (your Lordship is a far better judge,) if they be our records, and not copies, as was given out, they are the Church property, in whose hands soever they be. Not that I would be against a gratuity to his poor widow, who, I believe, needs it; but I fret to think of our negligence in so important a matter. I wish some care were taken to preserve the valuable papers that were in Mr Ridpath's hands as to our Scots History. If I have not forgot, I wrote to your Lordship before, that Mr Ridpath told me when here, 1713, that he had my Lord Warriston's Diary in his hands, and perused it with the greatest pleasure; that besides much spiritual soul exercise, it contained many valuable hints at facts, and the springs of them, no where else to be found. To recover this, or a copy of it from the Secretary, were my feet loose, and my health served me, I would willingly make a London journey. Forgive me, my Lord, for fashing you with thir things, as they come in my thoughts. I know nobody has done, or can do, so much for recovering our valuable remains as your Lordship.

LETTER CXXI.

LETTERS FROM THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, 1726.¹*Wodrow to Mrs Wodrow, No. 1.*

May 5, 1726.

MY DEAREST,—I have been dining with the Commissioner,² and am just going to the Committee for naming Preachers and Commissions, and so I have only time to tell you that there is nothing singular in the King's Letter or Commissioner's speech, or the return. We had an excellent and very short sermon, that is, about an hour, from Mr Alston, last Moderator, upon 2 Cor. vii. 8, "But this treasure is in earthen vessels, that the excellency," &c. It was a most pointed sermon, and very solid and general. If he had been a little more particular as to some things, some would have liked it the better. The Assembly came to the choice of the new Moderator, and Mr Mitchell, though his daughter is a-dying, was named by the Commissioner, and Mr William Hamilton, Professor of Divinity, was concerted by a good many, because Mr Mitchell has of late made a particular turn, because he declined it, because he was since Professor Hamilton, and because those I speak of are not for still being tied down to one named by the Commissioner. The struggle run very near. As I reckoned it on my buttons, Mr Mitchell had but one, and I am pretty sure he had not two. However, it carried, and he had a speech as usual. The King's grant for the second year of the L.1000 was given in and read. I am on two committees this night, and am like to be so throng that you must not be surprised if you want a letter some posts. I give my service to my Lord and Mr Maxwell. Send this to them. What is not worth their while is on the other side.

¹ Letters to Wodrow, vol. xvii. Nos. 39-48.² The Earl of Loudoun.

LETTER CXXII.

Wodrow to Mrs Wodrow, No. 2.

Edinburgh, May 6, 1726.

MY DEAREST,—This day the Assembly met for prayer at ten of the clock. The Commissioner had more great men attending him than usual on days of prayer. Mr Willison of Dundee, Mr Wishart, Mr John Hamilton, Professor Hamilton, and Professor Blackwell, prayed, and I cannot say but with sensible assistance. In the afternoon, the Committee of Overtures entered upon the Answer to the King's Letter; and there being nothing, save generals, all was passed unanimously. Our report from the Committee for Commissions took more time. The last Act of Assembly was peremptory, that Commissions were not to be sustained, except according to the formula transmitted last year. Six or seven were not according to it. And we found that, in several of the Commissions, the attesting the elders were qualified, according to Act of Assembly, 1722, was omitted; and in some cases we found that ruling elders were sent up who kept not family worship, as Culloden, and his brother, the present Advocate.¹ We overtured that either the act might be repealed or excute. In some Presbyteries, protests were taken against attesting the elders to be qualified in all respects, and yet they were named. This, after long debate, wherein some were for casting the whole members sent up contrary to the last act; others were for making examples of some of them, and that for examples to others; others for calling the Presbyteries before the Assembly, and rebuking them;—it landed in this, because the unqualified members were none of them present, I mean the elders, that letters should be written to the Presbyteries, with a rebuke to the Presbyteries, and assuring them they would not, after this, be sustained, if their Commissions were not every way in terms of the act passed

¹ The celebrated Duncan Forbes, afterwards President of the Court of Session.

last year. It's stumbling to many that Mr Finlator comes in and sits as a member of this Assembly ; and, considering his present circumstances, it's reckoned great imprudence in the Presbytery to send him, and somewhat worse in him to come. Mr N. Campbell and Mr Matthew Connel are come in, commissioned by the part of the parish of Cardross who oppose Mr Smith, to act for them. We are like to have much litigious work before us.

Mr Gabriel Wilson is a member of the Assembly. His commission is in form. He came in to the Committee of Overtures, and proposed the inserting a clause in our Answer to the King's Letter, about our grievances, and gave an instance that this was done 1716. To this it was answered, that that year the King's Letter had a clause, and the circumstances of the time made it proper, we having made application to him for their redress. But now, there being no part of the King's Letter relative to our grievances, and the King having done somewhat in order to remove them, there was no need of inserting any thing in the Answer to the King's Letter on this subject.

LETTER CXXIII.

Wodrow to Mrs Wodrow, No. 3.

May 9, 1726.

MY DEAR,—Yesterday Mr William Stewart preached in the forenoon before the Commissioner ; his lecture on Psalm lxxxv., and his sermon on Hosea v. last verse, “I will go and return to my place,” &c., a most serious and rousing sermon. In the afternoon, Mr Patrick Cumming of Lochmaben, upon “Them that honour me I will honour,” a neat discourse, very pleasantly and distinctly delivered. We are this day entering on our business. The instructions contain not much remarkable ; only five or six Presbyteries have instructions relative to Mr Simson's teaching, and our hazard

of error and refined Arianism, as some of them express it,—Perth, Kirkcaldy, Coupar, Dundee, Ellon, Deer. In the forenoon, after we had classed our instructions, our committee met; and after I had read the class, Mr Allan Logan moved that the case of Arianism, and the hazard of this Church from it, might be first considered, though not first in the roll, as being by far the most important thing before us. This was gone into, and the Presbyteries of Perth and Ellon, who direct us to inquire into the reports, were called on, and they signified the reports related to Glasgow, and that they had accounts from Edinburgh and Aberdeen that Mr Simson was gone into Clarke's scheme. Without farther dipping in the Public Committee of Instructions, this matter was sub-committed to a committee, the Moderator, Principals Wishart, Haddow, Chalmers, Professor Hamilton, Mr Allan Logan, Mr J. Alston, Mr R. W[odrow,] and the members of the Presbyteries of Glasgow, Perth, and Ellon, with the President, Lord Grange, and some others I may have forgot, to hear the state of this affair from the Presbytery of Glasgow, what they have done, where it stands, and bring in an overture thereanent. Thus this matter is entered on; where it will land, the Lord himself direct. I do not incline this account go farther than my Lord and Mr Maxwell. Be concerned about conduct to the Assembly at Cathcart, and put Mr Love in mind we desire prayers; for I am of opinion we never had more need. The affair of Popery came next before our Committee of Instructions; and besides the representations sent up in November upon the rabble of Fochabers, and some others since, and a kind letter from the Duke of Newcastle, promising the King's forward prosecution of the Papists, who have fled from justice, the Solicitor told us, last post, he had particular orders to prosecute them. At four the Assembly met. Provost Campbell's appeal from our Synod about Mr Richardson was tabled, and the President and others moved a committee might be named to take it up, so as the Assembly might not be further troubled with it openly. This was gone into. They say they are to pass Mr Richardson with some small acknowledgment. Then Mr William Stewart of Inverness' transportation to Kiltearn

came in. The process was not long. He declared his willingness, yea, desire, to leave Inverness, and that he had prevailed with the magistrates, who did not appear in the cause; and so he was transported. At night the sub-committee as to Mr Simson's affair met. We inquired into the reports, found them all land on Mr Simson; the Presbytery was called, the letter read, and, after long reasoning, we agreed to refer it to the Presbytery of Glasgow, and desire them to go on in their inquiry, and to adjoin an Assembly committee to them, to be advised with and called for by the Presbytery of Glasgow. But the numbers, time, and manner of their choice, will be matter of another meeting, if not of more, of our sub-committee, before it be ended. I see little in the letters this night.

LETTER CXXIV.

Wodrow to Mrs Wodrow, No. 4.

May 11, 1726.

MY DEAR,—Yesterday, in the afternoon, the Assembly met, and the Committee for managing the King's Bounty last year gave in their report to the Assembly, that they had sent twelve ministers, twenty-one probationers, and eighteen catechists, to preach in Popish countries,¹ some of them shorter, some of them longer; that they had laid out L.895, or thereby, upon them, according to the instructions agreed upon, and there was L.25 of expenses to be deduced for the royal grants passing, and sixpence per pound, with a very small matter to the cashier and clerk of their meeting, which came up, with a few incidental charges, to the L.1000; that a small balance was remaining, rising from the deficiencies of some who had not been able to go out. With this they laid before the Assembly a representation of the present state of Popery in these countries, of about two sheets, and the progress they had made, particularly that one isle of many families were brought back to the

¹ Meaning districts of country in the Highlands and Islands.

Protestant interest; that their heritors, particularly the Laird of Coll, joined heartily. The missionaries on the King's Bounty had much success. They propose that a considerable number of neighbouring ministers be sent up for three months to the Synod of Glenelg, and Strabogie, [Strathbogie,] and Abernethy, where Popery most abounds, and that they preach and be members of the Presbyteries whither they come; and that these, with the Protestant heritors in these bounds, meet and consider the most necessary places where they are to labour. They intimate, likewise, that there is great need that more schools and catechists be appointed; this being of more use than any other thing almost. And, therefore, essays will be made to get the King's gift extended to Protestant schoolmasters also, which will be of vast use; whereas it is now restricted to ministers, preachers, and catechists. The Solicitor had thanks given him to his diligence in the affair of the Fochabers rabble.

This day, in the forenoon, the Committee about Doctrine met, and transmitted an overture, by way of act, to the Committee of Instructions, who met at three in the afternoon, and several seemed to be against a committee for inquiring into this matter, jointly with the Presbytery of Glasgow, as proposed by us in the sub-committee, but were for referring it either to the Commission, which only two moved, to correspond with the Presbytery, or leave it to the Presbytery and the Synod in the ordinary course. In opposition to this, it was said that that course would not interest the Assembly, which now had it before them, nor be so solemn, or speedy, or proper, as that by a committee to assist the Presbytery; and that it was most proper that a matter of that nature should have the professors of divinity and the learnedest of the Church to be the managers of it; and that neither Presbytery nor Synod desired the burden of this matter upon them without others; and the ordinary way of procedure in this matter would delay it, without doing any thing in such an important and dangerous matter, till next Assembly; that this committee being only to inquire and bring to a sentence, it was no infraction on the radical judicatories; and that

though an extraordinary course, which this was not, since it had been used both in Mr Simson's former affair, in the Marrow, and in the yearly instructions to the Commission, to call before them any who are suspect in point of unsoundness, since the 1717, should be taken, nobody would mistake it with relation to a public teacher of youth formerly under process, and whose doctrine had been already censured.

At night, the matter being kept open to the Overtures, they and the Instructions met, and there, after long reasoning, the sub-committee's overture was remitted to the Assembly without a vote. What I observed to make some difficulty, after the sub-committee had agreed upon the overture of a committee, with their powers, was the nomination, which was like to run into a channel which would have brought such persons upon the nomination as might not be so proper for an affair of that nature, and the fears some had as to dissents and parties, in such a committee, and bringing in things and manners of speaking on this tremendous head, that would be additions to our Standards, if agreed to by the following Assembly, when they approved of what was done by the committee and Presbytery. The first way of nominating the committee was given up, a provision added to the act and overture tying the procedure down to the Scripture and Standards; and so amicably it was transmitted to the Assembly, and the nomination of a committee of twenty-five, whereof eighteen are to be ministers, was left to the Presbytery of Glasgow their members here. Much depends on the members of the committee to be named; and if they be well guided as to these, much of the procedure will depend on it.

* * * * *

May 12, 1726.

This forenoon, our Sub-committee of Instructions had the affair of a fast before them. We had but one instruction for it; but it seems the Commissioner's powers leave him at more liberty than formerly, providing the day be appointed by the King, that the Assembly nominate the causes, and point out the season, and in open

Assembly appoint the fast. It was urged, that when we may have the King's concurrence as to the day, we ought still to ask it, because in many places it will not be kept without this; that last year the Commission, by immediate powers from the Assembly, did name the day, and it's but decent to give the King the nomination in his *vice*, and since continuing and growing evils, and the hazard of error and growth of Popery, call for fasting, and the Assembly has not appointed a fast in Assembly since the King's accession, it's agreed we have one. Professor Hamilton, Principal Wishart, Mr Brand, and Lord Grange, are to draw the act and causes, and it's agreed that nothing we are not agreed in be insert in the draught. My Lord Grange and Colonel Erskine are now for leaving the day to the King.

LETTER CXXV.

Wodrow to Mrs Wodrow, No. 5.

May 12, 1726.

MY DEAREST,—I wrote to you this day, in the forenoon, and I must do it generally, since our afternoon meetings exclude one from thinking of writing any thing, till after nine at night. * * * * *

* * * Mr Willison proposed that a scandal was like to arise from legal preaching of morality, and sermons where nothing of Christ was, and a committee was appointed to join him, Mr Warden, Professor Hamilton, and my Lord Grange, and to bring in an overture. * * * * * The Assembly went on to Mr Simson's affair. The overture was read, and it was moved that the manner of nomination should be altered to some others than the Presbytery of Glasgow. This brought a long debate. It was only urged, that in this shape it was agreed there should be a committee, and if this was opened, we behoved to go back to the question, if there

should be a committee at all? It was doubted, whether the Assembly could vote the overture till the nomination of the committee. This was at length overruled, and before coming to the vote, Mr Mathew Simson told the Moderator, that by a letter from his brother, he had ordered him to signify to the Assembly that he had heard that there were some instructions, importing his teaching doctrines contrary to the Scripture and Confession of Faith, and therefore he craved liberty to signify that he had taught nothing contrary to these; and that he had not broken the injunctions formerly given him by the Assembly, and willingly subjected himself to be tried by the General Assembly in any regular method; and that if he had not been brought low with sickness, he would have personally attended upon this Assembly; but he was disabled, and for some days since his trouble was recurred upon him. Afterward the vote was stated, Whether Approve the overture of the Committee, or Delay. It carried Approve, by a vast plurality. There was not above ten or twelve Delays. Indeed, several were silent; and I do not wonder at it; for the consequences of this are very awful and doubtful, go as it will; and every body almost complains, and prays for forgiveness to him, that has, without all reason, brought us on this unhappy lock, to do somewhat, the matter being spread through all the church, and neighbouring churches, and before the Assembly; and yet we cannot positively say what must be the consequences of what we do. The members from the Presbytery of Glasgow declined being nominators very strongly, but now are overruled; and I hope they will make the nomination, at least now that the overture is agreed to, and if not, the matter will be provided for some other way. * * * * *

LETTER CXXVI.

Wodrow to Mrs Wodrow, No. 6.

May 14, 1726.

MY DEAR,—The Assembly has sat this day, (Saturday,) from nine in the morning till after ten at night, without rising. You'll easily guess that I am not to enter on particulars. About three of the clock, by a vote, they disapproved the procedure of the Commission as to Aberdeen settlement, because of their not duly considering the inclinations of the people, and for their too hasty procedure. Then they came to consider whether they should disannul the settlement, and at ten of the clock, by a vote, carried Not rescind, by twenty-three votes. The former was by fourteen. Thus Mr Chambers¹ is settled minister at Aberdeen, and this woeful affair happily ended; for had the Commission's sentence been opened and reversed after execution, our Commissions had been at an end. And a certain side are highly disappointed.

LETTER CXXVII.

Wodrow to Mrs Wodrow, No. 7.

May 14, 1726.

MY DEAREST,—I wrote a short time ago by post this night, and now while the matter is in my head, I shall give a short detail of a long day's work, from nine in the morning till ten at night, without the Commissioner's going off the throne. When the minutes were read, the Commission was approved unanimously in all other things, reserving Aberdeen, and received thanks, and Synods were

¹ This name is spelt by Wodrow indifferently, *Chambers* and *Chalmers*.

ordered to go aside at the rising of the Assembly, and choose their nominators for the Commission, nobody believing that it would be dark before we ended. But so it was, and so the election is delayed till Monday. Parties were heard out on Friday night, as to the Commission's procedure, and so we members of the Commission were removed. What passed in the members' reasoning upon our procedure, I cannot tell, being out. Mr Gray, Mr Hamilton, and others, spoke in defence of the Commission, but in vain; the Commission behoved to be run down as to their procedure, though, I believe, without breach of charity. The bulk of the voters were determined before they came in, and were much silenced in point of reasoning. About three of the clock it was, by a vote, carried that the Commission should not be approved in their procedure anent Aberdeen, especially because they had not considered the inclinations of the people, that is, heads of families, in opposition to town-council, session, and communicants, the plurality of whom, as far as appeared to me, were for Mr Chambers, and, because they had been too hasty and precipitant in determining that settlement, when the Assembly was so near at hand. The Assembly did not determine that the Commission had exceeded their powers, nor that they had done wrong in supplying the Presbytery's not concurring with the call, nor in joining correspondents with the Presbytery in settling of Mr Chambers, and several other important steps. The Commission submitted to the Assembly's sentence, though they complained that they had not given their mind so distinctly and particularly, by going through the particular steps taken by the Commission, as to know wherein they had done wrong, save in the two particulars hinted. Then the Assembly went forward to consider the settlement of Mr Chambers at Aberdeen, and whether, after disproving their procedure, they should reverse the settlement of Mr Chambers there. The Commission were called upon to speak to that point. The complainers were heard against the settlement. Upon their part, I remember little pleading from the bar, but what has been said formerly as to the proceedings of the Commission upon the first

head. The Advocate, Mr Hugh Dalrymple, alleged that the Commission had wilfully and knowingly transgressed the rule laid before them in this matter by the last Assembly, and their proceedings were consequently void and null, being a delegated power and court. Mr Logan, a dissenter, had some things at the Commission's imposing upon the power of radical judicatories, and their encroaching upon the constitution of this Church, and the rights of people in choosing their pastors, because the call from heritors, sessions, and communicants, was sustained, in opposition to that from the plurality of families. My Lord Grange spoke long, and by far the best, and urged that the Commission being a delegate court, and gone beyond their powers, the Assembly undoubtedly had power to reverse what they had done, and ought now to find so much, and vindicate the rights of the Christian people, who were here a majority, as to their elections. He noticed that unless this were done, there was hazard that Commissions should assume a power to do iniquity, when they knew that their sentences were not to be reversed, and that even when they were found to have done wrong in their proceedings. He further urged, that there was a nullity in their procedure, because their instructions, though finally to determine, were, by the ordinary rules of the Commission, to stand till disapproved by the succeeding Assembly, which imported a power in the Assembly to rescind them, which they ought to do, because, in their procedure, they had not consulted the inclination of the people, and heads of families. He endeavoured to prove a nullity from their want of the concurrence of the Presbytery, their going contrary to the power of the Christian people, their taking the matter out of the hands of the Presbytery of Forres, and some other things, extraneous, and in which the Assembly had not found the Commission to have erred, and committed iniquity in.

The managers of the Commission were next heard, the Moderator, Professor Hamilton, Principal Haddow, Mr Smith, and Mr Dundas, late Advocate. The Moderator shuffled the matter, as in his former appearance, though in this matter he spoke a little more

heartily. The rest, indeed, had no need of his assistances. Finer appearances from the bar I scarce ever heard. Professor Hamilton took notice that even when the Commission had been disapproved, the sentence still stood, and was never opened since the Revolution. He instanced in the case of Mr Graham of Dunfermline, and Mr Hepburn, and Mr English of Kilspindy. To enter upon all their pleadings would be endless. They noticed that this was a matter of vastly more consequence to the Church than Aberdeen call, or a hundred more; that it affected the constitution of the Commission essentially; that in all supreme courts, when a power was committed finally to determine, though iniquity, error, and wrong, was committed, yet, having power finally to determine, the delegates might be censured, but what they did by a right power still stood, till a new process on another foot was raised. They granted, that in general cases, relative to the constitution of the Church, or the doctrine of the Church, or in case of the Commissions exceeding the powers given them, the Assembly could reverse what they did; but in private cases, where there were parties concerned, whatever error was by the Commission, and however they might be censured or disapproved, their sentence behoved to stand irreversible, in the nature of the thing, and not from any want of power in the Supreme Court; that it were the highest unrighteousness and iniquity, after the Assembly had given a *jus tertii*, a power finally to determine in a private case, and the determination was made to open that decision or reverse it; that this would be to render Commissions useless, to open a door for bringing in all causes determined by a Commission anew before the Assembly, after they had clothed the Commission with a power to act in their room—it would ever load Assemblies with work, and render all Commissions henceforth useless. An Act of Assembly, 1721, I think, in the case of a petition to rescind the sentence of the Commission about Mr English, was cast up, declaring positively that the petition could not be granted, because the Assembly had given them power finally to determine. In short, this was for the Assembly to contradict what they had

done, to give with the one hand and take with the other; that if the Assembly could rescind a thing done by the Commission in a private cause where parties were concerned, where parties had *bona fide* depended on the Assembly's powers delegated to others, then there was liberty to appeal from the sentence of a Commission to the next General Assembly, which had never been allowed since the Revolution; and the constant practice of the Church is the strongest proof of the sense of the Church, though there were not rules as there are here. In short, it was strongly pled, that by Christ's law we cannot judge in the nature of the thing, *parte inaudita*, Do we judge a man before we hear him? that Mr Chambers, being now settled, the magistrates, (patrons,) town-council, session, and communicants in Aberdeen, who had Mr Chalmers given them *bona fide* by the Assembly's sentence finally to determine by the Commission, could not be deprived of him, nor he torn from them, unless they were cited here, which they neither were nor could be.

These things, much better said than I can express, were fully insisted on, and all the instances of Lochmaben, which was not a rescinding the Commission's sentence, but that of a Synod, and Kilspindy, &c., shown to a demonstration to be for, instead of being against, the Commission. After this parties were removed. The Assembly, after an hour's reasoning, came to the vote, Rescind the sentence or Not, and it carried Not, by 23 or 27, even when the Commission's members were out. This was mortifying to one side, as well as satisfying to others. Thus this woeful affair is ended, and those who appeared for the Revolution in Aberdeen supported. This is another instance where the Lord has well guarded our Assemblies in perplexed and party concerns, added to many I have been witness to, and I hope the peace of the town is much settled. I hear there were warm speeches within doors before the vote. There was little, very little left, in point of reasoning, to those who were for rescinding; and so they run out upon the hazards of Commissions going wrong, which was more popular. To this it was answered, that there was greater hazard of destroying them; and hints were given of some considerable services done by Commissions since the Revolution, particularly the Seasonable Warning. Mr Gabriel

Wilson had prepared a written speech, and, among other things, said warmly that the Commission had betrayed the rights of the Christian people. This drew a cry upon him to call him to the bar, where he was once before for a speech he had upon the Marrow.¹ This stuck his speech. Mr Willison in Dundee made a proposal before the vote, that if the vote carried Not rescind the Commission's sentence, it should be marked that this should not be a precedent, nor infer that after this the sentences of Commissions should not be rescinded by General Assemblies. But that was not gone into. The Solicitor, Mr Charles Erskine, who was but lately made an elder, and, I believe, never sat in any judicatory ecclesiastical, unless it was in a session, before, and from his unacquaintance with forms, falls into many blunders, because he speaks very much, and takes the direction of the Assembly almost in everything upon him, made several proposals, when it was feared that it would carry Not rescind. He proposed that Mr Chambers should be continued for a year at Aberdeen, and declared transportable by the next General Assembly; that is, that after two years' trouble, all done should be left open. But this was not yielded. After the vote, it's said some of the warmest asserters of the Commission's iniquity and powers of Assembly said without doors, when they heard how it went, that this was a villanous vote and division. So that some who appear for our powers in Assemblies, when they go against their inclinations, can as much censure them as others.

¹ The conduct of the Assembly on this, as well as on the former occasion here referred to, does not redound much to their credit; nor does Wodrow appear to much advantage in his way of recording it. On the former occasion, Mr Wilson, on attempting to speak, was put down by Dundas of Arniston, then Lord Advocate, who said, "Not one word, not one word." Mr Wilson then said, "Moderator, seeing I have not liberty to speak, I adhere to the protestation of my brethren." "Then," says Patrick Walker, who seems to have been present, "there was a speaking among the Long-heads about the helm, some saying, *O insolence!* others saying, *After all the work about him, we have not gained the least ground of him.* I would rather," adds honest Patrick, justly indignant at this injustice, "venture my neck before our Justiciary Lords, where I would get clean pith and fair play for my life, than before such Church judicatories; for if I were opposite to the backsliding spirit of the day, I would be sure to come off with loss."—*Biog. Pres.* See also *Christ. Instructor* for 1832.

May 16.

Yesterday, Mr Willison lectured before the Commissioner on Psalm xxii., and preached upon Psalm xlv. 4, "In thy majesty ride forth prosperously." He had many good things upon Christ's Divinity, and the hazard of error and Arianism creeping in upon this age, and in his prayers was very particular upon that head. In his sermon, pressing a concern for the public interest of truth, he told us, out of the Church Historians, the account of an orthodox Christian who had done a great service to one of the Arian Emperors. The Emperor desired him to ask what he pleased and he would grant it. The other gave in a petition that the Orthodox might have liberty to meet separately from the Arians. This put the Emperor in such a passion as he tore the petition, and yet, sensible of his obligation to the petitioner, desired him to ask any other thing. The Christian gathered the torn petition up, put it in his bosom, and said, If you will not hear me for my God, I will ask nothing. But what was most noticed, because of what followed in the afternoon, was, that when he was considering the hinderances of the riding prosperously of Christ as a King, he gave us this as one:—when the privileges of the Christian people to choose their own pastors, founded upon the Word of God, (Mr Smith, in his speech before the Assembly, had set them upon the natural rights of men and societies,) were encroached upon. Mr Nairn, minister at Anstruther, preached in the afternoon, upon—"The Lord hath done great things for us;" and in the application he mentioned, among the great things God had done for us, the freedom of our General Assemblies, and the conduct of them hitherto; and he said, that this Assembly, he thought, was guided kindly in their procedure hitherto; and as to the election of ministers, he hoped this Church would still keep her good acts; and he took the liberty to declare this as his opinion publicly, to prevent reflections and calumnies upon their procedure. These seeming different views of persons on different sides declared in pulpit, I am afraid have ill consequences. And I wish the great cry made for the people's powers in election, that is, of the majority of heads of families, which is the case now upon the carpet, (for, as I observed, the town-council,

session, and communicants, are in Aberdeen affair plainly for Mr Chalmers,) draw not down further burdens upon us, and an enlargement of the power of patrons, from such as would rent us and tear us to pieces. Thus this affair of Aberdeen stands. I wish to have no more to write upon it.

This day, the Committee for the fast met and agreed upon it, and it was transmitted the overtures. Another sub-committee also was named, where I was, for nomination of the next Committee for the King's Bounty, which was done. The Overtures have these and an act against legal preaching and declamatory discourses, which was remitted to the next diet. It's drawn by Messrs Warden, Willison, Mr John Curry in Fife, and my Lord Grange, and if it pass will, I hope, do service. The Assembly met at about 12 of the clock, and agreed to the draught of the fast, where the day is left to the King's nomination, and he is desired to interpose his authority. The new Committee for the King's Bounty was agreed to, and many particular affairs remitted to the Commission. The Synod met for nominating the nominators of the Commission. Our Synod met, where we found a concert, I never observed before, by the Presbyteries of Ayr and Irvine, who out-voted us with their ruling elders, which they brought in, and carried Messrs Falside, M'Derment, and Sir James Stewart, against Messrs Gray, Hamilton, and another. At the reading of the minutes, Affleck made a motion that the minutes were lame, and that it might be marked that the Assembly reserved power to alter all sentences of Commissions; but that was refused, because instruments were taken yesternight, and this was not added to the intimation. Mr Gabriel Wilson moved, that after error in the [cause of] fast, might be added the prevalency of Arianism in these lands; but was not seconded, as what was not before us, and did not appear among us, though we were inquiring into it. We had difficulty in this committee to [settle] the strait betwixt some brethren that were for putting in the Covenants more plainly than "by solemn engagements to God," and the prudence of this, it being to be sent to court. But my Lord Grange and Colonel Erskine, who are now upon the Commissioner's, and shall I call it the Court side, got matters easily calmed.

LETTER CXXVIII.

Wodrow to Mrs Wodrow, No. 8.

Edinburgh, May 16, 1726.

MY DEAR,—This afternoon the Committee of Instructions met, and went through what remained, principally matters referred to the Commission. At six the Overtures met, where we had an Act of Assembly proposed for restraining transportations from Highland parishes to the Lowlands, ratifying all the former Acts of Assembly, and discharging them to be transported without the consent of the General Assembly, or declared transportable without consent of the people. This was formed by my Lord Grange, upon Mr M^rInnes being declared transportable from a congregation in Braemar, after another year. Then an act against legal preaching was read, drawn by those named above, Messrs Warden, Willison, Mr John Curry, author of the *Jus Populi Vindicatum*, bearing, that as the Assembly, in the case of the Marrow, had asserted the obligation of the law, so now they recommend the preaching of Christ, and discharge legal preaching—that is, recommending duties only on the powers of nature and without grace, and neglecting Christ as our only strength for performing, and the ground of our acceptance, in sermons, and recommending the preaching so usefully used in this Church, by doctrine, reasons, and use. There was a clause added in the first draught, guarding against loose and declamatory sermons, but that was dropped. Both these were transmitted to the Assembly. Colonel Erskine renewed the proposal, that offence was taken at Mr Smith's expression in his defence of the Commission's procedure about Aberdeen, that the people had a natural right to elect their pastors, but the Scriptures ordinarily brought to support it were not directly to the purpose, and that Messrs Rutherford, Gillespie, and Calderwood, did not teach this doctrine, that the

majority of the people (heads of families, as distinguished from Session and Town-Council, for that was the subject of the reasoning) had not a right to call, and, therefore, that he should be called to explain himself, and if found censurable, that he should be rebuked by the Commission. The Assembly had refused this. In the forenoon Mr Smith was absent, and, therefore, the matter was dropped. * * * * *

LETTER CXXIX.

Wodrow to Mrs Wodrow, No. 9.

May 17, 1726.

MY DEAR,—This afternoon, after I sent away mine by post, the Committee for nomination of the Commission met, where it was brought in. It's like to be pretty much of such as opposed Aberdeen settlement. Mr Smith, Mr Ramsay, and a good many others, are out of it. The Synod of Lothian is generally on the other side, and these will keep best. You will be glad to hear I am left out of it. The members from our Synod are generally all of one side, Messrs Campbell, Johnston, and Menzies. There is a regulation made, that the Commission meddle not with private causes except at their ordinary stated meetings; all the rest runs in common form.

The Assembly agreed to it, and to an act against transporting Highland ministers. The act against legal preaching was read, and, after a long struggle, remitted to the Commission, to be amended as to some expressions, which, indeed, I could not understand the exceptions against; and Presbyteries allowed to take copies, when agreed to at the Commission in August, that their Presbyteries may be instructed about it next Assembly. It's a good act, and I wish it had passed. All agreed in approving the matter of it. Then we adjourned till to-morrow, when little remains save

common form. One of the reasons for dropping this act at present seemed to be, that it was drawn up by such as were supposed to be favourers of the Marrow, Messrs Warden, Willison, Curry, &c., though I do not think any of them did favour it. And the word *legal preaching* was not liked, though explained safe enough; and yet it's a word used in our former Church acts. But considering the desultory haranguing way of preaching, and the not preaching of Christ, and the spirit that is so common at this time among our young preachers, and bright images, as some call them, it will be a pity if the Commission do not effectually form the act, and I hope they will.

May 18, 1726.

This day the Assembly met at eleven. We had little but forms. The students at Edinburgh this year are 209; those at Glasgow, 59; at Aberdeen, 39; at St Andrews, 39. I have forgot the Probationers' number. The Moderator had a speech, wherein he took notice of the kindness of God in conducting the Assembly through so many important matters, and such a variety of business as uses not almost to be before one Assembly; that, whatever different sentiments there had been in some things, yet there was a perfect harmony as to the main and most difficult thing—the suppressing the least appearance of error; that our variety of sentiments in other things was of considerable use in our present state. The Commissioner's speech was in common form; only he took notice that the King was extremely concerned at the growth of Popery, and gave particular attention to the Church's representations there-
anent, and had given such orders to the forces, as it's hoped would do much to check it in time to come, and had graciously ordered prosecutions against Papists to be carried on at his expenses. The Assembly closed with the 133d Psalm being sung.

LETTER CXXX.

SIMSON'S CASE.—CALDERWOOD.

To my Lord Grange.

MY LORD,—I hear Mr Simson reckons the Assembly Act hard, and an inquisition; but, if a Church have not power to inquire into the doctrine of her teachers, I know no power she has. What shape this affair will fall into before the Presbytery, Wednesday next week, I cannot tell. I pray the Lord may guide them to wise and faithful measures. They say he is much better in his health, and it's probable may be at the next Presbytery.

I desired Mr Logan to send me his thoughts on what was most exceptionable in Mr Simson's letter to the Presbytery, and an abridge of the most glaring positions advanced by the Presbytery in his former process. He said he would talk with your Lordship upon it. If he has left any thing with you, it will be most acceptable, and your own thoughts upon the letter to the Presbytery, at your leisure, will be a new favour.

Since I came home I have looked through Mr Calderwood's Papers, turned many of them out of their old folds, and laid them as near the order of time as I could. Many of them are imperfect and sadly crazed,¹ especially the oldest. I send my most humble duty to good Lord Polton, and hope to make considerable additions to Mr Calderwood's Life. If my Lord had leisure to search, it may be, some thing might be found to make up the imperfections of these valuable remains. Permit me to mind your Lordship to write to Jerviswood. Rattray's Paper will be acceptable, with any thing on these questions among the gentlemen of that side. I am, my Lord, yours.

May 28, 1726.

¹ Creased or mutilated.

LETTER CXXXI.

REPLY.—DR CLARKE.

*Lord Grange to Wodrow.*¹

SIR,—I acknowledge my fault in delaying so long to answer yours of May 28th. Mr Spence tells me that the Presbytery of Glasgow has never yet sent in an attested authentic copy of Mr Simson's Letter, as the committee appointed them to do, nor do I hear that they have written to the moderator of the committee. Nevin's book, with many thanks, is herewith returned. Never did a book stick so in my hands in the perusing. I found little instruction in it, except as to the particular history of these debates; and I confess I wearied so much of it, that after divers attempts, other books and business have always made me lay it aside, and to this day I have not read it through. Mr Logan spoke nothing to me about what you mention; but after I got yours, I wrote to him of it. He wrote back to me, that other affairs had put it out of his head while I was in town, (and I left it before him,) and that he has not yet got his observes reduced into order. I am told, and not by bad hands, that some are trying already to sense (as they call it) some of the oddest parts of Simson's Letter, as, that Christ is the Supreme God, *cum grano salis*. Such sensing I take to be the art of teaching heresy orthodoxly. Rattray's Paper I have not yet fallen upon. I hope it is not lost; but if it be not, I have laid it somewhere, which I have forgot, and cannot yet find it. I am, Rev. Sir, your most humble servant,

JAMES ERSKINE.

Edinburgh, June 30, 1726.

A gentleman lately from England tells me that a book against Dr Waterland is coming out under the name of Jackson, but re-

¹ Letters to Wodrow, vol. xxii No. 4.

vised by Whiston and Dr Clarke, especially the last; that Dr Clarke recants what he wrote for his own way of signing the Thirty-Nine Articles, and not believing them, and declares he will not again sign them, which is the reason, says this gentleman, why he declines all further ecclesiastic benefices or preferments. He says that all the English Bishops, excepting one or two, whose names I have forgot, are of Dr Clarke's sentiments. He himself seemed to be so too. He said that Christ is not called the Supreme or Most High God in Scripture, and that we should not speak of him otherwise than the Scripture does; but he added, that all the dispute about this was idle, and mere subtleties. Strange! that it should be called a subtlety or idle, to inquire who he is that is the object of our worship and faith! The same person said that he reckoned the Epistle of Polycarp, and the larger Epistles of Ignatius, and some parts of the Apostolic Constitution, as the manner of celebrating the Eucharist, to be holy Scripture, and by inspiration. This gentleman is not, nor never was, Presbyterian. I mention this as an instance of what tenets are coming into our land; may the Lord keep them out of our Church! Dr Clarke at first tried to reconcile his doctrine to that of the Church of England, by *sensing* the Articles. Now he finds numerous supporters, and throws off the mask. The postscript is longer than the letter. It is time to end it.

LETTER CXXXII.

HENDERSON'S PRETENDED DECLARATION—AND HIS REMAINS.

To Mr Samuel Semple, Minister at Libberton.

REV. DEAR BROTHER,—I blame myself that I have been so long in fulfilling my promise to you and Mr Elliot of London, who spoke to me in name of the Rev. Mr Neil, who, it seems, is forming somewhat about Mr Henderson, who desired me to correspond

with you on this subject. The throng of communions, and my parochial work, is what really put this out of my head till this day it came in my mind, when you have not been so kind as to write to me, as I think you promised to do.

It's a loss to me when I begin to write you upon this, that I know not precisely the subject these gentlemen at London would have our help about, whether it be precisely the pretended declaration Mr Henderson had palmed upon him after he was dead, or whether they desire an account of what remains of his we have. I shall touch at both to you ; and you'll know probably better than I which of them, or if both, these gentlemen desire.

As to the declaration pretended to be made by him on his death-bed against Presbyterial government, and in favours of Episcopacy, I had it once in my hands in quarto, printed London, 1648, and it's at present in our friend Mr James Anderson's hand. When I glanced it over, the spurious paper appeared to me to be very dully written, two years or thereby after Mr Henderson's death ; at least it did not appear till then. There is nothing in the style that in the least resembles the nervous, solid, sententious style of Mr Henderson ; and it was certainly framed by some of the Scots Episcopal scribblers, who had fled to England for shelter, and lived by what they could earn by their pen. As soon as it appeared, you know the General Assembly, by their Act, August 7th, 1648, gave a public declaration of the spuriousness of the pamphlet, and insert the strongest reasons that we can wish for, taken from his constant adherence to our work of Reformation to his last breath, and that from witnesses present. I could add some things I have from very good hands to the same purpose. But the declaration of the Assembly is so authentic that it needs no support. This declaration (pretended) was, I suppose, reprinted by Dr Hollingsworth in 1693, in his character of King Charles the First. At least (for I have only the answer to it) he is severely taken to task for his imposing a spurious paper on the world, by Ludlow, in a printed answer to him, quarto, 1693, which I have, where he brings some good remarks from the style and the Assembly's Act, and the in-

scription on Mr Henderson's monument, both which he hath printed at length to expose this imposition. I mind no more I have seen upon it, unless it be the editor of Mr Sage's, (one of our Scots Episcopal clergy at London I have heard Mr Gray [speak of,]) 8vo, London, 1714, publishes two letters of his, one containing an idle story of Buchanan, and the other anent a verbal declaration made by Mr Henderson to Mr R. Freebairn. No doubt you have the pamphlet, and it can bear no faith, being published by a nameless author, who may have forged it for Mr Sage; and, though it should be genuine, and Mr Sage's, it depends both on Mr Sage's and Mr Freebairn's authority and memory, and that which is higher, Mr Freebairn's father's memory; and some circumstances in the tale look a little childish, and can never be laid in balance with the contrary accounts given by the General Assembly. This is all I mind I have met with as to the spurious declaration.

As to Mr Henderson's remains in print and in manuscript, if our friends at London want an account of them, I shall give you a hint of what is in my hands. Beside his Parliament Sermons, printed at London in quarto; and his valuable Essay upon the Government and Order of the Church of Scotland, quarto, 1640 or 1641, which I can vouch to be Mr Henderson's; and his Discourse at the taking of the Covenant, quarto, London, 1643; and the Letters which passed betwixt him and the King on Episcopacy, in which, out of decency to the King, he is allowed the last word, though Mr Henderson, as I am well informed, sent an answer, and kept a copy of it, to the King's last paper; I have in MS. Mr Henderson's Sermon at the Excommunication of the Bishops, 1638; his Instructions about Defensive Arms; Directions about Voicing in Parliament, 1639; Answer so some Propositions in Defence of Episcopacy, with some original Letters of his to Mr Douglas. If these hints can be of use to you or the gentlemen at London, it will be a particular pleasure to, Rev. Dear Brother, yours most affectionately,

R. WODROW.

P. S.—Dear Brother,—You'll oblige me extremely if you'll write me all your accounts of literature and new books, and discoveries you have from England and elsewhere, in your learned correspondence; and, particularly, I hope you'll let me know what you have in your valuable collection of manuscripts, and scarce books, and pamphlets relating to the lives of our Reformers, learned men, ministers, and Christians since; Messrs Knox, Willock, Gray, the Melvilles, Pollock, R. Boyd, Durham, Gillespie, Rutherford, and hundreds of others I need not name to you; their original letters, memoirs, &c. Pray send me a list of any thing you have this way. You may command what I have. I am, again, yours,

R. W.

LETTER CXXXIII.

CALDERWOOD'S PAPERS.—SIMSON'S CASE.

To my Lord Grange.

MY LORD,—Having the opportunity of Mr Maxwell's coming in, as his duty is, to wait on my Lord Pollock home, I could not but signify the deep [sense] I have of your goodness and singular favours to me. I have gone through my good Lord Polton's papers, though I cannot say I have perused almost any of them, and sorted them the best way I could. I found what I was extremely pleased to find, in the bottom of the chest, the volume that was wanting in the Original Calderwood, that is, the 5th volume, from the 96th to King James his death, which I'll take special care of, and have laid with the four other volumes my Lord favoured me with loan of. The Glasgow copy, and a copy which now I have got from the College of Glasgow (it was designed for poor Mr Ridpath) in exchange, were very incorrect, especially in this last part, and I hope this shall set us right. The pleasure of that use-

ful work being yet preserved in the original, was more than a balance to some disappointments I met with in going through the rest of the papers, where I have not yet met with what I hoped for. Though there are several things which will be of no small use to me, I hope, in the lives of our Reformers and their successors, and several scattered hints as to Mr Calderwood himself, and a great many papers which are in the large History. Yet the bulk are first draughts and collections, and imperfect papers sadly crazed, of which little can be made. I would fain hope that, if further search be made, some other papers may be fallen upon, that may make up many of thir that are incomplete; and when my Lord Polton, to whom I repeat my most humble acknowledgments, finds leisure, he may happen to fall on them. Meanwhile, I hope from these to give some tolerable account of the great Calderwood. Since my last, which I doubt not you received, I had a short line from Ireland in the time of the Synod, which I shall transcribe, that your Lordship may have all I yet know in this matter. In a little time I may be in case to give you larger accounts; and you'll find it on the other side. I have sent a dozen of Mr M'Bride's pamphlets to Mr James Davidson to sell, which give a tolerable view of matters before the Synod sat down. If your Lordship have glanced Nevin's case, it may come with my Lord Pollock's servant when he comes west; there being some things in it which are like to cast up among ourselves; which brings me to acquaint your Lordship that nothing is yet done at Glasgow as to Mr Simson. In the end of May he went to the country for his health. In June most of the ministers of Glasgow were out of town at the goat-milk. Last week the Presbytery met, and appointed their committee to have their remarks on his letter ready against their first meeting, the first Wednesday of August, and Mr Simson is writ to be present at that day. I pray the Lord may direct all concerned in that important matter.

If it shall happen to be the occasion of your Lordship's being in this country, if your other affairs allow you, it will be a peculiar pleasure to me to see you here, where I hope I shall be in case

to entertain you for some time, though not as I could wish, yet I am sure the best way that I possibly can. I shall not have the pleasure of waiting on your Lordship at the Commission, since the harvest will oblige us to have our communion, if the Lord will, on the 14th of August, when I will stand in need of much sympathy and concern. Were it not for this, though I be not a member, I might probably have been at Edinburgh, since riding I find agrees much with my trouble, which I am not altogether free of. Meanwhile, I'll be fond to hear from your Lordship at your leisure; and am, my Lord, your very much obliged and most humble servant,

ROBERT WODROW.

July 19, 1726.

LETTER CXXXIV.

MATTERS IN SCOTLAND AND NEW ENGLAND.

To the Rev. Mr Benjamin Colman.

REV. DEAR SIR,—Yours of the 23d of May came to me in good time, and I find my debt growing to you. Your kindness to Mr Kelly is what I shall not be able to repay. It's done to the son of a truly good and laborious minister; and I hope the youth will carry so as he may not be ashamed of the God of his fathers.

I am yet more obliged for communicating the hints I gave of our declining deplorable circumstances to the reverend ministers who met at your house, and the share we have of your prayers. I beg the continuance of them. We have a meeting of eight or nine ministers in this neighbourhood upon the first Monday of each month, to whom I use to communicate the state of the interests of Christ in New England, and you do not altogether want a share in our poor concern. We have a good many ministers that usually

spend some time every Monday in prayer for our dear Redeemer's interests, and particularly, on the first Monday of the month, in societies up and down this Church; and it's a peculiar pleasure to think that our dear brethren in New England interest themselves in us; and when you know our stated times, though there is nothing in the time, we beg your concurrence then, and at other times.

Indeed, our present circumstances call for doubling our cries. Looseness in doctrine is like to creep in, at least it's feared, among some of the younger students and ministers; and at our last Assembly, there were complaints tabled against Mr Simson, Professor of Divinity at Glasgow, as if he had innovate in some points as to the doctrine of the Trinity in his teaching. He, being under sickness, wrote a letter to the Presbytery of Glasgow, which was not altogether satisfying. Therein he owned that he had said the proposition, *Christus est summus Deus*, is to be taken *cum grano salis*, and that he had never taught Christ's Independency nor Self-Existence. The Assembly hath appointed a committee to assist the Presbytery in an inquiry in what he hath taught. Nothing is yet done save six queries proposed to him, to which he hath not yet given his answers. This is a melancholy subject I communicate to you, to quicken your sympathy with us; and a subject I incline to say the less on, because he is my father's immediate successor, and other things that make it not so proper for me to mix much. This matter is but beginning; and how it will end the Lord only knows. He will, I hope, preserve and vindicate his own truth.

Every thing that comes from you is useful to me, and your Sacramental Discourses will be particularly sweet. Last Lord's day save one we had the Supper in this congregation. I hope the Master of the ordinance was present, and his people comforted and confirmed. Lying near Glasgow, we have great numbers of communicants and crowds of hearers. Sometimes we have eleven hundred or twelve, and ordinarily a thousand, at our tables.

I'll be very fond that your and your brethren's Course of Lectures on Family Religion be published. Let not the modesty of some mar

the rest. Our common Lord has given various gifts and graces, and such as have lower measures, that is, think so, ought not to stand in the way of the publication of a course of lectures, by their overweening low thoughts of themselves.

The accounts of your University are most pleasing to me. I have written twice to worthy Professor Wigglesworth, and would still write had I any thing that offered worth while. I have a high esteem of President Wadsworth,¹ and was refreshed with his Sermons, and Treatise on the Ten Commands, you sent me. Mr Monis I still remember, and am fond to have whatever he publishes. Somebody tells me there is somewhat of his printed, a discourse he had at his baptism. This, if true, or any thing else he had published, pray send me, and give him my most affectionate respects. I bless the Lord who continues to incline the heart of Mr Hollis of London to continue his benefactions to you.

Pray continue your accounts of all things that are a-going with you in Church and State. I rejoice that the Lord is building up your family. Mr Turel, who, I hope, is now part of your family, has a claim in my poor cares. The Lord has blessed me with ten children alive, and two whom he hath taken, I hope, to himself. Let us mind one another, and all ours at the throne, and the interests of our glorious Redeemer. May he, by his Spirit, be assisting, comforting, and upmaking to you! I am, Rev. Dear Brother, yours most affectionately.

August 22, 1726.

¹ Who was appointed to fill the situation of President in Harvard College, which Dr Colman had declined.

LETTER CXXXV.

ELECTION OF RECTOR IN GLASGOW COLLEGE.

To my Lord Grange.

MY LORD,—It was my loss, that I had so little time to wait on you when so near me at the visitation at Glasgow; and yet a greater that I had not the pleasure of some hours of you here among my manuscripts, pamphlets, and other collections, which I would have pressed more had I thought you would have been detained till Wednesday. Your peaceable visitation was the more pleasing at Glasgow, that they were chagrined with the severer steps taken last year by the great folk who sent away their magistrates prisoners. By your restoring the boys to the choice of the Rector, they are already beginning to bribe and cabal; and I believe till the 16th of the next month be over, their thoughts will be much taken off their studies. I have three boys there, whom I find it hard enough to keep from mixing and turning partymen, though the eldest is but about fifteen.

Long since, when in the Library at Glasgow, I glanced the statutes, and they are lame and confused enough; but the circumstances are prodigiously altered in 150 years; and, if I remember, all the matriculate members had liberty to join in the choice of a Rector; and some of my predecessors, vicars of Eastwood, were called in. But nobody then came to the College till after twenty. Our Universities stand much in need of reformation in many things; and I know no matter that deserves more serious consideration, both from the Government and the Church, which, till the Revolution was very careful about schools and colleges, than the state of our youth, and the proper manner of teaching, which, in

our present state, I despair of seeing set on a right foot. Forgive me for stumbling into this subject.

With this I presume to send the Laird of Dun's Life, as I promised, which, if you have any spare time, I'll be glad you glance, before you take the trouble to send it to my Lord Dun. I wish I had had fuller and larger materials to have formed it upon, and will be much obliged to my Lord, if he will furnish me with any thing he has this way, and make what corrections he finds necessary upon this rude and first draught; and allow me any papers or memoirs that may bring light to that period.

You'll have seen Mr Simson's last letter to the Moderator of the Assembly and Committee. I have not seen a copy of it; but by the verbal accounts I have, it appears rude and shifting. The Committee is ordered by the Assembly to meet before the Commission; but I don't expect there will be a quorum unless they be called by the Moderator. I see little heartiness in this matter; and have some necessary business that calls me to Ayr at the term, being to receive some money, otherwise it's probable I would come in.

It will be a singular favour, if your Lordship have leisure, that you let me know by post, as soon as this comes to hand, if there be any prospect of the Committee's meeting, and doing any thing at this time. I really fancy this matter will be shifted off till next Assembly. All your other accounts of matters among us, and literature, will be most acceptable to, my Lord, your most humble, &c.

Oct. 24, 1726.

LETTER CXXXVI.

SIMSON'S CASE.

To my Lord Grange.

MY LORD,—Finding the carrier that uses to come from this to Edinburgh going off this day, I could not but signify my grateful sense of your last letter of the 5th, and the favour of your conversation last week ; and acquaint you, that as I came through Glasgow on Saturday, I have it from a good hand, that Professor Simson is come to the chapter *De Trinitate*, and in his lessons last week, positively taught his scholars that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are not numerically the same in substance, neither are they so specifically, but so of one substance as to be three distinct persons. Here is an answer to the first of the Presbytery's queries, about which the greatest noise was made in his teaching. I imagined your Lordship would incline to hear of this, and forgive this hasty account. I'll soon return Rattray's protestation. I'll be fond of Melville's *Life*, when you fall on it, and any thing you have to send, and to hear from you by post at any leisure hour ; and am, my Lord, &c.

Nov. 14, 1726.

LETTER CXXXVII.

LIVES OF THE REFORMERS.—SIMSON'S AFFAIR.

To my Lord Grange.

MY LORD,—The chief thing makes me venture to give you the trouble of this by post, is to put your Lordship in mind to send me your copy of Mr James Melville's Life, (by leaving it at my Lord Pollock's, direct for me,) if you have fallen on it. I am creeping on, as I may, in the lives of our Reformers and eminent Ministers. I have lately written Rollock's, and am beginning Mr James Melville's, and my good Lord Polton's copy (to whom I presume to give my most humble duty) breeds me such uneasiness in reading, as stops me much. I wish you have fallen upon it. I'll very soon return Rattray's Paper I have of yours.

You'll know how Mr Simson's affair stands before the Presbytery. They have given their paper to him, showing the references their queries have to his Letter and the Confession of Faith, which probably will be come to Mr Mitchell's, our Moderator's hands, according to the advice of the Committee. The advice is really confusedly minuted, and I think I objected so much when I heard it read, as their letter to us was very general. I wish now we had given our opinion approving the Queries; though I think the bulk of the members who spoke did plainly approve that manner of proceeding, as I am sure the Assembly's Act does; and I think the nature of things makes it necessary. But I am truly stunned at the falsehoods industriously propagated, and confidently asserted to be written from Edinburgh, by persons present in the Committee, that the whole of the Committee save two, Mr L. [Logan,] and Mr B——nd,¹ disapproved of the Presbytery's pro-

¹ Mr John Brand, Minister of Borrowstounness.

cedure, in the way of Queries; that we all, save these two, declared against inquiring into Mr Simson's private sentiments; particularly your Lordship is represented as speaking against this way of inquisition into private opinions and sentiments, and for want of better company I am joined with you in this; and Mr Simson, depending upon his certain information, asserted in Presbytery that the Committee were of opinion he ought not to answer their Queries, yea, generally against the inquisitory method; and when Mr M'Laren contradicted this, and some others brought me in as giving another account than he had, he continued peremptory in his assertions, and insisted upon his explaining the propositions, as he calls them in his letter, when showed him, but declined answering queries, as agreeable to the Committee's advice and minute, and craved that the Presbytery would give him all they had to say in write, before he would return his answers. However, the Presbytery went on in their own method, which they thought (and he denies) to be the advice of the Committee, to point out the references their queries have to his letter and our Standards; and he being absent in the afternoon, they sent him their condescendings in write, and required him to answer next Presbytery day. They met again, December 8th, and he came to them and insisted on his former request, to have all they had to lay to his charge given him before he answered. But that not being what would bear much reasoning, after some bickering about their former minutes, he promised, against their next meeting, January 4th, to bring his answers in write, which he hoped would satisfy them and the whole Church. A little time will let us now see them. Meanwhile, I am well informed that he has no design to answer the queries, but is to show that their queries are inconsequential to the places referred to by them in his letter, and our Standards. Thus that matter stands. In private he rails at the queries, and says he will never give way to the inquisitory method; and that he hath the opinion of the most pious and most learned ministers of this Church, dissuading him from answering the queries. In short, he goes the length to say, such as have be-

gun this inquisition with him shall find they should have chosen another than he to try their skill on; and they shall see they have mistaken their man; and other expressions I love not to repeat. What I wrote before of his teaching, that the Father, Son, and Spirit, are not numerically one, is still asserted by his hearers; and that he brought in a definition Aristotle has of numerical oneness, and applied it to the subject before him, and showed the absurdities which did follow. But then it's added, that ten or twelve days after, when it may be he found what he had formerly said began to be talked of, he came back to the subject of the Trinity, and told his scholars he had some farther to say that escaped him on that head, and then asserted the Divine Persons to be numerically one, in a sense different from the definition he had given; and in such a manner as his scholars did not understand him. If this be fact, it's either juggling or instability. I wish really the Presbytery had the advice of persons of judgment, what steps to take next, upon his quibbling upon their references, and refusing to answer their questions, whether to go on and take a precognition of what he has taught, and turn their queries to him to questions to the students, with other things that will offer, or to call the Committee. I find the Non-subscribers in England are mightily elated, and declare openly that Mr Simson and Mr W. [Wishart] and others of sense in the Church of Scotland, are now to make a noble stand against the inquisitory method, and for freedom and liberty. I'll be fond to have your Lordship's thoughts on the whole.

I have some letters from Holland and London; but I doubt not your Lordship has much better accounts. Dr Calamy is printing his Appendix to his Abridgment in two volumes, &c. *Vide Letters alibi.* * * * * * I am, my Lord, yours, &c.

December 23, 1726.

LETTER CXXXVIII.

BAILLIE'S ANTIDOTE AGAINST ARMINIANISM.

To Mr J. Loudon, P. P. [*Professor of Philosophy*] at G.
[*Glasgow.*]

DEAR SIR,—Receive Mr Baillie's Antidote against Arminianism, which you desire my thoughts of. I have it in MS., as he delivered it in the Assembly at Glasgow, 1638. This I have [not compared with the print, but suppose there are few differences, save some citations on the margin. It appeared to me when I read it, near thirty years ago, solid and plain, much adapted to its design, the use of common people; and to contain the chief points of the Arminian controversy judicially handled.

It hath of a long time been my opinion, that we are most in hazard in this Church from the Arminian and Pelagian errors, both as they are most adapted to our corrupted nature, indulge our sins and sinful inclinations, and really secure its interests in the soul, and take us off the only proportioned remedy provided against it, by landing us in self; as well as they are the natural channel to lead us to all other errors, whether Popish, Arian, or Socinian, yea, at length downright Deism.

Sometimes I have wished some short, plain antidote against this mother error were printed, so as it might be generally spread among common people, and particularly the youth. Whether Mr Baillie's would, in all respects, answer such a design, I dare scarce determine. It's the clearest and briefest I have seen. Were any thing of this nature spread, I would be ready to give all the encouragement in my power.

My thoughts, perhaps too much, have been for some time off subjects of this nature, and roving on our history and biography, which last I sometimes think, through God's blessing, might be of some

use to let us see from whence we are fallen, if not to revive some concern about real religion, and instruct as well as direct.

When your leisure allows, and when you are not better taken up, I'll send you in some of the first rude draughts of the Lives of our Reformers. My great difficulty, if ever I come to publish any thing this way, which I have no prospect of, will be to make a judgment how far it will be proper to publish some extraordinary vouchsafements towards them, which are as well vouched as morally we can expect things of that nature at this distance. I am yours.

December 29, 1726.

LETTER CXXXIX.

PROCEEDINGS OF COMMITTEE ON SIMSON'S CASE.

To my Lord Grange.

MY LORD,—Yours of the 7th came not to hand till Friday's post. I shall not say how satisfying it was. Your observe is too just, that half work is little better than no work at all, and sometimes it happens to be worse; and in this case, Mr Simson, indeed, improves our confused minute, which, you remember, was formed when we were late, and in a hurry, and was afterward to be considered; and next day we had not a quorum, and on Friday no time; this minute, I say, he improves in his protest, as a receding from the method of queries, and quarrels the Presbytery for going contrary to the Committee's advice, when they insisted on the queries. The Presbytery took it in another sense, and I hope when we meet we shall explain it to them. The idle and lying stories spread of our procedure last meeting, I think, should be remembered at our next.

I cannot tell how it comes, that the copies of the Presbytery's references, and Mr Simson's answers and protest, are not trans-

mitted. Mr Simson's answers are long and tiring; and I cannot but think they are before this sent to the Moderator. If they be not, or if your Lordship still want them, let me know by the first post, and I'll endeavour to send you a copy of both. I take the liberty to observe your Lordship speak of the 20th of March, as the day of the Committee's meeting; I hope it's but a mistake in the writing. My letter from the Moderator bears the 15th of March, and so does the letter to the Presbytery of Glasgow. I wish there be no confusion in the day appointed, and hope there is not.¹

The Committee of the Presbytery have not made their report of their precognition to the Presbytery as yet. And Mr Simson made loud complaints this day to the Presbytery, that delays were used, and he was not acquainted with what his scholars had said; and that their precognition was kept so close. The Committee told the Presbytery, that they had gone through all the scholars who had come before them, but severals were out of town, and they had not yet come to them; adding, they were ready to lay their incomplete report before the Presbytery, if they called for it. The Presbytery ordered them to go on, and call the students who were out of town, and complete their report, if they could, against the next Presbytery day, the 1st of March. The Professor complained that then he would have very little time to think upon the precognition, and prepare answers. However, the Presbytery adhered to what is above, being unwilling to take an incomplete report.

I am glad to find a matter of this nature is kept so close; and, indeed, there is not a whit of the students' declarations talked of at Glasgow, that I could hear of; and the bulk of people there, and perhaps every where, are ready enough to talk of matters of this nature. Any thing I know of this matter I can, with the utmost freedom, communicate with your Lordship, because I know it will go no further till once the report be made.

The students appeared pretty backward, and desired copies of the interrogatories to be proposed to them to think on; and insisted

¹ Wodrow and Lord Grange were members of the Committee on Simson's case, appointed by the preceding Assembly.

some of them, that they could not declare, after a year's teaching, the *ipsissima verba*, and other delays. When proper answers were given by the Committee to these, a great number at different times were examined. Most of them are young, raw lads, that, I believe, do not really understand what Mr Simson has taught. Others, I imagine, till they be put upon their oath, will not declare what they know; and it was somewhat surprising to find severals, upon the interrogatories, declare they remembered nothing taught upon these heads, even though we should make allowances for the distance of time, and difficulty of minding words. Severals of them agree in this, that they observed a considerable difference in the Professor's manner of teaching these two last years, upon the subject of the Trinity, and his manner formerly; but when urged to come to particulars, they either could not, or would not, distinctly explain themselves. The most material things declared, as far as I can find, were:—One student said, that when the Professor, last winter save one, was explaining the subject of creation, and speaking about Marck's¹ argument against the eternity of the world, viz., that if it were eternal it would be necessarily existent, he expressed himself dissatisfied with the argument, and gave this reason, because *Christus est eternus, quamvis non existat necessario*, or, *quamvis non est ens necessarium*. This is but declared by one, but the lad seems to be distinct in it; and his *causa scientiæ* is, because, as soon as he went home, he wrote down the words, and went to the Professor in private, and discoursed about them; but received no satisfaction from him about the expression.

Another declared, when the Professor was speaking some things about the Father's being *Fons Deitatis*, he (the student) objected against some things spoken as derogating from the Son's Independence. To which the Professor replied, That if he took independence in such a sense as includes the Father's personal property, then he could not see how it was applicable to the Son. To which the student answered, That take independence in what sense he pleased, if it could not be applied to the Son, he thought that he could not

¹ John Marck, author of the *Medulla Theologiae*, &c.

be necessarily existent ; and, consequently, it might have been possible he never should have had a being. To which the Professor replied, We know not these things, and these terms are very impertinent, and should not be used in talking of the Trinity.

Two of them agreed pretty near, that the Professor spoke of a definition of Aristotle, which was confused, and makes the numerical essence the same with one person, and said, that in this sense the unity of essence in the Trinity could not import the same numerical essence. They added, that the Professor did not deny one numerical essence absolutely, (as far as they remembered,) but with a view to this definition of Aristotle. This was this present session.

Another declared he heard the Professor use the terms, Three Intelligent Agents ; but never Three Beings.

'This is all I know of as yet. There are several of the students as yet unexamined. What their declaration will produce I know not ; but I imagine what is above is most part of what is to be expected at this time.

Thus I have laid before your Lordship all I can depend on in this matter, and you'll be able to judge what should be done, (though I cannot say what will be done,) much better than I can. We are told here, but with what truth I cannot tell, that the East country members are all generally against questions ; and what is very foolishly termed the inquisitory method, I fear some may. I found some, Mr Br. [Brand,] Mr Wishart,¹ and Mr Bannatyne,² were not of these sentiments in November ; if they are changed, it's another point. I am sorry for it. You'll find all the members of our Synod, unless it be one, and perhaps not he either, are for the method of queries, and going on in the way the Assembly hath directed. The Presbytery of Glasgow, save one minister and an elder, are joint and unanimous for what I know. They are much to be pitied, and need support and countenance. They are bullied, and, I had almost said, abused to their face by their pannel, and very much need your Lordship's presence ; and since the Assembly hath laid it upon us, in a matter of the last

¹ Mr William Wishart, Principal of the College of Edinburgh.

² Mr James Bannatyne, one of the Ministers of Edinburgh.

importance to this Church and all the Churches of Christ, and which is infinitely more, what so nearly concerns the glory of our Redeemer, I hope we shall not want your assistance. Matters are now come to all the bearing they can be brought to; and the Assembly's procedure will very much depend on what they and we do; and, therefore, I humbly presume to think your Lordship will find yourself called to be with us. I'll be extremely sorry if your circumstances should prevent your being at the Assembly, and I shall hope that Providence may order it so as you shall get both attended in a matter of this prodigious consequence. But I can by no means think of your not being with us on the 15th of March, when we need persons of your knowledge in law and forms of procedure, to say nothing of your other abilities to yourself. In one word, we need your countenance and weight, as I am sure we have your prayers, as one deeply impressed with the present hazard of the doctrine of this Church, and a true lover of the Redeemer's Divine person and glory.

I'll be a little impatient till I know this comes to your hands, and you'll not forget to let me know if you still want the papers which have passed since November. I'll be sorry if Mr Logan be not here, and I wish he may use his interest to bring Principal Haddow with him. It's the least they can do to be present in March, when they were not with us in November. And, indeed, considering that we are to send the state of this matter to the several Synods in March, and it's probable this will be our last meeting, I'll be sorry if we want their assistance.

May I conclude with an humble petition for myself, that you'll please to acquaint me what day you design to be at Glasgow, and I'll come in and be there, if the Lord will, when you come; and could it answer your conveniency to favour me with some little time here, it would be a peculiar pleasure to divert, with my collection of manuscripts, coins, and other things, a person I am more indebted to in many respects than any other. Forgive me all thir freedoms I presume upon; and believe that I am, my Lord, yours, &c.

LETTER CXL.

SIMSON'S VIOLENCE AND ILL TEMPER.

To my Lord Grange.

MY LORD,—I hope you had my last, and would be glad to hear from you before I see you at Glasgow on March 15, which I humbly hope for, and the rather that I am told several other of our ruling elders are to be with us.

The report of the precognition is not yet made. I am told there is nothing new since my last, but some concurring declarations anent the most important passages. This day, I am told that on Wednesday last Mr Simson was extremely out of the temper that the report was not made, and alleged he should have known the declarations some time before the Committee met, that he might have answers in readiness. I did not, indeed, take precognitions to concern parties so much as to be a kind of * * * by which judicatories are to direct their own procedure. The Presbytery have delayed taking the report, which is not yet completed, by reason of the absence of some students, till Tuesday the 14th instant. Mr Simson's temper is ruffled, probably by his bodily indisposition, and these two or three weeks, they say, he hath been somewhat indisposed, and this is given as the alleviation of some indiscreet words he used, that this was an unfruitful work of darkness, and others I repeat not; though I have ground that he knows the most material articles declared against him. They say, also, that the Presbytery being to appoint an *exegesis* to Mr Forbes, under a call named that subject, *Num Filius sit, equalis Patri, et Essentia, Independens, et Necessarius*; these are the words as told me. Mr Simson with violence opposed giving the young man that subject, as what was controverted and debated. It was answered, that all subjects of

exeges are so by adversaries. To which he rejoined, that this question in these terms was controverted by some even in this Church, and ought not to be prescribed. However, this Presbytery did prescribe it to Mr Forbes, I think, under a call to Kirkintilloch, or the other under call to Cumbernauld.

I'll be fond to hear from your Lordship, if you have any time, next week by post, and be extremely obliged by your thoughts on the matter as it now is to be before us. I think Mr Maxwell allowed me his paper on the Solemn League and Covenant, after your Lordship had done with it. I am, my Lord, &c.

March 4, 1727.

LETTER CXLI.

SIMSON'S CASE.--ASSEMBLY RECORDS.—MSS.

To my Lord Grange, at the British Coffeehouse, London.

MY LORD,—It's with a great deal of pleasure that I obey your commands, in giving you hints of what concerns Mr Simson's affair. Last week I sent, in the Solicitor's cover, the Presbytery of Glasgow's remarks, which you desired; and by this you'll receive the Professor's letter to us, November 7th. The libel is not yet put in his hands; but as soon as it is, and I can get a copy, I'll send it. I could not send you so distinct accounts of what passed on the 22d as I wished, because no copy could be got of the Professor's paper he gave in, and it was delayed till yesterday, and given him back. Neither yet can I give such an account of it as I would, because in things of this nature I would still incline to give the *ipsissima verba*, which I shall transmit to you when I get them. Till the paper itself come, please to take the following account, as far as I remember. For as ill as Mr Simson was when you left Glasgow,

yet he grew so well on Sabbath the 19th, that he was in church all day. He taught on Monday and Tuesday following, and was brought, by the importunity of his relations, (as some represent it, who are of opinion if he go to the Assembly suspended, that sentence will not be soon taken off,) to be more sensible of his hazard than formerly, and to take some measures for preventing the suspension. Accordingly, he formed that paper I wrote of last, and signed it, and sent it to the Presbytery. I heard it but read over that day, and cannot pretend to resume it, being very long. After a long introduction, containing a regret that he was not able to be present when his answers to the references were found not to remove the suspicion, he gives a prolix account of the Sabellians and Arians, which, in my opinion, was both heavy, and had nothing to do with the purpose in hand. The use he makes of all is to tell the Presbytery that of late he had seen the need of quitting all hypotheses for explaining the doctrine of the Trinity, and of restricting himself to the phrases in the Scriptures and our excellent Standards. This takes up near a sheet of paper; and then, in the close, he comes to the oneness of the Divine Essence, and declared as his private opinion that the same substance might be common to the Three Divine Persons; and adds, that he is much surprised that he should be suspected of denying the Necessary Existence of the Son, while he had taught that he had all life in himself, and was infinite, eternal in being, wisdom, power, holiness, goodness, and truth, from which his necessary existence is a consequent; and the like may be said as to his Self-Existence, Independence, Supreme Divinity, and being the only true God. This, he hopes, will remove all the difficulties which have been objected against him. The Presbytery, as he desired them, if they were not satisfied with this paper, returned it to him that day, and required him to be present on the 29th, to give plain, clear, and direct answers. It was insinuated by some, that if this did not satisfy, it might be resumed against next day. Accordingly, yesterday he came himself and offered his paper signed to the Presbytery. It was moved, that before reading it, he should be asked if he gave in this paper as his answers to the que-

ries? This was opposed by others, but carried by a vote. When he was asked if he gave in that paper as his answers to the Presbytery's queries? he answered, that he gave in that signed paper as his private sentiments upon the subject-matter of every one of the Presbytery's questions. And this being minuted, his paper was read. It's just what it was formerly, with the long out-of-the-way introduction; only he hath expressed his own opinion the oneness of substance, and declared Christ's Necessary Existence, &c. in his judgment to be a great consequence of his having all life in himself, &c. The Presbytery took the paper to consider till this day. What they have done I have not yet got account.

Your Lordship will permit me to put you in mind to speak to Jerviswood, if you can find so much leisure, as to Mr Kirkton's papers, in his hands, I suppose. I know Mr Kirkton had a collection of MSS. as to our Scots Ecclesiastical History; and I have some ground to imagine he had the second part of Mr James Melville's Life in MS., and, it may be, Mr James Carmichael's Memoirs, and Mr J. Davidson's Diary. I think you were pleased to signify to me that my Lord Polton imagined Mr Kirkton might have some of Calderwood's papers. I heard from others that Jerviswood had some curious papers about our History.

It would be a service to this Church if your Lordship could do any thing to secure Mr Ridpath's valuable collection of papers. I remember there is somewhat in the Commission's minutes about them; and he made an offer of them to the Church before he died. Your Lordship will know more of this than I. It will be a pity if they be squandered away, or come into hands that will make no use of them. He pretended to have our original Acts of Assembly, (as I hear Mr Archibald Campbell, Lord Neil's son, pretends his copy is likewise an original record, and hath many valuable manuscripts as to our Scots History,) and I know, by letters from Mr Ridpath himself, that he had a collection of Diaries, particularly Mr David Hume's, of which I have one year. And, indeed, being in some reputation after the Revolution, by his papers in defence of this Church, he had great access at London to make a considerable

collection of Scots papers. It appears a matter of some importance that they should be looked after.

I am of opinion it would be a vast accession to our History, and, which is unspeakably of more consequence, to the interests of vital religion, if my Lord Warriston's Diary could be copied. Mr Ridpath told me he had it in loan from Secretary Johnston, and said it contained, besides almost a complete history from the 1637 to the Restoration, the most wonderful instances of Divine condescension and communications ever he read. Were I in case for it, I would reckon it worth my pains in riding to London to obtain a copy of Warriston's Diary, and if any method can be fallen on to procure it, I believe your Lordship will leave nothing undone to procure it.

Mr Robert Traill, in his preface to Mr William Guthrie's Saving Interest, printed 1715, tells the world he had a series of letters upon soul-exercise, which passed betwixt his father and Mr Guthrie. My relation to Mr Guthrie makes me, and much more the edification I would hope to have from the spiritual intercourse of two so great men, more than fond to have copies of them. I cannot propose any methods for recovering them, unless some of the ministers of London could help to come at them. I am sure I should grudge at no charges to have a double of them.

The known bookseller, Parkhurst, who died some twelve or sixteen years ago, had, in MS., the three volumes of Gillespie on the Covenant, and by his letter to me offered to print it, if I would procure three hundred subscriptions at half-a-crown, the book in sheets. I wrote to him I would do it; and soon after he died. It would be of use if the MS. could be recovered and printed. *

* * * * * I am, with the greatest sincerity, my Lord, your most humble and obliged.

March 30.

P.S.—The Presbytery this day kept the Professor's paper under consideration, without determining any thing about it further at present, and put the libel in his hands, with a list of witnesses, and

cited him to answer upon the 12th of April. He required, considering his health and business, to the 19th, which they refused. I shall send a fuller account as soon as I can get his paper. Meanwhile, there is a difference like to fall in about the *ipsissima verba*; and some allege that, according to the opinions of lawyers, at the last process the witnesses were restricted to the *ipsissima verba*, not, indeed, of the libel, but what they heard. And if they cannot depone these, it's pretended they are judges and not witnesses; and this is alleged to be agreeable to your Lordship's and Sir James Stewart's opinion at the committee. I have much mistaken if it was so. I would, for my own satisfaction, gladly know the opinion of lawyers, and yours, if you please, upon the case, as it was reasoned this week among us in private:—"Supposing a person can swear that he remembers such a proposition or particular doctrine was vented, but cannot swear to every individual word or expression, and the order of them, though he mind some of the words, or cannot swear to each of the words, is his deposition to be taken?" I was of opinion it was, according to our reasoning in the committee. I wish I have not been mistaken.

LETTER CXLII.

SIMSON'S CASE.—EXAMINATION OF WITNESSES.

To my Lord Grange.

MY LORD,—Yours of the 8th instant was most acceptable. I am extremely concerned that mine of the 24th hath been opened, and I fear this must be the fate of the three other I have since sent. I was perfectly easy, they being directed according to concert, and each of them having half a sheet for a wrapper. There is no help for such incidents. My great concern is the fashrie this will bring to two persons whom I so much honour. I folded them and

sealed them as well as I used to do, never dreading opening. I hope this will not fall into such hands. I am in some pain that since the 8th, I don't hear of your receiving mine of the 30th of March, which I am mostly concerned about, and that of the 3d. I am afraid I need scarce write to you after this post, because you'll be (I hope) returning to the Assembly. I can add nothing to my former, but that the Presbytery met on the 12th and 13th, and were put off with dilators and idle objections against the libel, and gave the Professor till the 18th to propound his defences. These were produced on Tuesday the 18th, and are four or five sheets of sparse write, yet not so long as I expected. I cannot pretend to resume them, having only glanced them this day in the time of the depositions. In short, as to the main points in the libel, taken from the precognition, he says he cannot think they will be proven, because he never used these expressions, because they are contrary to his sentiments; and if they be deponed, he must think there is a mistake in hearing, or he hath tripped at that time in speaking, and used *Christus* for *mundus*, and *creavit* for *generavit*, or some such trip. As to the articles of the libel taken from his papers, he explains them, and repeats much that he said in his answers to the Presbytery's references. He seems, in his defences, to retract what he said in his representation in answer to the queries as to the oneness of number, and owns he taught they were neither numerically nor specifically one. Besides these defences, he gave in general grounds of exculpation, wherein he offers to prove that he hath taught agreeably to the Confession, and declares himself in seeming sound expressions, as to the most of the points libelled. The Presbytery got over these long papers, which, indeed, I have scarce glanced, and cannot well resume, and found nothing in them to hinder them going on to a proof. And so yesternight, the 19th, when I came in, they were upon the first witness, who depones, in as far as I can see, according to the declarations. This day I heard other three examined, and they are precisely according to the declarations in the precognition. I am apt to think that the rest will all do so; and some of them, as one already has done, will go some further

upon oath than is declared in the precognition. There are three depositions, agreeing that he altered his teaching these two last years. There are two concurring as to the Professor's refuting Mark's argument, and two agree that he said, *Christus quamvis eternus, non tamen necessario existit*. There is one deposition upon *Deus Pater est causa Dei Filii, ni supponamus, &c.* With the cross questions and other things, they have taken two or three hours to every witness, and there is no helping of this. However, the Presbytery resolve to finish the proofs, if possible, this and next week; and I believe will get through it, if Mr Simson fall not sick again among their hands; so that all will come in before the Assembly; when it's the earnest desire of all the ministers I have talked with, and six or seven have earnestly pressed me to beg it of your Lordship, that, if possible, you be at the Assembly, though your Lordship should not be down till the 8th of May.

This is a matter of the very last consequence to this Church; and never any thing of such importance to the cause of truth and the glory of God-Redeemer was before our Assemblies. Your Lordship, by being of the Committee, has it fully in your view, and I hope nothing shall hinder you from being present in a meeting to which you are chosen, and where, it may be, there may be a considerable appearance in favour of Mr Simson; though it will be strange to me if the precognition now turned to a libel be proven, as I now see it will, if any number shall appear for his continuing to teach; and I shall reckon it a dreadful sign of Divine anger already poured out on us. I humbly persuade myself I need not insist on arguments for your presence at the Assembly. God himself direct your heart and way! You may depend on it, whatever letters you see from Glasgow as to changes in some persons there, since the time your Lordship left that place, they are mistakes, I shall not say misrepresentations. By the time of the Assembly, if the Lord will I have the pleasure to wait on you there, I shall tell you the whole ground of the stories, if I mistake you not; and you will see that these worthy persons are far from being satisfied with the paper given in in answer to the queries; and, in my opinion,

much more is gained by it, such as it is, than could have been by suspension in such circumstances. But I must necessarily break off, with my thanks for the hints you give me as to Mr Watts, and the country gentleman who answers him, whom I highly value; and begging I may yet hear from you while you stay at London or by the road. Pray spare not postage; but direct for me, to the care of the Postmaster at Glasgow. If I find, by any from you, that I may write what passes next week, I shall be sure to write. Meanwhile, I am, my Lord, yours, &c.

April 20, 1727.

LETTER CXLIII.

LETTERS FROM THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, 1727.¹

Wodrow to Mrs Wodrow, No. 1.

May 4.

MY DEAR,—This day the Assembly met. Mr Mitchell opened the meeting with a sermon on Psalm cxxii. 6, “Pray for the peace of Jerusalem,” where he was very particular upon the case before the Assembly. He explained peace to be still in a consistency with truth, and truth was to be preferred even to peace, and urged first *pure*, then *peaceable*. He insisted upon praying for peace with God, and the removal of controversies; for civil peace, in opposition to war, and there noticed the present hazard, and princes breaking through every thing sacred, and their ingratitude in kindling a war at present; and, after several other kinds of peace, he came to that which was necessary for maintaining the purity of doctrine; and there he observed that, once or twice, (and he reck-

¹ Letters to Wodrow, vol. xvii. Nos. 196-204.

oned that was all since the Reformation,) this Church was threatened with error, and by the zealous appearances, in a peaceful way, of our General Assemblies, error was prevented. He said it was plainer than he needed notice it, that at this time we were threatened with error; that the last Assembly had found it their duty to appoint an inquiry to be made into it; that now a report was to be made to this Assembly, and the whole to be judged by them; that they were not to be directed by him as to the case before them; only he craved leave to observe, that the subject-matter of their consideration was the greatest that possibly could be before them; that the subject of the proper Deity of the Son was what, in all ages of the Church, had been mostly attacked by heretics; that in all ages they put forth their utmost force upon this foundation truth; that the Church had been vexed, by the mixing in the cunning and fancies of men with the pure revelation of God; that the subject of the Trinity was what we are bound to receive purely on the authority of revelation; that in this matter we can have no assistance of reason, or any thing but revelation; that this subject was so delicate and tender, that he trembled to speak of it; and much more to this purpose, delivered with much concern and gravity. When the Assembly constitute, the Commission to Finlater¹ was read in common form; then the King's Letter, wherein I observed nothing singular; only he recommends unity and harmony at this critical juncture. The Commissioner, in his speech, signified the King's grant of the L.1000, and that he had the warrant to deliver. He did not question but the Assembly, at such a time, when we are threatened with confusions, would express their loyalty to the King, and how much they were sensible of their safety and happiness under the present administration, which I believe will lead them to a direct address. There was a considerable struggle in the choice of a Moderator. The Commissioner was at first, when he came down, as is said, for Professor Hamilton.² However, these two

¹ The Commissioner was the Earl of Findlater and Seafield.

² Mr William Hamilton, Professor of Divinity in the University of Edinburgh.

days he hath given out himself to be for Mr Black of Perth. Provost Drummond and others seemed to be all for that choice, and the persons who seem most against Mr Simson gave it out that it was unfit to vote against Mr Black, because Professor Hamilton had been favourable to Mr Simson. I doubt a little if either the Commissioner or some others were violently against Professor Hamilton. Indeed, the Church being balked last year in their choice, which was noticed in Assembly by Mr Ramsay, who questioned whether Mr Hamilton was not really chosen by the last Assembly, which Mr Mitchell resented from the chair, and said he saw where that pointed, and that it was an attack on the sincerity of the clerk. Mr Hunter of Ayr, Mr Robison of Dumfries, were in the leet; but all the votes run on Mr Hamilton and Black. Mr Hamilton carried it by nineteen, or, as the clerk had it, twenty-one. Many thought it most decent, that when a matter of doctrine was to be before the Assembly a professor should be in the chair. His patent for King's Chaplain is passing the seals. Seafield got his Commissioner's office, to balance his charges of representing the King in installing the Duke of Hamilton Knight of the Thistle; at least this is given as the reason of the change from the Earl of Loudoun.

My Heart, I am very well. I can say nothing how the great matter will go. Continue instant in prayer. The Lord be with your spirit! I'll get little written the two next posts for our throng. I am your own.

May 4.

LETTER CXLIV.

Wodrow to Mrs Wodrow, No. 2.

May 5.

MY DEAR,—This day the Assembly met for prayer. The Moderator, then Mr Thomas Black, Mr John Scot, Mr Thomas Linning,

Mr Andrew Tate, Mr S. Semple, Mr T. Blackwell, prayed. I cannot say that liberty was altogether wanting, and, indeed, the view of the great matter before the Assembly, as it required more than ordinary application, so there was, I hope, more than common seriousness. The four preachers were appointed before the Commissioner, Mr H. Maxwell and Mr James Nairn, for the first Sabbath; Mr J. Taylor and another, for the next. In the afternoon the Answer to the King's Letter was read in the committee, and there was some little debate about a reference to the Commission's address to the King, and whether it was proper to insist so much upon the matter of it, or to make a separate direct address at this juncture. At length it was agreed to as brought in, and it's pretty long. I doubt there will be occasion of another direct application as to the dreadful growth of Popery in the North, of which the accounts are most dreadful; but these will be before us to-morrow. There was no more of any importance. This night there were two meetings in private as to Mr Simson's affair. It's agreed to be tabled to-morrow in the Assembly, after the voting of the King's Letter; and a committee will be appointed to consider the papers to be read before the Assembly; and I think all the principal papers will be read, which will take two or three sederunts. The Commissioner promises all time to discuss that great affair. I believe the bulk of them will be printed against Monday, to be in members' hands. The Lord direct, so as extremities be not run to on any hand! I doubt I'll be so throng to-morrow, that I must leave that day's procedure to my brother to write.

May 6.

This day some new commissions came up, and the King's Letter was voted unanimously, and put in the Commissioner's hand. Mr Simson's affair was tabled, and Mr Mitchell and Mr John Hamilton appointed to bring in a list of what papers the Assembly were to read, and he was allowed to be with them. Then the Synod books were called for, on which they are at present, when I write this, which I cannot get read over. The Instructions meet at night.

LETTER CXLV.

Wodrow to Mrs Wodrow, No. 3.

May, 8, 1727.

MY DEAR,—I am perfectly well; and I needed not begin with this unless my letter on Saturday had not gone to the post-house, after it was written, not through my fault, which only makes me uneasy, because I fear you'll be uneasy. On Saturday we had the Instructions, where there is not much of public concern. Several applications for a fast, about grievances and Mr Simson, and regulations on Students of Divinity; but the bulk are for a share in the public money and the King's Bounty. There is one of the most lamentable representations I ever saw of the growth of Popery and meeting-houses in the North, particularly Aberdeenshire, by Bishop Gatherer and his Hightflyers. There is a mass-house in Aberdeen, to which the Papists go as openly as to Church, and near thirty or forty meeting-houses set up, who pray not for the King, since the last Assembly. In short, in these bounds they seem already to be under a Jacobite government, and they are uppish to a degree upon the designs of Spain and Austria. There is no execution of laws, and matters in such circumstances, as, if the civil government do not effectually notice them, things are like to run very deep. A committee was appointed for that affair, and they have agreed to address the King immediately upon that head, and send a memorial; that is all we can do. Indeed, since the overlooking and sham prosecution for the rabble, September was a year, the insolence and keenness of Jacobites' meeting-houses and Popery is intolerable, and they are fretted by the King's Bounty, and exert themselves to defeat the design, and oppress and vex such as attend on missionaries and itinerant preachers. I don't know if any instance can be given, that a government ever suffered such to enjoy a toleration

that pray not for the government, but for its enemies openly, and in such terrible multitudes, that ministers are threatening to leave their charges, as insupportable. Mr Logan said in public, that all administrations, he thinks, are alike.

On Sabbath, Mr H. Maxwell lectured before the Commissioner on Christ's transfiguration, and preached on 1 Tim. ii. 1, 2, "Put up prayer, supplications, and intercession, for all men, especially Kings," &c., where he touched the state of the North at present; argued against forms of prayer; insisted against praying for the dead, the middle state, and other of Mr Gatherer's and the Highflyers' Popish notions. Then showed the unaccountableness of not praying for the King in Protestants; and could not but regret that such who did not pray for him were suffered to teach publicly. Mr James Morison in Fife preached afternoon, Mat. xi. 30, and had a plain Gospel sermon on the submission to Christ's yoke.

This day the Committee of Instructions met, where they began on their work; entered on the Church's grievances. That of toleration was remitted to the state of the Committee for the North, who have the representation a-forming, to be sent to the King. In short, not six or ten of all that take the benefit of the toleration come up to the terms of it, and this will be laid before the King. Patronages fell next. The acceptance of presentations by probationers, in a qualified way, was exclaimed against; and a resolution sought of the Assembly that Presbyteries should not concur with such as accepted of a presentation; an Act of Assembly, 1645, was insisted on, declaring such as accepted presentations guilty of Simony. This was justly opposed, because in the face of law, and a law that was designed to ease us of sham presentations, though some urged it was a law that was made to ease us of patronages, under the views that such were our principles, that we could not go in to ordain such as had accepted a presentation without a call and consent of Presbytery. No issue is yet come to, the time of the Committee of Overtures being come. There, in the forenoon, the overture as to calls *tanquam jure devoluto* was read, and remitted to consideration of a committee. There are difficulties in it not easily got over. An

act allowing processes before judicatories to be printed, providing persons' names are put to them, was, I think, transmitted. An act regulating distributing tokens at communions, levelled against some abuses in the Merse, by some Marrow brethren, was read, and ended in recommending former Acts of Assembly.

In the afternoon, at three, the Assembly met. I know not if I told you before, that on Saturday Mr Mitchell and Mr Hamilton of Glasgow were appointed to consider what papers, in Mr Simson's process, were to be read. They met with Mr Simson; and he insisted pertinaciously on so many things to come, that they gave it as their opinion, the shortest way would be to read all papers without debating. So he was called. He complained the Presbytery of Glasgow had injured him in not giving him a sight of their remarks on his Answers to the References, and their remarks on his Representation or Answers to the Queries. He charged the Presbytery with clandestine and unfair dealing, and other high terms, and craved that their members here might not be allowed to judge in the matter. Mr Hamilton easily answered all his hard words; and at length he fell from his objections till the controverted papers came in. This was none of the most cautious beginnings for him. The Assembly entered on reading his process four hours. I hope eight or twelve more will get through it. To-morrow we are to have a print of his thirteen sheets of small print. Nobody can positively say in what shape the matter will turn. The Commissioner will give full time for finishing it. To-morrow, all day, papers will be a-reading, so probably I shall have no more to write till Thursday's post.

LETTER CXLVI.

Wodrow to Mrs Wodrow, No. 4.

May 10, 1727.

MY DEAR,—I was in such haste in my last, that I forgot to tell you in my last what passed here as to Mr J. Millar, now entered upon his trials before us. On Friday night I got notice that there was a design to cast up the procedure of our Presbytery, in taking him on trials, when the Synod had ordered us to correspond with the Presbytery of Lanark, who had difficulties, and after the Presbytery of Glasgow had signified their dislike, and now that the Presbytery of Ayr had written a third letter, and complain of us, and get the Assembly to put a sist to his and Mr Pollock's trials. On this we had a meeting of our Synod members. Mr J. Millar of Neilston engaged to stop at his public trials, that the Synod might consider that affair before he was licensed. This would not satisfy the Presbyteries of Lanark, Glasgow, and Ayr, unless he was sisted altogether, and we went no farther till the Synod. Upon which it was agreed that the members of our Presbytery should lay the facts before our Presbytery, to be convened *pro ne nata* on Wednesday, and get their answer, whether they would stop trials immediately. This was done, and we wait their return. This is an unexpected turn to this affair.

On Tuesday, after I wrote my last, the papers about Mr Simson being ended, the length of the last day of the Presbytery's meeting, when their answers came to be adopted to Mr Simson's references, and their answers to his representation, Mr Simson complained, that as to the first he was allowed to see and answer, but could not get them from the clerk; that the second paper he had not seen till yesternight. His lawyers, Mr A. Murray and Mr William Grant, pled for him, that these papers could not be read till his answers were ready; and he craved till Thursday, that the defendant should

still have the last word. To this it was answered, that the Presbytery were judges, not defendants; that there was no party but Mr Simson and the truth; and yet to save time, and take away all clamour, he was allowed till Thursday to answer them, and so the matter stands. And we shall have no more of this affair till Thursday, and probably I'll scarce get writing, the Assembly will sit so late. Then a transportation to Dunning from Montrose of Mr Jo. Couper, Mr Mathew's son, came in, and he was continued almost unanimously in Montrose.

This day the Committee of Overtures met, and the Instructions. An overture as to the poor, and restraining sturdy beggars, was read and remitted to a committee. It's long, and I believe will not soon be ended. They had some lesser things before them. The Instructions went through several things, and insisted a while on a fast. It's delayed till the business of doctrine be over. The Commissioner is allowed to grant a fast; but the King must have the nomination of the day; and so I believe those who are to push a fast will not so much urge it. * * * * *

LETTER CXLVII.

Wodrow to Mrs Wodrow, No. 5.

May 12.

MY DEAR,—I could not possibly write to you yesterday in the afternoon, the Assembly sitting till after eight. But I desired my brother to write a short hint of the committee. Yesterday forenoon the Assembly met at ten, and a large report of the state of Popery, and the distribution and success of the King's Bounty, was read; then the Assembly went into a call somewhere in the Synod of Perth, of no great concern; but by reason of the lawyers' pleadings, it was very long protracted, and without a vote the unanimous sentence of the Synod was affirmed. In the afternoon Mr Simson's affair was tabled; the two papers not read formerly were read, and

Mr Simson's answers to them, which I shall send to you, if I forget not. The papers being all read, the Assembly came to remove parties. At going out, Mr Simson signified that he hoped still the matter was open to consider whether the Presbytery of Glasgow were to be his judges; and he did not insist upon it at present, because he thought it not of great moment, in this present case, when entering on the method of procedure. But the Assembly desired him to propound what he had to say against their being his judges, this being the proper place. Then his two lawyers, Mr Grant and Mr Murray, pled upon that head. They offered to plead partiality and iniquity upon the Presbytery; and when Mr Grant was laying out his plan for this, Mr Dundas interrupted him, and begged he might not propound his declinature upon irrelevant grounds, which were evidently irrelevant, and came not up to the forms in advocations and civil courts; that he should not enter upon the detail of that Presbytery's procedure in small trifling matters, which, though true as he laid them, would not be relevant for a declinature. After this interruption, Mr Grant shortened, and complained only of the Presbytery's taking in the first remarks on the Professor's answers, and their second answers to his representation, which he alleged showed a keenness against Mr Simson. The Assembly, all who spoke, found the Declinature of the Presbytery as Judges in this case was groundless; that they were the Professor's judges; they were appointed by the last Assembly to inquire and bring the matter *usque ad sententiam*; that they were no parties, since the whole they did was only to prepare and refer to the Assembly. Some said, instead of being casten as judges, they should have the Assembly's thanks for their pains and care. Nobody was of a contrary mind, save Mr Alexander Robison. Some, indeed, made a question, whether they could be judges on the relevancy, that they had judged already? but that was not insisted on, and several spoke against it. When this was intimated, Mr Simson was called in, and asked if he had any further to say before they entered to the affair? He said, he had no particulars to insist on, till he had them pointed to him, and had a pretty long discourse, that he had endeavoured to

approve himself to God in teaching ; that he had endeavoured to remove all the objections he had heard of against what he had taught ; that, indeed, he had taught nothing but what appeared to him agreeable to the Scriptures and our Standards ; that he had no opinions contrary to these ; and if he had had any, he would have reckoned it his duty to have communicated them with his brethren before he had taught them ; and if he could not have been convinced by them, he would have thought it his duty to have left the Church of Scotland in the peaceable possession of her doctrine, and left her ; that in no point, that he knew of, was he ever, or is contradictory to the doctrine of his mother church ; that he had offers of settlement in other places ; and had it not been for the love he bore to the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government of his mother church, he would have embraced them ; that in pulpit and discourse, he had many times expressed the contrary of what he designed to say ; that what was witnessed against him by some young students was of this kind, and contrary to his constant sentiments. And, on the whole, he craved that the Assembly might call him, and suffer him to be heard in explaining any word or phrases he had used, before they concluded any thing ; and some other things I may have forgot in once hearing. Being removed, the Assembly went upon the method of procedure. Members were averse to speak on this subject. The matter was divided into the queries and the libel. It was thought, generally, the libel was first to be considered ; and the Committee proposed was appointed at first, as it seemed, to bring in their opinion in general upon the method ; but then it turned to another shape, they were appointed to go through the whole, and consider the relevancy and proofs, and sum up the evidence, and report. It's a great trust. The Lord direct them ! Some alleged that the Assembly should first read the queries and libel, and go upon the relevancy in the open Assembly, but that was not much urged. The Moderator named the Committee, Mr Mitchell, Mr Jo. Hamilton, Mr Tho. Linning, Mr A. Logan, Principals Blackwell, Haddo, and Chalmers, Mr Robertson, Mr John Millar, and Mr Currie of Monkland, M.

[Marquis] of Tweeddale, Lord Drummore, Mr Dundas of Arniston, Affleck,¹ and the Provost of Edinburgh. They met this night, and are to meet to-morrow. I doubt if their report come in soon, or if they will soon agree ; and some wonder how the Moderator named so many that are not reckoned very friendly to Mr Simson.

May 12.

This day the Assembly met in the forenoon at ten. We waited till eleven for the Committee ; and then Mr Simson was not ready to come, but promised to be soon present ; and the Assembly went to the approbation of the Commission book, and the Committee for the King's Bounty, and the counts of the public money. The Church is about L.300 sterling in debt. Mr Gillespie threw up the affair of the new edition of the Confessions, as what the Commission had not ended as they ought. This was sopited, by referring it to the Overtures. Some other lesser things were referred to the Overtures and Commission, particularly a large representation from the Society for Propagation of Knowledge, complaining that the last collection for books was not gathered, nor young intrants, and near the half of the ministry, had not signed for that good work ; and an act was ordained to be framed and presented to the Overtures thereanent. The Acts of the Assembly since the 1697 were ready to be lodged in the four public libraries ; and the report of the Committee appointed yesterday was read, which was not what some expected. It contained only a general directory how to proceed in Mr Simson's affair. There, I am told, there were some who proposed that the queries should be begun with by the Assembly, and proposed by them to Mr Simson at the bar. Those were reckoned friendly to him who proposed this ; and it was said they were assured that he was ready to give direct plain answers to them ; and that would have answered this end, to prevent the entering upon the libel, or at least have shortened it. But this was not gone into by the Committee. However, some persons who were said to have

¹ Mr James Boswell of Auchinleck, advocate, the grandfather of the celebrated biographer of Dr Samuel Johnson.

been against queries as an inquisition, and made a great cry against them, are now obliged to come in to that method, which before was so much spoken against; but that was overruled, and the consideration of his not answering the queries was reserved till the libel was gone through. The report from the Committee to the Assembly was, that the libel should be considered in its relevancy, exculpation, and proof; that the second and third articles should be begun with; and the places in the prints were specified relative to each of the articles. In the afternoon the Assembly entered upon the libel as to the second and third articles, about Christ's Independence and Necessary Existence, which is, no doubt, the chief part of the cause. The Professor was heard on it, after the article, and the probation, and exculpation, were read. He had a long discourse on them, and repeated what he had said yesterday; asserted that he had no contrary opinion to the Confession of Faith as to Christ's Necessary Existence, &c.; that at the time of that discourse libelled he was very ill, and had opiates prescribed; that he was not able to have arguing and disputing; that he thought the witnesses had mistaken him; that it was but once that he had said so; that always he had taught otherwise; supposing it true that was said, that it was only spoken in a particular sense and meaning, restricted in a safe sense, and so not relevant. His two lawyers insisted much on the same topics for an hour and a half, and, indeed, spoke little new from what is in the defences and papers in print; only strongly insisted that his renunciation, even supposing error, was a sufficient exculpation. After the parties were removed, some members spoke upon the relevancy. Mr Linning, Mr M'Laren, Mr Semple, spoke for the relevancy, and insisted that he made the personal property of the Father to be Self-existence and Necessary Independence, and, consequently, robbed Christ in a sense of these perfections. Mr M'Laren¹ insisted that all the persons were equal as to their personal perfections, though not as to order; that the subordination of the persons was only as to their order, and not as to any essential perfections, such as Necessary Existence; that the terms Necess-

¹ Mr M'Laurin of Glasgow.

sary Existence, &c., though not directly in Scripture, were to be taught as well as the Trinity, and many others; that Necessary Existence, &c., were included in Jehovah, attributed to Christ in Scripture; that heretics frequently spoke in a sound sense, but contradicted themselves; and many other things I cannot resume. It being by this time near nine, it was moved that this matter should be delayed till to-morrow, after they had been so long together, and since they could not overtake the relevancy or proof, so as to come to an issue; and so it stands till to-morrow; when, may the Lord direct! for this is the very hinge of the present cause. I know not if I shall have time to write to-morrow, since the Assembly is like to sit late.

LETTER CXLVIII.

Wodrow to Mrs Wodrow, No. 6.

May 15, 1727.

MY DEAR,—I wrote you a large account of the Assembly on Friday; and on Saturday they had an unmerciful sederunt, from nine to four in the afternoon; and, indeed, it was in some measure a lost sederunt, for nothing was done almost, further than what had been in the matter agreed to on Friday night. In the entry of the meeting the Professor compeared, without being called, and spent another half-hour. He desired again that he might be called in when any facts were advanced which were new, and craved yesterday's minute might be made so as to allow liberty. He told he was informed that it was advanced yesterday that he had denied Christ's Necessary Independence, which he denied, and put it to the proof. He complained that Mr M'Laren had said that he was condemned for Arminianism, and rebuked for it, 1717, which he asserted was false. He renewed his declarations of orthodoxy. There was nothing marked upon this, and Mr Logan gave him a public admonition that it was not for his interest to insist much on Act 1717, and so he was removed. Then Mr Dundas opened the debate. I did

not observe much advanced, in point of argument, but what is in the printed case, save that, with some keenness, Mr D. [Dundas] fell upon Mr M'Laren, for what he said, indeed, as I thought, a little unguardedly, yesternight, as I think I hinted; and he fell very foul on a print, supposed to be Mr Williamson's, called Remarks on Mr Simson's Case, in the title-page and preface whereof a dissent is threatened. The whole of Mr Dundas' arguments run upon this supposition, that heresy was to be the subsumption of the libel, and the punishment of heresy the conclusion; whereas, it's only the censures of the Church. The Lord Drummore, Mr John Hunter of Ayr, (who really speaks too often, and owns so much, and yet mends not,) Mr A. Robison, Mr Mercer, and Mr Thomson of Meigle, were all that spoke against the relevancy of some of the articles now before the Assembly; though Mr Dundas, and all that spoke on that side, in the strongest terms owned their belief of Christ's Necessary Existence and Independence, especially the first; and said that, if that were denied or weakened, there was nothing of Christianity left. On the first article now before the Assembly, about Necessary Existence, there was little debate, at least among ministers, as to the relevancy. But then, for two or three hours, the speakers spoke at random on both relevancy, exculpation, and probation; and, since, from the bar, all the three had been spoken to, this was insisted on by Mr Dundas and that side, which was a vast consumption of time, and I imagine the protracting of this matter is in some of their view. Perhaps I may be wrong. In this time, after Mr Dundas his first speech, Mr M'Laren vindicated himself as to what he said yesterday, and said, though he owned a superiority in order as to our conception and revelation among the Divine persons, yet he asserted the equality of the persons as to personal properties in power and glory; that it was equally glorious to be begotten as to beget; and if any subordination and dependence, further than that of order, were asserted, he could not but think it would land in a dependent and independent God. In the time of this speech, three queries in print, on Mr M'Laren's speech, were distributed in the House; when at length, [after] many speeches on the other side by Principal Blackwell, Mr Ramsay, Messrs M'Laren, Linning, Logan,

Arch. Napier, Samuel Semple, Mr Mitchell, and others I have forgot, Mr Hamilton moved the Assembly might restrict themselves to the point of relevancy, and come to an issue as to that. This occasioned much debate, and many hailed in the exculpation and proof as they inclined. But generally they came afterwards nearer. Mr Blackwell had some sweet enough remarks on Isa. ix. 6, "A Child, and the Mighty God and Everlasting Father." The great difficulty was upon the Independency. All owned it an essential attribute of the Son; but then, by sustaining the relevancy of Independency, as laid in the libel, separately considered from Necessary Existence, the difficulty was moved, (Mr Hunter carried it as to Necessary Existence also, from a citation of the Council of Smyrna, but he was backed by nobody as to that,) that Owen asserted that the Son was dependent as to his nature and in creation on the Father. Van Mاسترict and others were named as asserting a personal aseitas or independency; and our Confession of Faith, and all Protestant Confessions, went not in to determine the question, whether the Son, as to his personality, was dependent or not; and it was insisted that it would be improper the General Assembly should condemn those great men by sustaining this as relevant. On this Mr Mitchell proposed that in sustaining the relevancy, the words, "independent as to his Deity," should be inserted, which would prevent that difficulty. This was gone into; and because in this matter of sustaining the relevancy, the resolution of the Assembly would be the subject of remark and conversation to all Europe, both Protestant and Papist, the framing it should be with the utmost care and exactness. It was remitted to Mr Mitchell, Mr Chalmers, Mr Haddow, Arniston, and others, to be brought in next diet. And so the Assembly dismissed, after having sat from nine to four in the afternoon.

This day the Assembly met at ten, and the report was brought in from the committee as to the state of the relevancy. Before that was tabled, at the reading of the minutes, Mr Simson craved liberty to be heard on the minutes, when the clerk had put in what I hinted as to Saturday's procedure, that he had complained that he was asserted, in reasoning, to have denied Christ's Self-Existence and Independence, and that he had been rebuked, 1717, for Armi-

nianism,—both which were false. This was desired by Mr Gillespie and others to be rased out of the minutes, since it was not fit that every thing said by a member, and complained of by the party, should be noticed in the minutes. Mr Simson craved it might stand ; after several warm speeches, that part of the minute was rased out. Then Mr Simson craved that before the Assembly came to enter on the relevancy, he might be heard on somewhat new, not pleaded on that head, and gave in a long paper to the clerk, which was heard. The substance was, that if the Assembly should determine on the relevancy, they would add the phrases of “ Necessary Existence ” and “ Independence ” to our Standards, contrary to the Act of Assembly, [16]97,¹ against Innovations in Doctrine till they were remitted to Presbyteries, and some other acts. After this he had a long speech, half-an-hour or thereby, which I am not in case to resume. He addressed himself to the passions or affections of the Assembly, and signified that when a child, he had no prospect of usefulness, and yet got health from God ; that, 1725 and 1726, he was under the near views of death, and longed to die, and yet was restored to teaching ; that in teaching he had God’s glory in view, and the Scripture doctrine as far as he could gather it ; that he founded and gathered his notions on the Trinity from Dr Owen, as most Scriptural ; that (with an oblique hint on the Presbytery) he was afraid that this Church was running into Sabellianism ; that this was properly the question with his brethren ; that he did not think we were in hazard of Arianism, but of running to Sabellianism or Socinianism, in making the Three Persons modes and relations, and this made him assert them intelligent agents and principles of operation in the one God, adding somewhat I dare not be positive in, that he did not like the term numerical oneness of substance or principle, or to that purpose, adding he was near sixty years, and had not long to live, and did he differ from the Church in opinion, he would think it his duty to leave them ; but he did not know that he differed from the Confession of Faith ; and as he had acted and taught with

¹ Commonly called the *Barrier Act*.

a view to eternity, so he expected his brethren would lay aside all prejudices, and judge him under the same views. This long speech was timed remarkably, before the Assembly entered on the relevancy brought in by the Committee; and what effect it had, will only be known by the issue. The overture about relevancy was read next. That, 1. His denying the Necessary Existence of the Son. 2. That his saying, in teaching, that the Necessary Existence and Independence of the Son, *as to his Deity*, were things we knew not. 3. That he had taught they were philosophical niceties, things we had no knowledge of, as in the libel; only the word "ambiguous" is left out. The first article of relevancy was agreed unanimously, and that marked. There was some debate about the sense of *what we knew not*. Some would have it to be the same with mysterious, and above our comprehension. But, generally, it was thought to mean, to be no part of our faith. That sense was urged to be added; but sensing proportions was generally spoken against as improper here and dangerous, and the terms were to be taken in the ordinary use of the words. There was upon the same article a debate about the adjected word *as to his Deity*, as what was needless, because not in the libel, and hazardous, because it might perhaps be a new libel, at least called so by the panel. This last was denied by all the lawyers; and the first was thought needful to evite the condemnation of Owen and other divines. And so, after about three hours' debate, the relevancy as to these two articles in the terms above was agreed to without a vote. I forgot to mention the debate about the last article of the relevancy, the terms. Some of the lawyers debated that the using or not using of terms and words was not relevant to prove heresy. That was answered by observing that censure, not heresy, was in the libel, and that terms, especially such as are here, Necessary Existence and Independence, were of vast importance in teaching and a teacher, especially when denied by Dr Clarke and others. Thus the relevancy was ended.

In the afternoon, the Assembly sat from five to near eleven at night. The Professor and his counsel, as the phrase now is, were

heard on the exculpation, which, as agreed in the forenoon, was to be considered before the probation was heard. I mind little now from the bar upon the exculpation, but what is in the prints. The great thing insisted on was, that the Presbytery of Glasgow had refused to grant witnesses of exculpation, though sought by the Professor, beyond the witnesses for probation. This, indeed, consumed three or four hours, which were spent in defences and exceptions against the Presbytery of Glasgow, rather than the exculpation. The case was, in short,—the Presbytery had delayed to grant the Professor new witnesses of exculpation, different from those in the probation, before the sustaining of the grounds of exculpation, directly in the terms of the Form of Process. This was objected against, and not the method in criminal courts; but in this they differ. But the truth is, all the scholars, save those who were last year, were cited both for probation and exculpation, and examined by way of conjunct probation, as appears plain, and those of one year's standing could never exculpate. Mr Dundas, my Lord Drummore,¹ and Grant of Elchies, consumed three hours in insisting on this. There was scarce one minister joined in this, it being directly contrary to our Form of Process. The other grounds of exculpation, that his continued tract of teaching according to the Confession, and against the Arians, as in the abstract, was an exculpation of his teaching once or twice wrong, suppose proven, and some others were reasoned on. But the first ground of the Professor's not having had time and warrant to cite witnesses beyond those of probation, and that he should yet get time to cite them, was mostly insisted on, as what entirely exculpated. But that was at length overruled, and when a vote was demanded, the exculpation at length was given up; and it was again agreed without a vote that the articles of exculpation advanced, were no way sufficient to elude the libel on thir articles, reserving to inquire how far they might soften the censure, when proven. The lawyers almost only managed this debate. The ministers at length spoke, and seemed pretty unanimous, and so the minute runs as above. The proof comes to-

¹ Wodrow generally spells this *Dunmore*.

morrow ; the Lord direct in it ! Every inch is disputed, and many hours are spent, especially by the lawyers, from the throne, and some begin to fear that a design is to outweary so as nothing may be done this week. A little time now will discover the event, which I wish may be good.

May 16.

This day the Assembly met, and Mr Simson and his counsel appeared at the bar upon the proof. I mind little new, but what was in the exculpation, or, at least, better pled by the members lawyers in the Court. The Assembly restricted themselves to the first branch of the articles they are on, found relevant *that he denied the Necessary Existence of Christ*. The witnesses are Boyd, Duncan, Barr. The bulk of ministers that spoke were for finding Boyd and Barr relevant, though two or three reasoned otherwise, as Messrs Robison, Hunter, and Mercer ; but the plurality by far were for finding the proof good. At length Mr Dundas had his turn, and used the greatest force of expression to overturn the witnesses altogether. He argued from the distance of time, two years since, upon *verba emissa*, upon want of special time, so that there could be no contests in this matter, (both which were fully, I think, answered,)—from the youngness of Barr—from the false Latin he ascribes to the Professor in his oath,—from an inconsistency between Boyd's words,—from Duncan swearing to the best of his remembrance ; and, in short, he endeavoured to cut down and expose all witnesses upon *verba emissa* as to error or heresy, and to assert there scarce could be any proof of these but by write, especially if there were contrary assertions, renunciations, and declarations at the bar. All this is a strong proof of the necessity of queries, which I thought Mr Grant, the Presbytery's Advocate, allowed of in his reasoning, at which the Professor seemed a little displeas'd. In short, [he pled] his not getting all the witnesses for exculpation he sought, and the contrary testimony of those taken as to his teaching according to the Confession of Faith for ordinary ; and these three depositions being but one single instance of teaching. The trip in tongue¹ was scarce ever spoke of in this reason-

¹ A *lapsus linguæ*, pled by Mr Simson.

ing. All these defences were spoke to by many members pretty distinctly—Messrs Blackwell, Semple, Mitchell, Haddow, Logan, Mr J. Orr at Lanark, who justly observed, that the Presbytery's refusing to answer queries to him¹ was a great *vidimus* of his differing from us in the matter; and that assertions now at the bar, and afterwards, are much weakened by his refusing to answer his brethren's inquiry. Mr Peter Grant of Little Elchies answered Mr Dundas, and took him up in some points of law, as to the time, that it was libelled in the Justiciary in this method, and as to his distinction between legal and convincing proof, and insisted strongly that the words of depositions were to be taken in their plain meaning, and not sensed, and inferences put on them for probation, otherwise, judges would run into impressions; and he knew no proof belonging to judges but legal proof. My Lord Drummore answered him in a little; but the subject was much exhausted, and I don't think he reasoned very plainly. At length, about three of the clock, this first, and, indeed, the great article, came to a question, Whether, notwithstanding of the exculpation, this first article was proven, and it carried, as I reckoned it, by 129 Proven; 22 or 25 Not; and about 19 Go on. The consequences of this are evident.

I forgot to observe, that this forenoon the nomination of the Commission was brought in. There was not one altered given in by the Synods. Mr Smith is in from Edinburgh. From us, Mr Jo. Millar, Mr R. W., [Wodrow,] and Mr R. Mitchell. What will be further done in the afternoon at five, when the Assembly meets, I cannot say. I think after this vote there will not be much long debates.

Not proven, Mr Mercer, Mr Robison, Mr Hunter, Mr Carrick, Mr Bannatyne, Mr Anderson, Principal Chalmers, Mr William Hamilton, three or four in Merse, and some few others I forgot, Arniston, Lord Drummore, Mr Jo. Sinclair.

The vote above, I am of opinion, will lay aside Mr Simson from teaching.

¹ This is evidently a mistake for "his refusing to answer the Presbytery's queries to him," which formed a great part of the dispute. See *State of the Processes depending against Mr John Simson*, p. 29, &c. Edin. 1728; *The Method of Proceeding by Queries Vindicated*, &c.

LETTER CXLIX.

Wodrow to Mrs Wodrow, No. 7.

May 17, 1727.

MY DEAR,—I gave you a pretty large account of matters in the Assembly till yesterday at five of the clock, when the Assembly met, and went on to the second article found relevant in the first branch, whether the saying, Christ's Necessary Existence was what we know not? Before they entered on it the Professor's lawyers desired it might be inserted in the minutes, that they had, in the forenoon, required that the Assembly should observe that the Professor had not passed from the general exculpation that the Presbytery had not allowed the Professor all the witnesses he had desired for exculpation. The state of this I hinted at before. This raised a great cry from the lawyers that it should be minuted, and if the Assembly saw fit to deny it that they should do it; now the matter had been reasoned near four hours in the Assembly on Monday, and was at length fallen from by the judges. This was not denied, but still insisted that it should be minuted. Mr Hamilton and some others were ordered to draw the minute as to this against to-morrow. Then they went on to the second article, as to its probation. There are three or four witnesses for it, as is to be seen in the prints; but Mr Dundas, my Lord Drummore, and Easter Elchies, jested on them, and insisted there was not the least proof; mostly because four witnesses of exculpation had deponed that it was only question-ways, How do ye, or how do we know that? which was not the Professor's assertion, but a question, though three, and, I think, more witnesses deponed it as an assertion, We do not know this. There fell in an incident as to Mr Hunter of Ayr, which shows his ordinary keenness; but must speak three or four times every meeting, and more than a quarter of an hour's length at every time. He happened to bring in some similitude or other, as he uses very many,

and at first drew it from the Oath of Abjuration, and the charging of ministers that had taken it with approving of the Church of England. To this he compared some part of the libel. All this passed, but within some few minutes he drove on his similitude a little higher, if in reasoning one should call his Majesty King George *a rogue and villain*, and when called to prove it, should assert he was of wrong principles. Upon this the Commissioner rose and stopped him, and directing himself to the Moderator, he said, The member speaking, he believed, might have no ill intention in what he said, but he was very needlessly and indiscreetly bringing in the King, and if he acknowledged it was a mistake and *lapsus*, he would go no further; if not, he would apply to the Assembly to take notice of him; on which he immediately asked pardon, and acknowledged he was in the wrong, but "he was going to lay a hypothetical proposition and infer treason." The Moderator, however, though the Commissioner was satisfied, by the Assembly was required to rebuke and admonish Mr Hunter, which was done, and so the matter was hushed. After some reasoning about words of the same import, and some other objections made against the witnesses, it came to the vote, Proven or Not; and it carried Proven by a vast majority. Then the third article was read, whether his saying, Independence as to the Deity was what we know not. This was unanimously found Not proven; neither could it be, because the words, *as to the Deity*, were adjected in the relevancy, and so the proof was lost, of design that the Church might not determine the controversy about the independency or dependency as to the personality, which evinced authors differ about. The fourth article found relevant was delayed till to-morrow, it being about nine of the clock. It's observed by some that my L. D. and Mr J. H.,¹ the two keen advocates upon one side, the first transgressed against God in the Assembly, by, in the heat of an argument, falling out to a kind of—"Upon my conscience, I think it so!" And the second

¹ Lord Drummore probably, and the talkative Mr Hunter, whose "similitudes" met with less mercy from the Venerable Assembly than his Lordship's "kind of swearing."

against the King. The first begged pardon, and said, "He hoped he was not swearing, and fell without thought to the expression," and there was no more of it; and the other was handled as above.

At night, in conversation as to the issue of this process among six or seven of the leading members upon one side of the question, where I happened to be, we came to agree that it were to be wished, could it be attained, that this Assembly should put a final end to this unhappy and melancholy affair, as what would put it out of people's mouths, and still the clamour and talk about it; but then it did scarce appear possible that this could be done in such a distinct and accurate way as would be safe for the truth and the Church, and so as to take in the whole that was in the field. At the rate of the present dilatory and long management, we must sit some weeks before we get through the libel, many articles of it, and those of very great weight, being before the Assembly, as well as the method of queries, which we all agreed behoved to be approved and sustained. This being the state of things, and it being impossible to get through it so as to answer all the purposes of a determination in so grave an affair, it was next considered what was to be done. It seemed pretty plain that not a few were for a sentence of deposition, but how that could be well founded on what was yet judged, or what the Assembly at this time could overtake, so as to justify the Assembly's procedure, and have the sentence distinctly and solidly founded, appeared difficult. It was agreed that for preventing further damage to the youth, and many other accounts; particularly, that probably it would be most harmoniously gone into, a suspension should be gone into, and a stopping his teaching till next Assembly, and meantime either the Commission, (which was not inclined to,) or rather a particular Select Committee for Purity of Doctrine, well chosen, should be appointed by this Assembly, to go through and prepare what the Assembly could not overtake at this time, and meet as they should be appointed, and ripen the whole against the next Assembly; and that this should be proposed and carried with all the unanimity possible. This was agreed

to, and this, or somewhat like this, probably, will be the issue of this affair.

This day the Assembly met at ten, and sat till five. There was an hour's debate about the minute I spoke of before, and after the paper given in by the Professor, and that by Mr Hamilton, were read, a short minute was agreed to, narrating that the Professor did insist on the iniquity done him in not calling all witnesses for his exculpation, and craved they might be yet cited; but [that] this being overruled by the Assembly, the motion was rejected. Then the Assembly went on to the fourth article found relevant, as I wrote formerly, that in teaching he said the terms Necessarily Existent, and Independent, were impertinent philosophical niceties, &c. The former strait recurred here as to independency as to the personal properties, and many of the depositions relate to the personal properties; and so this article was remitted to a Committee to consider and class the probation, and bring it in next day. I believe the term independency, for the former reasons, will be dropped, and then all will prove as sustained, and the witnesses will perfectly prove it. Then the Assembly went on to the fourth general clause of the libel about numerical oneness. The Professor and his lawyers were heard on the relevancy of this, and the next, whether the subject of these perfections, &c.; and they added nothing I could observe to what is in the prints. Then the relevancy of these two articles came to be considered by the Assembly. On the one hand, Mr Chalmers, Hunter, and two or three more, alleged it was not relevant, because it was only a question whether the term numerical oneness should be used in teaching, which was not used by our Confession, nor any other. On the other hand, it was argued that the question was about rejecting the term numerical oneness, and bringing no other in the room of it; and numerical as to the thing, one in number was undoubtedly in our Shorter, Larger Catechism, and Confession of Faith; that it was plain from the Professor's papers, that this rejecting of the numerical oneness was to cover a distinction the Professor

insinuate of a Necessary Existence and Independency of the Father, which did not belong to the Son and Spirit, and so they indeed could not be numerically one in substance or essence; that this plainly led to a notion of three Godheads, substances or essences, and exposed the doctrine of the Divine Unity. My Lord Dunmore and E. Elchies, and four or five more, kept up the debate about five hours. At length, when they would not agree to sustain this article relevant without a vote, as they had done the rest, which my Lord Dunmore only hindered, it was put to the question, Sustain or Commit to a Committee, and carried by a great majority, Sustain this article relevant. This is all done this day. The Committees meet at night. The Lord direct to-morrow! and I hope the Assembly may rise on Friday, which, for what I see, will be the soonest. So you may send word to Mr Pinkerton that it will be late on Saturday before I can be home, and if the Commission meet, whereof I am a member, I know not but I may be kept till next week. So be not uneasy though I come not home. I am perfectly well.

May 18.

Yesternight the Committee of Instructions met. The Presbytery of Lanark propounded a most dreadful and atrocious case for advice. Some weeks ago, one Chancellor and some others came to that height of villany, as is said, as to baptize a dog, and use the words of institution. Ten witnesses are cited, nine examined, and depone *negativè*. The persons blamed acknowledge some circumstances of pouring water on a dog, but deny the using the words. The tenth witness it's expected can depone somewhat considerable, and yet the question is, being but a single witness, whether he ought to be sworn, and what will be the effect of his oath. The Committee seemed to be for swearing the witness, because, if he deponed, he might lead to further means of probation; and, at least, in this single witness, the Presbytery would have occasion to deal with their conscience, and without this witness his deponing they behoved to continue under scandal. The Commit-

tee remitted a fast to the Commission; and the affair of the Confession of Faith, as to the Covenant in the Third Volume, was remitted to the Commission, and a draught of an Act was agreed to about students of Divinity, especially their entering on trials; that, according to instructions from Presbyteries, all acts of Assembly be renewed, that they have testimonials to the ministers or Presbytery where the College is as well as to Professors; that none be admitted to be enrolled without testimonials from Presbyteries; that if a Presbytery give their opinion that a student should not pass trials with reasons, it should be stopt till next Synod determine.

At night I was with the former meeting, Mr M., Mr L., Mr B., Mr H., P. D., B. N., Mr R., and we agreed on the former proposal to be proposed this day in Assembly by Mr M., which he did after reading the minutes; and in case it was gone into, we agreed upon a list of thirty to be a Committee for Purity of Doctrine.

This day the Assembly met at nine, and there was a little squabble about the minutes. The word "specifically one" was put into the minutes, and it was declared that what the Assembly sustained relevant was, that he had denied that the persons were numerically one, and giving no other sense in room of numerical. The report as to the fourth proposition of the third and fourth articles came in, and was, that the Professor had taught that the Necessary Existence was impertinent, &c., was proved, and as to the Independence of the Deity, it was not proved. This was remitted to the Committee, of which I shall speak next. After the minutes were over, Mr Mitchell rose and made the proposal, that since it was impossible the Assembly could overtake the whole of this affair, a Committee should be named to consider what was past, and what was yet to come, and bring in an overture as to the whole. This was gone into without debate; and the former Committee, Messrs Logan, Chalmers, Principals Blackwell, Haddow, John Hamilton, Jo. Millar, Jo. Curry, Dunmore, P. of Edinburgh, Mr Mitchell, and Moderator, was agreed to. They are yet sitting,

and I doubt if the report be made this day. They will either go in as above, on a present suspension, and [or] that this matter be remitted to the Presbytery of Glasgow, and Messrs Mitchell, Hamilton, and Haddow, joined to them, as I hear. But I doubt if this last proposal carry. I am yours, &c.

LETTER CL.

Wodrow to Mrs Wodrow, No. 8.

Edinburgh, May 19, 1727.

MY DEAR,—In my last, I gave you some account of the committing of the great affair concerning Mr Simson. The Committee I named were ordered to withdraw, and the Assembly went on with their ordinary work, none of which almost could be overtaken till now, since the affair of Mr Simson was at the beginning preferred to all others; and partly by the nature of the thing, and partly by the long defences and dilators made by Mr Simson his lawyers, and partly by the long speeches made by two or three lawyers from the throne, and six or seven ministers upon one side against a vast majority, this affair was protracted, as I have observed to you. The Synod books were gone through in common form, and some other things from the bills of no great importance were passed. In the forenoon, the Committee agreed to suspension for the present. There was a debate, whether the Committee to be named for Purity of Doctrine should be empowered to take off the suspension on application from him; but that was waived, because the Committee would not have yielded that point, nor would the Assembly have gone into it, as appeared plain enough. However, this censure was last in the report. Then it was unanimously agreed to remit the whole remaining to be done by this Assembly, if they had had time, to a Committee. In the meanwhile, a Committee was agreed to. In the afternoon, at four, the Committee

about the North met for an address to the King, which was finished. The Committee of Overtures met at five, and transmitted several acts to the Assembly. An act was brought in by a member about planting of parishes, being a branch of the overture in dependence about calls and planting *jure devoluto*, which was that for preventing heats and divisions as to settling of parishes: If the third part of the electors were dissatisfied and dissented, the Presbytery should not go on, but refer to the Synod, or call one *pro re nata*. But this being popped in to the Committee at the close of the Assembly, and not being thought ripe, till who were electors was settled, it was sent to the Commission, that is, sunk.

The Assembly met at six, and the report of the Committee about Mr Simson was called for. Before that was produced, Mr Simson desired to be heard, and gave in a signed paper containing his sentiments for his own vindication upon the three heads found proven, —Necessary Existence, Independence, and numerical Oneness. Had he given in this before to the Presbytery, matters needed not run so high; but he is, as some remark, too like King Charles the First, who made many concessions, but generally they came too late. There was nothing spoken on it. Then the report was taken in. Principal Stirling desired that the minutes of the Presbytery might be read, containing the University's protestation in the Presbytery, allowing them judges in this affair, but protesting for the preservation of their liberties; which was done, and he adhered to it, and took instruments. It was said, if the University had used their powers they might have prevented all this, at least much of it; but no public notice was taken, only the protest received. Then the report was read; remitting to the Committee and suspending. Messrs Linning, Logan, Hog, and Black, and some others, moved that a clause might be added, that the Assembly did not reckon suspension an adequate censure for what was proven and gone through already by them; but because of want of time, and the gravity of the work, and till the matter were ripened, they went into this. This was said to be in the act already on the matter, it being for the interim only. They and several others de-

clared, they thought "stopping his mouth," as the Apostle's sentence is, and deposition was the proper sentence, but for harmony they went in. Indeed, had the question been Suspend or Depose, even on what is past, I doubt the last had carried. Then it was agreed to unanimously, and none spoke against it. After some discourses on the time of meeting, and numbers and quorum, it was moved the committee to take this before them might be named, and the three members from Glasgow, Messrs Mitchell, Haddow, and the Moderator, were made nominators, with an order to put in themselves, and ordered to withdraw, and turn the overture to an act, and add the time, place, powers, &c., and fill up the nomination; and so, after the Assembly had given their thanks to the Presbytery of Glasgow for their diligence and care, and to the Committee last year, which was done verbally to the members, and ordered to be recorded, they withdrew, and in two hours brought in the act as it stands. Thus this great affair is ended this year. And the Committee is twenty-six ministers and eight elders, and, save two, the members are what were agreed on in the meeting I wrote of; and in their room Messrs Crawford and M'George are; and, indeed, save six or seven, they are not reckoned to favour the one side of the debates we have had, and I hope it will be seen to be so. This is all could be done. The truth is vindicated by the sustaining the most important articles relevant, and Mr Simson is found guilty as to Necessary Existence and Numerical Essence; and all that have spoken have owned these great truths, and Mr Simson hath verbally owned most of them, and much plainer than ever formerly; so that, on the whole, I hope the Lord hath not altogether left his servants in this difficult matter. Several other acts were passed;—an act for a new collection to the Society for Knowledge; and many things were remitted to the Commission, and tomorrow the address to the King about Popery comes in, and a few other small matters, and the common forms at the close.

May 20.

This day the Assembly met at ten. Professor Simson was called,

not being present yesternight, when his sentence was agreed unto ; and this day we were told that he was gone home to Glasgow by eight of the clock, which was, I believe, what he was strongly moved to by his friends, who, in my opinion, by the pushing things too far, and misrepresentations of matters to him and others, have done him and his cause very much hurt. But it seems he took another course, which was, indeed, better for himself. Accordingly, when called, he compeared. The Moderator intimated the act of Assembly to him by word of mouth, and read the committee named to prepare his affair against next Assembly ; and then spoke to this purpose, that he heard the issue the Assembly of this Church had come to, and he needed not, he hoped, direct him to take this matter out of the hand of God ; and he did not doubt but it would be very affecting and awful to him ; and he was of opinion, that it should be matter of his deepest humiliation. Mr Simson answered, that he desired to take all he met with out of the hand of a holy and gracious God, and particularly this present sentence ; that he had formerly expressed his concern for the peace of this Church, and that he was resolved rather to submit to leave the country than do any thing that would disturb the peace of the Church ; that he had the deepest value for the judicatories of the Church, and would submit to the decision of this Assembly. The Moderator had cited him to wait on the Committee and the next Assembly. As to his attending the Committee on Monday, their first diet, he humbly conceived that they could do little but agree on their method of procedure ; and if there were absolute need of his presence, he would postpone every thing to it ; but, indeed, both the uncertainty of his health, and the circumstances of his family, hindered him from staying any longer ; and, unless it had been to show his regard to the venerable Assembly, he should have gone off early this morning. The matter he had in view was his wife's being brought to bed of a son on Wednesday, of which he had accounts only by Thursday's post. * * *

LETTER CLI.

SIMSON'S CASE.

*Lord Grange to Wodrow.*¹

SIR,—I have had one or two from you since I came from England, and also Woodward's book returned to me. Excuse my not acknowledging it sooner. I bought not many books at London, and those I did buy are in a ship not yet arrived at Leith. I have not time to write much, and some things I might say are better for conversation, which I hope to have with you at the next Commission. You and your friends, I humbly think, ought not to fail to attend it. There is good reason to apprehend that some intend to push for a sort of ambassade from the Kirk to the King, and for that purpose, and that they may be the ambassadors, are to convene all their forces. If this obtain, I am of opinion that you may as well send men to persuade the court that men of sense and breeding do not think ill of Simson's, and other new schemes, and that they are only opposed by odd out-of-the-way people, and that these things will at length, and easily take in Scotland as elsewhere. I do assure you there is great danger in this, as I believe I'll satisfy you at meeting. Our friends at London expected an account of Simson's affair in print, from some good and honest hand among us, since his account of it was reprinted there. His people have since printed here a second edition of it with additions. If nothing be printed on the other side, (and with due care and accuracy, so as may be well read both here and in England,) I am persuaded Simson's way will gain great advantage at home, and still more in England, where it imports the truth in general, and the Church of

¹ Letters to Wodrow, vol. xxii. No. 16.

Scotland very particularly, to have that matter right understood and judged of. When you come to town, I am sure I can satisfy you of this likewise, and that if some of you about Glasgow do it not, none else will. It is already too long delayed. Is not Mr McLaren one good hand for it? I beg my humble service to him; and I am, very faithfully, Rev. Sir, your most humble servant,

JAMES ERSKINE.

Edinburgh, July 22, 1727.

LETTER CLII.

SCOTTISH BIOGRAPHY.

To the Rev. Mr James Kirkpatrick, Minister at Belfast.

REV. DEAR SIR,—I have been making some collections for a considerable time upon the Lives of our Ministers and eminent Christians in Scotland since the Reformation. It's undoubtedly a loss to the interests of real practical vital religion, that, save some few scrapes, we have little or nothing of the lives of a great many very eminent persons the Lord raised up in this Church, whose labours in the work of the Gospel were remarkably blessed. Perhaps it's a piece of my weakness, and yet I am not singular in it, that no part of History affects me more than biography, when tolerably written. And could we recover well attested accounts of Ministers and Christians in the former periods, and the Lord's way with them, and his directing and countenancing them in his service, I would fain hope it might be, through the Divine blessing, of use for the reviving the languishing interests of piety in our day, and would not be without advantage to us, who labour in the holy ministry, under more light, perhaps, than was vouchsafed in some of the former ages; but, alas! I may say of myself, vastly short of their painfulness, love, life, and success they had. I have formed

the first rude draughts of the lives of a good many of our first Reformers and Ministers to the Union of the Crowns, 1603, and am making collections and gathering materials as to others down to this time. You know better than I that Messrs Livingston, Blair, Cunningham, and several others, came over to Ireland, and were there from the 1632, or thereabout, till the 1639. I believe you had Provost Stewart, and Kennedy, and some other of our eminent Christians pretty much with you, and many remarkable conversions, confirmations, and sensible outpourings of the Spirit, in and about the Six-mile Water, and much success attending these, Mr Josiah Welsh, and others, their labour. Mr Adair, Mr Andrew Stewart, and others, I need not name to you, down to the 1660, and even to the Revolution, are persons who naturally would come in, in a work of this nature. I have Mr Blair and Mr Livingston's Lives, and the hints there make me very much long for fuller accounts from Ireland. There is none I know of in the North of Ireland that hath had so much occasion to meet with things of this nature as yourself, and your great pains in your excellent account of the loyalty of Presbyterians, no doubt, would lead you to papers and narratives which give no small light to the lives and actings of the Scots ministers in the former period; and I doubt not but you'll have not a few remarkables handed down, relative to Ministers and Christians, from the reverend old Ministers and aged Christians alive twenty or thirty years ago, which no question you would carefully preserve. Forgive, then, my application to you for the favour of communicating what you judge proper for helping on any poor Collections I am making this way. This address, I own, needs an apology from one who has so little of the happiness of your acquaintance, though I cannot altogether call myself a stranger; since, though probably you'll have forgot me, it's I believe upwards of thirty years since I had some of your acquaintance at Glasgow. I flatter myself you will approve of the design of gathering what can be recovered of the worthies in our fathers' days, and that is all the excuse I can make for this trouble I presume to give you. The Rev. Mr Masterton, to whom I presume

to enclose this, has frequent occasions to write over to his relations in Glasgow, and will transmit any thing you favour me with. I heartily pray for much of the Lord's presence with you, and his blessing on your labours in the work of the Gospel; and am, Rev. and Dear Sir, your affectionate brother and humble servant,

R. W.

Sept. 18, 1727.

P. S.—Any Lives, Letters, Narratives, Public Papers, Diaries, and well vouched accounts of Conversions, and remarkable Providences, Dying Exercises, and Expressions of Ministers and Eminent Christians; and whatever you judge proper for giving light to the temper, actings, and usefulness of these worthies, will be very much obliging, and more than acceptable to me.

LETTER CLIII.

SOCIETY FOR PROPAGATING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE.

To Mr Henry Newman, Secretary to the Honourable Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge, to be left at Saint Dunstan's Coffee-house, London.

DEAR SIR,—I was equally surprised and pleased with yours of the 19th instant, wherein you acquaint me with the honour the honourable Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge have been pleased to do me in choosing me one of their corresponding members. It's hard for me to guess how so great a favour comes about to a person in my circumstances, and so far below the notice of that worthy body. Some friend or other of mine hath, from an excess of charity to me, given me a character which I wish I may deserve. You will please, Sir, to return my most humble acknowledgments to the Society, and to acquaint them how willing I am to my small power

to contribute my mite to the excellent purposes they have with so much success, for so long a time, been engaged in.

This I am persuaded of, that men and Christians cannot be engaged in a better work than to promote knowledge, and now, *in the time of the end*, to offer their help to the accomplishing that admirable promise, *Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased*. Charity schools, under good regulations, cannot fail to be a general blessing, and bring down upon such as are instrumental in them *the blessings of many that are ready to perish*, both as to body and soul.

I cannot altogether refuse, that endeavours everywhere towards such extensive usefulness have had my best wishes, for several years, when I had the accounts of them. Now, I reckon myself under some nearer ties to adore the Divine goodness, and make my humble acknowledgments to Almighty God, for his gracious countenancing the Society's essays for his glory; and carefully to observe for my own quickening to my duty, that *it's good to have it in our heart to build a house unto the Lord*; and I reckon it my undoubted duty humbly to pour out my supplications for a Divine blessing to accompany all the laudable endeavours of the Society in time to come, and to stir up praying persons of my acquaintance to join issue with me in this work.

It's with the greatest pleasure I know that so vast and useful a work, for the common interest of our dearest Redeemer, as the finishing of sixteen thousand Psalters and Testaments in Arabic, for the use of the Christians scattered up and down the Turkish dominions, is finished. May the blessing of God accompany them!

You may believe, I'll be extremely fond of your next, and the packet you design for me. Your letters will still come very safe by post three times a week; and with the advantage of being three or four weeks before the carriers can bring them. But for any larger packet you please to send, with any small books, practical tracts, or pamphlets, we have a very sure way how they can come once a month to Glasgow, and my house lies within two miles of it, and that is by the Kendal carrier, who sends what is left for

him very carefully. What packets you favour me with direct to me, to the care of the Kendal carrier, at the Castle Inn in Wood Street, to be forwarded to Mr James Tennant, merchant in Glasgow. That carrier is answerable for every thing that is booked and given him. Or, if it be nearer your lodgings, and may be any ease to you, you may direct your packet for me, to be left at the house of Mr Robert Fead, in Prince's Street, near the Royal Exchange, to the care of Mr Peter Murdoch, merchant in Glasgow.

Please to accept of my humble returns of duty to yourself in particular, and let me know what your honourable Society expect from their corresponding members, as their proper work. There are few could have been pitched [upon] more unfit, though, I'll venture to say, there are few more willing than, Dear Sir, your most humble servant,

R. W.

Eastwood, Dec. 27, 1727.

LETTER CLIV.

REFLECTIONS ON OLD AGE.—MATHER'S WORKS.

*Cotton Mather to Wodrow.*¹

MY INVALUABLE FRIEND,—The arrival of some vessels from Glasgow, without bringing me a line from you, or a word of you, raises in me some uneasy apprehensions. But I will not let slip the opportunity which now offers, to let you know that I still am what I hope you also are.

The vast benefits of commerce are what mankind in general now feel, and own and celebrate. We cannot sit at our tables, but the

¹ Letters to Wodrow, vol. xxii. No. 145.—This was Cotton Mather's last letter to Wodrow. That eminent minister died February 1728, in the sixty-fifth year of his age.

instances of the benefits are sensible, and afford a copious theme unto us. But you will allow me, that the *Epistolary commerce* is a sort not the least beneficial. And of what I enjoy in this way, that which you favour me withal gives me not the smallest entertainment and satisfaction.

In the 27th chapter of Leviticus, I observe that the estimation for an head between twenty and sixty years old was fifty shekels; but after sixty the estimation presently sunk to fifteen shekels, not a third part of what it was before. Though, according to this estimation, your friend should not be a third part worth so much as he was a little above three years ago, yet he is of the persuasion that, in old age, we must labour to be as useful as we can. The Orientals have an unhappy maxim, that *old age is to be reckoned no part of life*. But I have read of still *bringing forth fruit in old age*; and certainly so to do is to live. I have cause to lie down in much confusion, from a just reflection on my great and long unfruitfulness. But yet, after I have had opportunities to bring forth some little fruit, particularly by the way of the press, in my younger years, the glorious Lord allows me still, in my old age, to bear something that may be of some little use among his people. I say, my old age, because I have now outlived that which they foolishly call *The Grand Climacterix*.

I had once a simple fancy, that if I should arrive to see *three hundred and sixty-five* publications of poor treatises, which my shallow pen should have elaborated, this number would be the period of my life, and finish all that I have to do. But lately, looking on my catalogue, I found the number was arisen to *three hundred and sixty-nine*; though the preparations, which the sovereign wisdom of Heaven orders to lie by unpublished, are much more bulky, and weighty, and wealthy, than any of those that have been yet exhibited. It remains, then, that I know not the day of my death; but I would keep working and waiting, and hoping and rejoicing, and looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ in eternal life. A few of the number aforesaid (some that are just now published) I now humbly tender to your acceptance.

My country affords little that is worthy to be laid before you as a matter of intelligence. We enjoy peace. Our Churches have rest, and are edified and multiplied.

But because you asked me about our Tranquebarian brethren, and expect from the West Indies an account of what is done in the East Indies, I have enclosed a short extract of the last letters I have received from the excellent missionaries.

I pray make my remembrances acceptable to our never-to-be-forgotten Lord of Pollock. The world (I say not *our* world) ripens apace for the DILUVIUM IGNIS; my short Essay upon which you have seen. But I don't expect any other effect of that Essay on the world than what would add materials for the continuation of Petrus Licetus's Book, *De Hujusce Seculi Cæcitate*.

May our glorious Lord continue you still many years an useful servant of his kingdom, while it continues yet but in the condition of a *little stone*, and give you a recompensing lot when it shall appear in the condition of a *great mountain!* Lord Jesus, come quickly! I am in Him, Sir, your affectionate brother and servant,

CO. MATHER.

Boston, N. E., Nov. 30, 1726.

LETTER CLV.

DEATH OF PRINCIPAL STIRLING AND MR MITCHELL.

To the Rev. Cotton Mather, D.D., Minister at Boston.

REV. DEAR SIR,—I am in pain to hear from you, having had nothing since your son's letter, to whom I give my most affectionate respects, which I had in August last. By that, I found your God and Father had chastened you with a sore fever, which was very grievous to me. The accounts of the confirmation of your

health, after such a stroke, will be most welcome. I hope your good Master hath singular services for you, and hath by this visitation been widening you for them, as well as your reward.

In the beginning of October last, worthy Principal Stirling, our excellent and now glorified friend, got to his reward, after a long, languishing, and, in the end, a formed paralytical distemper. He died in much comfort, after some clouds. He was a serious and tender Christian, one of the best of our preachers, and a great benefactor to the College, though not very well treated by some of that Society. I have lost a dear and useful friend, and this poor Church hath a great loss. In September before, Mr William Mitchell,¹ one of the ministers of Edinburgh, was taken from us on the road to London, whither he was sent, with two other, to congratulate King George the Second, and condole with him the death of his father, in name of the Church. He was one of our chief men, and singularly useful many years.

These are but melancholy accounts to entertain you with ; but I hope they will move you to the more sympathy with us, when the pillars are taken away. Principal Stirling's post was last week supplied by Mr Neil Campbell, minister at Renfrew. He has none of the greatest encouragement in his entry to that once flourishing Society, which is at present torn with parties, too open to be concealed.

You will readily know that our last Assembly went as far as they had time in Mr Simson, Professor of Divinity, his process, and found as much of his libel clearly proven as to suspend him from teaching and preaching till the process be brought to an end next Assembly. We need your prayers very much for conduct. I fear the novelties and imprudence, to say no more, of Mr Simson, who was married to a niece of Principal Stirling's, as well as joint Professor with him, brought that good man to his grave in sorrow. This I only signify to yourself.

¹ Mr Mitchell became the leader in the General Assembly, after the death of Principal Carstares.

I was, ever since our epistolary correspondence, fond of hearing from you; but I am now anxious, not having any thing save your son's, whom again I thank, from you these two years. Please to continue all your accounts of the state of things with you, the state of the Gospel among the Indians, and your accounts from the East Indies, and the University of Halle. Pray continue your supplications for this poor Church. We are in hazard of corruption many ways. Our best ministers and Christians are fast taking away. My good Lord Pollock is now turned weak, and not able to attend his station this winter. He is going in his eighty-first year, and remembers you affectionately. I commend myself and my eleven children to your particular concern; and am, with my prayers for you and all yours, Rev. Dear Sir, yours.

Feb. 12.

LETTER CLVI.

WODROW'S PERSONAL AND FAMILY CONCERNS.

To the Rev. Mr Benjamin Colman, Minister at Boston.

REV. DEAR BROTHER,—Having the occasion of Captain Maxwell coming to Boston, I could not but send you my best wishes, and beg the favour of your useful letters, as often as any occasion to Scotland offers. Our distance, and the failure of trade with New England, makes these more seldom fall in my way than I could wish. When I want this pleasure, you and yours, and the dear churches of Christ under your care, are frequently on my heart. I persuade myself, I and my family and flock have an interest in your supplications. I have now been towards twenty-five years in the pastoral charge in this place. My people are growing on my hand, several hundred, near double to what they were when I came among them. I thought I had the Lord's call to come

here, and have resisted two designs of transportation, one to Glasgow, another to Stirling, places both too public and conspicuous, in which I have had much peace since. I have a loving and respectful people; it's time now to think seriously of dying among them. At first, I thought I did not altogether labour in vain; but these several years I perceive not that success I desire to be at. I leave all my complaints on myself where they ought to lie. The Lord hath given me thirteen children, two of them he hath, I hope, taken to himself. I have three boys near passed their course at the college, and my heart trembles for them in this loose age. I bless the Lord, hitherto they are restrained from many ills, and something like the beginnings of seeming seriousness in some of them, and inclinations to literature. But unsanctified learning is a terror to me. Pray for them when you come near to God's seat.

But I fear I trouble you with my little concerns. I know the care of all the churches is upon you; and the state of things with us is very cloudy. Prayer is restrained, loose principles are fast coming in, our standard-bearers are fast falling. Worthy Principal Stirling, at Glasgow, died October last, and, in September, Mr William Mitchell, one of the ministers of Edinburgh, a chief man in this Church. Few are coming up to fill their room. I hinted in my last at Professor Simson's unhappy process. It came before the Assembly in May last, where three articles of the libel were sustained and found proven, that he had taught Christ was not Independent and Necessarily Existent. They had not time to go through the rest of the libel, and committed it to a committee to prepare for the next Assembly, and, in the meantime, suspended Mr Simson from teaching and preaching till next General Assembly. Mr Simson alleges that the witnesses, his scholars, have mistaken his words, or that there has been a *lapsus linguae*, and declares his faith as to these admirable truths pretty strongly; but this happened not till after the proof was over, and all along he declined to declare his sentiments in answer to questions put to him on these august subjects. The Lord direct the next General Assembly! You will probably have his printed

case from London ere this reach you. The answer to it is too long delayed ; it will be printed at the opening of next Assembly, when, if the Lord spare me, I shall send it and the case, if it be not come to you.

We have no other thing of importance. You may be sure yours, with full accounts of all matters with you, as they were always, so now, after so long delays, will be most acceptable. I give my most affectionate remembrances to Professor Wigglesworth, and the Rev. Mr Wadsworth. May the Society they have the care of be blessed and prosper ! I have only this day got a view of Rabbi Monis' two or three discourses, printed in with your Sermon at his Baptism, which I had from yourself. I have not glanced them, but expect pleasure from them. Has he published any thing since ? Give him my dearest respects. I think you made me hope for an account of the success of the Gospel among the Indians, by the minister of Martha's Vineyard, if I have not forgot. What has become of our Scots renegado, whom Professor Wigglesworth hath so excellently taken to task, and the other abettors of ceremonies and Jacobitism ? You know my Athenian temper, and what will answer it. Great grace be with you ! My humble duty to your son-in-law. I am, Rev. Dear Brother, yours most affectionately.

Feb. 12, 1728.

LETTER CLVII.

SIMSON'S CASE.—NEW WORK ON POKERY.

To my Lord Grange.

MY LORD,—Yours of the 15th came only to me yesterday. It seems Mr Maxwell hath been come off before it came to my Lord Pollock's lodgings, and it is now come to me by the longer way of the carrier, who comes once a week.

It was extremely welcome, especially that it gives me the pros-

pect of your being at the Committee and Assembly. I cannot say but there is a sad restraint on prayer in this country; yet, where we have our few meetings, I dare not but own I see a particular concern as to error, and for conduct to such as have the affair of the purity of doctrine committed to them. I am both ashamed of myself, and extremely pleased with some of our country elders in our meetings, when I find them pouring out their souls in very fit petitions, backed with Scriptures and arguments surprising to me in this matter, and frequently I go away with a bosom full of convictions. Oh that they were more lasting! For my own share, though I am lamentably bound in secret, yet my light has led me to call on my people in public to wrestle for conduct and faithfulness to such as have, and are to have, the matter of doctrine so nearly concerning the glory of *Jehovah Jesus* among their hands, and frequently make it one article of the public addresses in this place, and I hope several join heartily with me in it. For this I am blamed, especially at communions, but hitherto I have had peace as to this part of my conduct.

I have glanced the Scriptural Inquiry into the time, manner, and consequences of Antichrist's ruin. I suspect it's written by a person in this neighbourhood, of my acquaintance; at least, it looks like some papers of his I saw eight or ten years ago, though he has now altered several of his calculations. There is not much in it but what I have read; only I think here what he has is pretty clear and distinct, and shortly and seemingly scripturally said; but the Scriptures he goes upon have been otherwise explained by severals, and he does much go in to establish his application of them. Neither is it to be expected from him, if I be not out in the guess as to the author. For my own share, I am no way a proper judge of such performances. But, if the author be for sending his thoughts abroad, I see no great hazard. Greater men than he or I have been mistaken upon this subject. Governor Burnet, now in New England, comes pretty near his period, but settles much better the beginning of the 1260 years. I doubt this writer has not seen him, otherwise he would have borrowed some more supports from

him. Dr Mather, likewise, goes much the same way. I cannot, indeed, bring myself to any determination in this matter, and a little doubt if it be agreeable to the manner and ends of that sweet book of the Revelation, that we should positively know the precise time of the fall of Antichrist till it come. There are several disadvantages of positive calculations in this matter, as to the general interests of religion; but I sometimes think that writings of this kind have some benefits attending them also; and this, in my poor opinion, is short and grave, if I could bring myself to think that any thing positive in this affair hath that gravity and modesty this awful subject deserves; and if it do no good, I hope will not do much hurt, and such as pervert things of this nature against religion in general will not much read it, and perhaps it may be of some use to others. This is what offers to me upon an overly reading of it. I shall bring it with me, if it please Providence I get in to the Committee.

And that brings me to give you a hint of what is going here since my last. After the queries were formed, which are eight or ten of the most exceptionable assertions in Mr Simson's printed answers to Mr Webster, and letters to Mr Rowan, turned in the form of a question, whether, since 1717, he had taught so and so; and to the scholars, whether they had heard him teach so and so. The Presbytery ordered their clerk to go to Mr Simson, and warn him to attend upon the 8th of February, and give an account of his teaching. Mr Simson told the clerk he would not attend, that this was no formal summons, not in write, nor had he ten free days. The clerk told him, the Presbytery sent him in civility to him, and, out of tenderness, read him the minute, I think, as his warrant. But Mr Simson declined to come. However, he was called, the summons sustained, and a written summons ordered to be sent to him against next Presbytery day. Meanwhile, a committee was appointed to take a precognition of the students, which is now finished, save two or three preachers out of town. Sixteen are examined, and their declarations will be laid before the committee in March. I need only tell your Lordship, that the declarations

are very plain, and concurring as to eight or nine of the queries: and all agree that, without giving any caution, he used still to refer to his printed Answers to Mr Webster. That matter, and his continued tract of teaching the most exceptionable passages in his Answers and Letters to Mr Rowan, is as full as can be.

I have also seen the first draught of remarks upon the Preface to his printed case, which please me very well; and I hope by this time they will be completed, save those on the law part of his case, which we very earnestly request for help in, and are longing much for. I think this will be fit to lie asleep till the opening of the Assembly, when it will be proper they be ready to be delivered to members and published. Mr Simson has lain very quiet all this winter. We only hear he is very busy in his Letters to influence the choice of favourable members of the Assembly; and I hope others will not be idle in their endeavours to have faithful and honest members chosen. I can say very little of my hopes of such from several Presbyteries in this Synod. We hear a talk, what is in it I know not, that Earl of Marchmont is to be Commissioner. This will be a disappointment to Mr S[imson,] who, they say, earnestly wishes Earl of Loudoun. Mr Mitchell's and Principal Blackwell's death I fear be now felt in members from the North.

I have letters from New England full of accounts of the awful earthquake there, which I shall bring with me, if my frailty and the weather suffer me to come to Committee, as I design, if the Lord will. I pray for much of the presence of God at your sacrament at Edinburgh, and much access to the exalted Redeemer, for his appearing for his own name's sake. That your Lordship may have a sensible share is the earnest prayer of, my Lord, yours, &c.

Feb 28, 1728.

LETTER CLVIII.

SIMSON'S CASE.

To the Rev. Mr William Macknight.

REV. DEAR BROTHER,—I came home from Edinburgh only on Monday's night late. If you'll come to me next Monday, all night we shall talk over the subject you write of. In short, our Committee for Purity went through the libel about Mr Simson's teaching or venting errors on the Trinity, and found the remaining parts, which the Assembly and we in November had not got through, relevant and proven, save the 6th and 7th articles, which we found relevant, but transmitted the proof as it stood to the Assembly. The 6th article is about three Intelligent Beings. To this we found two witnesses, but at different times, the one in teaching, the other in private conversation. The 7th article is, *Deus Pater fuit ante Deum Filium*, &c., and there is only one witness. We entered on Mr Simson's teaching since 1717, and from the precognition and declarations of fifteen witnesses, taken before the Presbytery of Glasgow, which are very plain, upon all the most exceptionable points prohibited by Assembly, 1717, we formed a second libel as to his breach of that act, put it to his hand, and cited him and the witnesses to another meeting of the Committee at Edinburgh, 9th of April. The proof seems to be exceeding plain. The Committee then will, I suppose, hear his exculpation, and judge it, and examine some witnesses who are at Edinburgh; and probably refer the examination of such witnesses as are at Glasgow to the Presbytery there. And so all may be ready for the Assembly.

We next entered upon his refusing to answer queries, and found that he had disobeyed the Act of Assembly, and refused to give a declaration of his faith when required; and, in so doing, had done

what was in its nature eversive of the discipline of this Church; and gave it as our opinion, the Assembly should provide in time to come against ministers or professors declining to give a fair account of their faith, on a *fama clamosa*, or when justly suspected. Lastly, we ordered the whole of the process, *ab initio*, to be printed by the clerks, for the use of the next Assembly. I am, Dear Brother, yours, &c.

Eastwood, March 27, 1728.

LETTER CLIX.

LETTERS FROM THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, 1728.¹

Wodrow to Mrs Wodrow, No. 1.

May 2.

MY DEAR,—This day Professor Hamilton opened the Assembly with a sermon on James iii. 17, “The wisdom that cometh down from above is first pure,” &c. He handled religion under the notion of wisdom, and then the characters of wisdom in the text. He seemed to restrict purity to freedom from intemperance and lust. Last year, upon the same occasion, it seemed explained in another way, though both are consistent. “Without partiality” he explained righteousness in judgment, and wrangling. He seemed to make all these characters so necessary as there could be no religion without them, and took them for irritant clauses. He insisted half an hour on the improvement very seriously—that ministers should preach that wisdom with its characters, and that they should practise it themselves, and especially in judicatories. Here he entered upon the subject everybody knows is before the Assembly, the matter of the Trinity, which more than once he asserted to be

¹ Letters to Wodrow, vol. xviii. Nos. 55–63.

a fundamental of our faith, and what ought, with the greatest zeal and earnestness, to be looked after ; and added, that this was consistent with all due regard to private and personal rights, and God's service could not possibly be promoted by any personal real injuries. Where this looks I need not say. I am persuaded the support of our doctrine needs no personal injuries to promote it.

Then after reading the Commissions from Presbyteries, the first wholly, the rest only the names and dates ; and then the leet for Moderator was Mr Wishart, Mr Moncrief of Largo, Mr Wilkie, these the Moderator named. Principal Chalmers added Mr James Smith. The votes ran upon Messrs Wishart and Smith, and Mr Wishart carried by eighteen votes. Many in the North, Lothian, the Merse, and some in Fife, were for Mr Smith. The West seemed to carry Mr Wishart. This vote is not any trial about the main affair ; for P. Peady, and B. Montgomery, and the elders about the throne, save Arniston and Sir John English, and a few others, who readily will differ from the rest who voted for Mr Wishart, voted all this way. Then the Commission in common form was read ; and the King's Letter in the ordinary style, with some hints about its being the first of this nature, and assurances of protecting inviolable the Presbyterian Church in Scotland. Then the Commissioner's speech. None of them take any notice of this affair of the process about error. Then the Moderator had his speech, very long and warm. He touched the train of providences since the Revolution, enlarged in an encomium on the late King, and the loss in his death, and commendations of the King. He concluded with a hint at the affair of doctrine before the Assembly, and assured the Commissioner that it was with much trembling and fear that the Assembly were to enter on that awful subject, and yet being met in the name of Christ, the Head of the Church, and under the protection of the Government, they were sensible it was their undoubted duty to contend earnestly for the faith, &c., in all proper ecclesiastical methods, and he hoped that though it was of no small intricacy, yet relating so nearly to the glory of God and honour of the Redeemer, he hoped he who had promised to be with

his servants to the end of the world would not leave them. Then the ordinary committees were appointed.

I have no time to read over what I write.

LETTER CLX.

Wodrow to Mrs Wodrow, No. 2.

MY DEAR,—Yesterday the forenoon was spent in prayer as usual. The Moderator, Mr Flint, Mr Charters, Mr William Stewart, Mr Smith, and another, prayed. In the afternoon the Committee of Overtures and Bills met. The Committee for the Answer to the King's Letter brought in an Answer. They represented that they, when thinking on the King's Letter, were of opinion, that this being the first meeting of the Assembly after the King's accession, it was proper and decent that a humble address of condolence for the late King's death, and congratulation for our present King's accession, should be drawn up, if the Committee of Overtures were of that same opinion; and that it was proper this address should go along with the Answer to the Letter. This was gone into, and then the Answer to the Letter was read, wherein there is nothing singular in my mind. It passed without any considerable amendments. A question was raised by Mr Alston, whether the Committee for Overtures could meet again betwixt the Assembly to receive the draught of the address, or adjourn themselves to another diet? That was overruled, and the Sub-committee was ordered to meet that night and form an address, and bring it in this morning to the Overtures at nine of the clock.

I forgot to tell you that the Assembly at their first meeting ordered, having it represented to them that the Committee of the last Assembly had finished their work as to Mr Simson, save the advising the proof and summing up the evidence, they were of new appointed to meet in the intervals of this Assembly, and complete

what they had not time for. And so we met on Thursday evening, and the depositions on the last libel were committed to Mr Smith, Mr Hamilton, Mr Anderson, and me, to class under the articles of the libel. This was a labour that took some time. However, we got it ready against yesternight at six, when the Committee for Purity met again, and I read the class of the depositions against and for Mr Simson, and this day is appointed for the Committee to meet at three, for the summing up the evidence and advising the proof.

This day the Assembly met, and had the Answer to the King's Letter read, and then the Address of condolence and congratulation, approved by the Committee. This last was formed by Mr Alston. Both of them passed without any amendment, and are smooth and easy. Nothing very remarkable is in them. The commission from the burgh of Dunbar to Dechmont, my Lord Pont's son, is rejected both by Committee and Assembly, as not attested in terms of the act. This is the first commission I ever saw rejected. The magistrates in it promise to stand by what he does, and mention nothing of the Scripture and Confession. In short, it has been senselessly drawn by some notary, and was as foolishly given. The magistrates are not so well with Mr Logan, their minister, and Presbytery, as were to be wished, and it's pity, for they are right they say, and for the Revolution. The Committee for revising the Commission book and for Instructions are named, and they are going on Synod books. I have left them to write this, because it's probable I'll get no more written this day.

May 4, 1728.

LETTER CLXI.

Wodrow to Mrs Wodrow, No. 3.

May 6.

MY DEAR,—Upon Saturday at four, our Committee for Purity met in the Assembly-House, for summing up the proof of Mr Simson's second libel. Mr Simson's advocate appeared, and signified Mr Simson was a little indisposed, and very throng in preparing his papers for the Assembly, and could not wait on us. On which my Lord Dunmore urged we should delay. It was answered, there was no time to delay now; that Mr Simson was present by his advocate, and judges might find the proof without presence of parties. Then my Lord urged very hard, that it was of no use, nor decent to the Committee, to find the proof, when the Assembly, who had reserved the judgment to themselves, were sitting; that our summing up the evidence was what might be ranversed by the Assembly; and, therefore, he moved we might refer the whole to the Assembly. Such dilators we have been teased with, and I believe the Assembly will get their share of them. It was answered, that it was by no means indecent to follow forth the Assembly's order, and to bring our inquiry *usque ad sententiam*, which could not be done without summing up the evidence; that this saved the Assembly time, and prepared; that by this reasoning, that the Assembly could overturn what we had done, and so it was needless, the true consequence was, that there should have been nothing done, and all left to the Assembly. Principal Chalmers joined my Lord in this, and no other. This being overruled, we went on the proof, and read over the class formed yesterday, and then the original depositions, both as to probation of every article and proposition of it, and as to Mr Simson's exculpation, both which we had classed. When these were seen to agree, we reasoned upon each article, whether proved, and whether his

exculpation took off the proof. There was no great difficulty in any of the articles of the libel; all of them, save that about *ratio*, and that about serving God with a prospect of happiness, were most fully proven. As to the third about *ratio*, we found that it was proven, that he had used terms, used by adversaries in an unsound sense, though he explained them in a sound sense, which comes under the prohibition of the act 1717 directly, and, consequently, is a breach of the act. As to the 7th article, that, without a prospect of happiness, we could not, and therefore would not, serve God, we found one witness proving the expression libelled, and in his defences he had defended the teaching of it very strongly, which we reckoned a confession at the bar. And we found a concurrence of witnesses on this article, on a stronger expression, that man's happiness is his chief motive in religion, or serving God. The rest are all very fully proven beyond contradiction. Thus we have ended our work, and are to signify to the Assembly, that we are ready to lay our report in our minutes before them, when they shall please to receive it. In all this we were unanimous, for my Lord Dunmore soon left us. Mr Crawford was not with us, nor Professor Hamilton, he being on the Instructions, to which none of us could go, without retarding our report to the Assembly. We sat till after ten of the clock, that we might be ready against Monday for the Assembly, and are not to meet again. The Lord direct such as have it now before them!

Yesterday Mr William Stewart of Kiltearn preached before the Commissioner in the forenoon, with great seriousness and affection. He lectured on 2 Thess. i. 1-12. There he touched upon the unanimity necessary in ministers, and especially on the glory of Christ as a judge. He had some things, too, against a man's happiness being his chief end and motive. He preached on verse 12th, "That the name of the Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you," to wit, by God's fulfilling the work of faith with power, where he inquired why Paul spoke of the name of Christ, and not of God the Father, and answered, because what is said of one of the Divine Persons belongs to all; because that the Father is now only knowable in Christ, and

glorified in him ; because the Father's great design in the work of redemption was to glorify Christ. He next showed how the fulfilling of the work of faith glorified Christ, and applied all in an inference or two, the misery of such as wanted faith, and did not glorify Christ, the mercy of such as did, and the duty of all. At the close, he addressed the members of Assembly, to glorify the name of Christ in all that they did. He said, many were saying, What would they do ? He would not pretend to say what they would do, neither presume to say what they should do ; but he would tell what he hoped they would do, assert the foundation doctrine of the Deity of Christ, and that their sentence would be such as the name of the Lord Jesus should be glorified. In the afternoon, Mr Gaudy of Earlstoun preached on 1 John v. 12, "He that hath the Son hath life." He gave us an account who this Son was, for about a quarter of an hour, in Scriptural expressions, very well laid together, Prov. viii., Is. ix., John i., Col. ii. 3, and the rest was practical.

This day the Assembly met at three, and Principal Haddow and Mr Anderson, after the reading of the minutes, acquainted the Assembly that the Committee for Purity had their report ready whenever called for, and it was their opinion that the Assembly should take it in as soon as possibly they could. It was presently called for. The clerk acquainted the Assembly, that at the appointment of the Committee, he printed the whole state of the process ; that the whole minutes and report were there, and he declared he had omitted nothing but sederunts and mere forms. On which the Assembly went in to read the printed state, and the clerk compared it with the minutes in write. It was urged that it was to lose so much time, and so indeed it was, to read over the whole, since the Assembly was to go over the whole again. However, many of the members inclined to have the whole read, that they might have a general view of the thing ; and it was yielded ; so the whole of the Committee's procedure as to the remaining part of the first libel was read over, which took up three hours or more. After all was read, Mr Neil Campbell gave in a written

protestation in his own name ; in his speech he signified that it was matter of sorrow to him, and he doubted not to the whole Assembly, that a Professor of Divinity, so long in the Church, and remarked for his learning, should stand at the bar of the Assembly under a libel of error ; but it was a great satisfaction to him that this cause was to be judged by the judicatory on earth he wished most to determine this affair ; that for himself he entirely subjected this matter to the Assembly, but he begged liberty to present a protestation, as his predecessor had done, and was received, that the determination of the Assembly might not affect the just rights of the university to judge their members as such. Mr Stirling, in his protestation, had insert his owning the Assembly's power of judging in the protestation ; Mr Campbell delivered this only in words. My Lord Justice-Clerk moved, that since we had two protestations given in in this process, the Assembly might declare their power of judging members of the university in point of error, and recorded. This was backed by Mr Smith, and several other members. My Lord Grange, and the President, and Mr Alston, had speeches, all asserting the Assembly's right, but reckoned *licet protestare* ; and that the Assembly, by judging, asserted their right in fact, and Mr Hamilton joined them ; and Mr Simson's being at the bar was the most effectual asserting of the Assembly's power. And so, after some debate, the protestation was received in common form ; and the Assembly went on to settle their method where to begin. Some moved they should begin where the Committee began. The President moved that a Committee should be appointed to consider in what method to enter on this matter. Many of the members of the Assembly complained they had not read the state printed, and could not conclude where it was proper to begin. So the matter was delayed till to-morrow at three of the clock. The members were desired to read the book, and there are no Committees to meet to-morrow, that members may know and read the state of the affair. I fear to-morrow some hours be spent on the method of procedure. * * *

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LETTER CLXII.

Wodrow to Mrs Wodrow, No. 4.

May 8, 1728.

MY DEAR,—Yesterday at three we met, and fell straight where the Assembly left last day. The minutes, when read, I found took in Principal Campbell's speech, owning the power of the Assembly to judge of him, and members of his Society. It was expected that there should have been a considerable struggle as to the method of the Assembly's procedure; but it was well matters were otherwise ordered. We had discourses without doors, that the members of this General Assembly were very different from the last; that one Act of Assembly might be repealed by another; that this Assembly could not be precluded by the votes of the last Assembly; that at least all the procedure of the last Assembly be-
 haved to be read over, before this Assembly could be precluded by what they had done. Perhaps these were rather arguments that some of us were forming to ourselves, in order to be ready to give pointed answer to, in case they should cast up, than really in design by any, and it's not unfit that the worst should be considered, and made ready for in point of arguing. The greatest difficulty I could form was, to make the supposition that the last Assembly had come in to a sentence that Mr Simson had been leased by the Committee, and had assoilzied him, could not this Assembly have taken up the matter and processed him anew? was there no remedy? and if so, why may not this Assembly find that the last malversed, and alter what they had done? These are points I am exceedingly pleased we had no occasion to come upon. It's hard to adjust the powers of a Supreme Court. We had no collateral instance to be any thread to us save the House of

Peers among our neighbours, and the case of the Lords of Session, when we had a Parliament. The last now is not in being. As to the House of Peers, it was found that nothing once passed there can be recalled, except by way of an Act of Parliament passed by the two Houses. How this stands I cannot say. But what seemed to satisfy was this; we distinguished between an Act of Assembly, that no doubt can be repealed, and a sentence of Assembly, or a judgment given forth in a particular case, which, if it should be alterable in a Supreme Court, there would be no end of business possible. And the nearest instance we could come at was in the Commission, which acts by an Assembly power, and yet though the Assembly disapprove of the procedure of a Commission, they have not opened their sentences; though some instances were pretended even of that. And the Assembly has passed an act that no Commission shall alter any thing done at one meeting in another; and that seems to run stronger as to an Assembly. However, none cast up these things in the Assembly, and with much calmness, it was agreed in the entry to take this affair directly up where the last Assembly left it, and to proceed in the order that the Committee for Purity had gone on, unless the Assembly should find cause to do otherwise, upon further looking into it. And so the pannel was called and appeared; had a long speech, partly by word, and then by a long paper, which he gave in to the clerk. Mr Simson resumed what he had said before the last Assembly, that he had not once thought different from what he took to be the general sentiments of the Church of Scotland in the Confession of Faith, and according to the Scripture, upon the Trinity; that if he was conscious of a different opinion from them, he would have left them and gone to some other place, where he might enjoy his opinions, and not create further trouble. But it was not so, and he supposed the Church and he differed only on manners of expression; that he was under much weakness when the things libelled were emitted; that he was sensible he sometimes, through weakness of body, lost the thread of thinking, and other things to this purpose. Then he came to declare his sentiments in Necessary

Existence of the Son, and I thought, indeed, expressed himself more strongly than formerly, and to me seemed to assert the Necessary Existence of the person of the Son, as well as his Essential Necessary Existence, in the terms of the Confession of Faith, and said he did not know how to assert it more plainly than he did, and would be obliged to any who would tell him where their scruple lay, as to any further satisfaction they desired of him. But I will not pretend to repeat what I heard only once read on so nice a head. They say we are to have it to-morrow in print. If so, I shall send a copy of it. When this was given in, the Assembly ordered it to be received, and some said it might be afterwards considered upon the alleviation; but all declined speaking much on it, and it did not appear to satisfy many, when now, as it were, it's forced from him.

Then the Assembly went on to the next part of the libel at which the committee began—that Necessary Existence and Independence were terms impertinent, not to be used in the Trinity, and the depositions were read. The pannel was heard on the proof, for the Assembly last year had voted the relevancy. Mr Murray, Mr Simson's advocate, and himself, were heard at great length, where I observed [nothing] new that had not been pleaded before, last year, and before the committee; that it had been but once spoken; that the whole chain of the discourse was not fully known; that it might be a wrong hearing, or the like. Then when they had done, Mr Simson desired the Assembly, since he had no pursuer nor *altera pars* in this matter, might allow him to stay still and hear what was reasoned, and promised not to speak till all was over, and then not till allowed, and urged our kind allowing him in the committee to be present in all our reasonings, and hearing him after all; that his health was such as did not allow him to go frequently in and out. This was long reasoned on, and it was said, on the one hand, that Mr Simson should be, *ex gratia*, allowed this, since the committee had done so, and there could be no harm, and he would be in case in many cases to give the Assembly light. On the other hand, it was said that the committee had some reason to do this, because

they were but preparing this matter for the Assembly, and they did well to hear all, and him last, that they might the more ripely give their judgment to the Assembly; though, perhaps, Mr Simson had not improved this allowance as became him, and had frequently, by speaking and whispering, diverted and consumed our time; that to allow the party to be present when judging was an innovation, and would presently be drawn in practice by all other judicatories, and could not be done, being a point of discipline, till remitted to Presbyteries, and their sentiments were had; and that he might be called for to clear any point when the Assembly was needing it. At length this matter came to the vote, and carried Remove him, by nine votes as the clerk, fifteen as another had it. Many were Go on. This vote seems to be as favourable a question as can well be put for Mr Simson, and though carried by a scrimp majority, yet seems to give a *vidimus* of this Assembly I did not expect so soon. However, nothing can certainly be determined from it. Then he was removed, and the Assembly entered on the probation, and it was clearly opened up by several of the committee. At length our Moderator, Mr Hamilton, opened on it, and complained, that by reason of his absence, he did not so well understand the proof of this article. He found the words indeed proven, but conceived they might be detached words, and only part of a sentence, and unless we had the full conversation, it was hard for him to satisfy himself, so as to be found proven; and referred to what was pled from the bar, that if eight witnesses deponed somewhat relative to a conversation, that a man had said it was lawful to kill his neighbour, without mentioning in self-defence, and two witnesses mentioned at the same time that he added in self-defence, he would incline to hope that what was said was not criminal; that the independency behoved to be restricted as the Assembly had done. Mr Walker (James) took him up, and observed that the cases were not parallel, and that Professor Hamilton had not touched Necessary Existence, which was the main thing in this, and what was clearly proven as well as Independence. Mr Alston, Mr G. Logan, and every minister almost that spoke, agreed that his saying that

Necessary Existence was a term impertinent, and not to be used in speaking of the Trinity, was fully proven. But there remained a difficulty, that the Assembly had not sustained Independency but as to the Deity of Christ, relevant, and yet had not cast to that clause here, and since the proof was plain as to Independency as well as Necessary Existence, which here without the former addition was sustained relevant, [ought they] not to sustain the whole relevant? My own opinion was, that the Assembly had last year sustained it relevant to infer censure if Mr Simson denied the doctrine, that the Deity of Christ was Independent, waiving the debate about the *Independencia Essensialis* and *Personalis*; and did not at all deny the Son's personal Independence, but would not determine it. But on this article, when it was about terms, they did not cast to the addition "Deity," because it was not fit to call the terms impertinent, since many used them, and very fitly. And the term may be retained in talking of the Trinity, without dipping into the *modus*, which is not fit to determine indeed. However, this was not cast up, and the Assembly waived the term Independency as the last Assembly had done, and declared they did not enter upon that matter, either on the one side or other. Several members declared their opinions, that Christ, as a person, was Independent; and Mr G. Logan spoke strongly on this, and a young man, Mr John Forbes, from the north, spoke well to it from John xiv., "The Father is in me, and I in the Father;" Christ was in the fountain, and the fountain was in him, and he that saw him saw the Father. Then after a long speech of Lord Drummore, pretty foreign, it was agreed that the article, after dropping of Independence, was proven. As to Necessary Existence, several said, (who are reckoned friendly to Mr Simson,) that unless he revoked that expression, he ought to be most highly censured, and I believe a revocation and recantation is in view.

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The Assembly went on to the next article—that these terms were philosophical niceties. This behoved to be dropped, though the committee had sustained it, (and I still think right,) because, in the one deposition, and they are but two, Independence is mentioned,

and by yesterday's resolution dropped. Then in the nature of the former resolve the Assembly came forward to consider, as the committee had done, Mr Simson's alleviations to the articles as proven, viz. the second, third, and fourth. This the committee inclined to have left to the close, but Mr Simson and his friends urged that it should be taken in before we went on the numerical oneness, and we yielded. On this Mr Simson was heard, and three very long papers of his were read. At the close, Mr Dundas of Arniston moved that the alleviations should be delayed till all the first libel was over, and then considered as to the censure, when that came, since he could have no notion of judging alleviation till he knew the censure, since somewhat might be good to alleviate, for instance, higher excommunication, that would not deposition, &c. This was gone into, and the Assembly adjourned to the afternoon.

In the afternoon, at five, the Assembly met, and entered on the fifth article about numerical oneness. The Professor and his lawyers were heard from five to eight at night, against the proof, and for an exculpation. Then the members spoke at a great length on the proof and exculpation. On the one side, Mr Haddow, Mr Hamilton, Mr Allan Logan, Mr John Gray, Mr Ogilvy, Mr James Smith, my Lord Grange, Affleck, and several others, were heard on the proof and exculpation, and were clear that it was proven, and no exculpation relevant. On the other side, Mr Alston, Mr Hamilton, Mr G. Logan, the President, my Lord Drummore, and some others, opposed this; and the subject being exhausted, a vote was proposed. But differing on the state of the vote, and it being after eleven at night, it was delayed till to-morrow, with this resolution, that the Assembly should enter first upon the state of the vote. I cannot deduce the arguments used on all hands at any length. The lawyers at the bar had misstated the article sustained relevant and to be proven very much, and it took some time to set it right, which was done at great length. The article is, that he gave it as his own opinion, that the three persons of the Trinity are not said to be numerically one in substance or essence. The lawyers made objections, (and the members on the one side espe-

cially did not much but repeat what was said from the bar,) that there was a dropping of things on which the proof depended in the libel in the sustaining the relevancy, that is, of his denying them to be specifically one; to this it was answered, that that was no error, and therefore well dropped. That the relevancy restricted the article to teaching this as his own opinion, whereas one witness only proves that. To this it was answered, that one witness was plain as to the very words, the rest imported his own opinion most plainly, since he said that the three persons were not numerically one, and gave reasons for it, which is the strongest way of declaring one's opinion, and, indeed, all teaching without giving a caution is teaching as one's opinion. That he taught only in Aristotle's sense of numerical. To which it was said, that the witnesses named in the report do not bear that; that Aristotle meant numerical of things as well as persons; that his notion of numerical will, if true, cast persons. In short, it was made very plain that he had rejected numerical oneness, and put no other in its stead; that numerical oneness is the only notion of oneness we can possibly have; that that being laid aside, there is no other. There was some debate about *ὁμοῦσιον*, and the Socinians using the term numerical oneness; and Dr Stillingfleet was brought in speaking in terms much the same with Mr Simson, and it was answered, that that book of his was none of the clearest; and Spanheim was noticed to counter him. Dr Calamy's assertion was explained by Principal Haddow, as not relating to this subject we were upon. And Cromwell's words in the trial of Bishop Laud were cited, "If the Archbishop think as we do, why does he not speak as we do?" His own answers bearing that he carefully distinguished between numerical oneness of essence and substance was much insisted on as a confession that he rejected numerical oneness of substance, while our Standards make the three persons the same in substance, which, if possible, is stronger than one in number. A strong proof was brought from what is proven already in the libel, he hath been found to deny Necessary Existence of the Son, and so possibly, in the nature of the thing, cannot own the Father and Son to be one numerically, since

the one is necessary, the other not so necessary. And Mr Gray noticed that the innovators owned a oneness in principle and other respects, while the Son and Spirit were maintained to be of an inferior nature. But the term "numerical" is what chokes them. Mr Simson's owning numerical oneness in his declaration, May the 18th last, was much urged as exculpatory. But it was observed this was when at the bar, and before a sentence, and did not affect his teaching formerly, which was the case now; that even in that owning there seems to be a back-door; that he refused to answer this; that he had declared and given reasons why he had rejected that term, and at length comes to use it; that he is so variable, we know not what to make of declarations. The exculpation from his rejecting this good way of speaking "numerical," because adversaries used it in an ill sense, was exposed, even by Mr Alston, for this reason, that if adversaries should shelter themselves under a wrong sense of any term in our Confession, they might this way bring us to part with our Confession. In short, every minister that spoke disapproved of his rejecting the term "numerical," and some that spoke for him prefaced with heavy complaints against him for darkening terms, and sensing things so as to take off the students from the ordinary way of speaking among approved writers. And yet I fear this article will be voted out to-morrow.

Thursday, May 9, 1728.

This day the Assembly met at ten, came to state the vote, and after some reasoning upon the state of the vote, and whether the Form of Process required to go on exculpation or probation first, it was found that only exculpations that affected the whole, such as *alibi*, were to go first, and that, where the substance of the libel was proven, there were to be only alleviations to be considered. The proof was, in the nature of the thing, to go before exculpation, because exculpation supposed somewhat to be proven from which there was exculpation; and this was the method of the Assembly last year. Mr Pitcairn of Dysart had a long and moving speech about the hazard of division on nice points, and moved that this

intricate process might be laid aside, and the Professor called to the bar, and called to answer queries. This was too late, and was not backed. Mr Stewart of Kiltearn had a warm and serious speech on the danger of the plague of error, and the Professor refusing queries, and standing out against all pains, and was for the vote, Proven or Not. Another state was proposed, Consider the exculpation or Not. The first state of the vote carried 85 to 60. Then the second vote was stated, Proven or Not, and carried Proven 87 to about 48, and 30 Go ons. This is a little unexpected, and gives us another view of the Assembly than some had. I am yours.

LETTER CLXIII.

Wodrow to Mrs Wodrow, No. 5.

May 10, 1728.

MY DEAR,—Yesterday the Assembly met in the afternoon, and after the relevancy and proof, the pannel craved to be heard on the defences. It was urged he had not been heard before, and it was hard if he should be cut off by point of form, whether it was for exculpation or by any other name. So it was agreed he should be heard. Mr Grant was heard near an hour, and pled with a good deal of earnestness that Mr Simson might be exculpate from the charge of disowning the unity of the Divine nature, from the evidences arising from the proof of his teaching orthodoxy, and from the charge of error arising from his teaching the proposition proven. Here the Assembly could not easily miss falling into pretty much of the former reasonings, of which I have already given account, and I shall not resume them. The speakers were Mr W. Hamilton, Mr Alston, Mr G. Logan, Mr Goudy, and some others. On the

other side, Mr Haddow, Mr Smith, Mr J. Hamilton, Mr Alexander Anderson, Mr M^cIntosh, and elders, Lord Grange, and Affleck ; the President was not in ; Mr Dundas was in, but did not mix ; Lord Drummore, and Baillie of Monkton, who is frequently interrupted and laughed at, and has really exposed himself. I mind little now advanced for Mr Simson. All seemed to own that he was in the wrong to cast the term numerical essence ; but we had large speeches as to his orthodoxy in teaching the Confession's terms, that there was a debate in Athanasius' time about the *μια ὑποστασις* and the *τρεις ὑποστασεις*, and that was applied to the case that both sides explained themselves well and soundly, and Athanasius reconciled them, and there was no more of it. It was urged that then they had no Standard as we have ; it was answered, they had that of the Council of Nice. It was replied, that they did not reject terms generally used. As to the other defence, that the words proven were only denied in Aristotle's sense, and that of the schools, which was brought very low, that it was only a mistake in Mr Simson at best ; it was observed, that the fault was in applying Aristotle's sense of *numerical* to the Deity, and in applying, as the argument would go, Aristotle's definition of person to personal unity, which was quite wrong, and most unsafe ; that rejecting both specific and numerical oneness was a leading the students to some middle oneness which was neither of the two ; and this was supported by Mr Simson's distinguishing between the Divine Substance and the Divine Essence, which looked like a nostrum there. In short, it was urged, that his rejecting the numerical oneness, as applied even to creatures, was rejecting the phrase every body knew and assented to ; and oneness in number, according to our weak conceptions, abstracting from the incomprehensible manner where the mystery lies, behoved to be the same with the oneness in number in creatures ; that we must express our notions of oneness in number by the very same word we use as to creatures ; and so Mr Simson's declaration of numerical oneness, with the exception of that among creatures, May 18, 1727, was a subterfuge, and though it had been without that, could not exculpate from teaching wrong before. In

short, it was urged, that there was very little even of alleviation in any thing propounded against the proposition relevant and proven, since it was a rejecting a good term, and the rendering this mystery dark and dubious, and shaking the students' belief of it. One instance was brought of a minister's handling the question, There are three persons in the Godhead, and should say that they were not numerically three—that this and person, and the Covenant of Works, in the proper sense of lawyers, and justification by the righteousness of imputation, were school terms, and we are not to use them; and join this with refusing to explain himself on these heads when suspected, and shifting from one time, and judicatory, to another, and at length condescending to come into these terms when frightened with a sentence, would not this be censurable? By ten at night the subject was exhausted; and the Assembly came to agree in this, that after hearing the defences offered by Mr Simson, they found there was no exculpation of the article proven, but some things for alleviation, which they reserved the consideration of till they came to the censure. This was agreed without a vote. Tomorrow they enter on the queries. Since Saturday last the Assembly hath had no Committees sitting, which I never saw before; but this case of Mr Simson takes up all the time, and there will be agoing through it, at least, as near as can be before other things come in. It is probable there will be acknowledgments and retractions, and recantation of all that is proven, if these will satisfy to continue the suspension. But whether that will be yielded I do not know. The Lord guide all well!

This day the Assembly met at ten, according to the Assembly's appointment, to consider the overture of the Committee. The minutes were read; and, as the matter was at first stated, I thought there was like to be little or no debate. It was declared, and is most plain from the nature of the thing, that that overture about Mr Simson's answering the questions relates to Mr Simson, and contains no general rule further than a precedent will go. Yet, as was noticed on Monday, several members in concert together, Mr W. Hamilton, Principal Chalmers, Messrs Smith, Alston, and some

others, who all, save Mr Smith, seem inclined to support Mr Simson, together with Mr Robert Dundas, whom Professor Hamilton brought in, and he joins the President and Drummore in this, made a motion that they were intimidated by the last clause of this overture to the Assembly to speak freely their votes, lest, upon a *fama clamosa*, brethren might be brought in as guilty of error and heresy from their reasonings; and therefore they would have this overture considered apart. This was as awkward and forced a way of coming to a purpose as ever I saw, and I am afraid, indeed, may have ill effects, and make it suspected that all this proceeds from one person's having differed from the Committee about one word, *conduct*, which was rejected, and *just grounds* put in the room of it; at least this seemed intimate in Mr Dundas's long speech. This inflaming debate about a subject, which by no means can be determined in all the extent of it, without a subject in particular before the determiners, was forced by the elders in on the Assembly, and the ministry, (the plurality of whom by far, and of the gravest and peaceablest, excepting the younger sort, and a good many whom I have heard called mockers and *risores*,) were against, and declined by all means to come in. Yet, by all means, and under the pretext of peace and love, too, the Assembly must be brought upon it, and brought to conclude, when I may say only two members or four, three on one side, and one on the other, were heard; and multitudes of others were not allowed to be heard, nor the subject at all spoken to. Indeed, I never saw such a hasty and forced vote as this was. After an hour's debate upon the method of entering upon this subject, and whether to hear Mr Simson and his lawyers upon it, as indeed concerning him, Mr Alston, without allowance of the Assembly, broke in upon the general consideration of the subject, pointed, as he thought, at in the reason or motive the Committee give for censuring Mr Simson, (without determining the censure,)—" *And that it will be the more needful, duly animadvert, &c., to prevent disorders, and the spreading of dangerous error, through not questioning persons about whom there is a just suspicion, or fama clamosa.*" This, he and others argued, was

the laying down of a rule, that all who were under just suspicion and *fama clamosa*, or either, might be questioned, or have queries put to them. He began his speech with a declaration, (and all, save Mr Dundas, seemed to express the same sentiment, who were on his side of speaking,) that he was for putting queries where there was any overt act, giving occasion for them either word or write; and he thought queries were a very necessary occasion of a person's vindicating himself, and a kindness done to him; but that if a person were so foolish as to refuse or neglect this method of his own vindication, he saw no censure he was liable to, but that of a fool and madman, that neglects that proper method for his own vindication. He run out at some length on the iniquitous questions in the late times put to people. Mr Smith followed him, or spoke soon after him, with more softness, and said he was for appointing this day for considering the overture, since he heard the fears and jealousies many brethren were impressed with, that they were in hazard by somewhat included in that overture, which, indeed, looked properly to Mr Simson's case; that he thought the reason or motive added to the overture was of a more general aspect than Mr Simson's case; that the proper way to enter on it was to speak on the grounds of fear and intimidating that those, who had craved and carried this diet for considering them, had; and, instead of these, he gave us some few of his arguments against queries, without just grounds, and upon a *fama clamosa*, as he described it; and thought the present divided circumstances of this Church, wherein Presbyteries were divided in their sentiments, and might be in such a situation as to have their horns in the side of some of their brethren, might actively raise a *fama clamosa* upon a minister, and vex him, and cause him run through all the judicatories. This he declared he did not mean of the case of Mr Simson, but other cases; and proposed that the last words of the Committee's overture above might be dropped and overlooked. This overture was pretty near agreed to. But it seems some members behoved to be more plain and strict, further, and the overlooking of it, in consideration of the matter properly before them,

would not satisfy, but more must be done. So Professor Hamilton had a long speech, where he said he would speak with much freedom and liberty. After owning his being for queries to ministers, when by word or write they had given just cause, he run out upon *fama clamosa*, as Mr Alston had done, as not a good ground, unless supported, and as tittle-tattle, &c., which every body owns. Then he run out on the iniquity of the late times, in putting questions and inquiring into people's opinions; but what he mostly insisted upon was censure, annexed to refusing of queries. He said he meant not to reflect upon the late Acts of Assembly, annexing suspension to Mr Simson's refusing queries, (and yet this was what he struck at,) but thought it hard that persons should be pressed with authority and arguments drawn from that which there was no answering; and he thought there was no general Synod infallible; and then called in question the citations in the pamphlet published yesterday, *The Method of Queries vindicated from the Synod of Dort*, and alleged that Arminians were willing to answer queries, and there was no doubt about this; the Divines Synodical, and the Foreign Divines, differed a little on that point, and the States ordered the Arminians to be censured for obstinacy; but that answering queries was not the matter; all of these directly contrary to the places there quoted. Then he insisted at great length to show that the tendency of the overture was to breed dispeace, and create divisions in the subjects to King George, (in the entry of his speech, either he or some other declared, they believed the Committee had not this view in the overture,) and he thought that was ill service to the Government, and contrary to the liberty and privileges we so happily enjoyed by and since the Revolution. All the proof I could observe he brought for this was, that as long as there were different sentiments, one Presbytery might find opinions erroneous, and another Presbytery not, and this might create a flame, which he supported from the different instructions, that come from different Presbyteries to the Assembly, on different points of doctrine. Some body, Mr Goudy had observed before, and he fell in with it,

and repeated it, that this way of questioning, without just ground, was the way to draw out debates and errors in a church, when a person had peculiar opinions, which he kept to himself, and spoke and taught as others did; and yet upon being queried, especially on censure, he vented them, and they were spread up and down. But, in the meantime, no notice was taken of the secret spreading of errors, and undermining of truth, against which there is no provision in this case. He concluded with the tendency of the overtures being against the law of the King of kings, love and charity, where we had a harangue upon love and forbearance. This speech I am very sorry for. Several little pickerings were.

Mr Hamilton of Glasgow took up Professor Hamilton, in short, but a pretty strong way. He noticed, that he owned queries, on just grounds, very proper, and he thought he considered the *fama clamosa* only on one side; that in some cases there might be a *fama* raised without ground, and there was no help for it, during the wicked state we are in. But if questions were not allowed, he was of opinion it was impossible to a man to have a vindication; and were he innocent in such a case, he would crave an inquisition and queries to be put to him. As to what Professor Hamilton had insisted chiefly on—the annexing of a penalty to queries, he said that there was nothing of that in the overture; it was indeed in the Act of Assembly, and he thought that the P. of Glasgow had been safe under the authority of a rule, but now he found they were not, and that what was done so lately and deliberately was now impugned, and where the end of that would be he did not know; that the overture could not be wire-drawn to that in the general, since it was directly founded on the Act of Assembly, against which now, it seems, all was directed, and not at the overture, which was necessary, on supposition the act constituting them was right. Every body, almost, saw Mr Hamilton struck the Professor home here; but the great and pitched battle followed.

My Lord Grange took up the debate, and insisted, I believe, near an hour, in a very distinct discourse, which I cannot pretend to resume; it's but scrapes I can give. He began by observing, that

the Committee had acted according to their powers, and might have been censured, if they had not given their opinion on what was committed to them ; that their opinion was upon Mr Simson's case, and no more ; if they had given a reason that was now wire-drawn to be the subject of a question, and stated debate in the Assembly, when they had the great point of doctrine before them, they were not to blame at all for it, but others. The reason was, he thought, good, and that there was nothing in law or liberty against it ; however, the throwing off of queries might pave the way to licentiousness ; and any thing that had been yet spoken in vague and general declamations, that were not applicable to anything, (when the necessity of queries on overt facts and just ground was still yielded,) did not prevail with him to think there was anything in queries contrary to liberty or law, unless we were to have a new law, as, in another case, we are like to have a new gospel and way of salvation palmed upon us. He began with the Form of Process, which established the prosecution of scandals, and he thought error was one upon a *fama clamosa* ; that it provided against all hazard by requiring the judicatory to inquire into the grounds and raisers of the *fama* ; that *fama clamosa* was not stories, and clash, and tittle-tattle, as it had been called, but quite another thing ; that it was by the best lawyers made a ground of civil processes, especially in the *modus per inquisitionem*, and gave many instances, and referred to Matheus De Criminibus and Daubonderus, and others ; that *fama clamosa* was not that which the mob believed, not street talk, but defined by lawyers what grave and discreet men believed, or were offended at, or raised a suspicion necessary to vindicate another's reputation from ; that judges might err ; that it might rise on wrong grounds for which there is no help ; but if judges erred, by subordination of our judicatories there was redress, and that till it came to the Assembly ; that all he had heard speak owned the necessity of putting questions on overt acts, and conduct, and just suspicion raised by these, so he reckoned the main thing really given up ; that what had been said of taking up persons on just suspicion, and putting questions to them, was contrary to law and

liberty, and the Revolution establishment; this he conceived by no means to be true, whatever clamour had been raised upon it, that among the Romans it had been used—that in all places where the canon law was followed it was owned—that in Holland, where liberty was run pretty high, it was used to put queries, and if they were refused, to go great lengths—that in Britain it was what was secured to the Church of Scotland by law, though he believed that elsewhere this might be called Presbyterian Inquisition among our neighbours—that it was directly law in England, a Secretary of State could take up a man from the street, and bring him before the Council, and examine him and imprison him, put questions of fact, and if he refused to answer, it was followed with censure enough—that even a justice of peace might by law apprehend a man on suspicion, and examine, though indeed on his peril, if it was without just ground. This he supported by Hawkins' Pleas of the Crown, and other writers. He added, he thought that the Church had as good a right as a society to question, and question upon censure on suspicion, as the civil magistrate had, if not a greater—that the magistrate had only a power as to the bodies and estates, and had no power as to opinions, if not vented to disturb the public peace; and there was the difference between the *super inquirendis* in the Claim of Right, justly now barred, which related to opinions on points of government and other things that were in the breast, and to swear on what they heard, and the Session's determination in Sir Jo. Cochrane's case, which he declared he thought tyranny. But the Church had a law of faith, and were a society that had a right to inquire into the faith and belief of such with whom they worshipped God, and into their sincerity in joining with them in the standards by law established; and faith and belief being the bond of the Church, he thought that that only could be inquired on suspicion by queries upon opinions; and here he sufficiently exposed Professor Hamilton's argument from love and charity, and said there could be no love where there were just suspicions of unsoundness in the faith and of error, and this was indeed by destroying of truth to create jealousies among peaceable subjects—that it

was happy for us we were delivered from tyranny, and he hoped we were not in hazard of it, but rather of an abuse of liberty, and of very great wantonness and licentiousness. Then as to the censure to be added to refusing answering questions, though that was quite out of the present question, and drawn in quite beyond the overture, he was of opinion, that in vain had the Church or State any power to inquire or put questions, if they had no power to censure the contraveners for obstinacy and refusal.

Mr Dundas of Arniston took my Lord up in another hour's discourse, when we had been together four hours and more. I cannot either resume him, though very plain and clear, and I no doubt wrong them both in my telling what they said. But what he observed was in substance, that he would not debate the power of a supreme judicatory; they were not tied down in extraordinary cases; and he was for the supporting the Assembly's Act in this extraordinary case, and had nothing to say about the Secretary's taking up on suspicion, though he doubted that was practice rather than law. The bounds of supreme power, in extraordinary cases, he thought could not be well determined; but he was by no means for doing any thing, as the overture included, by Presbyteries and inferior judicatories as to questions; and he much doubted if the method of queries was to be used at all, save at the direction of a supreme court, and in extraordinary cases, (and, indeed, the overture relates only to Mr Simson's case, which is one of these;) that *fama clamosa* he thought by lawyers was understood of common report of the mob or people; that the regulations added by my Lord Grange he questioned; that he thought there were some things pointed at in the overture beyond even the inquisition, who he believed were tied up to rules; that in Holland, where liberty was pretended, there was the greatest tyranny any where, except in Popish countries, and torture was yet law there; and several other things I have forgot. By this time we were all wearied. He observed further, that he could not easily think that the Church, as a society, had a right to inquire, by question, into people's breasts and opinions in suspicion; that if a man doubted, as every one who reasoned

closely would do, and happened to speak of his doubts, it was hard to take him up, and censure him, and church tyranny ; that, indeed, before a man be received to a church, they have right to be satisfied of his soundness, but after he is received without overt acts, he ought not to be quarrelled for his opinions, if not vented. My Lord Grange had insisted on the Scripture named in the pamphlet, the reason of our hope and confessing before men, only by naming them. Mr Dundas [said] he left them to the ministers. But Mr D. said they did not convince him, and he thought Christ's declaration, that he was the Son of God, was not answering a query, but peculiar to himself, who came to the world to declare the truth ; that Judas, though he believed he was unsound all his days, had never queries put to him to discover his sincerity.

These two learned lawyers seemed each to say they did not differ much, and would very soon agree, which put us all in hopes the matter might be agreed to. But then some warmth rose among ministers, about the stating either a question or a resolve of agreement. It was moved that this matter should be referred to the Committee of Overtures, and they to bring in an overture on it, to be transmitted to the Presbyteries before any rule be passed, or if that was not gone into, to delay this matter to another Diet, since it really was not reasoned, but by three on one side, and one upon the other, or rather only by the two lawyers. But that would not be yielded to, though it was declared that many had not spoken upon it, who had several things to say, and new, and they offered either to say them now, were it not wearisome, or at another Diet, or before the Committee of Overtures. But nothing would satisfy but a vote at present ; and it was pretended these were but ways of preventing a vote, after the subject was exhausted, when, indeed, it was not exhausted. And another vote was cast up, Lay aside the reason offered at the close of the Overture, reserving Mr Simson's case entire, till the Assembly consider the censure, and remit to the Committee of Overtures to bring an overture for preserving the Purity of Doctrine to the Assembly ; and both votes, or the state of the vote, was put, and the last state carried 96 to

87, by nine votes, and that was agreed. This is thought to be a dropping of the method of queries in processes of error, with a censure annexed, though the method of queries is owned by all, except Mr Dundas, but the censure or penalty not to be added. But I am sure the Assembly did not fully take this sense, neither is it declared, but only supposed in the vote, as the general method is not declared, but only forced in upon the Committee's Overture. I doubt the narrowness of this vote, and the grating of members in it, will not prove much to Mr Simson's advantage in the great cause. The Committee of Overtures met and reasoned on the matter of an Overture, and seemed all to agree to queries to be put for preventing of error, without annexing a penalty, which is just the Committee's Overture, who did not condescend on censure; and it was sub-committed. How it will be worded by them I cannot say till afterwards. It seems agreed, that in rejecting the Committee's Overture, the Assembly has [not] established any new rule, (neither can they till it go to Presbyteries,) excluding questions even with censure, but things are just as they were without or before this vote, which, indeed, was losing a whole day; only, we that were present had the advantage of hearing the matter reasoned by lawyers.

May 10.

This day the Assembly met at ten, and went through the 5th, 6th, and 7th articles of the libel, about the substance of the perfections, intelligent beings, and *Pater est prior causaliter*, &c.; found them all relevant, but not proven, just as the Committee had on the matter done. Yet being connected with the former articles, and one witness or two in different places, though it does not amount to a strong proof, yet it leaves an ill opinion of Mr Simson's way of teaching on the Trinity; and Messrs Alston, Smith, and other members on that, declared so, even though a full proof had not come up. Then the Assembly came to consider the proof from the papers, and the lawyers declared they had not had time to consider this part of their work, not thinking the Assembly could reach it, and begged it might be delayed. Accordingly, it was delayed till the afternoon at four. Many pressed it might be delayed till

Monday, but that could not be yielded, because of the shortness of time we now have. The Assembly cannot easily sit longer than Wednesday, because much must go to the Commission, and cannot sit after Friday easily. I wish, in the hurry, that now things will be in, no hasty nor rash conclusion be gone into.

At four of the clock the Assembly met, and read the article of the libel drawn from Mr Simson's papers and writings, and heard his advocates and himself upon the relevancy of all the three propositions, which took up three hours almost. Then, as to the probation, the lawyers pleaded they were not ready, and their papers were just a printing, that they might be in the hands of the members of Assembly on Monday. It was now near eight of the clock; and it was agreed to delay this matter till Monday at nine of the clock. A petition for a collection to the Infirmary of the Royal Physicians, and a bar put upon other collections for this Assembly. We have not had a Committee almost this week.

LETTER CLXIV.

Wodrow to Mrs Wodrow, No. 6.

May 13, 1728.

MY DEAR,—Yesterday, in the forenoon, Mr Rouat preached before the Commissioner. He lectured on Psalm cxxv., and preached upon Acts ix. 32, "The Churches had rest, and walked in the fear of the Lord, and comfort," &c. He had very good things, and did not meddle at all, almost, but very generally, with what is before the Assembly. However, his successor in the afternoon, Mr Witherspoon, followed not his example. His text was, "Contend earnestly for the faith," and those who heard him say he explained very softly, and much overlooked earnestness, and pressed, which are good things, moderation and charity, and showed this contending is not about manners of speaking and words of different mean-

ings, and it may be, people who are mistaken may be the same at bottom. Such as preach now are sure to be mistaken by one side or other, and it's no desirable province. I did not hear Mr Wither-
spoon, minister at Yester, but went to the Tron Church to hear Mr Charles Owen, minister at Warrington, in England, who is come down to the Assembly. He preached on Dan. ii. 32, "The image of gold." I shall not resume his sermon. His first was pretty long, and he brought in every thing of a public nature into it, prayed for our Supreme Lord George the Second, and Queen Caroline, the Prince, &c., and very affectionately for the Assembly. He told us his text had a political view to the four monarchies, and a moral view; and the sermon was mostly allusive and allegorical. He told us the image in the text, the head of gold and feet of iron and clay, represented man in his primitive state; soul, the head of gold; body, clay; where he had some taking and beautiful similes and practical application, in which he was warm and pathetic. The image led us next to man in his fallen state. Adam was the head of gold, and our corrupt nature the feet of clay. He asserted the communication of sin from Adam as a head, but did not speak of the covenant. He observed, when a child was brought to the world, a candle was lighted that was to shine to eternity; but then sin and death came, and parents should consider children and the younger sort as a proof they were going off the stage. Next, the image led us to the various ages of man's life; youth was a head of gold, a precious time, and addressed himself to the youth warmly and suitably; old age was part iron and clay. Then the image led us to the moral state of man; a fair profession and hypocrisy was like a shining head and feet of clay. Next, the image led us to primitive Christianity, which was the head of gold, and there he run out in the shining lives of Christians, and showed that now we were comparatively part iron, the iron age, and worse part clay; that a heathen would be long among us before he knew our God from our practice. Lastly, it led us to the Reformation from Popery, and our decays and declinings from the Reformation. He observed our first Reformers were called Puritans, and justly, and

how is our pure gold become dim; that he thought himself now happy, that he was now on that spot of ground where, perhaps, reformation was carried to as great a length, if not greater, than any where else, and he observed here a glorious appearance against Popery, and hoped the Lord would continue it with us. But he could not [but] observe, that in many Protestant pulpits, for many years, there was not one word for many years, a hint that the Pope was Antichrist; but too great a going back to the whore of Babylon; that, even in some Protestant Churches, there was a worship very like the image in his text. He ended all with some inferences—that we should labour to be like heads of gold in purity and holiness, and shining religion, and insisted on loving of our enemies, and other shining parts of Christianity. He pressed sincerity, from the unmixed solid nature of gold, and said there was no religion without sincerity; that it was not so much a grace as the blood that runs through the veins of every grace. He pressed peace and unity, and said it had been the glory of this church; and, lastly, an unmixedness from the clay of this world. He was short, not three quarters, and his last prayer was but five or six sentences. He had short notes in his Bible, but delivered most gracefully, and kept his Bible sometimes closed, sometimes open in his hand, and sometimes laid it down. He had a good deal of grave, affectionate pathos in his delivery.

It is time now to come to this day's proceedings in the Assembly. * * * * * Then Mr Simson and his lawyers were heard for the third Diet on the proof of the article of the libel, from the Professor's own papers. Mr Grant spoke as well as the matter would bear, and very gracefully, near two hours. What he insisted on was afterwards pled by members, and answered, and, indeed, lawyers will not readily hit on what will not be better reasoned on a point of this nature by members. When parties were removing, Mr Allan Logan desired Mr Simson might reconcile a passage in his letter to the Presbytery of Glasgow, and another in his papers, that seemed to contradict [each] other,—the matter and *modus* of the oneness of God was a proof of the Tri-

nity, and yet the matter and manner were not revealed. This Mr Simson explained by distinguishing between the matter of the divine perfections and *modus* of the personal relations, and I thought rid himself in some respects. But Mr Smith proposed somewhat that was very cutting from p. 61, in the beginning of Mr Simson's Answers to the Presbytery's Remarks, wherein Mr Simson says that there is a sense of Necessary Existence made use of in the argument against Atheists relative to the personal property of the Father, his being of none, not to be attributed to the Son in its highest sense. This he said he had not observed, and wished he might explain it; for it did not seem to be true in our arguing against Atheists, which behoved to go on reason and abstract from revelation, and personal property of the Father, and seemed to suppose a higher and lower sense of Necessary Existence among the persons of the Trinity. This was one of the strongest proofs the Committee had adduced, and had been exceedingly laboured by the lawyers, who did not understand it so well as other points. They had complained of the Committee, their stating this proof by curtailed words, inferences, and stretches, and in papers, to the Presbytery, and not in teaching; though from the bar they owned that all in his papers in process was what they did not decline as proof. Mr Simson thanked Mr Smith for his kindness in casting up the place, (it was much the same on the matter with Mr Craig's Query, though in another shape,) and pretended to account for it thus—(we will soon, I believe, get it in print)—that in the argument with Atheists, the Necessary Existence of the First Cause who was of none, was urged as a good proof, and that being of none, was taken for the principle and origin of all being and persons whatsoever. Mr Smith declared he was not satisfied with this answer, since that was essential Necessary Existence, and not personal, and desired Mr Simson to give any of those authors who used Necessary Existence in dealing with Atheists as the personal property of the Father; and, secondly, to declare whether he thought if they used it as the Father's personal property, soundly or unsoundly. As to the first, he said Pictet used the term so against

Atheists. But in the afternoon he was read, and no such thing was found, and most writers on Christianity in the general. As to the second question, he said he knew not how far it was competent for him to declare his opinion, whether they used the term soundly or unsoundly, lest he should reflect on the authors that had used it, and declined, adding, he thought that, if it was so used, whether soundly or unsoundly, the term was ambiguous, and it was enough to him to caution the students not to take it in a sense that agreed to the personal property of the Father. Then my Lord Grange put another question to him, What particular writers made use of Necessary Existence as the Father's personal property, either in a sound or unsound sense, so as that it was not applicable to the Son? All we heard produced were Dr Clarke, and Mr Jackson, who replies to Waterland, which every body saw were not sufficient to make the word ambiguous, so as the students needed be [at any loss] about it in the way libelled. Mr Alston repeated Mr Smith's question again to Mr Simson, some thought with a design that he might rid himself; but either he could not or would not.

In the afternoon, the Assembly met at five, and Mr Simson gave in his answer in writing to Mr Logan's and Mr Smith's difficulty, and it was read. Next the lawyers brought a passage of Damasus, added to the end of the Helvetic Confession, adopted by the Church of Scotland, which seems to say that the Son is begotten by the necessity of nature. But it was shown after they were removed, that that was not at all to be understood of any necessary existence, but of the Divine nature, in opposition to fate and coaction. The passage is cited in some of Mr Simson's papers, and is not home to the purpose at all. However, this is all adduced, after he was three times before the Committee called to produce any one approved writer, who spoke of necessary subsistence, in a sense only agreeable to the Father's personal property, which he still waived; and Damasus, Dr Clarke, and Jackson, are all brought, but quite beside the intent. Then the Assembly came to judge of the relevancy and proof. Professor Haddow spoke a little, and stated

what they should consider relevancy and proof. Professor Hamilton spoke next, and seemed to think that the proof was lame on the main thing, which was, that Mr Simson had said the terms might be rightly taken, in a sense only competent to the Father; that it may be, that it actually was, by some writers taken, he did not see relevant, if so be the terms were ambiguous. Mr A. Anderson next opened up the proof of this, as stated by the Committee at great length, and showed the groundlessness of the objections from the bar, against the proof, from the letter to the Presbytery of Glasgow, the answers to the references, and to the Presbytery's remarks, and very strongly from the deposition of the witnesses. Mr Gaudy spoke long against the relevancy and proof, and adduced passages from the ancients, Athanasius, Eusebius, and others, wherein self-existence, or *αὐωνητος*, was taken for the personal property of the Father, and *Summus Deus*, independency, which was waived, and the title of the only true God; and referred to Potavius and Sandius for more, and cited Dr Bull, Bishop Pearson on the Creed, for taking most of these, as included in the personal property of the Father, and read many citations from Greek and Latin; and since authors had taken the terms so, they were ambiguous, and the students might be warned to take them in a sense consistent with the Father's property. He did not see that Mr Simson had given this sense as what he approved; but had said in all senses, save that peculiar to the personal property, they were applicable to the Son. This was the great appearance from that side, but not one word of Necessary Existence, which was the main [thing] quarrelled.

One Mr Sinclair succeeded him, but to no great purpose, that I could perceive. Then Mr Gray spoke pretty strongly, that the Professor, when challenged, on rumours, that he taught innovations, had written the letter to them, where the first proof was, and cast up the ambiguity complained of in these terms, and was the first broacher of it himself, to their surprise, and certainly adopted that sense, and did not tell what that sense was in which it did not agree to the Son, further than that sense that agreed to the per-

sonal relation; that he had heard a great deal of the Fathers cited and read; that if a system of divinity were drawn up, from the unguarded expressions of the writers, from the second century and downwards, we would have a hotch-potch of errors, worse than Dr Clarke's; and thought this was very censurable and proven.

Mr Hamilton of Glasgow spoke next very clearly, and observed, that these terms were at first used in a sound sense by the Fathers, and on the incoming of heresy ill senses were brought in; that at the Reformation most of the Fathers' wrong expressions were laid aside, and Christ was owned as *αυτο Θεος*; that Curelleus, Episcopus, Vorstius, and other Arminians, brought in again the ill use of these words to the Protestant Churches; that though they were not used as to the personal property by any almost, but such as run into Arminianism, yet they were adopted by many English writers of great name in the ill sense; that hitherto we had been happily free from Arminianism, and were in possession of the right use of these terms, without the ambiguous sense and the dangerous meaning from the restriction of them to the Father's personal property; that Mr Simson was the first who interrupted this Church in the safe use of these terms, and thus darkened them, and gave the students no suitable caution against the wrong use of them; but left them at an uncertainty, and still insinuate the ill and unsound sense of these terms. Mr G. Logan observed that the main term was Necessary Existence; that it's already proven that Mr Simson has denied that, and, therefore, was for passing this article, being of less moment than what was already over. But to this it was said that that proof was by witnesses, this script [written] by Mr Simson's own papers, and the Church was to guard much against the ill use of terms, especially in so high a matter as this; and that in all the witnesses for exculpation, not one had proven he had taught Necessary Existence; yea, he himself owns he abstained from it and the other terms.

Principal Haddow came next, and insisted much on the passage in Mr Simson's Answers to the Remarks about Necessary Existence, being in the argument with Atheists, taken for the Father's per-

sonal property, and in a sense not belonging to the Son. He argued that Necessary Existence, in reasoning with Atheists, behoved to be essential Necessary Existence, for reason knew no other but revelation, which was no argument with Atheists; that, therefore, there was a higher essential Necessary Existence competent to the Father than to the Son, acknowledged by Mr Simson; that the evasion that God the Father was, as "of none," the principle and origin of all persons and things, was contrary to the Confession of Faith, which says of God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, [that he] was infinitely perfect, and the fountain and original of being and perfection, and in the next section comes to the personal properties, the Father's being of none, which was directly contrary to Mr Simson's passage.

My Lord Grange followed, in a long but home speech, where he showed that this article libelled could not but be relevant, that is, inferred censure; that Mr Simson had, as his own opinion, given the sense of Necessary Existence to be taken as the Father's property; that he was the first that said so; that he had produced no other saying so; that Dr Clarke himself had not said so in terms; that all the passages cited by Mr Gaudy were, and many more, in Dr Clarke, and read them as his vouchers for what was his opinion, which we all knew was heretical; that Mr Simson had acted directly contrary to the Larger Catechism in this matter, that says all the divine perfections belong to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, notwithstanding of their personal properties; that Mr Simson says Necessary Existence, &c., are not to be attributed to the Son in the sense in which it's taken for the Father's personal property; that in teaching and saying to the students that these terms may be taken, and were taken by Bull, Pearson, &c., in a sense not disagreeable to the Father's property, was his adopting of this wrong sense, and inculcating it on the students in [such] a manner as approved of that wrong sense; that it was undermining this great article, and relevant and proven, and highly censurable; that the English writers being all professedly Arminian, and having departed from their own Articles, could be no alleviation, but should

have been rather cautioned against than adopted, and the students cautioned against the wrong sense. Mr Smith spoke last, that he was unsatisfied with Mr Simson's declarations on this matter; that he had certainly injected scruples most needlessly into the students, and misled them in this great matter; and he concluded the article both relevant and proven. Professor Hamilton, a little before, had owned he was shocked at the passage above, as to Necessary Existence.

The subject now by eight at night was exhausted, and very little said on the other side, and strong things from all quarters for the relevancy and proof. A vote was going into, but it was proposed the Assembly might agree without a vote. The term Independency was waived, and Mr Alston moved that Self-Existence, being near Independency, might be dropped as very near, and what some sound writers as Dr Owen and Waterland had used, as some way peculiar to the personal property, and so what came not in here so well, the article running most on that. This was amicably agreed to, with a declaration that the Assembly fully approved, and as one man believed the properness of the terms Independency and Self-Existence to all the three Persons, yet being terms by sound authors restricted sometimes to the Father's personal property in one sense as to the eternal incomprehensible generation of the Son, the manner of which was not to be dipped into, though Mr Simson in the forenoon had very unguardedly spoken of the difference between the generation of the Son and that of animals; and so the article was sustained relevant and proven, as to the terms Necessary Existence, Supreme Deity, and the only true God, and these declared applicable to the Son every way as to the Father. Mr Allan Logan said he could not digest a profane man's expression, which was most profane, that *Summus Deus* as the Son's Supreme Deity was to be taken *cum grano salis*. The third article of this last branch of Self-Existence being an English term of art, upon this agreement was dropped. Thus the first libel is got through, and to-morrow the Assembly go upon the alleviations, and censure on the whole. The Lord direct them! I fear a breach upon this, when they are very unanimously got through the libel.

May 14.

This forenoon the Assembly entered on the alleviations. The lawyers pled about two or three hours, and Mr Simson at the bar purged himself from all heterodoxy as to Necessary Existence, and declared, in answer to a question from Mr G. Logan and Mr Alston, very orthodoxly, and as they would have him. How far this will go to impress the Assembly I know not; but if he be assolized or returned, there will be a breach.

LETTER CLXV.

Wodrow to Mrs Wodrow, No. 7.

May 15, 1728.

MY DEAR,—I had no time yesterday to write to you. In the entry of the forenoon's sederunt, we had the lawyers pleading the alleviation to the second and third article about Christ's Necessary Existence. The other, as to the numerical oneness, was pled to before, and found not to exculpate, but to alleviate, and the alleviations to be considered when the Assembly came on the censure. I observed little new in the lawyers' pleading. Their argument generally run against any weight to be laid on the witnesses, three against twenty-seven, the distance of time thirteen months, dubiety of witnesses, and Mr Simson's having proved that he taught the doctrine in the Confession of Faith, which were all considered upon the relevancy and proof, and if they proved any thing they proved too much certainly, that there was no proof, which the Assembly overruled. The lawyers brought a proof from Reinerus upon the Prosecution of Heretics, who was Inquisitor-General, that heretics who had heresy proven only by oath of witnesses, might purge themselves, by a solemn oath on the Gospels, that they did not, do not, and never will, maintain the heresy sworn against them, providing that grave men come and join with them, and swear they do not think them guilty, and know their testimony is

to be depended upon. The Earl of Argyle's case was pled upon his giving an explication of his sense and the hardship of the case exposed. They forgot to add, that though he was not allowed to explain his sense, yet the Episcopal clergy, several of them, were allowed to explain the test. There were some authorities advanced of heretics,—Arius before some general councils, particularly Eusebius of Nicomedia, who had a renunciation offered him, and refused it, and was condemned; and Eusebius of Pamphilia, who first joined the Arians, and retracted what was wrong after proven, and was exculpate. We easily saw where this was pointing. Accordingly, Mr Logan of Dunbar put a question, and gave it in write to Mr Simson, as what stuck with him much, and he desired to be cleared in, whether he owned that the Son of God was begotten by nature, in opposition to fate and coaction? This he desired to be cleared to him, that he might be free to judge of the alleviation, since he could not help fearing that Mr Simson, considering many expressions, and his constant reservation of a sense of Necessary Existence, applicable only to the Father's personal property, had some bias to Dr Clarke's Arian notion, the Son was begotten by the Father's will and power, and so might have been a creature, and never had a being. Mr Alston proposed another difficulty he had, which he wished Mr Simson would clear, whether Christ had all the divine perfections, and Necessary Existence, in particular, as a person, as the Son, in the same way the Father had? You may be sure the Professor was ready to give a most satisfying answer to both these questions, for I suppose they were concerted that he might have room to cleanse himself more fully than he had done, and help the scrape he had fallen into, in not answering Mr Craig's question before the Committee. However, the Assembly would not adopt these questions off-hand, but only allowed them to be proposed by the members for their own satisfaction; not that the Assembly could not ask questions, but the questions were on such important points, as without a full consideration of them, and how far it might be fit for this Church to enter upon these questions, that they would only have them the deed of private persons. However, we got a sound orthodox meaning and answer to both in the

affirmative, and Mr Simson was allowed to give it in write in the afternoon.

In the afternoon the Assembly met at five. Mr Simson gave in in write his answer, showing that he meant what he had said, as including these—that it was his constant opinion, the Son, as Son and a person, was possessed of all perfections and Necessary Existence in the same way the Father was, and that, by his generation, which he believed to be by necessity of nature, in opposition to co-action and fate, and this was what he had constantly taught and believed; and he also believed the oneness of these persons, and of the Holy Ghost, to be numerical. You see this, which we will probably have in print soon, is Mr Simson's renunciation of all, found proven and relevant. His lawyers then gave in a petition, desiring that, in the first place, the Assembly might determine whether Mr Simson had maintained any heretical opinions as to the Son's Necessary Existence, and that before all other things, and find him either guilty or innocent of that fearful heresy laid to his charge; and then removed. The Assembly entered on the case. It was proposed that the clerk should read what was found relevant and proven against Mr Simson, last Assembly and this, and the Assembly should consider the alleviations alleged, and how far the censure was to be applied. On the other side, it was urged that the Assembly should first give their opinion and interlocutor, whether Mr Simson was a heretic now, and had maintained heretical opinions. Professor Anderson said, that opinions and sentiments were not the object of the Assembly's declaration, that what was before them, and found relevant, alleviate the censure, and what censure was proper. Mr W. Stewart of Kiltearn had a very warm and serious speech, that he wished the prophets and apostles, if possible, were members of this Assembly, and they would soon determine the matter. Paul said, if any man preach another gospel, let him be accursed, though an angel; that Mr Simson taught another gospel, and it was found proven that he had denied Christ to be Necessarily Existent, Supreme God, the only true God; that, therefore, he should have the sentence of higher excommunication pronounced; that all other sentences were short, and this might be blessed to

him, and was necessary to testify the Church's abhorrence. Mr Lindsay of Bothkenner had two or three remarks of no very great importance, and concluded with, "If any man love not our Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha." Mr Smith and some others moved to state the debate, whether we should declare Mr Simson was free of maintaining heretical opinions now. Lord Drummore complained of the fulminations threatened, and alleged that judges should not aggravate matters, but be as ready to have Mr Simson vindicated, as to have him condemned, and then entered on the alleviations, and endeavoured to weaken the testimony of the witnesses as above, and advanced little but what was spoke from the bar, save that he showed that Mr Simson had not dropped "being," as to the Son, as Mr Lindsay had said in his papers. Mr Anderson of St Andrews followed in a long speech, wherein he went through what had been pled from the bar about the witnesses, and took it off pretty much. He observed that Mr Simson's grand mistake seemed to be as to the Father's personal property, which he seemed to mistake much. In the Confession of Faith, it is "being of none," and not being begotten or proceeding. That the Larger Catechism expressed it by begetting, in one word. Mr Simson, by distinguishing and sensing *being of none* as somewhat different (as he thought) from not being begotten, had got in Necessary Existence peculiar to the Father's personal property, a notion of his own; whereas, the notions of Necessary Existence and being of none were vastly different; that he took this to be his *proton pseudos*,¹ though now he had explained it away. He went through the passages in Mr Simson's first letter, his Answers to the References, and his Answer to the Remarks and other papers, wherein he still insinuates this unsound sense. He owned there was some alleviation in what the Professor had said this day; and that he was come greater lengths this day than ever; but he observed that this was when at a pinch, without any retraction or declaration of sorrow for what was found relevant and proven; yea, he declared that the sound opinion was declared by him

¹ Radical error.

to be what he still believed and taught, which was contrary to what appeared from the proof and his papers; that his declaration of this to him seemed not much to alleviate the matter, considering, that after the rumour rose, he had declared he had taught nothing wrong, and Mr Stirling, by order, declared so much from him; that after that, he had not bettered matters much, refused to give answers to questions, and shuffled all along the process, had kept his shift in his declaration before the last Assembly, refused to declare before the Committee; and now at length he had come out with [a declaration;] that he was a person that was under restrictions by the act 1717; that, upon examination, he had been found to break these; that he owned he had altered his method of teaching on the Trinity, and evidently had taught novelties and dangerous positions; that his sincerity and fairness in his declaration, when contrary to proof and print, that he had still believed and taught, as this day, when a sentence was going upon to him, did very little alleviate; though he owned even this forced strange declaration was to be reckoned a victory to the truth at length, yet it did not, to him, much lessen the censure, since treason against the King, last year, could little soften the matter, when loyal declarations were made last year, as another had observed.

Professor Hamilton spoke next. He considered the witnesses much, and endeavoured to invalidate their proof as to guilt, which I think is not the case after the Assembly hath had this before them, and judged it. He said, that, indeed, he thought there was a censure due to Mr Simson, for the things found relevant and proven, but several things, when he balanced the weakness and degree of proof with the guilt relevant, stuck with him; and he run out on three being only against twenty-seven, and the distance of time, and one of them about Marek's argument *a creatione* he thought not to the purpose, or nonsense, and read a passage, pled by the lawyers before the last Assembly, from Mr Simson's case. This Mr Allan Logan took off, and proved the argument good from eternity to Necessary Existence. Mr John Gray said some more on this, and took notice that the greatest stress seemed to be laid upon Mr Simson's alleviation from his teaching the sound doctrine

as in the Confession of Faith, in all the branches of it, by twenty-seven witnesses, which to him had no great weight in it; for it might be true that he taught it in these words, and in the terms that Mr Simson this day professed he believed and taught, though against fact, that Christ possesses, as the Son, and by his filiation, all the perfections and Necessary Existence in the same manner as the Father, except as to his necessarily being begotten, which, indeed, he was content to hear now acknowledged; and yet, in the meantime, he might be of Dr Clarke's opinion,¹ that the Son was from the will and power of the Father, and as soon as begotten he possessed Necessary Existence, and all other perfections, and yet he would not be properly eternal; and, indeed, I know not if yet the application of his being filiated by the necessity of nature will fully answer even that difficulty; that Mr Simson, perhaps, had said, and the argument was the same, when the argument was urged from Christ's eternal to his Necessary Existence, that that argument was not good, because the decrees were eternal, and yet not necessary. This observation seemed to be strong, and to affect many. Then my Lord Grange spoke not so long as in the former debates, but very strongly. He could by no means think the question was, Whether Mr Simson was a heretic, or maintained heretical opinions as to the Necessary Existence of the Son? He did not think the Assembly were to determine as to his opinions, nor to pronounce him a heretic, but to judge how far the unsound doctrines taught deserved censure; that it was very certain damnable doctrines have been taught, and that deserved censure; that the explication now given was somewhat and more than ever given, which he rejoiced in as a victory to the truth, however forced and unnatural it had been as coming from him; but that though he was not for the highest censure, yet he was for a very great censure, notwith-

¹ Dr Clarke maintained that "the generation of the Son of God from eternity (in his sense of it) was voluntary and free, and not necessary; it might have been and not have been; that in this voluntary act there was a communication of all the Divine perfections to the Son, save Independency, Self-Existence, or Necessary Existence; such as eternity, or being before all creatures, omniscience, omnipresence, and other perfections, which lay the foundation of religious worship."—*Wod. Anal.* v. 163.

standing of this declaration ; for it was good in the matter, but imported a vindication of himself, that he had still believed and taught, and it was his fixed opinion before, what he now declared, which, in his opinion, was a back-door for Mr Simson to get out at, and say he had taught right, and made no acknowledgment to the Assembly, but in the sense of what he had ever taught and believed, and so was at liberty to teach as he had done ; and should the Assembly accept of this, it was an approbation of his vile manner of teaching. He insisted long on what was vented by him in his papers, and then on what is found proven by witnesses. He had thrown up the dubious sense of Necessary Existence to the Presbytery, maintained it in his Answers to the References, and in his papers given in to the Assembly, maintained that the denying of Christ's Necessary Existence was a thing not relevant, that is, not censurable, or the saying it was a thing we know not was not censurable, because we had not the term in the Confession or Scripture. This was such a vile assertion, that it ought to be renounced with the deepest humility. As to the witnesses, he observed three positive witnesses were all required by the law of God ; that twenty-seven negative did not weaken the proof by them, especially when others were easily supposable to be inattentive or taken up ; that several others besides the three were clear as to the conversation, though they did not remember what passed, but that strengthened the proof that such a conversation was ; that three were enough to let us in to the circumstances, and we had a full view how the conversation passed ; and it was not broken sentences, but the detail of the argument which was deponed ; that the grossness of the expression was certainly no weakening the proof, but a strengthening of it, because such an expression could not be fallen into in an argument, but *ex proposito* ; that it strengthened the evidence of the three that deponed, and was a thing could not be forgot nor mistaken ; that a trip was impossible, as the matter stood in an argument, and that it's plain now Mr Simson understood it as to the Father's personal property, and denied Necessary Existence in that sense positively ; that the distance of thirteen months was no good argument ; that the *ipsissima verba*

were out of doors, as what destroyed all evidence as to doctrine and expressions; that the dubiety of the witnesses was a strong proof they were sincere and knowing witnesses, and deponed to the best of their remembrance, which was not dubious, but a proof of tenderness; that he could depone in no other way as to what he had said himself, or heard others say this day, unless he had at the time written it down.

Mr Dundas, who came in this afternoon, answered my Lord Grange, that the former Assembly could not conclude this Assembly; that formerly he hesitated on the proof, and did still, notwithstanding, doubt of it; that he thought it unsafe to conclude a man a heretic for his words, when he had declared his opinion sound afterwards. Then he ran out on the objections of the witnesses, and said he could not think three balanced twenty-seven; but providing he was not declared to have maintained heretical opinions, he was clear he was censurable, and highly censurable, but thought he should be vindicated from heresy, since he had declared his soundness. He thought his declaration, in a consistency with what he had taught and believed, was no more than his not remembering what was proven against him, and weakened in the proof by twenty-seven, and a denial of the libel; that his saying Necessary Existence was a thing we knew not was not relevant, was only as to the terms, not the thing, for he owned the thing now, and had taught it in the terms of Scripture and Confession, and was no more than a denial of the libel. My Lord Grange answered Mr Dundas, and maintained the Assembly could not in judgment, though in acts they might, reverse what the former had done; that the honourable member had lately been of opinion (in Aberdeen affair as to Mr Chalmers) that the sentence and decision of the Commission could not be opened and ranversed; but that was then [old] and this new. To be sure, this was more when agreed by an Assembly; that that was against all law and reason, to be affirmed of a supreme court; and then went on in defending the witnesses, and the Professor's denying the thing that we knew not Christ's Necessary Existence to be not relevant to be a gross thing. Mr Alston spoke

but little new from what is noticed, but was for finding Mr Simson had not maintained heretical doctrine, now that he had declared. Mr Gaudy observed, that the witnesses deponed that he had refuted all the branches of the Arian heresy. It was answered, that that was a general [refutation,] and Dr Clarke's doctrine, the error of the day, was not refuted, but encouraged by what Mr Simson had taught and wrote. This is what I can remember of the substance of the reasonings yesternight, and I think I have given the sum of what was material. The Assembly sat till after ten. A resolution was moved by some to agree to reason no more, but come to the state of a vote to-morrow when we meet; but that was refused as a prelimiting the Assembly.

* * * * *

This day the Assembly met at ten. Mr Simson appeared at the bar, and craved to explain what he had given in yesterday, and gave it in in write. It contained a declaration that what he gave in yesterday, though it referred to his papers, and seemed to be in a consistency with them, yet he desired it might be understood absolutely, and without the least restriction; that he declared his sorrow for his having used any unsound expressions, and for having given offence, and did renounce any thing in his papers or otherwise that had done so; and was willing further to retract whatever the Assembly thought fit to call him to. His lawyers after this pleaded it as a point of right that the Assembly should condescend on what part of the libel he was guilty, and free him from impugning or denying the Necessary Existence of Christ. What was brought for this landed only in a judicatory's agreeing to give the grounds of their sentence, which every body owned. After parties were removed, some proposed, that now the Assembly might give their opinion whether Mr Simson had pertinaciously maintained heresy; and others, that the Assembly should go in to the prayer, that is, petition, for we must have English terms, from the bar. Mr Baillie of Monkton began the reasoning very idly, and was frequently interrupted, and at length a little hissed at, and at last stopped, as repeating what was said yesternight, without adding

any thing new. Mr Pitcairn moved that the lawyers, who had given him much light, had been heard, and he inclined to hear ministers speak on the question, and spoke himself a little, and seemed to be of opinion that his recantation had purged him of heresy. Every body that spoke on that side seemed to own that Mr Simson had been much wrong, and was highly censurable, but now he had retracted and recanted, and declared his sorrow for what was passed.

Mr Charters spoke at some length; that by his papers, and the procedure of the last Assembly, he was convinced Mr Simson was guilty of denying the Necessary Existence; that he was acquaint with him, and took him to be a friendly, kind man, who would not give the Church all this trouble, if there had not been a change of principle with him, and somewhat within signified by the words proven; that till yesterday and this day he did not doubt but he had drunk in heretical notions; that now he had recanted them—how far that would go he did not know, but he was sure that the great question was, Whether, having once vented such opinions, he should preach or teach any more? Mr Alston succeeded him, and owned he very much agreed with Mr Charters, and thought what was proven deserved censure, and by no means a small one; that he was not for sending him back (his meaning, though not expressed, was for a year only) to Glasgow. Mr Smith spoke next, and justly distinguished between what was in the process, and what followed yesterday and this day; that as to what was in process, he thought the Assembly last year, and the committee and this Assembly had found that he had entertained of late unsound notions about the Trinity, by what how he did not know, and went through the proof, and answered the arguments to lessen it very distinctly; that it was certain he had now renounced it in very full terms—how far there might yet be somewhat under them he would not say, having only heard his paper given in to-day, but conceived that what now cast up did not hinder a proportioned censure.

Mr A. Logan said, that he agreed with Mr Smith, and that heresy was an opinion that was contrary to foundation-articles of re-

ligion ; that what was proven discovered Mr Simson once heretical ; that his papers now offered would say that he was not pertinacious, he did not yet judge. Mr Gray was by no means for the Assembly's entering into the question, whether he had maintained heresy pertinaciously, because that was about words, but for confining the question to what censure his fault deserved.

Mr Hamilton was much of the same mind, and thought nobody would deny that he had retracted what was wrong, the manner and time of which he left to the Assembly. My Lord Grange spoke a little, that he rejoiced to hear Mr Simson's recantation ; that he thought it was a victory to the truth, and sufficient to satisfy the world ; that such as had contended earnestly in this matter were in their duty, and with good effect ; that one who certainly once had been unsound and heretical had been brought to a recantation ; that he hoped this would vindicate the method of the Church of Scotland's procedure, and be a good copy to other Churches in so ill a time ; that by no means he thought that Mr Simson had not been pertinacious, though he owned that was now overcome, and he thought very happily ; but he had fenced two years, refused to give satisfaction at first, and his retractation had come out gradually, and at length it was come after insolence to the Presbytery, Assembly last year, with whom no doubt what is cast up this day would have had weight, and the committee and this Assembly, till just coming to a sentence. However, we were to be thankful the matter was now come the length it was come. He observed a general, absolute retractation in this day's paper, and a Christian offer to retract more, if the Assembly condescended. He instanced the passage in the letter to the Presbytery, the Answers to Inferences, and his Answer to the Remarks ; and other passages might be condescended on, and he called particularly to retract them. If he did not, then his general signified nothing. If he did, it was his own further happiness ; and moved a committee, Mr Haddow, Mr Smith, Mr A. Logan, who were acquaint with the passages, might draw them out, and give them to him, and he retract them against the afternoon ; and yet after all, considering that once he was hereti-

cal, he was of opinion that this did not much to affect the censure, for what was in process, as Mr Smith had observed; but still that he deserved to be deposed, though he might be reponed. But if he was pertinacious, he thought, indeed, the highest censure was what he deserved.

Provost Drummond spoke after him, and observed that he never came in so melancholy to an Assembly as this morning, and saw that, as Mr Pitcairn had observed, if matters came to a vote, there was like to be a breach and a dissent by members, the end of which he could not see; but now he thought we were coming to more harmony, and every body was for censure, and waiving determination as to his heresy, and moved the committee. When all seemed agreed, Mr Pr. Hamilton opposed the committee, as having too great a trust, unless the places pointed to were agreed to by the Assembly; and some others, Mr G. Logan and Mr Goudy, moved we should rather come to the censure. This cast all loose; and it was proposed that Mr Simson should hear what passed, and know the places objected, and that it should be left to him to do as he saw cause. And so the Assembly adjourned, having done nothing for two sederunts but received Mr Simson's papers.

In the afternoon, this day, Mr Simson took some time before he brought in his paper; and the report of the Committee for the King's Bounty was read, pretty long, containing most heavy accounts of the progress of Popery and Jacobite meeting-houses, which was remitted to the Commission, and a representation and address seemed to be agreed upon to the King as to both these, as fit in the entry of the King's reign. Then a collection came in for Mr Morison, ordained catechist in Rathven, for a church and a manse, which was agreed to. The Justice-Clerk and lawyers spoke for it. By this time Mr Simson came in, and offered his third cleansing paper and his last. It's but short, but fuller and clearer, and more distinct, than any of his papers formerly; so I fancy he has had help to it. I saw Lord Drummore, Mr Gowdy, and some others, and the President, came in a little before. The tenor of it, in short, is, that finding that brethren were not fully satisfied with what he had given, he de-

declares that the argument from eternity to Necessary Existence is good. This relates to the passage about Necessary Existence in Marck, and his argument. He declares he does not remember he used that expression, that *Christus non est ens necessarium*, but abhors it, and utterly renounces it; that he is very sorry that he omitted teaching Christ's Necessary Existence; that he renounces that passage, p. 61—state about the argument against Atheists, from any Necessary Existence not competent to the Son; that he is sorry for his making the distinction, and renounces any Necessary Existence as the personal property of the Father, and allows Christ's necessary generation, as explained in the forenoon; that he did not mean that the thing was not relevant when he used that phrase, of denying the relevancy of Christ's Necessary Existence, but only the word, when not used in the Confession; that he was sorry for his saying, Christ was not the only true God and *Summus Deus*, with any restriction, and renounces all other unsafe terms used by him; and is sorry for the offence given to the Assembly, his brethren in the ministry, and all the members of the Church of Scotland, by his doing of these; and resolves to abstain from these in time to come, and will adhere to all this, and not alter. After this paper of his, the lawyers gave in a paper of a short sum of the state of alleviation, as pleaded and pled before the Assembly, where there were some expressions that seemed to import that he had been still the same in his opinions. This coming after the Professor's paper was reckoned a renunciation of what the Professor had given in. He was required to own the lawyers' paper or not. He said only it was what had been pleaded, but that did not satisfy. This looked like somewhat of lessening what he had given in, and therefore it was left to him and them to do as they pleased. The lawyers insisted that it was their paper, and it was said it was his, since given in before him, and he not disowning it, it was to be received as his. Whereupon it was taken back.

Then the Assembly came back to their former question, whether to give judgment first, whether he was guilty or innocent as to impugning, or disowning or denying the Necessary Existence of

Christ, or to go on to the censure on the whole? It was urged that this declaration of the Assembly, that now he was sound, was just to him, and what would make our sentence look the better in the eyes of the world. All owned that for what appeared he seemed now to return to the faith from which he had departed, and to renounce the errors he had been under. But that was of little importance. It was observed that his declaration about the numerical unity wanted substance, and was a quibble; that the Divine unity was one numerically, and *idem per idem*; that the dishonour put on Christ by what he had taught or said, before his declaration of his soundness, was first to be noticed, that it might be noticed when the Assembly came to the sentence; that if he had continued in his unsound doctrine, he deserved excommunication, but having renounced what was erroneous, the Assembly only deposed him from the ministry; and this would include his vindication, and being at present sound. Mr G. Logan said, that he thought his carriage had been such as he should continue suspended and on good behaviour till next Assembly. At length Mr Smith proposed that a committee should be named to form the censure, and draw up the grounds of it, that, if possible, the Assembly might agree to it without a vote. This was gone into by the Assembly, and the Moderator, Principal Haddow, Professor Hamilton, Principal Chalmers, Mr Gray, Mr Hamilton, Mr Smith, Mr Alston, Mr Allan Logan, President, Grange, Drummore, P. Drummond, were named on the committee, and withdrew; and the Assembly went on the Synod books. They are to report to-morrow. The Lord guide them! The one side will be content to suspend him to the next Assembly; the other will insist that he be deposed; and they are equal in the committee. If they can agree, it's well; if not, it must come before the Assembly, and be voted; and if he be not deposed, it's probable there will be a dissent, and many joining in it, and an open breach.

LETTER CLXVI.

Wodrow to Mrs Wodrow, No. 8.

Thursday, May 16, 1728.

MY DEAR,—I signified that yesternight Mr Simson's affair was sub-committed, as I still thought it would be. The Committee was one supernumerary for the favourable side to him, whether through the Moderator's haste, or want of consideration, I know not. They sat up till near twelve of the clock this morning, and did not agree upon the censure to be proposed. They agreed pretty well upon the narrative—That, whereas, by Mr Simson's declarations of the 14th and 15th, (and he added to the Committee a new one, as to numerical oneness, in essence or substance, which, I believe, was omitted only in haste before,) Mr Simson and the substance of the declarations is insert, it appears that he is now sound in these great articles; yet, whereas, by what was found relevant and proven before the last Assembly and this, he hath impugned the great foundation-articles of our religion, and undermined people's faith concerning them, and shaken their belief; therefore, the General Assembly, to show their high dissatisfaction and displeasure with such practices and conduct, and for the honour of the truth—thus far the Committee agreed. There is a clause, too, in the narrative, that though he had many opportunities given him of vindicating himself, and declaring his soundness in these great points, he did not fall in with them. But then the Committee differed as to the sentence, and brought in two different states of it to the Assembly, which they left to their determination. The one was:—Therefore, (for all runs as an Act of Assembly on the whole,) the Assembly suspend him from teaching and preaching, and all other ecclesiastical office, power, and function in this Church, until another General Assembly see cause to

take off this, leaving to the next General Assembly still to do in this as they see cause. The other state was:—And the General Assembly, considering these and his vexatious wrangling through the whole of this affair, do depose him from teaching, preaching, and all other ecclesiastical function and office in the Church. The Committee sat till about one this day, when they came into the Assembly, who had yesternight and this day been upon Synod books, petitions from the Committee of Bills of lesser moment.

When the narrative was read, and the two different states, which the Committee would not yield to one another in, and several exceptions were made upon all hands, it was wanted by some members in the Assembly, that, in the narrative, there was no notice taken that Mr Simson had been 1717 convicted of error. That was refused by others, and this was denied, that the Assembly then had found him guilty of error. Then it was urged, that he was then certainly laid under a prohibition to teach, as in the Act; and that it was found now that he had broken these prohibitions, and this should be in fairness added to the narrative. It was answered, that the prohibition was upon others as well as on him; and that the second libel given was not yet judged, and there was no time to enter upon it. Mr Smith spoke at some length, that this was all the Assembly could now overtake; and that though some thought, and, perhaps, it was not far wrong to reckon that he himself was among the number of those that did think so, that Mr Simson, though now he had declared himself sound, deserved deposition for what was in the process; yet, taking all together, as things now stand, he thought, in prudence, and for peace and harmony, and considering all circumstances of things as they now stand, it were better, without a vote, to agree to a suspension, till another Assembly should see reason to take it off.

Then several pretty warm speeches were made. A minister in Angus, I think, said, that now there were two parties here, Christ and Mr Simson, and Christ was in hazard to be wounded in the house of his friends; that he thought Levi tribe, that would not know father or brother in this cause, should be our pattern; that now

the honour of Christ was, upon the one hand, to be considered, and Mr Simson's person and benefit ; and that, for his share, he had rather fall with Mr Simson than in the least any dishonour should come upon our glorious Redeemer. Mr Smith said, that he did not think that was precisely the state of the matter before the Assembly, but rather put the case, that a father was both judge and party with relation to his child ; the fault deserved the greatest severity, but tenderness of a child that was guilty, and considerations as to the family in general, and the state of it, with acknowledgments and retractions, swayed to the side of clemency ; and instanced in Jacob, who was both judge and parent, and Simeon and Levi had committed a crime that deserved death, yet he did not inflict it, by reason of the prudential considerations, but only frowned on them, and at his death left them to be divided in Jacob, and scattered in Israel, and to have in their posterity an inconvenient and discontinuous habitation. Mr Ker, in Teviotdale or Dumfries, noticed the case of Eli as to his sons, that the Lord was angry at Eli, because he had [not] restrained them from doing evil ; and desired a part of the Form of Process to be read, that if ministers fell in fornication, or any gross immoralities, even though penitent, they should be *instanter* deposed ; that he thought the scandal of error was worse than that of fornication, and though he did not see that penitency and repentance in Mr Simson he wished for, yet he apprehended the case was parallel. Professor Hamilton answered him, that the Form of Process, in that very chapter, distinguished between processes for error and immorality, and Mr Ker seemed to make the rule in both the same ; and that in that same place the Form of Process directed, that if error was fallen into, then lenitives should be applied, &c. ; but to that it was answered, that it was lesser errors not spreading, whereas the case was otherwise. The Professor observed further, that if the case were betwixt the glory of Christ and the person of Mr Simson, none could be in any difficulty ; but he took the case to be, whether suspension or deposition were the best methods for promoting this great end of vindicating the truth and glorifying Christ. He

thought both of them equally answered the end we had before us, and there was much the same effect from both as to the interests of the glory of God and truth; for, by suspension, Mr Simson was as effectually barred from doing further hurt as by deposition; that the one might be taken off by the next Assembly, if they found cause, as well as the other. The only difference was here, that he knew no instance in Councils and Assemblies, that where a person declared penitence, and showed himself in the faith, that the highest sentence was gone into; that he thought deposition was the farthest we could go, though he had not so fully retracted; and that now the case was altered, and how the justice of the highest sentence, in case of a person's renouncing, would appear in the eyes of other Churches, he did not know. He noticed Christ's rebuke to John, &c., when they would bring fire from heaven. Mr Chambers followed him, and owned deposition would have been just two days ago, but, after what now was done, he thought suspension should be gone into, and cited Peter's case of denying his Master, and Christ's passing it, and coming first to him after his resurrection. It was observed, that Peter was under a temptation, did not deny Christ's Necessary Existence, that he wept bitterly, which was not here.

I forgot to add, that the lawyers at the beginning craved their last word, and produced several citations from Councils, that upon retractions there could be no deprivation; that heretics, when not pertinacious, could not be deprived by the Canon law, and cited a passage in Corvinus, in the animadversions on Mr Simson's case, which they alleged wanted some words. But Lord Grange set that matter plain, and explained it clearly of heretics, who, on the first discovery of their heresy, recanted, and, from pride and quirks, did not continue till they could do no better, which was far from this case. Lawyers urged that no instance could be given of deprivation after renunciation and declared soundness, and endeavoured to show that Mr Simson was not convicted before, nor fallen a second time into error. Mr M^rIntosh reasoned on the narrative of the act brought in, and said if the sentence were only suspension, he was

afraid in the eyes of other Churches, the conclusion would be unequal to the crime of impugning fundamental truths, shaking and undermining them, and other gross things there, which could not well answer so mild a censure as suspension, and would not satisfy brethren, nor the offended people of God, nor other Churches. Mr Anderson of Falkirk had a very affectionate serious speech, that Mr Simson had taken up the time of four or five Assemblies with his innovations; that it was hard this matter should be still upon the field; that we saw no prohibitions would do with him; that he still grew worse; that now the Assembly were acting in Christ's name, and as tutors to truth, and if they did not depose such a person, he did not see how they acted as stewards; and wished every one would lay their hand to their heart, and act as they would be answerable, and moved a vote, Suspend or Depose? How the vote would go nobody could well say. I doubt Mr Simson would have only been suspended, though others think it would have been depose; it's certain it would have run very near, and had exceeding ill consequences. And, therefore, when the Assembly were going into the vote, Principal Haddow rose up, according to concert in several meetings in private, (where I regret it that brethren on the other side, perhaps trusting to their numbers, did not show so much inclination to conferences, and preventing a breach, as I expected,) and signified that he perceived a great number of the Assembly, and perhaps the plurality, thought the things found against Mr Simson, notwithstanding of his renunciation, were so gross as deserved deposition. But he saw the consequences of distinguished sides and a vote, and looked for a breach, unless the Assembly would allow this process not to be thoroughly finished, and allow that the plurality, or very many at least, were of opinion that the censure should be deposition, and agree for peace, that for this time it was agreed to suspend, and that the members who were for deposition, of which he owned he was one, should have liberty to mark their names, or give them in to the clerk in what manner was best for the peace of the Church, as agreeing to a suspension at this time, with liberty at the next Assembly to take up the process as

not concluded ; and if this was not yielded, he saw very dismal consequences in the Church—that is, though he did not tell it out, that all the members who were for deposition (if not the plurality) would enter their dissent, and a great many ministers in the Church would join in declaring themselves of the same sentiments. This was said just to be a voting of the matter, and equal to a vote, and would not be granted, by the President, Drummore, Mr Dundas, Justice-Clerk, (who did not speak in this matter,) Sir John English, Professor Hamilton, and others, who, indeed, did not speak, but showed that could not be yielded. Mr D. Pitcairn made a speech for peace and unity, and that we seemed nearer than formerly ; and declared against a vote, as what would lay a foundation of a breach, like Protesters and Resolutioners, in the Church, of which he would never live to see the healing. Mr Anderson of St Andrews spoke, and thought that the proposal was fair and peaceable, and wished it might be gone into without a vote—that a great many members thought the demerit of the crime deserved deposition, but, *pro hac vice*, yielded for peace, and till the diffusive sense of the Church were had on this great matter.

Mr Alston proposed the committee might withdraw out of the house presently, and he hoped they would agree in bringing in what would satisfy all. This was opposed pretty much by those about the throne just now named, and they seemed very unwillingly to go into it ; but the Assembly were generally for it. And so they retired for two hours, (the Assembly still sitting,) and brought in much the same narrative ; but on the whole, the Assembly testified their high dissatisfaction with Mr Simson's practices and conduct, and as an interim agreement and sentence, reserving what remained in this process (the second libel and censure for refusing the queries) to be further considered, when the Assembly shall see fit to take up this process, and declaring that many members of the Assembly thought deposition the demerit of what was already found, and ordering the whole process to be printed, and what this Assembly had done to be added to what was printed by the committee, and sent to the several Presbyteries, that they might return their opi-

nion on it. And, in the meantime, as an interim sentence, the Assembly suspended as above. When this came in to the Assembly, Mr W. Stewart said, though there were none to protest against this he would do it, and Mr Squire said he should not be alone. Whether they were resolved on this extremity, or inclined to impress the house, I don't know. Mr Logan said he had been still for peace, and he was drawn in with much difficulty to this, under the prospect of getting his name marked with others, and desired to know if Presbyteries were to have the matter sent to them, and to make returns to the Assembly. It was answered, that was what was included in the clause added. Then he said, that as, in the case of the overtures, he had prevented a flame and yielded for peace, he would now yield to show his readiness that way, and what the Moderator had intimated, that truth should be contended for and peace, but without peace truth could not long stand, and besought his dear brethren, who spoke of protesting, not to insist since the matter was but an interim determination, and yet before the diffusive Church; and so it was agreed, without a vote very happily, and Mr Stewart moved the Committee for Purity might have the thanks of the Assembly for their pains and faithfulness, and good services done to the Church, which was done and given by the Moderator.

Mr Simson was called in, the act read, the Moderator wished he might consider it, and that it might be sanctified to him. He said nothing, and was not cited to the next Assembly. Thus this unhappy affair is over; I hope comfortably, and to the advantage of truth, with a great regard to the peace of the Church in those who were most against Mr Simson, and to the reputation of the Church in the eyes of observers; and, as far as I can see, we shall not hear any more of Mr Simson in public, and no difficulties are run to with the King in the entry of his reign, who was made to believe that this matter touched his prerogative; and the truth receives a considerable victory by Mr Simson's renunciation, and a bar is put on him that he cannot print in defence of his notions if he entertain them. Some regard is shown to his person and family, and I hope he will either demit or withdraw, and another will supply his room

better. I only add, that Mr Dundas, before the committee went out, said, that he could never be informed that an erroneous man was ever deposed for his heresy or opinion, if he returned to the faith, by any Council; that if the Church of Scotland should do so, he did not know what improvements would be made of it elsewhere, and he did not know how she would be vindicated; that unless he entertained doubts whether Mr Simson were such as were to be wished in his declarations of soundness made to the Assembly, because of his many tergiversations and turnings, and unless he inclined to see some further trial of his carriage, he could not have gone in even to an interim suspension, as what he thought would be too high when he was now sound; and that this method would tend best, in his opinion, to what we all intended, and perhaps as effectually affect his benefice, which he loved not to speak of as our church deprivation. I only notice further, that the elders in the committee, even Mr Dundas, appeared, as I am told, more yielding than several ministers, as Professor Hamilton and Principal Chalmers.

After this matter was ended, a petition from Mr Chambers, P. at Aberdeen, patron of the Old Town, for the settlements being referred to the Commission, came in. After some warm debate, the settlement being, as was whispered, designed for Principal Chalmers himself, who is to be called, against the inclinations of the town, to be minister, in Mr Mitchell's room, by a vote the Assembly refused to grant its coming to the Commission, but left it to its ordinary course. Then, after reading the lists of probationers and students, the minutes were read, and a committee appointed to revise the minutes. Then the Moderator had a long speech to the Commissioner in common form, wherein were compliments to the King and Commissioner, and a particular remark upon the preventing of a breach in this Assembly, and their harmonious close in this great affair. The Commissioner had his speech in common form; and being uncertain of the issue of the Assembly, though all the rest was written, when he came to that I think he delivered himself off book, that after so much debate on such an affair, he was glad that

he had so peaceful and calm an issue to represent to his Majesty, which he would do, very much, he hoped, to the reputation of this Church. Then, after prayer, the Moderator sung the 72d Psalm, from verse 17th to the end. The House was thinner than usual, the Assembly having sat from ten to seven at night; but I cannot say but the Psalm was pertinent, and in singing it there was more than ordinary sweetness. The Assembly dismissed with the blessing; and the Commission was ordered to sit to-morrow at ten. I am yours.

LETTER CLXVII.

DEATH OF DR COTTON MATHER.

To the Rev. Mr Samuel Mather, Chaplain at Castle-William, New England.

REV. DEAR BROTHER,—I am favoured with both your last in April and May last, by the Dove sloop, which comes into Glasgow, and I thank you kindly for them. The melancholy accounts of my heavy loss, [in the death of your] now glorified father, reached me by the London prints in the beginning of May. I will not renew your sorrow. The Lord sanctify this stroke to you and your sister, to me, and all the churches of Christ! A great man is fallen in our Israel. Take him altogether, I do not know his equal left. I enjoyed the inestimable benefit of his prayers (and he was a man of prayer) now near twenty years, and of his sweet, useful, friendly correspondence, and had the benefit likewise, now and then, of your eminent grandfather's letters. I preserve them both among my *κειμήλια*. May a double portion of their spirit, Dear Sir, rest on you! Assure yourself I'll be fond to entertain correspondence with the MATHERS. I love the name, because of Christ eminently in them. The oftener you write the more you'll oblige; and I hope

you'll oblige me by every ship you hear of coming for Scotland. At this distance (though we daily meet at the throne) we must not wait for one another's letters, but take all occasions Providence offereth. I thank you for the justice you have done to your excellent parent in your sermon, which was extremely acceptable. Go on; give us his Life from his papers. The Lord direct you in forming it! I long for it, and will be impatient till it come. Let me also be favoured with his Restitutus, his Sermon on Mr Thatcher, and what was published after his Agricola, which was the last book of his I had from his dear hands; and I think I want little published by him and your grandfather these twenty years. You see the freedom I use. Let me know wherein I can serve you here. I am sure you have my best and warmest wishes. I must break off. Yesterday we had the sacrament of the Supper dispensed in this place. The bearer comes for Boston to-morrow. You'll excuse my haste; and believe that I am, Dear Sir, your afflicted sympathiser, affectionate brother, and humble servant.

August 12, 1728.

I had your father's last accounts from the East Indies. Pray continue your accounts from New England, and give my affectionate regards to your sister. Great grace be with you!

LETTER CLXVIII.

SIMSON'S CASE BEFORE PRESBYTERIES.

To the Rev. Mr Thomas Linning, Minister at Lesmahago.

REV. DEAR BROTHER,—I have been in conversation with some brethren hereabout of late upon the subject, What Presbyteries ought to do now, when the affair of Mr Simson's doctrine lies under their consideration? You know better than I that this is an affair

of the very last importance to this Church. It's given out, upon what grounds I do not know, that a design is forming to repon Mr Simson at the next Assembly, and to get as many Presbyteries as possible to give no instructions at all; and others, where so much interest can be made, to instruct their commissioners to the next Assembly that two years' suspension is sufficient censure for his offence, especially after his retraction. In the meantime, to cool the edge of some Presbyteries that will not readily be silent, and some ministers, till matters be past helping, it's given out that Mr Simson is to give us no more trouble, but will demit before the next Assembly, and methods are taking to procure him a pension and competency to live upon. It is hard to me to believe this story, though I have nothing to say against any provision shall be made, providing the youth be no more corrupted, and teaching error prevented. Indeed, I cannot help thinking the present vigorous spreading of this story, if it be unsupported, as I fear it is, may be designed to cool any further appearances from Presbyteries against error, that is deeplier spread I doubt than we yet see, though we see too much.

Now that the state of the process is come to each Presbytery, it were to be wished that methods were concerted for our acting vigorously, prudently, and, as far as may be, unanimously. We seem to be in a very miserable case. Though the process be printed, yet I question if one minister among six will buy it or read it. How far Presbyteries will stay to read over their copies together I do not know; and how brethren and elders who are not acquainted with the process will give their judgment upon the whole, I think I know pretty well: that is, just as other views, and not the weight of cause, ought to lead them.

I am very desirous to have your sentiments upon this subject, and the method of procedure that should now be essayed in Presbyteries. Your long experience now since the Revolution, and your perfect knowledge of this affair, make you ripe to advise as to what is now fit to be done, without any compliment, which you know is not my way. Pray let me hear from you with the first occasion

you have to Hamilton, to Alexander Archer's, or to Glasgow, to Mr Porterfield's.

That I may not seem to put work on others that I may only ease myself, I'll take the liberty to communicate with you my present raw thoughts upon this matter, that you may have the better occasion to set me right, and add what may be proper. I wish we in this Synod, where the unhappy beginnings of this and the other process were, could be in case to make some more vigorous appearances than we have done, though, to be plain with you, I don't expect much this way, unless it be from your Presbytery and Ayr; Glasgow, perhaps, and Dumbarton; and, therefore, when it shall be found proper to begin, I hope as much from your Presbytery as any. And I hope in time you'll correspond with Mr Orr, Mr R. Gray, Mr Charles Hunter, Mr J. Hepburn, and others, and concert matters, as you may easily do. To me it appears very needful that brethren understand one another's sentiments on this important matter in different corners, and a correspondence be fixed as much as may be with Galloway, Dumfries, Edinburgh, Fife, Stirling, and the North, that, as much as may be, some joint course may be taken. I expect as hearty appearances in other quarters as in the west of Scotland, and if once we could concert matters, I shall not be wanting, as far as my acquaintance reaches, to write in concert with you and others. Indeed, I could almost wish a few who know this affair, and are impressed with the importance of it, could meet in some proper place, and spend a night together. But as that will make a noise, and is scarce to be hoped for at this season of the year, when you and others are turning frail, I fear we must concert as well as we can by letters; and I wish you may have your thoughts seriously on the affair, and write to the south and Edinburgh, and Mr Logan, or whom you think proper, and press returns as soon as may be.

You and they will consider how far some short warning (indeed, I would not be for its being above half a sheet) of our present danger, from looseness in principles, error, and corruption, were fit to be drawn up and printed, and spread among people. I am not

much for appeals to the people, and I know they want not inconveniences, and would be very cautiously formed. But we seem deeply lethargic, and what I am most concerned in, is to have them stirred up to prayer at this juncture, and a deep concern for conduct in this matter, and the Lord's interposal for preventing the spreading of corruption among us. And I do not know but some country elders that are in Presbyteries want to be quickened to pray about a matter they are to act in.

But, perhaps, somewhat farther were needful, if one knew how it could be well done, and short enough; and that is, a short state of this affair in a sheet and a half; for if it go beyond that, it will scarce be bought by ministers, who I own need it not, if they would buy or read the state of the process, or even the last Acts of Assembly, wherein I would have an abbreviate of what is proven, of what is found in the last Assembly, and some short hints of the insufficiency of the acknowledgments made by Mr Simson, of which I may say more just now, with references to the large state of the process. I doubt the most part of ministers and elders in the diffusive church, before whom this matter now lies, need such a help to judge. The two greatest difficulties I see here are how to get this drawn as it should be, and then the hazard of printing against such an abbreviate, by a man, or his friends, who have time enough for papers of this sort, and art enough to set matters in a light most for his advantage.

But all this is but preparatory to what is the main thing I would have as soon concerted as might be, and that is, the materials of an Act of Instructions from Presbyteries to their Commissioners to the next Assembly, signifying their opinion, where it is the opinion of the plurality, upon their perusal of the state of the process sent to them. This I particularly wish you may spend some time in thinking of. I know well enough that the most part of Presbyteries do not give themselves the trouble to send instructions, and, except upon the matter of the overtures, ours never sent any; and I may know the practice of Presbyteries as to this, and, generally speaking, even in matters referred to Presbyteries, one half of Presby-

teries never send instructions. Care must be taken to prevent this, which I imagine may be hard to do. Yet if pains be taken to inform brethren, I hope even this may be prevented. And, in my opinion, since the Assembly hath remitted this affair to Presbyteries, the next should have the sentiments of each Presbytery in write, as they are; and the numbers of such as are for reponing him on his retractation; the numbers that are for laying him aside from any further public teaching in this Church, and the *Go ons* and *Non liquets*, too often hedgers and skulkers, should be all transmitted to the Assembly, that we may all be known what part we act in a matter of this weight; unless the minority are content to be sunk in the plurality; but if they are not, I conceive they have a right to demand their sentiments, as to a public teacher of youth for the holy ministry, for or against, it's equal [just] in this case, should be transmitted to the Supreme Judicatory and last resort.

I see inconveniences in this proposal, but I reckon it fair. And to be free, it's the best method I see to prevent a greater evil than sides in Presbyteries, that is a fatal breach in the Assembly itself, and a direct separation, I fear, both in word and sacraments, in case of the continuance of a corrupt education of youth to the ministry; and I know not but it may have good effects on all public teachers in time to come.

The materials for such an act, or instructions from Presbyteries, I would fain hope, will not be difficult to find. How we will agree to them generally, is another question; but I think pains should be taken to have them fairly proposed and reasoned in every Presbytery. If they be not gone into as to the substance, let every one answer to his own conscience, and to a higher tribunal.

Every body who inclines to see, cannot but by this time perceive the inconvenience and hurt to this Church, to the West of Scotland in particular, to this Synod, the College of Glasgow, the youth who have been under Mr Simson, that evidently must come from any further delays, and the continuance of matters any longer in suspension. I hope the most, if not all, Presbyteries will agree, that if Mr Simson will not ease us of any farther trouble by

leaving us, or demitting, his process must be issued one way or other.

I have, and perhaps you also have heard, more than one of his keenest defenders in our Committee for Purity declare they were not for his teaching any longer in this Church. I am told severals through the Church, and these of no small name, think otherwise now, and say, had it not been for one man, he should and would have been replaced by the last Assembly. I differ from them, and imagine, had a vote been, it would not have been so. However, if the bulk of the ministry in Scotland and of Presbyteries be of these sentiments, then he will be reponed, and they must answer to God and men for the consequences.

But I hope it will be otherwise. As I take it, Presbyteries are now called upon to give their opinion, what the next General Assembly should do as matters now stand. Perhaps you'll think my sentiments are, that he deserves deposition from all ecclesiastical office and function, and had I been to vote in the last Assembly, I really think it had been my vote, and should this be what the plurality of Presbyteries go into, you'll easily guess, were I in the next Assembly, I would not much oppose it. But in our present broken state, I am for going into what most probably we will be most harmonious in, in a consistency with the safety of truth and the youth; and, therefore, I would be (where it's fact) for the act and instruction to run somewhat in the very terms of the last Assembly; that although many or some have declared that a sentence of deposition is what comes up to what is proven, both as to teaching of error and contumacy, in refusing to obtemper the Acts of Assembly, in this and the former process, and the direct breach of them as appeared at least plain to us, who were upon the trial of the second libel; yet for the preservation of jointness and harmony in the truth, as far as may be attained, and to give the greater weight to our opinion from the unanimity of it, the Presbytery gives it as their opinion, that at this time, the General Assembly should, by their act, lay aside and declare they find it unmeet and unsafe that Mr J. Simson bear the office of Professor of Divinity, or teach

any more in the Church of Scotland, or bear any other ecclesiastical office or function therein. You'll probably think I am too soft and malmy¹ now, and it may be so ; and I am but setting down things as they come in my head, under correction ; and my reason for proposing this is, because probably this may unite all that have any concern for the truth in Presbyteries, and it being already gone into, in point of suspension, may bring the most harmony at the Assembly ; and it's what I think will take off most part of the arguments that are drawn from his retraction, and an obvious clamour that there is no new offence since the last Assembly ; and to depose him now would be to cast a slur upon the last Assembly, though that might be easily answered too. In short, I am for this shape, till better instructed, because I hope it will most probably carry through in our present pitiful circumstances.

This opinion, I think, should be supported, but very briefly, with some reasons ; and the heads of them I could wish generally agreed on, and left to every Presbytery, where the opinion prevails, to be put in their own words. What is found proven, and the pretty strong expressions, I think, of the last Act of Assembly, in the first part of it, may be used pretty generally ; and they are so strong, that one would [suppose] the inference was to have been deposition rather than suspension. In the next room, some notice would be taken of Mr Simson's retractions, which would be very carefully worded. In this, Mr Simson's personal character cannot well be missed, though as little as may be this way should be touched ; but the meddling with it here seems, in some respect, inevitable to us that have been witnesses to his shifting and about-gates. His character does not come up to that fairness and frankness that generally he is taken to have ; and facts are convincing enough to us who are witnesses to them. The difficulty is how to convince strangers. Some things even in order to this might be cautiously and shortly laid down, as that every body must see, that had he had no difficulties about the matter he now declares, and sentiments different from this Church, he might have done it at first to the Presbytery, and

¹ Mild, mellow.

more than once to the Committee, where he had oftener opportunities than once, yet still loved to be in the clouds and mist; that his retraction was plainly wrung out of him piece by piece, and according as he was informed of the unsatisfactoriness of his concessions to the members of the Assembly, and the reserves that were observed in what he said; that it was made when directly under the prospect of a sentence against him; that there is nothing natural and free in it; that there are in it no acknowledgments of what is proven, and found proven against him; but rather a plain lessening of the proof; that his professions of sorrow are only for offence taken, and not given; that his resolutions in time to come are general and restricted, and, in one word, not to be depended on, since all his fair engagements in the first process have been forgotten, and the Church's injunctions not at all kept. This brings me forward to the second libel, which the Assembly hath not had time to consider. But the plain proof that appears there, yea, his own confession, that he has not in many things departed from his notions, in his Answers to Mr Webster, when he taught since; that the force of the Act of Assembly, 1717, hath been neglected by him; besides the grossness of some of the tenets, which it's evident he hath taught ordinarily since, after he could not but know how dissatisfying these tenets were to this Church, particularly as to their connection [between moral seriousness and grace,] and several other particulars, reason, and his phrases about God's glory; all these would be shortly couched by Presbyteries, as reasons why they cannot but think that so notable a person, whom no acts can tie, yea, after the Church's declared dislike, he ventures upon yet more astonishing novelties, on the tremendous article of the Trinity, all of them flatly contrary to the prohibitions of the Assembly, 1717, should teach no more; that however now he be thrown in to speak in the terms of the Church of Scotland, and the form of sound words, yet he stood out as long as possibly he could, and his plain discourses with his scholars, and others, were of a quite other strain, and his free acknowledgments, under sickness and in health too, as to his being shaken, at least dubious as to some great points; and his quite change in his manner of teaching

of late, owned by himself, and declared by his scholars, and his sudden departure from his former sound way of expressing himself on the Trinity, and declared dislike at the very hypotheses, expressions, and terms, which now he is returned to at last, and that during the process itself;—all these declare him to be a lover of novelties, and given to changes, and unsettledness in terms and expressions, one great thing in teaching; and much more in opinions and notions, especially in matters of such weight as are libelled in the first and second libel. All this evidently makes him unfit for the charge of youth.

I am not of opinion that all these, with other things that might be added, should be put at full length in the act and instructions from Presbyteries; but they may be the subject of conversation and reasoning there for the conviction of brethren; and some general branches of them, better worded than I have time to do, might be formed and spread through the generality of Presbyteries, by letters to some one brother who might be depended on to make right use of them. Certainly only a few of the clearest, most unexceptionable, and plainest reasons, should be made use of in the act, just as every Presbytery find themselves affected with the weight of them.

Thus you have my thoughts *raptim* on this subject, only to draw out your riper and digested opinion, what methods are most proper at this juncture. I hope you will let me have your sentiments as soon as may be. Begin to prepare matters in your Presbytery, for brethren's having a just view of this matter of last consequence; and I wish you would form the draught of an act and instructions for yourselves, and if once one honest, just, and well worded act were drawn up, who knows what considerable influence it would have on other Presbyteries, when they see others in earnest? Let me only add, that the sooner somewhat be done, so much the better; the more will know of it when adoining, and brethren will be got acquainted in distant corners. I wish you be able to go in to the Commission next month, and, when there, converse with brethren from all corners; and I scarce know better service you can do than to meet with brethren who have our purity in this Church

at heart, and agree upon some general course to be taken. I hope, as to the substance, it will in part coincide with what is above. Forgive this trouble. The Lord be with you under your failures, and support you under old age and infirmities. And if you be not able to go to the Commission, I wish you would write in, to somebody you think proper, your sentiments, and desire their return. Mind to send me Durham on Job. My dearest respects to Mrs L. I am, Rev. Dear Sir, yours.

Oct. 30, 1728.

LETTER CLXIX.

SAME SUBJECT.

To Mr William Macknight.

REV. DEAR BROTHER,—I have yours of the 25th of November, and could not till now find as much time as to make a return, which, when it comes, is very little worth while.

As to your first query, which, in my opinion, is the main hinge of any thing like a difficulty in the case now before Presbyteries, that is, Mr Simson's retraction, as you put it, whether a man, after such a retraction, is to be rejected as a heretic, I am of opinion is much out of the field. A heretic is a word and way of speaking that needs no doubt a great deal of explication, and perhaps an obstinate heretic needs more. I never resolve to break my brain upon either. I think it's plain enough that Mr Simson has taught heresy, and the Assembly hath found what amounts to this. But whether it's now heresy or pertinacious heresy, after a retraction, is in my opinion a very useless question. I am, indeed, of the mind that a man who has taught unsound doctrine in the great truths of our religion, and hath been suspended for it, should not be reponed, were his repentance and declarations plainer than in this case, with the utmost allowances that can be made. I should soon know what I had to do, if a young student had the charge of my children, and

had taught them to lie, to equivocate, to commit wickedness, and when he had stiffly denied all, questioned my power to inquire into his manner of teaching, refused to answer my inquiries touching his teaching my boys, till I had proven all against him, and was just going to give my opinion upon the whole, and retracted all, and professed sorrow for what was past, and his resolutions to guard against these things in time to come. I'll assure you I would not trust my children to him, if another were to be had in the world, and even though I could not have another, I would let them read alone rather than continue under such a person. But, indeed, this is too favourable a state, considering what passed in Mr Webster's process, and the engagements he came under then. In short, Mr Simson's retraction has no weight with me at all; for his reposition, considering his personal character, which would be the last thing I would meddle with, if the weight to be laid on any deed of his did not, in its very nature, depend upon it, in so far that there is no passing it. In short, his inconstancy, variable-ness, and the many turns and shapes he hath appeared in, make any retraction, were it quite of a stronger nature than this, of no weight with me. The plain shiftings and hedgings I have observed before the committee, and you could not miss noticing in the Assembly, make me entertain a quite other opinion of his character than frank and open, as he is generally thought to be.

Every body, I think, may see if Mr Simson had had no difficulty about the matters, which now he declares pretty frankly in words; had he had no sentiments different from this Church, he could have made no scruple to declare his mind on them to the Presbytery and Committee. But he still loved to be in the clouds in things he now with open mouth declares. You saw as well as I, that every branch of this retraction was wrung out of him, and he was near three days in the press before what we have come out. Piece by piece it cast up, as he was informed of the unsatisfying nature of his concessions to the members of the Assembly, and the reserves they observed him to make in what he said. Is there any thing natural and free in it? There are no acknowledgments of

what was proven against him, that I remember, but rather an alleviating and lessening of every thing. His professions of sorrow, scrup as they are, are for *scandalum acceptum, non datum*. His resolutions of bettering in time to come are general, and yet limited, so as I know not what to make of them. But supposing all were otherwise, what can be made of them? when he has so plainly broke through all the bounds that the Church set to him formerly, as we plainly saw, who were on the second libel, and you may see from the state of the process.

This brings me to your second query, to which I answer very shortly, that, in my opinion, there is enough found proven by the Assembly in the first libel, to bar Mr Simson from teaching any more. These three years I have been witness to so many bad things, in the tossing of proofs, witnesses, and questions, of such a tender nature, in public, that, for my own part, I am heartily wearied of it, and wish they were out of people's mouths, and off the field; and yet there are to me so many gross things confessed by himself, and fully proven by distinct witnesses, that I wish heartily, such as have any doubts of the proof of the first libel, might be satisfied by the Assembly's going through our Committee's procedure on the second libel, and either finding it proven or not. For my share, I am so exceedingly grieved with the doctrine he hath taught since the 1717, I think the unsavoury and pernicious doctrine there instilled into the youth, in any former period of this Church alone, without the far more weighty things in the second libel, would have laid aside any minister or teacher in this Church.

Your third query relates to the second libel, which, if I am not mistaken, is not remitted by the last Assembly to Presbyteries, and first comes regularly before an Assembly, when they find cause to take up the consideration of it; which, indeed, I think they must necessarily take before them, before they can take off the suspension or repon Mr Simson. As to your query, the Assembly, 1717, did not at all mark out that — of the unsound passages in Mr Simson's Answers to Mr Webster. You know he printed them himself, and continued still to recommend his answers to his scholars

whenever he had occasion to teach any of these subjects. The Committee of Purity, 1716, went through Mr Webster's libel, and classed the propositions in it to such as were debated among orthodox and sound divines, and such as were unsound, and went through the probation as to both. The Assembly followed their committee's method, and when they had gone through the controverted and dubious propositions, came to enter upon those that were reckoned erroneous, and came to that of the connection, as it's generally termed, between moral seriousness and grace, and when entering upon that, without going through the rest, it was judged safest to end that unhappy affair by the general prohibitions in the act 1717, which, in all the four branches of them, however now explained away, had a plain reference to the propositions, about which sound writers were not agreed, and yet the Assembly reckoned unfit to be cast up in this Church, and those which were directly found to be unsound. Now, as you'll see in our minutes, when the committee, 1727-8, were upon the second libel, it's fully proven that Mr Simson hath taught both the unnecessary things, ready to stir up strifes, which were prohibited, and the connection and other things directly prohibited and found among the unsound. When the Assembly goes through our procedure, and finds, as I think they will, as we have done, I believe it will be out of question that Mr Simson hath broken all, and the youth ought not to be committed to the care of one whom no bonds can tie, and who hath taught not only the disputable points when prohibited, but the propositions which the Assembly, 1717, found among the undoubted errors, though no particular condescension was made, (the affair being, as I said, interrupted in the very middle, and that out of regard to Mr Simson, under promises to guard against those things in time to come, and promises no more to teach any thing that might breed disturbance,) save in the generals you name in the act 1717.

To end, after professions and promises to obtemper that act, he hath all along continued his former way of teaching, and ventured on far greater errors upon the awful Trinity. And now, when sentence is coming on him, he comes in to the same hypotheses, ex-

pressions, and terms, he had declared himself unsatisfied with on the doctrine of the Trinity. One cannot help thinking he is a lover of novelties, given to changes, and unsettled in the very main points of religion, and any settlement he is now come to is from the fears of a sentence.

Thus you have my sentiments with great plainness and freedom, just *raptim* as they come in my head. I believe they can be of very little use to you or those you speak of; but they are some of the things that lie uppermost with me, and are so weighty upon me, as to one in such a post as the care of youth who have their eye to the ministry, that I think I shall never have any satisfying answer to them; though, if I know myself, I am willing to receive light, and be set right in any of them I am mistaken in. I easily foresee a fatal breach in this poor Church if Mr Simson be reponed, which I am persuaded I shall never live to see healed. The Presbytery of Glasgow have talked over this affair, and reasoned upon it formerly, and this week I hear of none but Mr Wishart, (Principal Campbell was not with them this week,) but are of opinion that the next Assembly should lay him aside. They have appointed a committee to form instructions to their Commissioners to the next General Assembly, and to bring them in to their next Presbytery day in January next. I am yours.

December 6, 1728.

LETTER CLXX.

SCOTTISH BIOGRAPHY.—REMISSIONS FOR HERESY.

To the Laird of Earlston, at his Lodgings, Edinburgh.

DEAR SIR,—I have been frequently thinking on what you so kindly communicated to me in my last, as what you had observed

in the Register of Privy Seals, (if I remember,) of a great many remissions upon sentences for heresy, before the Reformation.

In a few weeks I hope to end the first draught of my introduction to our Scots Biography. It's like to be very large. I have, in the best manner I could, drawn down the history of the state of religion and learned men in Scotland, in every century since the first settlement of Christianity to the Reformation. I have given a short sketch of the history of the Reformation abroad, and a larger account of that of England, in as far as I think they had influence on ours in Scotland, and have met with a very (to me) surprising parallel between the sentiments, usages, and practices of the English Reformers and our Scotch Reformers; and now I am of opinion that, bating the office of bishops, they agree in most other things, and even as to national covenanting, which was the very first step of our reformers. I have now very near finished the History of our sore Sufferings before the Reformation, and have, from Calderwood's manuscript and other accounts not in print, formed narratives (taking in what we have in print in Knox and Fox) of near a hundred martyrs and confessors.

But I am persuaded I might have great help on this subject from the remissions you told me of in the above Register. It will be needful to go as far back as King James the First's reign, or even the 1400; but from the 1500 to 1550, particular notice would be taken of the remissions for heresy.

It's scarce possible for me to be so long at Edinburgh as to make this search myself. I was humbly desiring you might take a note of the remissions of this nature as you went through the Register. I humbly repeat my request unto you, though it were to be but an index to me, if I shall find any time to look into them; and the persons' names and years, and the heads of the indictment, if they be in the remission, would make my work exceeding easy. Forgive my making such a proposal. I know your concern for any thing of a public nature, especially what relates to religion; and if you had any leisure to take notes this way, I should make

the best improvement of them I could to enlighten this part of history.

I know your ancient family of Earlston were very early enlightened with the knowledge of the truth; and I cannot but think they would have a share in the sufferings and the Reformation. I hear the New Testament was early, in English, among your ancestors. Pray fail not to set down whatever you can collect (even but by tradition) this way, and send me.

Favour me, as soon as you can, with a line by post, and as much assistance as your leisure can allow in this good work. Accept of my best wishes to yourself and family; and allow me to subscribe myself, Dear Sir, yours most affectionately.

Eastwood, Jan. 31, 1729.

I'll be glad of your news, and to know if you have any other letters of Mr Rutherford's to your predecessors than are printed.

LETTER CLXXI.

DECLINE OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

To the Laird of Earlston, at his Lodgings, Edinburgh.

DEAR SIR,—Yours of the 8th instant was extremely acceptable. I thank you for the just and proper advice you give me as to singleness in the Biography. I agree with you in sentiments that we are on the decline for many years, and my searches into the sentiments and practices of our reformers from Popery lead me to begin our decline before your date of the Public Resolutions. There was too much eying of men even in our good times between the 1637-1649, and I cannot help observing blemishes even among the Protesters themselves. I resolve, as far as light and facts will carry,

to notice what appears blameable in the best; though it's a question if I shall live so long as to carry the Biography down to the Protesters and Resolutioners. Indeed, it appears to me that our reformers, and their successors, down to the Union of the Crowns, may put us all to the blush that have followed since; and it was some thoughts this way that their lives might be useful for conviction and upstirring that put me on writing them.

I thank you for your offer of your old Bible. All in the Saxon character will be acceptable. I am, Dear Sir, yours.

Feb. 24.

LETTER CLXXII.

DOMESTIC AFFLICTION.—IRISH DISSENTERS.—SIMSON.

To the Rev. Mr William Livingston, Minister at Temple-Patrick.

REV. DEAR BROTHER,—I have yours of the 29th of March, by Mr Macknight. It seems mine to you have miscarried; for, besides what I wrote in June, which I heard from you about, I wrote since about November. I am obliged, however, to your concern for me and good wishes.

My circumstances, at present, do not allow me to enlarge, neither need I, considering Mr Macknight knows all I know, especially as to unhappy Mr Simson. My eldest son, of eighteen years, a boy of excellent parts, and I hope pious, is very near death, and though this situation would have made you pity and excuse me, though I had been silent, yet I could not but express my tender sympathy (now when I need it so much) with the Protestant Dissenters in the North, in the rueful circumstances you acquaint me with, which is a matter of another weight than my poor afflicted family. The Lord overrule this Providence for great ends, sanctify it, support

you and many of my dear brethren with you, under your discouragements and pressures, and deliver from them with advantage.

You have, it seems, very foolish idle stories spread among you as to our present state. We have no such views here. Heats have been in some few Presbyteries, and some of our younger brethren have discovered themselves too much; but I think such discoveries should be improved by us, and I own, are matter of a deep humiliation, and forebode much evil, if grace prevent not. But there are but three or four Presbyteries, as far as I can hear, that give instructions favourable to Mr Simson, and those not without a considerable struggle. For my share, I am surprised, with some pleasure, there are not more. The plurality, by far, are for deposition, and all, save these three or four, for laying him aside from teaching. It's no great riddle to know how these reports are raised among you. We rejoice they are so ill-founded. Pray for conduct to the next Assembly. If my circumstances allow me to be a witness, you shall hear how matters go. The Lord himself appear!

I am extremely concerned to hear of worthy Mr Hutchison's death. We may hope his Answer will be reprinted. I am in pain for Dr Masterton. The Lord preserve him! Pray for us. Mind me and my family. Three of my children, besides my dying son, are under affliction. O for sanctification to them of my house! Give my kindest respects to Messrs M'Bride, Kennedy, Masterton, and all brethren of my acquaintance. You made me hope for somewhat about your Ministers and Christians. Grace, great grace be with you! Believe that I am, Rev. Dear Brother, yours in affliction and affection.

April 14, 1729.

LETTER CLXXIII.

LETTERS FROM THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, 1729.¹*Wodrow to Mrs Wodrow, No. 1.*

May 6, 1729.

MY DEAR,—I have not time to write at length this post. On Sabbath there were two sermons preached before the Commissioner,² by Mr George Logan in the forenoon, and a minister in Fife in the afternoon, Mr Monro, both of whom, it seems, spoke favourably of Mr Simson. This day the Assembly entered on Mr Simson's affair, and after reading the act of the last Assembly, called him, and then he was removed, and they debated four hours, whether he was legally sisted before the Assembly. There was much said against his being sisted by reference by Professor Hamilton and the lawyers, who were generally against his being sisted; yet, without a vote, it was agreed he was before the Assembly, and the Assembly resolved to go on in the affair. This he seemed to be dissatisfied with when he came in, and denied some things the Moderator and the Assembly thought he said at the bar, and gave another sense of them. However, the Assembly adhered to their resolution, and he is to be heard to-morrow. The bulk of the ministers seem to be for deposition. The event is yet uncertain. The Lord guide all! My service to my Lord.

¹ Letters to Wodrow, vol. xviii. Nos. 231-238.² David, Earl of Buchan.

LETTER CLXXIV.

Wodrow to Mrs Wodrow, No. 2.

May 7.

MY DEAR,—I wrote a hint to you yesterday, but had no time to give full accounts. The minutes of their procedure upon Monday, which was taken up in Mr Wilkie of Uphall his transportation to Dundee. The call was unanimous, and five vacancies in that Presbytery, yet he was averse, and the Commissioner, one of his heritors, and so the transportation was refused by a great majority. Yesterday the process about Mr Simson came in, the first diet of it. The act of the last Assembly was read. Then the report of the Committee of Instructions and Overtures was read about Presbyteries' Instructions upon the remit to them. There are a great many for deposition, and as many near for laying him aside from his office; only two for reposition. There had been many debates in the Sub-committees, which I cannot resume, not being here. The overture, on the whole, was to this purpose, that whatever regard is to be shown to the Instructions from Presbyteries, yet every member in this Assembly is at liberty to act according to his own light, and is not bound by instructions to vote otherwise, and that the Assembly take this affair into their serious consideration, and do as they find cause. I am sure the Assembly have now declared themselves a free court, and that cannot be objected against them. There was no reasoning in the Assembly upon this overture, and it was gone into; and Mr Simson was called. He signified that he was come in, over many difficulties, to be at hand, in case the Assembly wanted him; and though he might plead several things in law and equity, why he was not regularly sisted before this Assembly, yet, at present, he did not insist upon these. He was asked if he had any thing to represent to the Assembly, now that they were

to take up his affair where the last ended. He said he did not know what method they were to take it in; he did not think that they could enter upon any thing new till he had had time to be heard; he took the last Assembly's sentence to be final, and that he had no more place here, not being cited, but to petition for taking off the suspension; that he had a paper to lay before the Assembly, but it was not ready. The Assembly caused remove him, after they had inquired if he had obeyed the Assembly's sentence of suspension, which he said he had done in the strictest manner, and had a testimony of his colleagues to produce if necessary. After he was removed, Mr Campbell, Principal, offered to produce the testimony of the University in his favours. This was much opposed by Mr Linning, Mr Logan, and others on that side. It was urged by them, that Principal Campbell had offered that paper to the Instructions, and they refused it; that if it was a representation to the Assembly, it should come in by the Bills; if it was instructions, it was a novelty, and no instructions from the colleges and burghs had ever been received, and Mr Simson's affair was remitted to Presbyteries. On the other hand, it was said that it was not known what was in that paper, but it was offered as a voucher, to what Mr Simson said was his obedience to the Assembly's act, and it should be read. It was objected, that there was more in the paper. To that it was said, the Assembly might stop any thing that was out of the way when read. So, after an hour's being lost, it was read. When read, it contained very little, indeed, to vouch what the Professor had said, but an attestation of his orthodoxy, and of their power to judge doctrine, and a declaration, upon a paper given by Mr Simson, of their being satisfied as to his orthodoxy. They own the Assembly's power to judge their members, but declare they think the suspension should be taken off. Several speeches were made against the College's testimonial, and how unsuitable it was to have been read. But the Assembly waived that, and came to consider whether Mr Simson were legally sisted before them. That debate turned much on the lawyers. The President, Solicitor, Lord Drummore, Mr Dundas, spoke on one side. Before them,

Professor Hamilton spoke against its being before the Assembly by a reference, and endeavoured to show that the Act of Assembly, 1643, comes not up to this case. He was answered by Messrs Linning and Logan. The Form of Process, supposing that references sisted parties, was not so much observed as I thought it might. The lawyers, generally speaking, insisted that in civil courts there was no criminal but behoved to be cited; that when one parliament has a continued case that another parliament had, the party should be certiorated; that in case of a reference from the Justiciary to the Circuit, there behoved to be a new citation of the pannel. But it was not observed, that the Assembly was an annual court; and they say a continued case before the Lords of Session needs no citation. But, generally speaking, they all concluded that Mr Simson was present, not declining the Assembly, and therefore was to be held as present, till the Assembly came to determine the case, and then this question was to be considered. On the other side, among the lawyers, Affleck, Tullibody, Gordon of Ardoch, Enterkin, and some others, spoke for his being here regularly by the continuation of the affair. Principal Haddow spoke at the close, and said it was not so honourable for the Assembly to go on till they knew if they had a party; to delay this question till afterwards was not decent; and reckoned he was cited by the reference, in common practice, he was called the first day, and a letter wrote since to him, which he owned the receipt of, and came in after it; that if any thing was wanting, it might be now supplied at the bar by a direct citation. The Lords and lawyers insisted a little upon the hastiness of the reference to the Presbyteries, and Mr Simson's not being able to be present at all Presbyteries to which it was referred. On this Professor Hamilton ahd touched. But to that it was answered, that there was no need of Presbyteries having Mr Simson with them; but the reference brought him to the Assembly, who were only judges in this case. After long reasoning, the Assembly shunning a vote, which such who were against the Professor seemed to urge, agreed as I wrote yesternight. So the Assembly formed their resolve, that, consider-

ing what had been intimated from the bar of the last Assembly, (which takes in the reference,) and the Assembly calling him formerly, and writing to him, and his submitting the affair to the Assembly to judge therein as they saw cause, at the bar, they found him regularly sisted, and resolved to proceed. This was intimated to him; he complained that he had not used those expressions at the bar, that he could not but think his affair was ended. His expressions were rased out; though certainly he had them, or equivalent words.

Thus you have yesterday's work. This day the Assembly met at ten, and entered on reading their minutes. Upon the reading of them, the abstract of the College paper was cast in, that they vouched his obedience to the Act of Assembly, and upon a paper given in to them declared his orthodoxy. This was quarrelled, and there were several speeches against the College paper; that it was brought in yesterday irregularly as a voucher, and when read, much more was found in it; that the College were not judges of doctrine; that no more should be in the minute, if any thing at all, but their vouching his obedience to the Assembly's Act; that the rest should be left out. Mr Stewart of Perth moved that Mr Simson's paper given in to the College should be read, upon which their testimony went; that was opposed, and the minute altered, and made only to refer to Mr Simson's obedience to the Act of Assembly. This debate lost an hour. Mr Gray was like to turn keen, and said that the Faculty of Theology might judge the doctrine, but not the Faculty of the University; that it was known many of the members of the University, who had the honour of truth most at heart, were not there, and refused to join; that he did not think any but the Dean of Faculty and Principal, whom he excepted out of what he had said, were judges, and that the regents and other members had no claim to judge doctrine. The Principal urged that when Mr Gray was Dean of Faculty, he had not called a Faculty; in answer to that, he had said that the Faculty had not done any thing for three years in that affair. The matter was waived, and the minute corrected as above. Then they came to consider what to do next.

The Moderator moved that the Assembly should either state their method of procedure first, or call Mr Simson to see what he had to offer. On this a debate rose, which of the two should be gone into. I thought those who seemed most favourable to Mr Simson were for calling him first. The other side therefore agreed on the method; and that it should be determined whether the former Assembly had finished this affair or not. A vote was urged upon that; but at length it was agreed to call in Mr Simson, and intimate to him that the Assembly were to enter on his affair, and consider whether they were to go on to any further sentence, or continue the former, or to make alterations, and were willing to hear him on these heads. He was called, and was half an hour before he came. He gave in a large paper, which Mr Paisley read, full of submission, large declarations of his orthodoxy in the words of the Confession and Catechisms, and his former declarations, and some pretty sharp innuendoes of the prejudices ministers had taken up against him, through the spreading of pamphlets against him, and some solemn declarations and Scriptures pretty harshly applied. It's very long, and I believe will be printed soon, and subjects all to the Assembly in the words of Jeremiah, and the words of the Gileadites and others, Joshua xxii. Then he desired the Assembly's words might be explained, whether they were on opening or recognosing of the sentence of the last Assembly, and he would give in his answer next diet. The Assembly told him their resolve was plain; these terms were not applicable here so well; and he was appointed to give in answers as far as he could against five of the clock.

May 7, *Post Meridicm*, 5 Afternoon.

This night the Assembly met. Mr Simson was heard to say what he had to say, upon the Assembly their going on to a further sentence, or continuing the former or altering it, upon the head of Christ's Necessary Existence, and ended that head. Mr Murray, his advocate, spoke some more than an hour and about a half, and had nothing new I could observe, and did, indeed, on the

matter read the former pleadings that are in print, and had them in his hand. Mr Simson followed him near an hour or more. I observed as little new in him, but only some things—that he had given satisfaction to the Church, not at the last, but as soon as he could, (witness his letter to the Presbytery of Glasgow,) and that he was right in refusing queries, because the Assembly had vindicated him, and altered some of the queries as to Independence, &c. After he was done, he craved to get leave to stay in as an indulgence when the Assembly reasoned. That was not agreed to, but he staid in, and was overlooked. This kept us late, and to-morrow at ten the Assembly sits. And Mr Simson is desired to shorten, and to end to-morrow.

LETTER CLXXV.

Wodrow to Mrs Wodrow, No. 3.

MY DEAREST,—I have nothing almost to write from the Assembly this day; and yesterday's procedure you have a pretty full account of, by a letter which I hope this night would reach you by a private hand. This day the Assembly met at ten, and upon reading the minutes, which were pretty full, as to Mr Simson and his advocate's pleadings upon the second article about Necessary Existence; and yet some things were added to them. Upon this, a debate rose whether the pleadings of parties should be recorded more than pleadings of members, and especially things that were already in print. On the other hand, it was urged that the minutes [otherwise] would be very lame and useless as to the design of them, that is, to be a narrative of fact. Upon this, it was resolved that the subjects pled to should be named and no more. Another debate arose about Mr Simson's being present at debates; he had foolishly intermixed in the question about the minutes. Yesternight he sought to be allowed to be present at the reasonings, and alleged the Assembly 1717 had allowed him, and which was true, that we

in the Committee for Purity allowed him. But it happened that his desire was thrown out last year by a vote, and the Assembly would not repeal what was done. Then he and his advocate, Mr Murray, were heard on what remained on the second and third articles. I observed nothing new, but reading what was before in print, and in reasoning more than once. Indeed, the cause is exhausted. In the afternoon the Assembly meet at five, when I hope they will end their pleadings; and if the Assembly win through their debates among members to-morrow and Saturday, it's as much as I expect. My duty to my Lord. I am, my Dear, your own.

May 8.

LETTER CLXXVI.

Wodrow to Mrs Wodrow, No. 4.

May 9, 1729.

MY DEAR,—Yesternight the Assembly met at five, and heard out Mr Simson and his advocates, their pleading upon the rest of the articles. I observed nothing new but what is in the prints, unless it was, which I may have forgot, a quibble about Christ's being *non Deus Supremus*, and the Supreme Deity being attributed to the Father, and not to the Son, which Mr Simson said was not at all proved as libelled; and some explications of the numerical oneness, as to a qualified relation to specific oneness, and the oneness of two or three, which was so thin, I could not fathom it. Mr Murray ended the pleadings with a warm speech, recollecting all that had been pled, and addressed himself to the passions and affections of the House. At the close, it was moved, that Mr Simson should be indulged to continue in the House, *ex gratia*, and we had speeches from Professor Hamilton, Mr G. Logan, Mr Goudy, Mr Alexander Robison, Mr James Allan, Mr M'George, Principal Chalmers, my Lord Drummore, the Solicitor, and others on that side. The other side answered them,

that the granting of this was an ill precedent ; it was unreasonable ; that when Mr Simson was needed to clear in facts, they would call for him ; that what was urged that he might be present for his instruction was ill-grounded ; when his judges were to advise on the sentence, they were to instruct one another, not him ; that his proposal of sitting still, and at the close speaking if allowed, was of no use but to protract the affair. They desired the matter, after an hour's spending on it, might be brought to a vote ; but all along a vote is guarded against by the side who appear most favourable to Mr Simson. Whether they dread their want of numbers, or if it be that all that is done may be unanimous, I cannot say. And so Mr Simson was excluded, being present at advising without a vote.

This day the Assembly met at ten, and sat till three, and met at five, and continued till near ten. I cannot give a full detail of the speeches, many of them half hours, that I could wish. Ten hours hearing is not for my failing memory. The Moderator called up Mr Linning, who declared himself for the Assembly's going on to further censure, and saw nothing in Mr Simson's defences at the bar to hinder this. After him Mr Allan Logan was called, and declined to speak as yet. Then Mr Alexander Anderson spoke, and was for going on to a further sentence, but did not come to particulars. He urged the words of the last Act of Assembly, which declared several things remaining, and that what Mr Simson and his advocate had spoke from the bar, was so far from removing the grounds for favour, that they have increased. He alleged that Mr Simson continued to impugne what the last Assembly had found relevant and proven ; and that he had declared he never was of different sentiments from this Church ; that he had no way changed his sentiments, but was still of the same mind with this Church. He alleged this weakened terribly all his declarations and renunciations, and fell upon his speech, which I sent you ; alleged that in it he had dropped what formerly, about numerical oneness, he had declared, though he there, indeed, repeats his former declarations, and in the end of it compared himself to the Apostle Paul and David, and had many harsh and ill-natured expressions of the Assembly and his

judges. He was answered by Principal Campbell, who declared he had conversed with the Professor, and had found him, as far as he could judge, sincere in all his declarations ; that his reasonings at the bar were in self-defence, and not arraignings of the procedure of the last Assembly ; that his speech yesterday, he thought, was a most orthodox one, and pleasing to all he had spoke to ; with some other little arguings of this nature. Then Mr Craig was called upon, who began with some reflections on the Presbytery of Glasgow, whose harsh treatment of Mr Simson, and mutual jealousies, had raised humour in him, and made him to delay too long to give his declarations ; that he was to be restored, having fallen, (which word he thought was too softly translated, and was used for the sins which Christ bore, and the greatest of sin,) in the spirit of meekness ; that he was of opinion the Assembly should go no further than the last had gone. Mr William Stewart in Kiltearn followed, and considered the importance of this matter, and concluded that Mr Simson should be deposed, and should enter into a course of repentance, and make public retraction of what was proven in the Kirks of Glasgow ; and if penitent, that the Assembly following might consider of his repentance on proper certificates ; if he did not repent and retract, that the Church should go on to a higher sentence, as one that does not hear the Church. He, I think, instanced the Assembly, 1638, who summarily deposed the Bishops for error, and, on non-compearance, excommunicated them. I'll certainly miss some of the speakers ; but, as far as I mind, Mr William Stewart, minister of Perth, followed, and had a long and very good discourse, modest and pointed. He complained much of the defectiveness of Mr Simson's renunciations. He wondered how ever it came in his mind not to teach Necessary Existence ; that he had charged all the hypotheses upon the Trinity, as insufficient to remove the objections of adversaries ; that he had not renounced his refusing the Supreme Deity to the Son and Spirit ; that, at the bar, he had yesterday declared he was of the same sentiments with the Church on the Trinity, and ever was ; that he could not connect these with what was found proven ; that he wanted repentance and retraction of these, and could not but sus-

pect but that there was some latent, if not worse, errors concealed under these, with many other pointed things. Mr George Logan of Dunbar followed, and alleged Christ's restoring Peter, after a worse fall than Mr Simson's was, to his apostolical office; and repeated, they say, much of what he had in his lecture Sabbath last, which is to be printed. Then he signified how much he was satisfied with Mr Simson's declarations, and told us he was the person that led him to begin them last year; that his making them so late was owing to the treatment of the Committee, (some of them he should have said,) who declared that his retractations now under a view of the sentence would not satisfy. Then, as to the numerical oneness, he alleged the whole current of Protestant writers expressed themselves much as Mr Simson did, and were not even for using the term numerical, but *unicus* and singular, and cited Gomarus, Cloppenburg, Hornbeck, and Cheynell, in England. Then he urged the common topic at present, that there was not one Council had ever deposed an erroneous person after he had renounced his errors, and cited two or three instances. But, unluckily, they all afterwards, when received, fell back to their errors and worse. He left other citations to Mr Goudy,¹ who, he said, was better prepared, and dared, yea charged, any member of the Assembly to show one instance of going on to censure upon a declaration of orthodoxy as Mr Simson's. Mr Clow was next, and was for going to a further censure. I forgot, too, Mr John Wilson of Glencorse, who had a very warm and affectionate speech with much seriousness, rejoicing, as he said, that Christ was preached, whether in pretence or reality, and many professions of his concern for the glory of Christ his Redeemer, which every body belied. He ended with a remark, ill-founded, I doubt, that the Assembly's Act last year declared that Mr Simson had only subverted some circumstantial truth. Mr James Allan, a near relation of Mr Simson's, made a speech in favour of Mr Simson; little new in it.

¹ Mr, afterwards Dr, John Gowdie, or *Gaudy*, as Wodrow sometimes has it, (now anglicised into *Goldie*,) was first settled at Earlston, was transported to Edinburgh in 1730, and became Professor of Divinity and Principal there.—(See *Morren's Annals*, i. 319.)

He noticed that ministers were not to speak wrong for God; that Mr Simson had renounced what was found error, and altered his mind, which was the best repentance; that undoubtedly he was sincere, and his temper frank; that no human consideration would move him; that the last Assembly's sentence was final, and not to be opened.

In the afternoon the Assembly met, and it being argued upon in the forenoon, that the Act of the last Assembly was final, by severals, Principal Haddow and others urged, that before any other thing the Assembly should determine whether the Act of the last Assembly was so or not; for, if it was final, then to be sure they were losing time exceedingly. Several arguments were brought to prove it not final; and Mr A. Anderson appealed to Professor Hamilton, if that was not the very concession and midse,¹ yielded to for peace last Assembly, that the sentence should be kept open. He did not refuse it, but did not remember distinctly what passed. He said he was of opinion, the Act of the last Assembly was final in one sense, and not in another. However, this declaration was urged; and, to shun a vote, it was yielded to be marked in the minutes, that, notwithstanding of the Act of the last Assembly, it was in the power of this Assembly to go to a further sentence, or alter the last sentence, or lessen it. Then the reasonings of members were resumed. Mr Goudy being named, said he was willing to hear others; and so Mr Warden spoke, and was heard with very much attention. He spoke with seriousness and short. He was for going further, because of the atrocity of Mr Simson's crime found proven. He insisted upon the Assembly finding him to have taught things subversive of the Church, &c., and in treason against our King; he did not think that it was in the power of the judges in that case, on retractions and repentance, to stop an adequate sentence. He alleged that the places of restoring one fallen, and forgiving others injuries to us, came not up to this case; that charity and forgiving did not relate to entrusting with an office, or our valuable interests, to one's hand that had misman-

¹ Medium, or middle course.

aged. Mr Monro of Kelso answered him with much forwardness, and insisted much on our Lord's restoring of Peter, as he called it, to an apostle's office, upon his repentance, when he had committed a greater fault than Mr Simson, and alleged Christ's example in this as a binding rule to restore Mr Simson to his office; and as to treason, he said it was an offence against the society, and could not be forgiven. Mr Warden answered him several things, that Peter's fall was out of fear, under a temptation, with reluctancy, and not applicable to this case. The other answered, that Peter's case was much more aggravated than Mr Simson's, that he believed he had no fear of a gibbet, but a poor damsel, (but he did not consider her backing,) and many other things which I wish had been let alone. I fear ill use he made of aggravating Peter's sin to encourage sinners in sin. Mr A. Logan took him up, and gave many differences between Peter and Mr Simson. So did Mr Linning. Mr John Gray spoke next, and wished no reflections had been made on the Presbytery of Glasgow; that they were groundless. He pointed at Mr Craig; that the Councils advanced were to no purpose, and many of them Arian Councils; that it was our statute to depose a minister for perjury, fornication, &c.; that reposition after that was not soon, nor to the same office; that malversation in public trust, in civil courts, was ordinarily followed with declarations of incapacity. He represented the hazard of youth and error, and the ill precedent of this, if nothing further were gone into. I have not now room to go on.

LETTER CLXXVII.

Wodrow to Mrs Wodrow, No. 5.

May 10, 1729.

MY DEAREST,—I have not time this night to continue my account of yesterday's procedure, far less this day's. I shall endea-

your to do it the next post. I can only add, that the Assembly went on in their reasonings this day from ten to five at night, or four. There are severals to speak. But a Committee is appointed to meet this night, to see if they can prepare the way for the Assembly coming to an issue in this affair. I can only tell you the Committee consists of eighteen; nine on the one side of the question, nine on the other. I cannot, and scarce have time to name them; the Moderator, Professor Hamilton, Mr G. Logan, Mr Gaudy, Mr Allan Logan, Principal Haddow, Mr Ramsay, Mr A. Anderson, Mr Dundas, Mr Solicitor, Colonel Erskine, P. Drummond, &c. They are ordered to bring the draught of an overture on both sides. They must bring what they agree to. This is not to come in till the reasonings are over on Monday. And if the Assembly cannot come in to it, it stands *in statu quo*. I shall only add, that I am pretty certain the plurality are against Mr Simson. The Court are, I think, content to go further than suspension; what it is we know not; some say that he be laid aside from teaching, but not deposed. Pray for the Assembly; they are coming to a choak. I am, with my respects to my Lord, yours most affectionately.

LETTER CLXXVIII.

Wodrow to Mrs Wodrow, No. 6.

May 12.

MY DEAR,—NOW we are within some view of land, if some wave toss us not back. However, I'll begin where I left. I ended with Mr J. Gray his speech on Friday afternoon, May the 9th. To him followed Mr G. Logan a second time. He thought himself touched by what Mr Gray had said on Councils and other things,

and repeated what he said about them, maintaining that the Councils he named were not Arian Councils; put again his argument that it would be a reckoning ourselves wiser than all the Christians before us if we should depose after sound declarations, and challenged any in the House to give an instance of an erroneous person being censured after a retraction, and turned a little warm. Mr Willison of Montrose followed, and gave a long narrative what offence had been given by the pannel, and how he had put ministers and Christians in the utmost fear that the youth were corrupted; he considered the errors in the procedure of Councils, and might have added, they never had a person in the circumstances with the pannel before them, and insisted for further censure, laying aside from teaching, at least. Mr Webster in Angus spoke next, and observed some mistake in Mr Logan's History of Councils, and a confounding Arius the Presbyter with Arius the Heresiarch, alleged several Councils named were Arian Councils. This brought up Mr G. Logan again in his own defence, who alleged Arius the Presbyter was an Arian, and offered to vouch all his instances. Mr Boece of Kintyre followed, who declared his acquaintance with Mr Simson, his good thoughts of him, his high esteem of his father; but, since reading the process, he had altered his sentiments; that, considering what was found proven, he could not see but the Church behoved to go further; what that was he left to the Assembly. Then the Moderator moved that many ministers having spoke, he might call on the honourable ruling elders, and called up Mr Dundas. He spoke long, and after two days I cannot now resume what he said. He thought Mr Simson was staged for heretical opinions, (which I take to be a general mistake, since it's for teaching of error or heresy;) that he had declared his disbelief of these opinions, that now he was no more to be held guilty. He insisted on the lameness of the proof, and that now, indeed, after declarations, there was no fault remaining, and yet, perhaps, he was more of the sentiments of those who were on the other side of the question than they might think, but could by no means enter into deposition; that the opinion of Presbyteries did not bind him;

that he knew somewhat how ill this would look in the eyes of the world, and our best friends abroad in England, Holland, and elsewhere, if the Assembly should run cross to all the practice of persons in all the ages of the Church; that he saw the arguments of most run upon suspicions and jealousies, which could never enter to a proof, and ought not to be an argument with any judge, because they could never be proved; there is no answering of them, and judges must go *secundum allegata* and *probata*; that we were all agreed in the truths controverted, and the Church was safe in the present state, since Mr Simson could neither teach nor preach. Affleck followed him, and took notice of the act of Parliament against blasphemy in King William's time; that it was for words, the first time standing in sackcloth, the second time arbitrary punishment, and at length death. He insisted upon the offence given, and the proof, and seemed to be for further censure. By this time it was near ten at night.

On Saturday, May the 10th, the reasonings continued from ten to four at night. They are, indeed, much out of head. Mr Brand began with observing, how backward Mr Simson was to answer questions, and give any satisfaction to the Church of his soundness in the faith; that he had proposed to him before the Committee at Glasgow to give sound declarations and answers; that this was his opinion then, and Mr William Mitchell's, and others, that had he done so, the Church needed go no further, but he was inflexible. He went on to consider the proof, the want of retraction and repentance, and was for further censure. Mr Mackenzie in Inverness had a grave, pointed speech, declared he was unacquaint with Mr Simson; had no bias; that his declarations were not full; that the eyes of God were upon us; that there were three interests to be looked to now, the glory of Christ, the peace of the Church, and Mr Simson's; that he wished all could be preserved, but neither could, without further censure. He observed that Deism was growing, that Non-subscribing principles were prevailing in England and Ireland; that even in Scotland error was gaining ground, and papers and proposals handed about among them, to reconcile sub-

scribing the Westminster Confession with Arian and Deistical principles; that it was high time to provide against these dreadful things, when, if we look above, below, on each hand, we were in the utmost hazard. Mr Gillespie followed him. He was long and slow. He declared himself Mr Simson's friend, complained of the lateness, want of fulness in his declarations, and his contradicting them by his lawyers at the bar since, by declaring he had never changed his sentiments, and was still of the same opinion with this Church. He was for further censure. Mr James Gordon in Ross spoke next, and stated the Scripture rules of judging, Mat. xviii., and in Timothy, and about restoring Peter, and could not conceive that to be a rule of judging in this case. Professor Hamilton followed him, and spoke an hour and some more, from notes in his hand. He endeavoured to take off all that was said against Mr Simson; he considered the rule we were to judge by proof, not suspicion and jealousy; he considered the earliness of his declarations about Necessary Existence, in his letter to the Presbytery of Glasgow, Answer to References, and his Representation; that Mr —— had too much scrupulosity in giving these answers their proper name; for they were answers to queries. He had some squints on the Committee for Purity, that they were not biassed in his favour; that repentance could not be expected from Professor Simson, because he was not convinced of guilt, and the proof was such, and but once, and therefore he wondered repentance was insisted upon. This was not a moving consideration to many. He cast up a sermon of Mestrezat, Moderator of a Synod at Charenton, in a sermon preached before the Synod, on John i. 1, 2; that he said the Logos was an act of the Divine mind, and yet he was not censured. As to Councils, he said they were not urged as an argument authoritative, but from the internal reasons of their procedure, and the rules of righteousness they went by. He cautioned against judging by surmises and fear; rejoiced in the unanimous declaration of this Assembly, that they were at liberty to judge with freedom, and thought the opinion of Presbyteries should not be cast up, further than their reasons went; that unity

was to be endeavoured, and as a dissent had been spoken of last year, so he believed another side this year would give the reasons of their sentiments publicly.

The Mr Solicitor followed. He pressed unity, and went through the proof as not coming up fully. He urged that it was intention made the crime; that was disclaimed; that we are to believe sincerity in speaking till the contrary appear, otherwise all society and commerce will fail. He ended with falling in with Mr J. Scot's motion for a Committee. Mr Scot had defended the Presbytery of Glasgow, and said that Mr Simson had refused to them to give the words of the Confession of Faith, by way of answer to their interrogatories. Principal Haddow followed the Solicitor, and at great length, with much slowness, proved that Mr Simson's declarations came not up to what had fallen out in the proof and process; that all his declarations seemed to be yet consistent with some favourite scheme of three substances he had taken up, and that led him into his reserves as to the personal property; that at the bar upon Thursday he had given a new explication of numerical oneness, which he thought took in three substances; that, though he had renounced three substances, yet he thought he seemed still to reserve the notion, which was the foundation of his scheme, and which he had owned in his answers in several places, and brought Zanchius to support it; that his declarations last year and this at the bar were inconsistent, and, therefore, not satisfying; and he was for further censure. The Laird of Tullybody followed him, and had an excellent discourse, and exceeding pointed. He gave his reasons from the atrocity of the crime, the pannel as a Christian Minister and Professor, as erroneous, and pertinacious, not in adhering to the truth, but in declarations of his innocence at the bar, after all that was proven, and after censure, 1717; and, in teaching what is proven on the first libel, he had undoubtedly broken that act, and so his case came up to a heretic after two admonitions. He insisted against what Professor Hamilton had said, that Mr Simson was absolved by that Assembly, and not condemned, and read the act, and showed that in every point it was

plainly broken. Upon these and many other pointed reasons, he urged a further censure. Then Enterkin spoke in defence of the proof and relevancy. He insisted that Peter's example was no model to follow; that Christ's pattern was not to be urged there, more than in what he did as to the woman taken in the act of adultery. His difficulty as to further censure was, that the King was patron, and Mr Simson one of his servants, and his Majesty was, he thought, to be acquainted before a sentence, and he did not doubt he would allow it. This was, as the Solicitor said to me, to take his¹ trade off his hand; but it was not regarded; and a Committee urged and agreed to, as I wrote on Saturday. If the reasoning be resumed, as I hope it will not, we have Lord Drummore, and Principal Chalmers, and Mr Goudy, who has signified his having a speech in readiness more than once, and many others to speak; but I hope the Committee will hit somewhat that the Assembly may centre in. Their report is not yet come in, (Monday, May the 12th, in the morning,) but they have agreed to a unanimous declaration of the truth; that Mr Simson deserves further censure, (and if they add deposition, I believe all will be pretty much satisfied;) and, in the meantime, they declare that it's unsafe that Mr Simson in any time hereafter teach Divinity in this Church, or have the care of youth trusted to him. This Mr Dundas, and the Solicitor, and that side, have yielded to. It's thought, on the one hand, that deposition at present may bring in one as unsafe as Mr Simson, or may be taken off next Assembly, if it be prepared some way for it; and the declaration as above will for ever close the door. A clause is designed, but I know not if it will be got through, that the Assembly or Commission be acquainted by Presbyteries before they transport any person to be Professor of Divinity. Besides, this method will make it the more decent to provide some subsistence for Mr Simson and family, which the Solicitor says he hath in view in private; whereas, if he be deposed, nothing can be done till he be reponed. He declares he shall never trouble this Church in teaching again. And when preaching is

¹ That is, the Solicitor's.

proposed to be added, that is waived, because already he is suspended from teaching, preaching, and all office, till another Assembly take it off. How the Committee and you shall hear. Thus matters stand in the morning. The Lord bring them well about!

Yesterday (Sabbath) Mr Mackenzie of Inverness preached in the forenoon on Psalm cxxxii. 13, 14. He had a good sermon, and many zealous, excellent observes, which I may afterward hint at. He lectured on Psalm cxxii. Mr Paton in Haddington preached in the afternoon upon "Be zealous." Some say he preached against his text. He had a pointed, accurate discourse, and gave us the nature of zeal, and its characters, so as to guard against extremities. He was pretty safe, and held in generals, which I thought were just, though he expressed them more upon his own side than upon the other. I have written enough for this morning, and filled the paper.

This [day] the Assembly should have met at ten, but it was near to one before they met. The Committee fell into many debates about the wording of the overture, when the Sub-committee, Principal Haddow, and Mr A. Anderson, and some others, brought it in. However, at length they agreed in the overture, save Mr Allan Logan and Colonel Erskine. The overture I have hinted above. It's softly enough expressed, and is the only midse I can see for preventing of breach, and yet it's not like to be acquiesced unto unanimously. The overture was read twice. The Marquis of Tweeddale spoke first. It was the first time I heard him speak in the Assembly. He excused his not being in the Committee, not knowing he was a member. He said, on hearing the overture, he thought it too much to come into upon so lame a proof, after such renunciations; yet he would not oppose it, if it was what might be for harmony. But if it was not agreed to, but a higher sentence pressed, he would not be ashamed to have his name among a minority, who behaved to give their reasons against deposition. Several others spoke for some hours, mostly against it as too low; it was urged that it was lower than deposition; on the other side, it was said, in their judgment it was stronger than deposition, and could not be altered by another Assembly, being a declarative judgment of the Church, by way of compromise, in the time of different

sentiments. I shall afterwards give the abstract of the reasonings, *pro* and *con.*, if I can recover them. By this time it was four of the clock, and it was moved in private to delay it till to-morrow, which at length was gone into, that members might have time to think, and a breach prevented if possible, and a dissent. Accordingly, the Assembly adjourned till six, when we had but a thin House. The Commission book was approved, except as to the parish of Hutton, where a remark very strong was made, that the Commission, by their decision, had acted contrary to our constitution, and principles against patronages. That was reserved to be considered, and a day appointed to consider it; and the Synod were appointed to choose the nominators of a new Commission. For our Synod, Mr Gray, Mr M'Farlan, and Mr Scott of Stonehouse, were nominated, Mr Wiseman only voted for Principal Campbell. This is not satisfying to the Principal to be thrown out of the nominators. If I have time I shall write what passes on Tuesday, but I fear I shall scarce have time.

May 13.—This day the Assembly met, under considerable fears among ministers, and great hopes among enemies, of a breach. But through God's good hand, all is ended without a breach; and the enclosed overture was agreed to without a vote;¹ only a verbal dissent of Mr Boston of Etterick, one of the Marrow brethren, which is not yet recorded, and I believe will not be pushed. I have not time, having been with the Commissioner dining till six at night, to enter on particulars. It's my opinion, and that of others, that this declaration of the Assembly, of Mr Simson's being unfit, and that it is unsafe [for him] to teach, is stronger, and can less be altered than a deposition; and the suspension stands renewed upon him. Send this and the act to my Lord. I have no news. Miss Lillias is still very weakly, I think no worse.

¹ The conclusion of the Act is as follows: "Therefore, the General Assembly did, and hereby do, ratify and confirm the sentence of the last Assembly, suspending the said Mr John Simson from preaching and teaching, and all exercise of any ecclesiastical power or function, until another Assembly shall think fit to take off this sentence; and also, give it as their judgment that it is not fit or safe that he be further employed in teaching divinity, and instructing of youth designed for the holy ministry in this Church."

LETTER CLXXIX.

Wodrow to Mrs Wodrow, No. 7.

Edinburgh, May 14, 1729.

MY DEAR,—Yesternight I sent you the Act of Assembly anent Mr Simson, and now that great affair is over, and I have some breathing time this morning. Let me, therefore, give what I had not time to write Monday and yesterday. The Committee to which Mr Simson's affair was referred were, as far as I mind, the Moderator, Professor Hamilton, Mr Craig, Mr George Logan, Mr Gaudy, Principal Haddow, Mr Allan Logan, Mr James Ramsay, Mr John Scot, Mr John Gray, and Mr Alexander Anderson, Marquis of Tweeddale, Lord President, Drummore, Solicitor, Mr R. Dundas, Colonel Erskine, P. Drummond, and Affleck. On Saturday, May the 10th, they met, and seemed pretty much to agree upon the general heads of the overture as I wrote to you; and it was sub-committed to Principal Haddow, Mr Anderson, and some others. On Monday morning they had the draught laid before them, and were not like to agree for many hours on it. Colonel Erskine and Mr Allan Logan stuck much by a declaration in the overture, that upon what was found proven Mr Simson deserved deposition. The members on the other side plainly declared they could not come in to this, and would rather let it go to a vote, Depose. Mr Dundas and the Solicitor had declared on Saturday that they were peremptory in it, that it was unfit Mr Simson should teach any more in this Church. The Solicitor said, that he had a view of providing Mr Simson some support to his family when laid aside, and would not declare so much if he had not probable grounds to get it accomplished, and that, in event of the highest sentence, Mr Simson could not be with decency provided for. Mr Dundas went out of town on Monday to the country. On the other hand, it was reasoned in the Committee on Monday, that, considering the situation of affairs in the College of Glasgow, that the Faculty had given him a testimonial, and found him orthodox, and

he had an extract of it, he would continue teaching, notwithstanding of deposition, by virtue of his right as a member of the University, which he thought the Church could not take away from him, and if any thing was done against him that way, he would turn this affair to a civil channel, and table the proof of the witnesses, &c., to a declarature before the Lords of Session, who would not judge of it as the Church judged; and if he carried not his point there, he would carry it to the British Parliament, where he was sure to carry his point. Whether all this was grimace and threatening I cannot tell, but it had its weight to make ministers fear a deposition would not provide so well for the main point, the purity of doctrine and teaching in that University, as a declaration in the terms of the act, which are, indeed, like the Parliament's declaring a person incapable of public trust. Besides, there appeared another hazard of the Faculty's choosing Mr W. ——— or Mr C. ———¹ of Larbert, who are not very acceptable. This was not, however, spoken of in the Committee. Had I been to give the other side of this matter, I think several things might have been said; that Mr Simson would not have continued to teach on deposition; scholars would not come to him; Presbyteries would have demurred upon receiving such; neither Court nor Parliament would have espoused a man who was branded with this censure; and it's probable the College of Glasgow will not come into Mr W. or C., but rather to another less exceptionable than either. I am ready to think the great view that this present shape of the overture was gone into was the fears, indeed, of one little better than Mr Simson his getting in on present deposition—the equal security, if not greater, that ministers apprehended from the incapacitating declinature, as from deposition—and the great regard the bulk of ministers had for the Earl of Buchan, Commissioner, who was, indeed, under no limiting instructions, but was in difficult enough circumstances, had a breach been, as there would certainly have been reasons against deposition given

¹ Probably Mr William Wishart, one of the ministers of Glasgow, son of Principal Wishart, and afterwards himself Principal of the University of Edinburgh; and Mr Archibald Campbell, afterwards Professor of Church History in St Andrews, who was processed for heresy before the General Assembly in 1736.

in by Professor Hamilton, (as they say, and as he said in public,) and others of that side, who were merely for continuing the suspension, and several for reposition. In the event of a vote of deposition, the Earl of Buchan's enemies at Court would have been pleased, and laid the breach of the Church upon him. But certainly a breach was by all just means to be prevented, be on the throne who would. Thus matters stood, in the most inward views of this matter that I can comprehend.

The Committee, about one of the clock on Monday, brought in their overture, on which no amendments were made at all. When it was read we had many speeches, which I cannot now resume. The bulk of the members spoke upon the necessity of going higher than the overture, considering the great scandal given, the instructions from Presbyteries, the hazard of a flame in the Church, and that most part of ministers, and the fearers of God, were for a deposition. The persons favourable to Mr Simson, as far as I remember, scarce mixed in to this the reasonings this day. Mr Allan Logan declared himself for deposition, and, indeed, the overture when read did not so generally please, because it was believed, before it was read, that a declaration was in it, that Mr Simson deserved deposition, and, instead of that, there were only mutual declarations of many, on the one hand, and others on the other, for milder measures. It was generally reasoned by those who were for deposition, that there was no more in the overture but a continuance of the suspension of last year, and another Assembly might take off that, and no doubt they can take off deposition. They urged also the Form of Process that tied down to cutting off, if the error was spreading, and in important matters, and urged much the deposing of ministers for fornication. However, some of the most remarkable on that side spoke for the overture, as Mr M'Kenzie, Mr Potter, Mr William Stewart of Perth, Mr Willison, and some others. It was soon perceived that this overture was like to split those who were for further censure, and upon their splitting, it was a considerable hazard, but the other members who were for reposition, or a bare continuing of a suspension, might carry their point; and this was now what was to be carefully guarded against, and, indeed,

here was a great strait. Deposition now would scarce carry by a vote in case put to it, and there was a very great hazard of losing the declarature of his being unfit, &c. And when I considered this I moved in private to Principal Haddow, that the reasonings having been three hours, it was proper to delay this affair till to-morrow, that the brethren who were for further censure might meet together, as they usually did, at the Eagle this night, and consider what was to be done in this very critical juncture, and to guard against a split among ourselves. He went into it, and I acquainted the Moderator in private, who was willing it should be proposed, and it was moved and gone into. At night, about eight, we met near a hundred of us, ministers, and mostly members. There the case was proposed, and amendments were offered to the overture to keep us united. The more warm side, Mr Logan, Mr Gillespie, Mr William Stewart, Inverness, Mr Boston, reasoned against all amendments, and were peremptorily for a vote of Assembly. Mr M'Kenzie, Mr Gray, Mr Ramsay, Mr Potter, Messrs M'Laren, Flint, Millar, Gusthart, myself, and others, were for considering how far this overture, if unanimously carried, might answer the end, and brethren might be satisfied so as to come to harmony. We gained little ground for some time, the other side threatening a dissent. Thus we were choaked with threatenings of breaches and dissents on all hands, from Professor Hamilton, &c., on the one hand, and Mr Allan Logan and Colonel Erskine on the other, and it may be, (at least I wish it be so,) we were driven to the proper midse, and it was said the breach would be safer on their side than on ours, who were for the truth. We staved off things as well as we could, and though at length most of those who were for a vote to depose left us, yet one considerable point was gained, and that was the convincing of most part that were for further censure, that deposition was not the fit state of the vote, but acquiesce and harmony if possible in the declarature. We were late together, till near one of the clock. On Tuesday morning, May 13, I went down to Mr Logan and Colonel Erskine, and reasoned in private against a dissent, if the vote should be Acquiesce or Not. I cannot say I had any great hopes they would yield; Mr Gordon at Cromarty, Mr

Boston, Mr William Forbes, Gordon of Ardoch, and Tullybody, (but that was wronging him,) were said to join Mr Gillespie, Mr Grant, Mr L., &c., in a dissent. Indeed, when we met at ten, we met under great fears of a dissent, and yet we were told, and I believe on good grounds, that Mr Simson was to come in to the bar, and desire the Assembly to clear or purge him, and either depose him or vindicate him. However, he came not. Thus for once our warmer brethren (undesignedly) were working Mr Simson's work, and joining issues with him as to the state of the vote.

The amendments proposed yesternight I forgot to give. They were not material, save that, instead of stating the different opinions, that after them the Assembly would declare he deserved the censure of deposition, yet for peace sake this declarature was gone into. But that would never be yielded by Professor Hamilton, Mr G. Logan, and that side. I moved in our meeting that the Assembly should declare he deserved further censure, and then go to the declarature, but that was not understood, at least our warmer brethren would have nothing but deposition. It was further moved, by way of amendment, that the sentence might be extended to other Churches, which was out of the road, and, instead of *further*, it should run *to all time coming*. There was little in these amendments, and so, when the Assembly met, few of them, save a declarature that Mr Simson deserved deposition, were proposed, and that was knocked down as a throwing out of the overture, which was said to go on condescensions on both sides, and in this shape there was none to those who were for milder courses with Mr Simson. But to come to the speeches and reasonings yesterday, immediately before the passing the act. They were, indeed, all decent and grave, as all along in this Assembly, (which, however, by the other side is reckoned the warmest ever we had.) I never saw more decency and decorum kept in speaking, and more abstaining from personal hints and attacks. Mr Brand began a most serious discourse for harmony and jointness in this great matter, observed the weight it would give to our actings, and the hazard of giving the least occasion to the beginnings of a division; the inconve-
nieney of a vote, lest persons, according to their votes, might get

characters of Simsonians, Anti-Simsonians, it may be Arians, or Semi-Arians; and concluded for acquiescing in the overture without a vote. Mr McGeorge followed him, some time after, and declared he was on the mild side, but did not urge a vote. Mr William Stewart in Ross declared he had been for the highest sentence of excommunication, and had come down to deposition, and he could not well go below that. The Presbytery of Glasgow were called on as knowing the state of this affair, and having had it so much before them. Mr Scot declared that their instructions were for deposition, but he was of opinion that the declaration was equal to it as to teaching, and was for it, and hoped to satisfy his brethren. Mr Gray said, that the overture answered all the valuable ends proposed in this process. Mr Tate pressed unity and harmony with tears, I thought, and represented the hazard of a breach at this juncture and in this affair. Mr G. Logan spoke against the hints that were made, that the declaration was as high or higher than deposition, and said he did not think so. He noticed that even the declaration was what he was not for, but came into for peace. He thought the proof deserved a much milder sentence. However, in that case, what the Assembly acquiesced in he would lay his hand on his mouth, and say no more. I thought, but I may be wrong, that that side were for opening the overture, and would not seem much displeas'd if it had not been gone into. Mr Curry of Kinglassie thought the declaration about doctrine was not strong enough nor full enough, and moved that Necessary Existence should be put in. It was answered by the Moderator, that it was better in by the general "Supreme, Proper Deity;" that there was not the least difference as to doctrine among us; and, if particulars were entered into, it would be endless to declare upon them. My Lord Drummore had a speech not very seasonable, (some thought it was for breaking the overture, but that is harsh in one of his station,) that he would not have members to think that the declaration on the sentence was as high a censure as deposition, which was a public disgrace, far less that it was a higher sentence; that he took it not so, and would never be for it in that sense; that it was not designed so by the committee, but as a safe midse. The Soli-

citor followed him a little smoother, but somewhat looking the same way. Somebody observed the committee were not agreed on the sense of the overture, and that it would be hard for the members of the Assembly to acquiesce. Mr Stewart of Perth very handsomely interposed, and said he did not think the declarature a higher sentence than deposition, but he was of opinion it was a stronger bar against error, in our present circumstances, than deposition. This was a call to the two lawyers to explain, which they did, with high eulogiums on Mr Stewart, and strong declarations that was their meaning. Drummore added, that if the overture was acquiesced in, he thought all should stand in the support of the Church and what was done, and this would effectually stop all writing and pamphlets, which, in his opinion, was to be done. The Solicitor added, that the Supreme Judicatory and all judges had power to mitigate the punishment of panels, providing the great ends were answered; and he was for mitigation, though he thought this way the purity of doctrine and peace of the Church were best secured. Then Mr Boece spoke for the overture, and Mr Thomas Linning. Mr Allan Logan gave some hints he was not for it. Mr Craig spoke for it, and Mr Bannatyne, at Edinburgh, said he was for the overture, and cited a Council at Miletum, I think, that, after the deposition of a bishop, on his giving satisfaction as to his orthodoxy, restored him to his office as bishop, but restrained him in the exercise of it, lest that he should fall back to error, and lest scandal should be taken, which he thought very applicable here. He was at distance, and I did not fully hear him. Then Mr Gillespie spoke a little, and said he was not satisfied with the overture. He thought the sentence in it was not adequate to what was found proven, and did not secure the purity of doctrine, (with some apologies that he was Mr Simson's relation;) yet if the Assembly was for acquiescing, he did not think he was bound to enter his dissent, but only declared that for himself he could not be satisfied with it. Mr Logan (Allan) declared pretty strongly he was not for the overture, but for present deposition; but whether he would dissent he did not yet know; he had shown how much he was for peace, with truth. Colonel Erskine declared much in the same method,

and did not urge a vote upon it. Mr Boston, one of the twelve Marrow brethren, declared with modesty that he would not speak, sensible of his own weakness, but that he was pressed in conscience to speak. He thought the sentence far below the desert of the crime proven, would not answer the ends proposed, nor the instructions of Presbyteries, (his Presbytery was not for deposition,) nor satisfy the fearers of God; and asked liberty to dissent in his own name and any, if there were any, that did adhere to it. The Moderator coaxed him,—if it be not an ill word,—and told him that he believed he would not incline to tear out the bowels of his mother, and desired him to pray and think before he took the burden of a step of that nature on him, that might be the beginning of a breach in this Church. He answered, he appealed to God that he had not tearing in his view, but, before the vote, desired it might be marked that he was against that sentence, and read, as a part of his speech, a few short reasons, which are hinted above. The Moderator begged of him not to insist on that. He answered, if there was time after to give in his dissent, he would do so. And the Moderator declared there was no precluding him afterwards, if he should insist on it before the Assembly rose, since in due time he had moved it, but he hoped he would not at all insist on second thought. Mr Gillespie took him up, and declared he was of the same judgment with him, but could not think of a dissent for the consequences of it, and begged him to withdraw his dissent and think on it, especially since he was not precluded; but afterwards, if the overture was not found to answer the end on trial, or if any thing were done to support error, he and many others would join him regularly in remonstrating to the Church. But he hoped it would not be so. Mr Allan Logan said there were a set of men in this Church that supported this unhappy, corrupt creature, Simson, and if they did go on to give way to corruption, he would oppose them, and that publicly; but he was not for dissenting publicly at present, especially that the Assembly had not closed the door. So the Moderator declared the Assembly acquiesced in the overture; and though some few had declared they were for going further, yet the Assembly went into it without a vote. Then Mr Simson was called in.

Meanwhile, a collection was ordered in the House, by a recommendation from the Bills, for one Mrs Margaret Guthrie, in great straits, and highly commended for piety by the ministers of Edinburgh, a descendant of the Laird of Guthrie.

When Mr Simson came in, the Moderator told him his affair had been long before the Church, and now they were come to a sentence, and he would hear it read by the clerk. After reading, the Moderator told him he was very sorry that the Assembly were obliged to come to what he might think a harsh sentence, but they could do no less. He hoped he would take it as out of the Lord's hand, and behave accordingly. Mr Simson appeared dissatisfied, and in a fret, and they say was going away without giving any answer, but after some steps he returned and said, (see Letter to London, yesterday's date,¹) that he took it out of the hand of his heavenly Father, wished it might be sanctified to him, complained of errors in pamphlets against him, worse than anything proven against him; declared he was still, and is of the same opinion with this Church, in point of doctrine, and prayed what was done to him might not be to the prejudice of this Church, and went off. The Assembly closed, and adjourned till six, when I was not present, but Principal Chalmers' settlement at Old Aberdeen came in, and they heard parties, and entered on the reasoning, but did not end it, but referred it till this day. In the afternoon, yesterday, I was called to a meeting with Mr Boston, to prevent his giving in his dissent, which they say is to be subscribed by many hands; but I don't believe it. Mr McLaren, Mr Gillespie, Colonel Erskine, Mr Charles Erskine, Mr Brown of Abercorn, with as many of the Marrow brethren as are in town, Mr Hog, the Erskines, and Mr Williamson, Gabriel Wilson, and Kilfargie, and some others, met. What will be the issue I know not, but I thought we softened him, and let him see he had done what was competent for a member of the Assembly to do; that he was alone in his dissent, and if, afterwards, a testimony against corruption were necessary, it might be given in a regular way. I forgot to observe, that Mr G. Wilson

¹ He refers to a Letter to the Rev. Abraham Taylor of London, giving an account of the Assembly's proceedings, which is omitted.

craved leave to speak, not being a member, before the overture was acquiesced to, and turned to an act. Mr Logan (Allan) said he was not for dissents, nor much speaking now, but did not oppose his speaking, and all the Marrow brethren, on such a subject as this. Professor Hamilton was for Mr Wilson being allowed to speak. He declared, he not being a member, would not speak till he were allowed, and being allowed, would speak but a sentence or two. And he said he could not conceive this sentence adequate, and it neither answered Presbyteries' instructions, nor the expectations of the fearers of God; that he feared it would open a door to let in corruption to the Church, and craved leave to bear testimony against it. No answer was given, and the Moderator took care members should not make any replies to him or Mr Boston. This is a new practice, and the case extraordinary. What is done this day I shall hint at night. I have written this in the morning, before I go out, and am wearied with it. Pardon haste and hurry.

LETTER CLXXX.

Wodrow to Mrs Wodrow, No. 8.

Edinburgh, May 15, 1729.

MY DEAR,—I had not time yesternight to acquaint you with the proceedings of the Assembly yesterday. I was little in the House. They had been on Principal Chalmers' affair, wherein the Commissioner's daughter, Lady Catherine Fraser, is concerned, and the whole day yesterday was spent on it, and they are still to be on it this day, at nine of the clock. It is a most litigious affair, and many indecencies in it. What turn it takes, I do not know. It's not probable the settlement of the Principal will be overturned, at least no instance I mind of this, but Lochmaben, since the Revolution. The nomination of the Commission is made. I am not a member, which you'll be glad of. Our members are, Mr J. Millar, Mr H. Hunter, Mr P. Maxwell. Mr Smith is a member. Mr Boston came in, and signified he would not insist in marking his

dissent. The affair of Renfrew will certainly go to the Commission, I doubt, in August. Mr Simson is more and more displeased, they say, with the Assembly's act. He is prosecuting some of the printers for printing a pamphlet which he says contains calumny on him. I have no news. If I get not off this day, I hope to come off to-morrow, so as to be home on Saturday, and shall send this by post. I am in perfect health. We have had great rains here Tuesday and yesterday.

LETTER CLXXXI.

STATE OF MATTERS IN THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

To the Rev. Mr Abraham Taylor,¹ to be left at the Amsterdam Coffee-house, near the Royal Exchange, London.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,—It was with a great deal of pleasure I received your kind letter of the 31st of May yesternight. You have done me a greater favour than I could have well asked, in beginning a correspondence with one who is very unworthy of your notice, and from whom you can expect very poor returns. But such as I can send you from this retired corner, I'll be most willing to make.

This, in my opinion, is a juncture wherein such who love the

¹ Mr, afterwards Dr, Abraham Taylor, was Theological Tutor of an Independent Academy in London. His father, Richard, was a distinguished minister among the Dissenters. The son was also a man of note, a good classical scholar, and an able divine. He took an active part in the theological disputes of the day, and left behind him several volumes of a doctrinal and controversial kind. "It was the remark of a Scotch divine, when expounding the words, 'Moses' face shone, and he knew it not,' that 'It was a braw thing for a man's face to shine, and him not to ken it.' Dr Taylor possessed learning, but *he knew it*; and this knowledge proved the source of much misery to its possessor."—(*Bogue and Bennett's History of Dissenters*, vol. iii. 285.) Dr Taylor was in the practice of administering corporal correction to the students under his inspection. He does not, however, suggest the propriety of adopting this mode of correcting the "pertness" or "unsafe luxuriance and latitude" of the young men, of which Wodrow here complains.

truth and the peace ought to speak often one to another, and when we have little else but complaints to make, all which we leave upon ourselves, to pour them out in one another's bosoms, and before the Lord Redeemer. I embrace the kind opportunity you have been pleased to allow me of writing to you with very much thankfulness.

It's but too plain Mr Simson, in his teaching and more private conversation, was pointing towards things of the most dangerous consequence, especially in the perilous times we are fallen to. I sometimes think both formerly, and in this last process, he was stopped short; and before he had fully brought his schemes to the bearing he would have been at, was interrupted. Vain man will be wise, though he be born like an ass's colt. Instability and un-fixedness, with a foolish inclination to advance somewhat new and convincing, to such who pretend to solve all difficulties in our holy religion, from philosophy and reason, I fear have led him to very unwarrantable ways of thinking and speaking. For my share, though it had not been so clearly as we have it in revelation told us, that the truth makes us free, I think the nature of things might have led him to believe that the closest adherence to truth, without hedging and yielding to adversaries, is the shortest way to be free from the seeming difficulties that attend it. In my small reading, I have never observed any advantage gained upon the adversaries of the truth, by the methods of hypotheses and explicatory schemes; though, after all, I see very little new this way Mr Simson hath advanced, and I doubt your proper Arians, and other enemies of Jehovah Redeemer, can have but very mean thoughts of what he hath pretended to advance for their satisfaction.

Now that the process is at an end, we very much want your prayers, that our youth, who have got a most unhappy turn, by being indulged too much by these methods, in unwarrantable ways of thinking and speaking of the great doctrines of Christianity, may be brought to greater modesty and self-diffidence, and reclaimed from that pert and bold manner of teaching sacred things, I fear too many of them are fallen into. This temper is too much growing among our students, who have their eye to the holy ministry; and our young gentry, merchants and others, who have a little reading,

are got into a most unsafe luxuriancy and latitude, in their talking upon these subjects. The evil, I fear, is further spread, and spreading among us, than is yet observed.

That which frights me most is our dreadful falling away, as to practical, vital, and exercising religion. We have the truth, and God hath enabled this Church hitherto to make some stand for it; but, alas! we do not receive the love of it. We have a name to live. Pray, dear Sir, that He who hath the seven spirits may strengthen the things that remain, and are ready to die. I am not among the eldest of ministers; but about twenty-six years ago, when I entered upon that awful work, we were in a pleasant situation as to practical, relative religion, by what we are at present. Our parties, our lamentable debates upon several heads that have cast up, together with our sleeping under so much light and prosperity as we have enjoyed—these have opened the door to such declinings and departures from the Lord, as would make your heart bleed over us, did you know our present languishing state of late years.

But, verily, the Lord of Sabaoth hath left us a remnant, and we have yet a considerable number, who are sighing and crying, and desire to be found standing in the gap, and making up the breach. We have some very promising young men entered into the ministry, though I own my fears and damps are greatest from some others of quite other character. The burden of patronages on this Church is like, as it is managed, to prove ruining to us; and if God prevent not, it's like to be a door, at which a new and time-serving ministry, dipt in party, are like to enter. Our communions in this season of the year, up and down the country, though we have some indecencies and irregularities at them sometimes, yet they are times of prayer, and refreshing from the presence of God. I hope a work of edification is carried on, somewhat of love and holiness revived; though conviction and conversion work by the word, plentifully preached at such times, is under a sensible restraint. In short, Zechariah's prophecy comes much in my mind, it's neither light nor dark. May the Lord grant, that in the evening time it may be light! We take it as a token for good, that with such har-

mony and unanimity, considering our parties and different views, we have got this unhappy matter of Mr Simson ended.

The accounts you favour me with, of matters with you, are very acceptable, though melancholy enough. I am not at all surprised, that downright Atheism, and the most unaccountable attacks upon our holy religion, succeed Arianism in the various shapes it hath appeared among you of late. I am afraid the steps of defection are but very short from the doctrine, relative to the grace and Spirit of Christ, to direct attacks upon his person; and these must inevitably land against the whole of revelation, which centres in God-Redeemer, and, in the nature of things, as well as the awful depth of Divine judgment, Deism and Atheism must come in as an overflowing flood. It grieves me to the heart to hear of the frightful advances these evils are making among you, as well as the Established Church. May we hope, that, when there is scarce faith upon the earth, Christ will appear, and act for his own name's sake?

Dear Sir, you have reason to be thankful to God for his assisting you to make so noble a stand against these prevailing errors. I have, before I had the pleasure of writing to you, or any prospect of any share in your acquaintance, essayed to bless God on your behalf. I incline to say more of your remarks on Mr Watts and your Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity than perhaps is fit to be said to yourself. At least, should I give way to my real sentiments in writing to you, you might jealousy me of flattery in my first address, which, however, I don't take to be my weakest side. I have seen no more of yours save these two, and I humbly pray God may make them as useful to others, and sweet, as I hope they have been to me, and preserve and enable you for much further service to your Lord and Redeemer, at a time when we need the most earnest appearances for our foundation truths. If you have printed any thing since, I'll be fond to hear of it.

You have exceedingly obliged me with your hints from abroad, and I beg you'll please to continue them. I hear sometimes from Utrecht, but very seldom from Germany. I am honoured, for these good many years, with the Rev. Mr Benjamin Colman's correspond-

ence from Boston. Your accounts from New England are frequently earlier than ours here. Our brethren there are deeply concerned for us in our present struggles for the truth. It pleases me to know, that the Lutheran divines are beginning to write in favour of our fundamental and common truths. I wish they would drop their warmth and violence against our brethren, who differ from them, in Germany, and spend their fire upon our common enemies. They are in the right, in naming the modish innovations and opposition to creeds and confessions, *Theologia Indifferentifca*. We have an old Scots phrase, that sometimes I cannot help applying to them—They love elbow-room. And this is certainly at bottom of their eagerness against forms of sound words. I am sorry to hear these gentlemen's libertinism is spreading so much in Switzerland, and that neighbourhood; but am not surprised at all at it, after what I have heard and read in the writings of Messrs Turretine, Werenfeld, and Osterwald. No doubt, we shall have the posthumous works of Dr Clarke, calculated to the taste of his admirers, as I see Mr Whiston and others are now sheltering themselves under the great name of Sir Isaac Newton. Meanwhile, they are scarce of a piece with their own professed impartial searches after truth, when they make so much noise of great names, and herd as much under them as they pretend we do under John Calvin and Knox.

By this time, I fear I have more than wearied you. You will soon see what poor entertainment you are to expect from this quarter; but let not this hinder you from favouring me with your accounts of matters. You lie in the road of every thing that is a-going, not only in England, but in all the churches of Christ; and I'll only presume to say, that though you could have scarce pitched upon one more unworthy of any trouble you'll give yourself, or unfit to give you returns, yet you shall find few more thankful than I. And if any thing offer here, any way worth your notice, you may expect to know it. Meanwhile, when you have a leisure hour, give me the pleasure of hearing from you, what you think proper to give me, as to the state of religion and literature, and new books

and pamphlets, and every thing as to the state of doctrine and learning, and the Reformed Churches abroad. Let me know if Mr Fancourt has published any more but his eight letters, which I wish to see a well-written answer to. He is a bold, and yet a smooth writer, I never heard of till last year, and I fear his writings do a world of mischief, without a timeous antidote. He pushes the connection betwixt moral seriousness, and what he miscalls grace, to its full height of downright Pelagianism.

Permit me now to end your first trouble, with my best wishes for much of the Divine presence to you, and a rich blessing to attend your labours from the pulpit and press. I am, Rev. and Dear Sir, your most affectionate brother, and faithful, humble servant,

R. W.

Eastwood, June 7, 1729.

LETTER CLXXXII.

COMMUNIONS AT EASTWOOD.—DOCTORIAL DEGREES.—DR WATTS.

To the Rev. Mr Abraham Taylor, to be left at the Amsterdam Coffehouse, behind the Royal Exchange, London.

REV. DEAR SIR,—I may be ashamed to pretend to answer your last of June, now after seven or eight weeks. There are several excuses I might make for my silence, which I don't incline to spend your time with. I would willingly have our letters put off the bottom of ceremony, and humbly beg you may not wait returns from me, unless there be something in particular you want to be informed of, in which case, I shall not fail to give you any satisfaction in my power. But whenever [there occurs] any thing of importance, or that you would wish to know, were you here, and I where you are, then let me hear from you. This I am sure of, did you know how barren a country this is, as to any thing that can be

entertaining, you will not wonder at my silence. It's not so, I know, with you, and you will be seldom at a loss for what will be useful to me.

One reason why I did not sooner make my acknowledgments for your last, which was very acceptable, is, that last Lord's Day save one we had the Sacrament of the Supper dispensed in this congregation, and for some time before I catechise my people, and explain some of the principles of Christianity in that method called catechetical. Our communions in the country are all crowded in the summer time, and what by work at home, and assisting my neighbours from May to September, I am generally overburdened. We have many irregularities in the celebration of that holy ordinance that cannot be yet rectified, at least not soon, especially here. I lie in the neighbourhood of the city of Glasgow, and we have confluences and multitudes. Perhaps I may have about three hundred of my own charge who are allowed to partake, and yet we will have a thousand, sometimes eleven or twelve hundred at our tables. I am obliged to preach in the fields a Sabbath or more sometimes before our Sacrament, and a Sabbath after it. We must bear what we cannot help. Amidst our irregularities, we want not a mixture of good tokens. The people are attentive, and many of the younger sort I hope receive the love of the truth, and there is somewhat like a spirit of prayer and wrestling on our fast days before our communions, and more of it appears in our meetings for prayer in Societies. Join with me in praising God for his goodness to us, and pray for grace to improve it, and walk worthy of it.

You desire to know the cool thoughts of Mr Simson's friends as to the sentence. I have been little abroad since May, and have heard nothing but that he wants not some that wish him to be reponed. I was a little surprised to see his name at a testimonial of a Student of Divinity, notwithstanding of his suspension, with S. T. P.¹ at it. I can say little of this, which to me appears bold enough, till I inquire what can be said in his defence. You have one of his friends, Mr W. [Wishart,] minister at Glasgow, at London

¹ *Sanctæ Theologiæ Professor*,—Professor of Divinity.

this summer. If he act as openly after the sentence as he did before, no doubt he will increase the resentments of those for the indifferent way at our procedure.

For my share, I cannot account for the doctorial degrees given all to Non-subscribers by the College of Edinburgh,¹ for some will scarce allow that Society the name of a proper University. That is a question of powers I shall not pretend to judge in; but if they will assert their power by dispensing their honours, I wish they had made a better choice. We are not so much surprised at it here, though sorry for it, when we know the same gentlemen who send abroad their compliments at this rate, some more than a year ago, subscribed a paper protesting against the Assembly's power of judging Mr Simson's teaching, because he was member of a University. You will guess *ex ungue leonem*, and see how hardly this Church is used, when their actings are reckoned ours. Indeed, our Universities are exceeding low, by what they have been in Scotland; and I am afraid the Church of Scotland may have too much reason to repent the little care they have taken of those noble seminaries of learning. I would not be understood, as if we had not some valuable and worthy men in our Colleges; but it's matter of mourning to me that persons of another character, especially in

¹ Dr Calamy has named the persons who were thus dignified about this period—Mr Jabez Earle, Mr John Evans, Mr Isaac Watts, Mr William Harris, Mr John Comyng, (or *Cumming*, Wodrow's correspondent, who, however, was a firm Subscription man,) Mr Benjamin Grosvenor, and Mr Samuel Wright. Jabez Earle sent to his friend Harris the following lines on occasion of this academical distinction:—

“ Since dunces now are Doctors made,
As well as men of skill,
What does the title signify?
I'll tell thee, honest Will.

“ The same as trappings to a horse,
Which, be he fleet or jade,
Not for his own, but rider's sake,
So wondrous fine is made.

“ So, when our Universities
Doctorial honours give,
'Tis not *our* merit they declare,
But *their* prerogative.”

Dr Calamy's Life, vol. ii. p. 513.

a time of party and division, get in where they ought not to be, and when they have wrenched themselves in, talk as if no power upon earth, save the Sovereign, had any thing to do with their doctrine and teaching, and treat ministers and Church Judicatories in a manner I love not much to think on, lest I lose my temper.

When I was lately forming a rude draught of our Reformer Mr Knox's Life, I met with a passage in a letter of his to the General Assembly—it was his last, not long before his death—which appeared pretty remarkable to me, and I fancy you'll not grudge my transcribing it, when I am upon this melancholy subject. His words are:—"Albeit I have tane my leave, not only of you, *Dear Brethren*, but of the whole world, and all worldly affairs, yet remaining in the flesh, I could not nor cannot cease to admonish you of things which I know to be most prejudicial to the Kirk of Jesus Christ in this realm. Above all things, preserve the Kirk from the bondage of the Universities. Persuade them to rule themselves peaceably, and order the schools in Christ. But never subject the pulpit to their judgment, neither yet exempt them from your jurisdiction," &c. This letter bears date August 5, 1572.

To return from this ramble your hint led me to, accept of my thanks for the valuable hints in yours. I am, indeed, afraid Mr W——ts be another Mr B——r to the Independent brethren.¹ I know not what to make of his last Sermon in his third volume on the Trinity. He gives, and takes away what he seems to give. I thought Coliber was printing the same way. You promise in your next to say more of him. I wish Mr Millar success in his observes on Fancourt. I see in the advertisements last month Animadversions on Fancourt's Letters; but it's not yet come down here.

Our Commission of Assembly, which met last week, had little of moment before them. Settlements of parishes are what take up much of their time. Our State little parties mix in, where one would think there were little to say, with most of our settlements.

¹ He means, I think, to express his fears that Mr, afterwards Dr, Isaac Watts, would prove to be another Mr Richard Baxter to the Independents, by leading them into error. Watts was fond enough of his own novelties, but, though claimed by the Arians, there is not sufficient ground for supposing that he ever abandoned the orthodox creed.

We hear that a worthy nobleman, the Earl of Rothes, is like to get a rich match near you. There is another of our peers, whose friendship I have the honour of, who, I hear, has lost a match designed for him, with whom he should have had thirty thousand pounds, merely because the lady is strict Church of England, and cannot think of living in our church. He is, as it were, a Confessor for us, and, indeed, deserves a fortune. I wish a good match to him, but am no marriage-maker. Pray, at your leisure, favour me with every thing you judge proper, and when your dead time for books and literature is over, let me have what is going that way, and all that offers from the Foreign Churches and learned men. Allow me a share in your prayers. May you be assisted by your Master in all your labours and designs for the public service! I am, Rev. Dear Sir, yours most affectionately.

Eastwood, August 21, 1729.

LETTER CLXXXIII.

IRISH DISSENTERS.—EDINBURGH UNIVERSITY DEGREES.

To the Rev. Mr Benjamin Colman, Minister at Boston.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,—It's about six weeks ago that I was favoured with yours sent by Mr Barry, and am glad of the good character you give of him while in New England. He is yet at London, and not come to Glasgow, his business keeping him there. I heartily thank you for all your kindness to him.

This comes by a vessel not coming directly if at all to Boston, but the person who bears it promises to send it to you in a few weeks after he arrives in Pennsylvania, having frequently occasions coming to Boston. Indeed, our ships directly coming to you are so rare that I am glad of an opportunity any way, to keep up so useful a friendship as yours is.

I am pleased to hear from London that Mr Belcher is named in Governor Burnet's room, and hope that Providence shall open a door by him, who is one of our own, for putting an end to your unhappy heats, which have bred me some anxious thoughts, as not seeing where they could land. No doubt, you'll let me hear how things cast up on his arrival.

The poor people from Ireland undoubtedly need your pity and protection; but their minister must certainly be imprudent and zealous without knowledge, to overlook the ministers and preach against them. It's an instance of folly I scarce ever had the parallel of. I doubt it's some of those that have come from Ireland that have carried their heats, which had well nigh consumed them at home, to the Synod of Pennsylvania. It's but mere guess, and I shall be glad to find it otherwise. We have here a copy of their Act about Subscription, which I know not well what to make of.

The state of the Dissenters in Ireland is lamentable enough. The great numbers of them who have of late come over in shoals to America have alarmed the Government. This weakens the English interest, and strengthens that of the Irish Papists. This was thought might have been a very proper season to get somewhat done for the easing our brethren's grievances there, especially the scandalous abuse of our Lord's ordinance by the sacramental test, which was one considerable incitement to them to come to America. The north and south, Subscribers and Non-subscribers, agreed to make an application to the Parliament now sitting in Ireland for the removal of that burden. It was thought proper, however, to advise with their friends at London. For what reason I cannot tell, but they advised to waive this proposal. This is done, and the time is not yet come to build the Lord's house.

As to our own affairs, I have little to acquaint you with. We have not a word as to Mr Simson since the Act of Assembly which I sent you. I wish we never have that affair again on the carpet. That severals among us appeared for lenity is very true; but I hope there are none who are of the sentiments charged on him. The degrees of Doctors of Divinity conferred by the College

of Edinburgh, which some will scarce allow to have the powers of a University, though they have long claimed them, to the English ministers, all upon one side, as is said, and scarce a Subscriber among them, is not very pleasing to many. But I am sure, if they shall in their next granting of degrees bestow them on Professor Wigglesworth, they will bestow them on a most fit person.¹ In my sentiments, I reckon him a doctor already. Pray give him my most affectionate respects. It is my loss that he hath not leisure to let me hear from him now and then, as he once made me hope he would. I remember Mr Monis. I have lately got his Discourses printed after his baptism, where there are fine remarks. I am exceedingly pleased with his remark on Deut. iv. 6. What is become of his Hebrew Grammar?

I send you a paper upon our workhouse for the poor in Glasgow, with a letter to the Rev. Mr Cooper, in answer to one from him which came in Mr Barry's packet. The worthy minister who sends it knew no way to send it but under my cover to you. I know you will take no trouble of it. Some of Mr Cooper's sermons you sent me have raised a very great value for him, and I most affectionately remember him. Let me end with my best wishes to you, your family, flock, and country. Continue your sympathy with, Rev. Dear Brother, your most affectionate brother and servant.

Jan. 30, 1730.

¹ Mr Edward Wigglesworth was the first Professor of Divinity in Harvard College. The University of Edinburgh some time after this conferred on him the degree of Doctor of Divinity. Dr Holmes describes him as "an eminent theologian, and distinguished for his learning, humility, and piety." He died 1765, aged 73. The University of Edinburgh also conferred on Mr Colman the same degree.—*Life of Calamy*, vol. ii. p. 514.

LETTER CLXXXIV.

CASE OF MR GLASS.—WODROW'S CALL TO RENFREW.—SIMSON.

To the Rev. Mr Hugh Maxwell, Minister of the Gospel at Forfar.

REV. DEAR BROTHER,—I had yours without date two or three posts ago, for which I am indebted to you. Were I a member of the Commission, I would see you in March next, God willing; but since I am not, I shall communicate the contents of yours with our brethren hereabout, and do my best endeavours that as many may come up as may be. I hope to prevail with your friend, Mr P. Maxwell, to come in, and it may be some others of our ministers from this Presbytery.

The delays and off-puts in the matter of Mr Glass¹ are what I do not understand. In my opinion, (till further informed,) your Synod ought to be supported in what they have done, and our discipline preserved; otherwise we must inevitably run into confusion. The soft measures we are running fast into, in processes with ministers, will be improven to disadvantages in other cases. I know no difference between their irregularities and immoralities and those of others, but that they are more aggravated, and have more and more extensive effects than in cases of persons not clothed with their character.

¹ Mr John Glass, minister of Tealing, the celebrated founder of the Glassites, a sect analogous to that of the Sandemanians in England. He began to propagate his opinions in 1727, and in 1729 published his "Testimony of the King of Martyrs," which was, in fact, a treatise by Dr Owen, given in a new form, without due acknowledgment. He advocated Independency, (in a higher strain than Owen, whose sentiments latterly were in substance Presbyterian,) attacked the Confession of Faith and the Covenants, condemned national churches, and adopted the kiss of charity, community of goods, with a variety of other crotchets; and having proceeded to introduce several disorderly practices, he was deposed from the ministry. With all his antipathy to Presbytery, no man gave more annoyance to the Church Courts; and with all his horror of Establishments, he clung, with singular tenacity, to his benefice; compelling the Assembly to drive him out, and then complaining of his expulsion as an injury. Mr Glass was a man of considerable talents, though thus sadly misapplied. He died in 1773.

It is (I find in conversation) urged that nothing is laid to Mr Glass' charge but his being of the Independent opinion; and that it will look very ill in the eyes of our brethren of these sentiments in England and New England to depose a person from the ministry only for this. No doubt, your Synod have considered this, and can account for it. That scarce appears to me to be the question before the Commission; at least not so much as this, Whether to re-pone him without repentance and acknowledgments, when you have already deposed him, and he neither owns your authority nor the Church's in her Assemblies and Commissions. But even as to your sentence, (if I have not wrong views of it,) it doth not properly run upon Independent principles. Nobody has a greater value for some of these principles than I, and no doubt there have been brethren of that opinion whom all the Reformed Churches do and ought to esteem. As I take it, your Synod have deposed him for his disorders in what they think a Scriptural, regular, and well constituted Presbyterian Church; his departure from her, his contumacy and divisive courses, and venting and spreading schism and innovations in a peaceable and united society, contrary to his solemn vow and subscription. I am of opinion, (under correction,) that Dr Owen, the Mathers, and other pious Independents, would never approve his practices. Had any of them been alone in a Presbyterian Church, and happened to change their sentiments towards Independency, I persuade myself they would have sought conference, modestly propounded their arguments, free from the airs he gives himself, and if they could not convince others, they would (as the first Independents, or rather the first Presbyterians, we may call them, did about the 1630) have departed to another society, where they might enjoy their freedom.

You need make no apology to me as to the affair of Renfrew, and your not being there. As I was never consulted in that matter, so I declare to you I never had an inclination to leave this place, and am too old now to love changes. I am only sorry the principles of the Church are so much *rejected and deserted*, though, as to my personal case, I am pleased that it is gone as it is. They

say it's to be before you at the Commission by an appeal from Ayr Presbytery, who would not receive the call, as wanting our Presbytery's concurrence.

You hear more at a distance of the intrigues for Mr Simson's reposition than we who lie near him. Since the Assembly there hath been a profound silence till of late ; we hear that the Principal, who teaches the bursars, or rather hears their discourses, once or twice a-week, should have lately told the students in the hall that he was sorry they were so little waited on, but it was not his office ; but he hoped that the next Assembly would take off the sentence from the late Professor, and he would next session teach them to better purpose. This is so unlike the smallest measures of prudence, that I cannot believe it till I inquire further about it, which I have not done. My Lord is as well as a man entered into the eighty-third year of his age can be expected to be. Mr Maxwell, and his lady and children, are well. He hath another son, and is at present at Edinburgh. My Lord remembers you kindly.

I'll be glad to hear from you once before the Commission, with all you know further about Mr Glass. It's fit we should know circumstances here at a distance. We have some stories here as if Mr Glass and his company were bringing in some surprising novelties, as the holy kiss, saying Amen, the use of the Lord's Prayer, &c. But we know not what to believe. If he be upon the foot of innovations, and setting up for the head of a sect, and being noticed for his singularity, (of which I fear there are too plain presumptions,) I wonder he produces not what there is abundance of ground for, were we to follow the very early practice of some Christians, that is, the giving the Eucharist to infants. So far he is in the right (if he would be singular) not to innovate in doctrine, since there are so many innovations there that it would scarce render him singular. Pray write soon and often to, Dear Brother, yours most affectionately.

Eastwood, Feb. 11, 1730.

Remember me kindly to all brethren of my acquaintance.

LETTER CLXXXV.

THE ASSEMBLY VINDICATED FROM THE CHARGE OF PERSECUTION.

To Dr James Fraser, London.

DEAR SIR,—I am favoured with both yours of April the 14th and the 11th; and if you knew the pleasure and satisfaction I have to hear from you, I am very sure you would oftener write to me.

You may believe me when I say, I cannot with any patience think on the spirit of persecution; and did I think our Church were to be charged with it, I should be exceeding sorry. I am humbly of opinion they are not. I am sure they have shown another spirit to Mr Simson than that temper you so justly complain of. It's not matter of opinion that is insisted on, but matter of public teaching. Every sincere person ought to be borne with, reasoned with, and tolerated, if his opinions do not break the public peace, and affect practice, and the duties we all agree in. But the case, in my opinion, is quite otherwise in a public teacher, who ought not, without allowance of the Society, to bring in innovations, and things that break the public peace. But what I blame in a public teacher most is instability and unfix'dness; and you observe very well, that his speech and declaration is hyper-orthodox, and what it may be, Dr Whitby, and perhaps even Bishop Bull, would scarce have come up to. Whatever my own opinion be in those things is quite another case. But were I a public teacher of youth, and happened to alter my sentiments from the Society who set me to teach, I would communicate my new discoveries to them. If I could convince them that my discoveries were right, I had gained my point; if not, I would not disturb, but retire elsewhere. I assure you, that is far from the case here. Mr Simson professes to be the same with the sentiments of the

Society where he is a teacher, and you see his professions in his speeches and declarations, which you'll own go high enough, and yet in teaching and conversation he differs from these. This at best is instability. His sincerity I leave that to Him who knows our heart. I never judge any further of sincerity than actions discover it, and leave every man to his own conscience, and God who made him. And under all this going and coming has the Church persecuted him? Have they not let him enjoy his salary these four years without teaching? Did they not go in last year to the midse agreed on, out of tenderness to him, and that he might enjoy his stipend another year, till he were taken a care of? and yet it seems he complains of persecution. Forgive my freedom I take this way. I am persuaded, had you full information, you would not charge us with persecution. Orthodoxy and unorthodoxy must be judged by the Bible, and where a Church and Society are united, it's not every whim that takes a man in the head, though he have fathers and first writers, who we know were just as infallible as we are, on his side, and as many against him, that must rent and disturb a Society, and set us all by the ears; and if a man pretend to be of the same sentiments with a Society, and yet does act inconsistently with them, I must be allowed to think, till I alter my notions about liberty and the nature of human Society, that he is unfit to be a teacher, till he can bring up the Society, in which and for whom he teaches, to change their thoughts, and be as unstable as himself. Pardon me for insisting so much on this subject; I am sure I take no pleasure in it.

It pleases me to hear Mr Oldmixon has had so much assistance from you. When I get him read over you shall have my poor opinion. You have not told me the gentleman's business and station. He is a lively, entertaining writer.

I have not seen Chubb's papers. I heartily thank you for your allowance to collate your Acts of Assembly with my copy. I shall communicate the discoveries I make to you, if worth your while.

Your accounts of Mr Anderson confound me. Whom shall we trust? I could have ventured any thing I had in his hand. He

has been certainly either another man than I took him to be, or under some fearful failure or weight.

I am pleased to hear what you signify as to Mr Gibson, his giving a connected account from the 1560 to the Union of the Crowns. The paper I send you is a valuable paper in that period, and you may command any thing I have that way. I would fain see Dr Tindall's piece in quarto. His Rights of the Church had much life in it, though he laid about him, without due distinguishing between Papists and Protestants, and Moderate and Highflyers among Protestants. The two principles he lays down make me expect the less from it. If the B. of London manage him as closely as he has done Woolston,¹ he will demolish him; but I imagine Tindall is not capable of writing in so rambling wild a way as poor Woolston. With all my heart, I congratulate you on your reaching 85 years. I pray God preserve you, and continue your health and usefulness. Believe that I am, Dear Sir, your most humble and affectionate.

April 21, 1730.

P.S.—When you fully consider the harmony with which the last Assembly went into their Act on Mr Simson's affair, and it was that which such as in profession were most friendly to him went into, yea proposed, I hope it will not be found to be persecution, especially if you make a difference betwixt a man's opinion and sentiments, wherein I own great latitude is to be allowed, and public teaching in a Church or Society. But I will not enter upon this dispute.

The enclosed is written by a boy of mine, 70 years younger than you; and, if I had not collated it with the original, would have needed greater allowances than your letter. Pray give my humble duty to the Earl of Marchmont, and my thanks for permitting me to put this in his cover.

April 22, 1730.

¹ Woolston had, the preceding year, written a scurrilous piece against the miracles of Christ, for which he was sentenced to a fine of L.100, and one year's imprisonment. Dr Calamy says it was "the opinion of many that that method of proceeding might have been waived, considering that he had been reckoned many years to be out of mind by such as knew him best."—*Calamy's Life*, vol. ii. p. 525.

LETTER CLXXXVI.

ACCOUNT OF PROCEEDINGS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

To the Rev. Mr Charles Masterton, Minister at Belfast.

REV. DEAR BROTHER,—I had last post yours to Mr Macknight, with the very odd passages of Mr Colville of Drummore, his catechetical exercises, for which I heartily thank you. No doubt, you will let us know the issue of this charge of error. Mr Macknight is not able to write himself, being under a course of medicine, which I pray the Lord may make useful for his health. He leaves it on me to give you accounts of our last Assembly, which I very cheerfully do, though the trouble in my family (having a child near death, and two others indisposed) oblige me to give my hints shorter than otherwise I would do.

We were well delivered from the attacks from Mr Simson and his friends. The Commissioner apprehended that attempts would be made, even for his reposition to the ministry, which would raise new heats, and therefore signified his aversion to that matter's coming at all before us. I am not sure, however, but these applications may be made to an after Assembly, when matters are riper for it. There were some attempts from another quarter to get an Assembly act made as to the doctrines impugned by Mr Simson. But it came no further than a Committee, the generality inclining to do nothing that might bring Mr Simson again on the carpet, and thinking that the three last Assemblies had practically and sufficiently [defended] the doctrines Mr Simson had impugned, they made no more of it. Some attempts were made to have the Commission's deposition of Mr John Glass, in March last, opened, and a demission from his ministry accepted. But these came to no bearing, and he stands yet deposed. I was called home before the

Assembly rose, and I hear that at their last diet they made a recommendation to ministers to preach against the errors that prevail at this time, but I cannot give you the precise terms in which it runs.

The Assembly's time was spent in some litigious appeals lying before them. The settlement of Renfrew was the first, and Mr M'Derment, minister at Ayr, was refused to Renfrew. There were many debates about Principal Chalmers his settlement in Old Aberdeen. It was as warm an affair as ever I saw before us. In the end the Principal's settlement there by a Committee of the Synod, in opposition to the Presbytery, and, as is said, the best affected part of the parish, was affirmed. The settlement of the parish of Hutton by Mr Waugh, the King's presentee, who had few or none of the parish or heritors for him, came in by way of complaint upon the Commission, who had consented to and advised it. The story is too long to tell you. In the end it was put to the vote, Reverse the sentence of the Commission or Not. It carried Not Reverse, by four votes only. A dissent was offered by ten or twelve members, who thought this affected our constitution, and the settling of ministers against the inclinations of the people. But the dissent was refused to be marked by a vote. Two or three other affairs were determined, and the rest before us sent to the Commission.

This is the shortest view I could think of. We had a very wild sermon preached before the Commissioner, Sabbath was eight days, by a young man, Mr Telfer, wherein he laboured to prove these times better than the former. It was taken notice of in a Committee on the morrow; but it was thought best that the way to censure it was to despise it, and pity the man's folly. We will be fond of the account from your General Synod. I hope your own health is better. May the Lord preserve you, and bless your labours in pulpit and press! I give my kind remembrance to Mr M'Bride, Mr Livingston, Mr G. Kennedy, and other brethren of my acquaintance. I remember your family. All your friends here are in ordi-

nary. I am, in the greatest sincerity and affection, Dear Brother, yours, &c.

June 1, 1730.

LETTER CLXXXVII.

SUBSCRIPTION CONTROVERSY.—PATRONAGES, &c.

To the Rev. Mr Benjamin Colman, Minister at Boston.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,—Yours of the 28th of September came to me, with an intimation the ship stays in our river of Clyde but a day or two. I thank you for it, and the papers that accompany it. I did not know that the unhappy questions about subscription and private judgment were entered the pulpit and press in America; but it pleases me that they do not affect you in New England. Our burnings in England and Ireland this way are not thoroughly quenched, and there has been nothing in my time which has rendered our brethren in England more cheap in the eyes of their observers than their unhappy breaches on these heads. Subscription to our Confession of Faith, its being required by our Revolution Parliament, keeps us free from these flames.

I must wait till your next letters, before I can know the consequences of your Governor's return. Meanwhile, I pray that the kind Providence that hitherto hath directed all well may appear. I am glad to find our Irish brethren are recovering from their first wrong steps, and their minister is acting more brotherly and Christianly. It's good to be on the mending hand. We have much reason to pray earnestly for intrants to the ministry, and our younger brethren. The longer I continue in this awful work, I see more need to cry, "Cause me to know the way wherein I should walk!"

The diligence and success of the Professors in your College puts

me to thankfulness to the Father of lights. It's one of the matters of the greatest importance that our universities flourish. I wish I could give you the like accounts of ours; but we are at present under a cloud; parties and divisions are got in most unaccountably, and our College discipline slackens. Since May last, I have not met with Principal Campbell; he has been very little at home. In the summer, and till the College meet in October, he generally is in the country, and nothing done till the masters gather from the recesses they take. I am of opinion the acknowledgment the Principal designs for you should come from themselves, and not from my dunning them. I stand in some regards in your stead, as the canal from you to them, and you'll believe I'll do nothing to my knowledge unfit. I wish not to be wanting to put them in remembrance. They are not free from our common divisions, and may be the event will not come up to your deserving, and my wishes. What happens you shall know.

Worthy Mr Cooper is most happy in Mr M'Laren as his correspondent. I know none hereabouts that would fill a divinity chair better than he. But I know not if we shall be so happy as to have such men as he to fill our vacancies. I send my most affectionate regards to Mr Cooper.

Let us continue our remembrance of one another, our families, and flocks. I hope the care of all the churches is in some measure upon us. I pray for the blessings of the Covenant on your young Samuel, and all yours and the coming age.

Our last General Assembly in May had nothing about Mr Simson. Whether there are any designs that he should teach again I don't know. He enjoys his salary, and the youth are without a teacher.¹ The circumstances of his declarations were so dissatisfying, and like a necessity laid on him, that many cannot see how he can be further useful in that station, where the trust is so great, and one of the fairest character hath abundance of difficulty.

¹ Mr Simson was never restored to his office, but enjoyed its emoluments till his death, which took place in 1744; the duties were, in the meantime, performed by Principal Campbell.

The Assembly had nothing of any importance before them. We are, year after year, vexed with litigious debates with patrons and parties, as to settling of ministers. This is what at present is matter of very great trouble to all our judicatories, greater and lesser, and I am afraid will have very ill effects on serious religion. Pity us and pray for us.

Mr Robert Millar, my neighbour, the author of the Propagation of Christianity, hath published his History of the Old Testament Church, in a large folio. It's but come to hand this day, and appears to be a large and laborious collection of what hath been written on that subject, with a large dissertation annexed upon the conversion of the Jews. I doubt not but it will be of use to younger students, who have not leisure to consult the writers he has used.

I have only time to add, that I long to hear the state of things on your Governor's arrival, and all occurrences with you. Some time since, you made me to hope for a book that was publishing about the progress of the Gospel among the Indians, by a pastor of Martha's Vineyard, if I have not forgot. That is a subject I am fond of. Great grace be with you, and all that love our Lord in sincerity! I am, Dear Sir, yours most affectionately.

Sept. 24.

LETTER CLXXXVIII.

GLOOMY VIEWS OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

To the Honourable my Lord Grange.

MY LORD,—During the time of Session I had little to write, and I know your throng since August. I did not know (till of late) that you were in town, otherwise it may be you had got the trouble of this sooner by some weeks.

When I took not the liberty to write, I cannot deny but in some measure your Lordship and your family concerns have lain much on my spirit. The affecting and heavy crosses and afflictions you have been under have been matter of some supplication; were I capable of that sympathy I owe to you, you should have it. This is a time of trial and probation, and my cry for you is, that, when you are tried, you may be brought forth as the gold. The Lord knoweth how to deliver you, and I do not question but your eyes are towards him.

You have sometimes allowed me to write to you what hints of things come to my hand, and it's a pleasure to me if I can inform you of any thing you would wish to know.

Our Synods are now drawing on, and I wish we could know the schemes of Mr John Simson's favourers, that some more care may be taken in the choice of the members of the next Assembly than was last year. The youth especially in this Synod are quite neglected; perhaps better so than under wrong teaching. The College, it seems, are easy, provided Mr Simson have his salary, and the Church is silent. I know not but in a little time the Presbytery of Glasgow may be so modelled as to petition for his reposition, at least to the ministry. The Lord pity us!

I really know nothing through the [Church] since the Assembly, and scarce have any heart to inquire. I expect to hear of little but party work, and compliances with patrons, and great men, and sides. I hear of nothing of moment to be before the Commission, and am weary now of our ecclesiastical meetings. This winter, if my health (which is now declining) permit me, I hope to bring down the Biography towards the 1637, when a new set of men cast up. If any thing useful for me have come to your hands of late, it will be welcome, with any thing you judge proper to communicate with me. I am, my Lord, yours most affectionately.

Sept. 24, 1730.

P. S.—My Lord Pollock has been with us at our Communion, and in church every Sabbath since. It's a wonder to see him so

well when pretty near 84. We observe greater number of communicants at our sacraments this season than we have seen formerly. We had near eleven hundred.

LETTER CLXXXIX.

WATERLAND AND CLARKE, TINDAL AND DEISM.

To the Rev. Mr Abraham Taylor, at Deptford.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,—Yours of the 11th of July came timeously to hand. I would willingly hear oftener from you than I do. Long breach of intercourse breeds forgetfulness in me, though I trust not in others, and I beg you may remember me when you have not opportunities and leisure to write, which I wish may be more frequent.

I thank you for your hint of worthy Dr Waterland's debate with Dr Clarke's friends. Indeed, I do not perceive how controversies with the Arians, Pelagians, and Semi-Pelagians, can be managed with advantage, save upon what is called the Calvinistic scheme. I wish we had Waterland's papers here, for the same notions are getting in to the heads of some of our young preachers, that moral duties are much preferable to positive, and the main of religion is relative to Society, and relative duty betwixt man and man, at which I am not surprised. When our Lord Jesus Christ and the Spirit are left very much out of Christianity, it must settle in morality and mere heathenism. Mr Watts' admirers, who are for turning out of our pulpits the important truths of Christianity, (which, I fear, they mean by speculative matters,) will land, I fear, in the same sink of Gentilism.

I see little of argument in old Tindal. He sets the dignified writers, who are generally Pelagian, by the ears, and fails not to make the best of them he can to support Deism, and destroy Re-

relation. I have been wondering this dozen of years that the Deists did not thus improve your famous English Doctors, Tillotson, Seot, Clarke, &c. Perhaps this may open some of their eyes, and lead them to defend religion and revelation in a more tenable way than by giving so much to what they call reason and natural powers, and very few of them explain what they mean by these terms; so that I do not at all wonder that the Deists make terrible improvements of them. That one general concession, now too frequently made, that a revelation is rather a matter of conveniency than necessity, in our present state, and a thing to be hoped for, and very useful and advantageous when given, and what may be hoped for, though it seems, by what they speak half out, we may do tolerably without it, cannot fail to be turned against us.

It seems mine to Mr Bradbury are not acceptable, at least his returns come not to me. I wish your printer would send down some copies of your Essay on Faith and Sermons to Edinburgh. I have written once and again, and cannot find they are in the shops there.

We hear many reports of the crowded auditory Mr Wishart has at London.¹ It's a considerable change from what he had in this neighbourhood.

It pleases me to hear that you are like to have more leisure at Deptford. May the Lord preserve your health, and furnish you for singular services in this dark day!

All is hushed as to Mr Simson. Whether under this silence designs are forming for restoring him, at least to preaching, I cannot tell. The youth are neglected, and our judicatories are taken up with litigious debates with patrons, and our state parties, in settling congregations. This was the sum of what was before our last Assembly, and I thought it needless to trouble you with them. Let me be favoured with yours as frequently as you can; though I can make but very sorry returns. Let us frequently remember each

¹ Mr, afterwards Principal, Wishart, was settled in London, first as minister of the Old Jewry, and afterwards at Founders' Hall.

other at the throne of grace. I am, Rev. Dear Brother, yours most affectionately.

Sept. 25.

LETTER CXC.

DEATH OF WODROW'S SON, ALEXANDER.

To Colonel Erskine.

MY DEAREST COLONEL,—I have yours this post, and am glad to hear again from you, when you forget me so much, and I have so few news. I am glad to hear of your lady's being better. I pray and hope there will be a good account of her and her child. You and she have my poor concern. My dear Sandy died on Thursday morning, when the Commission was sitting. We have good hopes he is changed for the better, and that is our great comfort. He was lovely in his life and in his last hours, and gave a pleasant account of the Lord's goodness towards him. Indeed, they are happy that are got off the stage with clean garments. I am earnest to see what the Synod of Ross have done, and you must send me a copy of it as soon as you please, and the rather, that since the Commission, as I hear, would scarce read our letter, we may think against our next Synod upon somewhat (if others be of my opinion) which it's like the Assembly will please to read. And I wish that other Synods would have it also under their consideration; as also that care be taken in the choice of members to the General Assembly, lest a reposition be upon design, though all is silent here. I mind nothing else here, save our surprise at Mr Campbell of Larbert's bold pamphlet; and we wonder the Presbytery of Stirling doth not call him to explain himself at least, and retract some surprising expressions. Write to me, if you can, before you leave Edinburgh, and frequently from Culross. I am, with my best re-

spects to your lady and Mr John, Dearest Colonel, yours most affectionately.

Nov. 23, 1730.

LETTER CXCI.

SIMSON.—PROPOSAL TO NAIL DOWN PATRONAGE ON THE CHURCH.
—PROFESSOR CAMPBELL'S PAMPHLET.—GLASS AND ARCHIBALD.

To my Lord Grange.

MY LORD,—I hear your Lordships are to have a recess from your toilsome work for eight or ten days, and therefore venture to give you the trouble of this, though I have but very little of importance to communicate. Perhaps you'll be more at liberty to favour me with any thing that is a-going, than when the Session is sitting. Indeed, I know very little since the Assembly. My inclinations were to have been at the Commission last month, but the case of my family did not allow me. My son Alexander, about sixteen years of age, died when the Commission was meeting, not without some comfortable evidences of a begun work of grace in his soul.

There seems to be reason to apprehend Mr Simson designs an application to the next Assembly, in what shape I don't know. I was informed lately by a valuable minister, with whom he had a long conversation for some hours lately, that he remains just as formerly, as haughty, and as much on his own vindication as ever. He alleges he has the whole knowing, learned, and sensible ministers in the Church for him; and does not, after all his acknowledgments and retractions, stick to say that he is persecuted and egregiously wronged by this Church. He frowns upon all who have differed from him, and never discovers the least appearance of any sense that he hath done any thing amiss; and he and his friends are extremely angry that they did not push the last Assembly to

take off the sentence he lies under, and are positive, had it been moved, it would have carried in his favours. Indeed, I doubt they are not much out in this, and I know to whom, under God, we are obliged to,¹ that the Earl of Loudoun did not humour him in allowing it to be brought in.

No doubt, he and his friends are not idle, and doing their utmost to prepare matters against the next Assembly; and such as are on the side of truth ought to be apprised of this, and on their guard. There is somewhat to be said for the taking off the suspension as to preaching; that the process related entirely to his teaching; that in his sermons he was not blamed; and that by his being fixed in a congregation the Church will be rid of his University teaching. The answers to these are not very difficult; but this matter, I fear, is not to be determined by fair reasoning, and, therefore, I would willingly know your Lordship's opinion, what may be the most proper measures to be taken to prevent the busy endeavours of him and his side to get a majority for him at the next Assembly. Probably it will not be proposed to restore him to his teaching, but only the taking off the sentence of suspension as to preaching; though I believe he and his friends have face enough to go further. I know not well how far the Assembly's declaration that he is unfit hereafter to teach youth in this Church will go. I know how it was pretended to be meant, when that misde was gone into, 1729; but how it will come to be explained and interpreted I cannot tell. Even the opening of that sentence is not a small step to reverse it, and the taking off the suspension a pretty wide step to his restoring to teaching. I am sure his preaching itself and sitting in judicatories will be the beginning of many evils in this country, which, perhaps, others at a distance will not at first feel, but it may come to be felt by all the Church. But can the suspension itself be in any decency taken off, when he continues as much upon his own vindication, and as virulent upon what the Church has done, and take no pains to give the least

¹ Lord Grange is the person here meant.

satisfaction for the offence he hath given, yea, defends all he has done, and does not insinuate the least sense he has been in the wrong, and even insults and reproaches the Church for what they have done? But supposing he should be taught better when he comes into Edinburgh, and make pretty full professions, I would willingly know, if by all rules, and in point of justice, the second libel must be discussed before the suspension itself be taken off. That, in my opinion, does nearly relate to his preaching, and he cannot easily preach the Gospel without mixing in what he himself hath owned and vindicates in his Answers to the Second Libel. I wish such as set up upon the foot of prudence and peace of the Church would consider whither the opening and discussing the second libel will lead us, and what new ferment and wranglings it will necessarily bring us to. Indeed, were we sure of good judges, I wish the second libel were dipped into; but there is my difficulty.

I am but losing your time with these things. It would be very useful to me to have your thoughts on the whole, and upon what may be proper to do to prevent the next Assembly's taking up this affair, which, in all the shapes I can think of, will prove at best extremely hazardous to the Church, and I fear end in a breach of ministerial communion. I wish, at Edinburgh, there were a general correspondence begun, and ministers and others were written to and acquainted with our danger, and pressed to take care of the ensuing elections to the Assembly; and if any thing can be done timeously above for preventing of a new application by Mr Simson, which, if our statesmen be not on a design to raise new broils and confusions in this Church, they will see is the best way to preserve peace and quiet.

We are dunned with the accounts of a design on foot to nail down patronage and presentations upon us more straitly. We have been so obsequious already to presentations, and done more than perhaps the law requires, that I own there is ground to look that many will go into every thing that can be proposed. But pray what is it that is to be further done? I can scarce see what further can be done than the law, and our going perhaps beyond it, has

already brought us under. However, it seems there are letters from great names at Edinburgh, threatening further clauses as to presentations.

May I ask how Mr Campbell at Larbert is received at St Andrews? Is he settled there? I wonder that the Presbytery of Stirling has not called upon him to explain or retract some passages in his late pamphlet on Enthusiasm,¹ and wish the University of St Andrews might inquire into that matter a little. That pamphlet, I own, is a very odd preface to his setting up to be S. T. P. in Scotland, and I think, joined with the Seasonable Remarks on Mr Simson's sentiments from his own papers, might alarm this Church against any attempt for reponing Mr Simson, and engage St Andrews College and Presbytery to be cautious whom they admit, to whomsoever others see proper, to give a little to the salary. But I hinted some things, as to Mr Campbell, in a former letter to your Lordship.

You had likewise any thing since my last, which is come to my knowledge from New England and Ireland. I wish these have not missed you, when I am told you were in the north country. By a letter I had last week, I find worthy old Mr M'Crackan is dead, and one Alexander, an English Dissenter, is come over to Plunket Street meeting-house in Dublin. He is a Non-subscriber, but hath written pretty well against the Arian hypothesis. I have the copy of a letter wrote by a minister in Ireland to Mr J. Glass, to reclaim him from his wildness; but I don't think it will have any influence. I should be glad to know how his and Mr Archibald's² case and following stand. We hear very wild stories of their kiss of charity and confession of sins, and sending out tradesmen, gifted brethren, to preach,

¹ This was one of the treatises for which Professor Campbell was processed before the Assembly of 1736. The Assembly dismissed the process, declaring that they were satisfied that Mr Campbell had "a sound meaning" in the several propositions which they had under their consideration.

² Mr Francis Archibald, minister of Guthrie, had imbibed the same opinions with Mr Glass, on account of which he was first suspended, and refusing to submit to this sentence, was afterwards deposed. Both he and Mr Glass, however, were subsequently restored to the ministry, though not to their churches.

but what to believe I know not. Mr Smith was keen in March for Mr Glass's deposition. I know not how he acted in Mr Archibald's case in November, which, to me, does not seem easily to be knit with the Commission's procedure in March. It seems your profession of Divinity at Edinburgh is not yet disposed of. We reckon the present Professor is to be Principal.

I hope some papers that may be helpful to me in our Biography will be come to your hand, since I had the happiness to wait on you, particularly L. Nisbet's papers. We have a carrier that in winter comes sometimes to Edinburgh, a very eminent Christian, and a man of good sense. If your Lordship have any MSS. or papers, or any new thing in literature that is bulky for the post, I'll cause him to call for any thing you have for me. One can depend entirely on him.

Forgive my tediousness. I have not heard from Mr Taylor since I gave you a hint of his last, in September, if I remember. When your Lordship has any leisure, it will be exceeding welcome to hear from you by post. Meanwhile, I am, my Lord, yours most affectionately.

Dec. 16, 1730.

LETTER CXCII.

DESIGNS TO REPONE MR SIMSON.

To Mr John Lawson, Minister at Closeburn, near Dumfries.

REV. DEAR BROTHER,—You'll see by this that I have no mind our intercourse should fail on my part. Perhaps I may have the pleasure of seeing you at your friend's reception in Renfrew, the second or third week of January. The matter even requires that I should give you trouble betwixt and then. By the best information I can have, Mr Simson designs to apply (in what

shape I know not) to the next Assembly. The least that will be asked will be the taking off the sentence of suspension as to preaching. No doubt, he and his friends will not be idle under such a view, and you will agree with me that such as are concerned for the preservation of the purity of doctrine should be on their guard who comes to the next Assembly.¹ It's said, (and I believe not without reason,) that, had Mr Simson applied to the last Assembly, he had got a favourable return, and this raises his hopes of the next. I wish it may be well considered what tendency the taking off of the suspension may have, and how far it will pave the way even to his being restored to teaching; likewise, of how little consequence any restrictions laid on him, in this event, will be, considering the deference he paid to the restrictions laid on him, 1717, as appears in the Committee's procedure in his Second Libel. It will also be considered, no doubt, what divisions and new janglings this attempt, if it succeed, will be followed with. The Second Libel, one would think, must be discussed in the Assembly, and that will not be an easy matter, and bring things on the carpet which I wish our wise prudent ministers would consider the consequences of. In short, I don't see but in the issue this project must land in a stated rent in this poor Church. I wish ministers then in your bounds would

¹ A number of Wodrow's Letters, written about this time, which we have omitted, were sent as circulars to ministers in various parts of the country, suggesting, as he does in this letter, that, in consequence of the reported design of Mr Simson to apply to the ensuing Assembly for the removal of the sentence of suspension, all their influence should be exerted, that members firm for the preservation of purity of doctrine should be chosen, and that they should correspond with one another, in order to be united in their measures. He says to one correspondent—"We should undoubtedly send up to the next Assembly persons firm in this matter, for we see that instructions, when almost universal, can be some way got over. Though I am for continuing of these also, yet the great matter is sending of right men." To another he says—"I wish brethren that stand for the truth may be upon their guard, since I am assured pains will be taken to get members chosen who may favour his reposition." These endeavours to secure members attached to the doctrine of the Church were so far successful, that Mr Simson made no application to the Assembly, persuaded that he could not succeed in his object.

frequently meet, and consider what is proper to be done before the next Assembly, and communicate what appears to be present duty to their brethren here and elsewhere. One thing that should quicken us all is the strange lengths that another S. T. P., Mr Campbell, in his *Essay on Enthusiasm*, is gone. No doubt, you'll have seen that pamphlet, and Mr Haddow's good paper, proving Mr Simson's errors from his own papers. Let me know brethren's sentiments with you, and caution your friend not to appear with keenness, if his light lead him, as it's said it does; for a removal of Mr Simson's suspension. It will be a loss to him if he do so. Write often; and believe that I am, Dear Brother, yours.

Dec. 16.

LETTER CXCIII.

CAMPBELL'S ESSAY ON ENTHUSIASM.

To Mr John Warden, Minister of the Gospel at Gargunnoch.

REV. DEAR BROTHER,—I think you and I shall wear out of acquaintance. Allow me to begin with a complaint that you was at Glasgow some time, and saw me not. I think I was never within two miles and a half of Gargunnoch but I saw you. I hope you'll make up this fault, by frequent remembering me and mine under breaches, when no eye sees you. I find there will be an application by Mr Simson and his friends to the next Assembly, in what shape time will discover. It will be for removing the suspension as to the preaching at least, and more if the elections be favourable. It's now if ever necessary that firm, honest men be sent up, that brethren correspond, and communicate light one with another, as to present duty. I know you and most of your Synod stand for the truth, and I bless God for it; but allow me to ask if you

have made any inquiry concerning one of your neighbours, who very early styles himself S. T. P., his strange and bold assertions in his pamphlet on Enthusiasm. I have been longing to hear that the Presbytery of Stirling had called him to explain himself upon what gives so much offence, and prevailed with him to retract what, in my opinion, hath a visible tendency to destroy his design against the Deists, and weaken our argument against them, as well as to destroy our doctrine, as to the Spirit's work on the souls of his people, and many other things I need not insist on to you. This new attack on our doctrine, yea, the vital practical part of Christianity, I hope, will let us see that the leaven is spreading, and it's too early to retract what the Church of Scotland hath done as to his fellow S. T. P. I'll be glad to know Mr Campbell's defences of the odd and bold sallies in his book,¹ and the favourable senses he puts on the most shocking expressions in his preface, p. 1 and 2, p. 8, and many other places, and what your Presbytery say in your defence for not making an inquiry, according to the Acts of Assembly, into what is published by one of your number. I hear he is gone to St Andrews to present his patent. Pray let me know his reception there, with all your news. Take timeous care of the members of Assembly. Let us mind one another, and write frequently. I am, with respects to yours, yours most affectionately.

Eastwood, Dec. 17, 1730.

¹ Professor Campbell, in this Discourse on Enthusiasm, among other remarks of a similar kind, says, p. 2, that "many in the world look upon those manifestations, which they think they have of the nature and excellencies of God, as supernaturally communicated to their minds;" but "it is evident, beyond all reasonable dispute, that all such events may possibly have come about in a natural course and series of things, without any more immediate interposing of the Divinity, than there is when a man opens his eyes, and beholds the sun in its glory at noon-day." He affirms that "an extravagant conceit of being peculiarly blest with such supernatural communications from heaven makes up the very life and soul of enthusiasm;" and speaks of "consulting the throne of grace, and imploring light and direction," &c., as "terms of art," much used by enthusiasts.—Pp. 4-10.

LETTER CXCIV.

MR WILKS.—DEATH OF MR M'CRACKAN.—“WILDNESSES” OF
MR GLASS, &c.

To the Rev. Mr Charles Masterton, Minister at Belfast.

REV. DEAR BROTHER,—I had yours of the 19th of November, about a month after the date, and the bearer calls again for an answer this night, when I was not looking for him.

Mr Wilks' Essay on the Being of God I heartily thank you for. It's pity a gentleman should write in so cramp a style, as to need a Dictionary at the margin and the foot of the page. However, he writes in earnest, as far as I have glanced him, and has several very good, and some of them uncommon, remarks on the conduct of Atheists, and the opposers of religion. I fear his cramp, Latinised way of expressing himself, hinder the book to be read.

Worthy Mr M'Crackan's death affects me much. He was my father's friend, and I had the advantage of his letters more than twenty years. He was a firm, honest Scots Presbyterian, and though he has served God and his generation long, it's really a loss when such are removed.

I have yours to Mr Glass; I have no remarks to make on it; but though I take it to be your duty to write to him, and perhaps in such soft and gaining terms, yet I fear he is so stiff and self-willed, somewhat more of salt would have been as effectual. But I fear little will prevail on him now. I have kept your letter, lest any thing cast up here in his pamphlets, of which he never wearies, that I may do you justice. But, if you want it, I shall send it at a call. The poor man is still going on in his wildnesses, and comical things are talked of his public rebukes, for defects and excesses in the Christian kiss he has introduced to his meeting. He is advancing tradesmen to the ministry, and turning out the soberer mem-

bers of his congregation with much imperiousness, because they cannot see those gifts and qualities he, it seems, finds in the ignorant people he will make ministers of, who, they say, exceedingly expose religion in their probatory discourses.

It's a pleasure to me to hear you are no worse in your health. Be careful of it. The Lord preserve and increase it. I had the Primate's Charge, and sent it to Mr Erskine. He writes, I suppose, by the bearer, and so I'll but repeat things. I remember Messrs M'Bride, Kennedy, Livingston, and Lang, and am glad to hear of their health.

As soon as I got yours about your son Archibald having but a very overly acquaintance with Mr Wishart, and having never written to him, or heard from him, I communicate what you write to Mr Hamilton at Glasgow, once his colleague, and desired him to write upon that affair, which he seemed willing to do, or to employ some other, as intimate with him as he, to do it. But I doubt nothing will be done, or needs this way, since of late we hear he is to leave London and come to Scotland, because of his wife's health, which is exceeding bad at London; and some say she is already come down. If this hold, I doubt there is some more under it. You may reckon every thing in my power for you or yours.

Worthy Mr Luke, I fear, is a-dying of an asthma. You know what heavy crushes he has met with in his children, and these stuck to him. He is indeed better these few days, but I have little hope of his recovery. His death will be a very great loss to that place.

I forgot almost to tell you, that in all probability we are like to have a new attack from Mr Simson and his party next Assembly, for taking off his suspension from preaching; and if the choice prove what they reckon favourable, I doubt a push will be made for his being reponed to teach. That will undoubtedly throw us to confusion. Pray for us, and a good choice of members to the Assembly, and conduct to them.

I mind nothing new, unless it be Mr Francis Hutchison's inaugural oration, which receive from the bearer, and, when you

have perused it, send it to Mr G. Laing, if copies be not come over, as it may be they are. Write much and often to, Rev. Dear Brother, yours most affectionately.

Jan. 6, 1731.

LETTER CXCIV.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

To the Rev. Mr Abraham Taylor, Minister at Deptford.

REV. DEAR SIR,—Yours by Mr Randie's servant was exceedingly welcome, and I designedly put off the time of my writing till the time of the Assembly, when I thought you would incline to hear from me. We are for a while rid of Mr Simson's importunity. This Assembly, indeed, doth not seem to have been for his purpose, and so we have had no trouble from him. However, though I am far from being for personal hardships on him for his opinions, yet I cannot but regret that while he enjoys the salary, the youth in the west of Scotland are entirely neglected, and have no teacher in Divinity.

Upon this subject, there hath been a proposal from the Synods of Fife, Perth, &c., that the Assembly should give a seasonable testimony against the growing infidelity and errors at this day. This paper needs to be well digested, which is not easy in so large a meeting as the Assembly. Besides, I know not if we shall entirely agree in several expressions that some may incline to have brought in. And I am very sorry to tell you, that so necessary and seasonable a work as this will probably be put off for want of time. Perhaps it may be referred to the Commission, but that will be a material dropping of it; for the Commission will not probably enter upon it.

Save private causes, as transportations, &c., with which I will not

trouble you, there has been no more of importance, except an act about planting parishes when they happen to fall into the hands of the Presbytery, before our General Assembly. I know not if you'll be so well versed in our forms as to settlement, as to understand me if I should enter into a detail of it. It was upon the plan agreed to at the Revolution, which, though a civil act, was worded at the directions of the ministers who had suffered. In short, the power of calling ministers is lodged in the hands of the heritors and elders who are to propose the man to the congregation; and if they disapprove him, their reasons for so doing are to be laid before the Presbytery, who are the last resort.¹ This plan is recommended

¹ It was agreed that the overture of this Act should be transmitted to Presbyteries for their consideration, whether it should be turned into a standing Act, and that, in the meantime, it should have the force of a law. "It's probable," says Wodrow, "that by the opposition the North country ministers made to it, that it may not be passed to a standing Act next Assembly. To me, indeed, it's hard to determine whether one method will fully answer in point of expediency to the South, where the heritors are not openly disaffected, and the North; but it seems necessary that some rule should be fixed."—(*Analecta*, vol. vi. p. 297.) At the Assembly in May 1732, it was found that 18 Presbyteries had returned no judgment concerning the overture; that 12 were for it, but only upon condition of several amendments; that only six were for it as it stood; and that 31 were decidedly hostile to it. At the same Assembly, two representations of grievances, the one signed by 42 ministers, and the other by 1700 of the Christian people, were offered to the Assembly, in which, among other things, they remonstrated against the above overture. But the Assembly refused to hear these representations, and though the great majority of Presbyteries gave their judgment against the measure, yet the Assembly, in direct opposition to a fundamental and standing law, commonly called the Barrier Act, which requires that overtures in such cases should be rejected, not only converted it into an Act, but refused to restrict the right of voting to such heritors as resided within the parish, or were members of the Church of Scotland; and also refused to mark in their minutes a dissent from this Act, and a protest against it by several ministers and elders, members of the Assembly. There can be no doubt that the disregard of the rights of the members of the Church displayed in this Act, and the unreasonable procedure of the Assembly in refusing the marking of dissents and protestations against it, was what immediately gave rise to the Secession. Wodrow, it appears, had various objections against this Act. "It needs," says he, "great amendments, some of which were reasoned, and pretty much agreed upon in Committees of the Commission, which had the Act for settling *tanquam jure devoluto* under consideration, as has been said. There it was agreed on, that special regard should be had to heritors that attended on ordinances, otherwise certainly it will be a great hardship on well-affected heritors. And, fur-

to be used before the *jus devolutum* come into the Presbytery's hands, and afterwards. It lies hardest on our Northern brethren, where the heritors are disaffected, and will still act. But it was thought we should have somewhat in the room of patrons, if we should be quit of them, of which indeed we have but little prospect. This is a short hint of what was done in the Assembly.

It's high time I should make my thankful acknowledgments for your valuable present of your three Sermons and your Essay on Faith. I have not time here to read your Essay on Faith. When I get home, and have that pleasure, I make no doubt but I'll be much satisfied with it. Meanwhile, I can assure you it finds much acceptance with several very good judges here. One, in particular, an advocate, and very pious gentleman, who borrowed it while I am here, tells me his soul hath been much refreshed with it, and blesseth God who hath led you to write upon this subject. I am longing for your Funeral Sermon on the death of your colleague, and your Confession of Faith, which I know will be a judicious abstract of Christian doctrine. I cannot pretend to make a return to you for what you send me. But pray let me know if you have the History of our Sufferings I wrote some years since. If you have it not, I'll send it by Mr Randie upon the first occasion. I have got all your father wrote, and promise myself much edification by reading his Essays and other treatises. When you write next, let me know if it was your father who was in Scotland with Mr Boswell, 1706. Mr Shaw, now Lord Barrington, was in their company, and I had some acquaintance with that Mr Taylor at Glasgow. He was a grave, judicious man.

I am entertained a little with *Varia Sacra*; written, they say, by Sir R. Ellis, who, I am told, is a friend of yours. It is a prodigious collection of critical learning, well applied for giving light to

ther, it was there agreed, that heritors and elders should act in two separate bodies, and that heads of families, in case of a difference between these, should be taken in to make the balance. Many other regulations would be needful to make; but I doubt this is scarce a time for it; and I see some leading persons are not fond of rules. Power is sweet, and such who get it in their hands are not willing to part with it."— (*Ibid.* vol. vi. p. 300.)

the Holy Scripture. He hath sweet and just thoughts on baptism for the dead ; but it is miserably misprinted.

Allow me to rejoice in your ordination to the ministry, and to present my supplications to God-Redeemer to pour out his Holy Spirit upon you, and give you many seals and crowns. Let us wrestle with and for one another, in these evil days, when our darkness looks like an evening darkness ; but in the evening time it shall be light. I thank you for your sympathy under family rods. I need it, and look up for sanctifying power to come along with them. Foster is a vile writer. I see no warmth in Dr Waterland but what the subject requires. I have read him with pleasure against Dr Sykes, who runs fast to Deism and Socinianism. The Lord preserve the Doctor for much further service ! He hath done much already, and I hope more is in reserve. I shall send what is written against Mr Simson, by Mr Randie's means, to you. Permit me to beseech you to write what is a-going to me by post. You have our worthy friend, my Lord Grange, with you. I offer him my dutiful respects. Pardon the hurry I am in, and my bad hand ; and believe me to be, Dear Sir, your most affectionate and obliged brother.

Edinburgh, May 15, 1731.

LETTER CXCVI.

SAME SUBJECT.

To the Rev. Mr Charles Masterton, Belfast.

REV. DEAR BROTHER,—I have yours of the 21st of April, from my brother Mr Macknight, this night, and thank you for the copy of the depositions in Colville's case. You must gratify my Athenian temper by sending me what is a-going. I presume to hope you'll continue to send whatever you find proper, and you would wish to

have communicated if you were here and I there. It were unjust and unfriendly in me, if I did not with cheerfulness send you our account of matters, though they are not very important; and I wish I had more vigorous appearances to acquaint you with; but these are scarce to be expected from this Church, till the Lord be pleased to put a stop to our sensible declinings, from time to time.

Our Assembly met May 6th. Professor Hamilton, last Moderator, preached from 1 Tim. i. 15, "This is a faithful saying," &c. There was not much remarkable, but some flings at a persecuting spirit. There was a letter from our worthy clerk, Mr Dundas of Philipstoun, signifying his indisposition, and in four or five days we had an account of his death. His room was soon supplied with Mr William Grant, son to my Lord Cullen, by an unanimous vote. You need not be told what a great loss this Church will be at by the loss of this good and worthy gentleman's death, whose name will be for ever savoury in this Church. The vote for Moderator ran between Mr Smith and Mr William Millar, and Mr Smith carried it by a small majority. He had been left out in the first election by the Presbytery of Edinburgh, as is said, by his own desire, and Professor Hamilton's party; but when the Commissioner came down, eight or ten days before the Assembly, he was chosen in the room of a brother who made his excuse in order to be chosen Moderator. I doubt if he had been chosen without the Commissioner's weight. Mr Smith is failing, and not so vigorous as formerly, and his passion sometimes discovers itself. However, Professor Hamilton and he seem now to be joined, and it's believed he will go to the chair, and Mr Hamilton will be Principal. This vote of the Assembly, together with vigorous instructions from Presbyteries against Patronages and accepting of them; for an act against the prevalent errors of the times; for limitations of the Commission, and their meeting at Glasgow and Aberdeen; with a good many against Mr Simson and others of that strain, from Fife, Stirling, Angus, and especially from the North, for indeed they have any zeal and concern that is among us; these things, I say, made Mr Simson's friends think this Assembly too warm for moving any thing about

him; though it's said in town that there was a petition from the students at Glasgow, that is, a few whom he and the Principal could influence, that the Assembly would provide a remedy for their want of teaching these four or five years. In the Committee of Instructions and Overtures, we had very few speeches against patronages and acceptation of presentations; but all landed in a general instruction to the Commission about the Church's grievances, their redress, and an act of the Assembly, which is the only act made this year, about settlements of parishes. It enacts just in the terms of the Act of Parliament, 1690, placing the election and choice in the heritors being Protestants and elders, representatives of the people, the person to be proposed to the people, to be approved or disapproved by them, and the disapprovers are to give in their reasons to the Presbytery, at whose judgment and determination all is to be concluded. A clause is added, recommending it to all ministers, preachers, and members of this Church, to give no encouragement to settlements upon any other plan but this. This act took up most of our time; though this was the plan followed by our Scots law, yet we had not taken it in by any ecclesiastical deed. It was said that this would let all our friends know what we would agree to in room of patronages, and being our plan before patronages, it was gone into, but not with harmony, severals being of opinion that heritors, as such, have no power of choice, especially non-residing; and the brethren in the North, where the heritors are disaffected, complain much of it, and would have had in a clause, *heritors of our communion*, or that *a special regard should be had to heritors who join in ordinances*. But that could not be got in. The act binds till next Assembly, and is remitted to Presbyteries to send in their opinions upon it. There was a push made for a warning against error; and in the plans proposed for it from Fife, Perth, and Angus, there was a particular specification of the errors charged on Mr Simson; but there was not time, and many of our directors were willing there should not be time, to ripen it in our committees; and it was remitted to the Commission, where I can almost foretell what will be done about it, namely, nothing at all. I mind no

more of a public nature that was on the carpet. The Commission's actings, in settling Balfron, almost on a mere presentation, were disapproved, but the person settled continued. Their conduct was not approved in their reponing Mr Archibald to the ministry, after the Synod of Angus and Mearns had deposed him, and yet they had declared him no longer minister of Guthrie. He joins Mr Glass, who was deposed for the same irregularities by the Synod, so that it is hard to say what Mr Archibald's case is. The Synod has deposed him, the Commission hath reponed him to the ministry in general, and the Assembly doth not approve of what the Commission hath done, but leaves matters to stand as they are. Such mazes we are sometimes brought unto by our various sentences. I mind no more we had before us but transportations and settlements in the North; and a good many others referred to the Commission, particularly one, which was the only one which the Commission took in on May. The Synod of Perth had suspended Mr Andrew Burgh, preacher, for accepting a presentation to the parish of Foulis, *simpliciter*, and without any reserves, and for refusing to own presentations to be a grievance, though at length, indeed, he made some acknowledgments they were a grievance. This came before the Commission, who declared the suspension null, because the matter was referred by the Presbytery to the Synod only for advice, and not decision, and so remitted it back to the Presbytery. But it is thought the Presbytery will also suspend him, this being the only instance we have had of a simple acceptation of a presentation. We had a little scuffle the last diet of the Assembly about reading of sermons. One, Mr William Armstrong, had read his sermon with a very ill grace. He is a young man in the Presbytery of Penpont, who was named upon the failure of another who had been appointed, that sets up for oratory; but I never heard less, nor saw so much hammering and indecency in delivery.¹ Many members,

¹ Young men were now generally nominated to preach before the Commissioner. On this Wodrow remarks: "In their nomination of preachers, they continue to nominate, as has been ordinary these several years, mostly young men who bear the name of bright youths, and oratorical preachers. This is a considerable change

in open Assembly, testified their dislike of this innovation, and the matter was passed over. By this time I have wearied you. I mind little more remarkable. You'll forgive the confused account. I have only time to thank you for the information you have given of things with you, and long for the accounts of your Synod this month, and that of the Non-subscribers, and the issue. We long for the answer to the narrative and remarks on Mr Hutehison's well done paper. I thank you for your sympathy; and I am, with kind respects to all brethren of my acquaintance, yours most affectionately.

June 2, 1731.

LETTER CXCVII.

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

To the Rev. Mr Abraham Taylor, Minister at Deptford, Kent.

REV. DEAR BROTHER,—Yours of the 2d of May came to me in due time. I heard of the scheme in some people's heads to ease us of Confessions and public Formulas, which, if ever it come to a bearing, it will ruin us. The Lord forgive them, open their eyes, and disappoint their designs. We are not yet ripe for such a design, though, indeed, ripening faster than persons who do not know us think. I'll be fond of all you hear further about this. I within these few years; for, twenty years or more, since I kept Assemblies, none but the older graver ministers were set up to preach before the Assembly and Commissioner. What the motives are for this change I cannot divine. I am sure it's not a prudential step, and looks as if the leading men who have the direction of this matter were wearied of the older ministers, and their way of preaching, or are inclined to please the vitiated taste of those about the throne, and inclined to set the new way of preaching and haranguing against zeal and other things, as a pattern to be followed by other ministers, or that they are afraid if others were named, they would perhaps touch on some things that are not modish and complaisant enough for this time."—(*Analecta*, vol. vi. pp. 282, 283.)

thank you for your hints from Italy and Holland. I was a subscriber for Ridgley; and, since the case stands as you tell me, I wish my name had been in Dr Wishart's room, though it's very little worth. However, I have written to my bookseller to see it be added to the second volume. It's a solid, judicious, useful work. You gave me a lamentable account of Mr Christopher Taylor. I have now the pleasure of all written by your excellent father. In what I have glanced, I see a vein of solidity, gravity, and attachment to revelation, which is turning unfashionable among your English writers, who are generally either full of loose harangues, or light and fanciful, or verging towards Pelagianism. I thank you for your preface to his book on Justification. Some passages from Italy are new to me, and very sweet. I'll be somewhat impatient till the two volumes of your and your brethren's lectures on the evangelical truths be published.

It's a pleasure to me to find that you have not my History of the Sufferings. I have left a copy of it in sheets with Mr Randie, who acquaints me he hath an occasion coming to London pretty soon. I would have caused bind it, but he persuades me it would craze in the sea carriage, and that it's better to send it in sheets. It cost me labour in collecting what is in it, and, indeed, the main proofs from our records are what can never be answered by the advocates for persecution and slavery. I have the vanity to say, in jest, to my friends, that I am a voucher to Bishop Burnet's facts, hearsays, and assertions, in some things. Indeed, he needs support, and goes much on his own weight and authority, which was too much for me to offer at; and it's a way of writing I don't much like where facts can be vouched.

Had it not been to accompany this small present, which please accept as a token of our friendship, probably you had not heard from me so soon, when really nothing offers since my last. You have still matter enough to entertain me, and the oftener you write I'll be under the greater obligations.

Whatever you leave for me at Mr Hott's shop, when he hath any occasion he will send it to Edinburgh to Mr Randie. And

when I have any occasions straight from Glasgow, as sometimes in the spring and summer we have, I shall write to Mr Hott, who, I see, is your printer, and inquire if any thing be left there for me.

But let our letters ordinarily come by post, because that gains six or seven weeks. This comes to you by Mr Randie, who promises to send it under his cover.

May our God-Redeemer, your kind Master, who hath hitherto helped you, still vouchsafe his gracious presence! May you always be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus! Pray for us, and let us meet frequently in heaven, though we should never see one another's faces here. I am, Rev. Dear Brother, yours most affectionately.

June 14, 1731.

P. S.—I am much pleased with Mr Sievwright's Remonstrance to the Clergy. I am told he is an acquaintance of yours. He has my hearty acknowledgments for it. He has some fine turns in it. I bless God that such young men are coming up. His motto, 1 Cor. ix. 16, pleaseth me. I fear heavy woes are come and coming on many for their departure from the Evangel and Gospel truth. But I comfort myself here that Christ and his truth will be last on the field of battle, and would fain hope for a morning after this evening darkness coming and come upon us. Send me hints of all the valuable books and pamphlets you hear of;—who it is that writes *The Strength and Weakness of Human Reason*. He hath some good things, but mistakes the question, and upon the matter gives up the truth. If the terms *reason, rule, sufficiency,* and *actions,* were rightly explained, all the mist of loose reasonings would be at an end.

LETTER CXCVIII.

THE DOXOLOGY AND LORD'S PRAYER.—INTERDICT ON GLASGOW
PRESBYTERY.

To the Rev. Mr Charles Masterton, Minister at Belfast.

REV. DEAR BROTHER,—It is still a pleasure to hear from you, and yours of the 25th of August comes to me this night. Though I have little time, I must answer it now, lest it should fall by, and not be minded afterwards in my present hurry.

The book you mention I have. It's long since I read it, and have much forgot his arguments. As I remember, he runs upon singing what was called the Doxology, and not upon ending prayers with an ascription and adoration of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. This last was early used; and, if I am not mistaken, hath been generally used in all ages of the Church. It's pretty generally used amongst us at this time, and in all Reformed Churches, and is grounded on the Apostolical pattern, the inscription to their epistles, and direct doxologies in the New Testament. You know, as Mr Whiston first discovered his Arianism by a dilation of one of his printed doxologies at the end of his sermons then printed, so, in the course of his debate, the ancient doxologies in the first three centuries were strongly urged against him, and very justly. He falters sadly in his answers.

But Mr Edwards' debate was precisely upon singing glory to the Father, &c., which, with the repetition of the Lord's Prayer at the conclusion of the public prayer, was brought in after the Restoration by the Prelates. The controversy with the Presbyterians at this time, if I mistake it not, was precisely, whether or not any thing was to be sung in public worship saye David's Psalms, and other Scriptural songs. In this view, I do not remember Mr Ed-

wards advanced any thing that, when I read him, shook me much.

About the 1700, I fell into acquaintance with Mr Edwards at Glasgow, and had the favour of some letters from him. He was a grave, learned man, and pretty curious in our natural history. He particularly gave himself to architecture, and lived by furnishing gentlemen and noblemen with plans for building houses. He had likewise good knowledge of improving land, and things of that nature.

I am not at present very ripe about the practice of singing the doxology, since the Reformation in Scotland. That the use of the Lord's Prayer in public worship, as well as reading the old forms of prayer in the Book of Common Order, continued till the 1638, I do not much question. The manner of their being left off between the 1638 and 1660, I am told by old ministers, that it was not by any Assembly's act, as Mr Edwards says, but by a gradual disuse, pretty much before the Assembly's Directory, 1646, and generally after that. I have been told by ministers who lived in those days, that an act of Assembly was once proposed for laying aside the Lord's Prayer, the old forms of prayer, and probably the doxology also; but Mr Calderwood, and some other old ministers, opposed it, that is, the laying them aside by a formal act; and so they were insensibly let fall into disuse. This is all I mind at present as to this matter. If it be of any use to you, I shall search a little more narrowly my papers about it.

We, in the Presbytery, have received a very surprising thrust from the Town of Glasgow, when planting Port-Glasgow with a minister, by a Gospel call, *i. e.*, a sist from the Lord Ordinary on the Bills, with orders to appear before them, and answer a bill of advocation. We are going on notwithstanding of the sist. I have sent a memorial to Mr Macknight upon that affair, and if he can get it transcribed and sent to you, it will give you a full view of this new trial.¹

¹ See next Letter.

Mr Campbell's pamphlet I wrote of before ; I will be very glad of your observes on it. I mind no more but my best wishes unto, and my desires to hear frequently from you. I am, Rev. Dear Brother, yours most affectionately.

Sept. 8, 1731.

LETTER CXCIX.

SETTLEMENTS JURE DEVOLUTO.—ANOTHER INTERDICT.

To the Rev. Mr John Lawson, Minister at Closeburn.

REV. DEAR BROTHER,—I had one from you about three months ago, and I beg your excuse that I answered it not sooner. I have no way to send mine but by post. And we have been pretty throng about Port-Glasgow affair, which hath put other things out of head. Besides, my wife's being brought to bed of a son brings me new avocations.

You seem to fear the consequents of the last act of the General Assembly anent settlements *jure devoluto*. Till I be better informed, it appears to me to be all that then could be got. We need much more, indeed ; and our brethren in the North, where heritors are disaffected, think it bears hard on them ; and I reckon they will send up instructions against it, generally speaking, next Assembly. I am of opinion all Presbyteries and Synods should have it, and our general case as to settlements, on their heart ; but to what purpose I can't say, seeing addresses are fruitless, except for a testimony ; and it's not in the King's power, though it be his inclination, to relieve us ; and, till our Scots members be prevailed on to yield, I expect nothing but further encroachments.¹ How-

¹ To elucidate Wodrow's sentiments more fully on this subject, we subjoin the following extracts :—“ To begin with patronages, and our other grievances, there were instructions from many Presbyteries to address and take all proper

ever, we should communicate light to one another, and keep close correspondence. I pray you, then, let me hear what you are thinking of as proper in your bounds.

ways to have the Church freed from them. This has been a long continuing instruction for twenty years, and nothing done upon it, save in the 1715 and 1718, when the clause about acceptations was added. The Commission hath been every year empowered to make addresses, in order to removing the Church's grievances; and after all the reasonings this year, this landed likewise in that, and in the act about Settlements, of which afterwards. We were, as we have heard upon March, threatened with new pressures, and the tying the yoke harder about our necks, last Session of Parliament; and that was made a handle of to keep us quiet, lest a new law should be made; whereas it may be, had a wise appearance been made by this Assembly in a modest manner, to show the government how much we groan under the burden of patronages, this would effectually have prevented further impositions, unless the leading men at court incline to have the peace of the Church broken, which is scarce supposable. What many ministers fear is, that such countenance is given by Commissions and General Assemblies to settlements by patrons, and such favour is shown in the more public actings of the Church, by the influence of some of the leading ministers at Edinburgh, and the ruling elders there, to every case wherein a patron is concerned, be the people and Presbytery never so averse, and the man never so unworthy or unacceptable, that the Court, who take their rules from what passes at Edinburgh, may readily judge that patronage is turning easy to us, and no longer a burden. In conversation and reasoning on this head, I find it observed, that if we be in earnest to have patronages removed we are in the wrong channel. We make a bustle at our Assembly about addressing the King, who, indeed, has it not in his power to help us, except when the Parliament is sitting. Our address is out of head till next Assembly, and so nothing is done. If our Scots Members of Parliament be not brought over to favour us in this matter, all addresses to King or Parliament are idle things. Our road, then, would be for the Assembly to appoint persons in every Presbytery to deal with our Scots Members of Parliament in the time of recess, when they are here in Scotland, and to bring them to be sensible of the hurt that law brings to the Church, and how it sours people's tempers, and is the occasion of breaches of the public peace, and really alienates the common people, not only from the establishment in the Church, but the civil government, which bears so hard upon them in their religious concerns, and the choice of their ministers, nothing than this being dearer to them. And then, when matters are prepared this way, the Commission in November, before the Parliament meet, ought to address the King, and some of our Members apply to the Parliament in a regular way for redress; and, if need be, ministers should be sent to London who are in earnest to have this grievance helped. This is the only feasible way, to my apprehension; and, indeed, could we prevail but with the two brothers, Argyle and Hay, there is but little question but all the rest would come into it. How to prevail with them is the difficulty. But this is plain, were they in earnest, there would be little or no stop from the English Members of Parliament."—(*Wodrow's Analecta*, vol. vi. pp. 288, 289.)

You'll know what passed in our Presbytery before your last to me. Wednesday last, when an unanimous call to Mr D. B. [David Brown] came before our Presbytery, we had a third from the Lords given us by the Magistrates of Glasgow. This gave us no new light, and we reckoned it another undue encroachment upon us, when at our Master's work, and so went on to concur with the call, and take the lad upon his second trials. What the consequence will be is in God's hands. We incline to settle him before the 5th of November, till which we are sisted, if nothing fall out that we don't foresee.¹

This is all I mind. Write often to, Dear Brother, yours most affectionately.

Sept. 27.

LETTER CC.

SETTLEMENTS JURE DEVOLUTO.

To Sir Thomas Gordon of Earlston.

DEAR SIR,—I had yours of the 4th of November by Mr Warner, who is exceeding pleased with the happiness of your acquaintance.

¹ See p. 494.—The *sist* here spoken of was, it is presumed, what is now termed an interdiction. The following similar case, which occurred a few years after, may illustrate this :—“ In 1739, a vacancy happening in the New North Church of Edinburgh, by the death of Mr Smith, Principal of the College, the common council of the city, resolving to oppose Dr Wallace's translation from the New Greyfriars, obtained, on a bill of suspension presented to the Lord Ordinary on the Bills, a *sist* or temporary stay of execution, of an Act of the Presbytery of Edinburgh, translating him to that collegiate charge. The *sist* was formally notified to the Doctor ; but, knowing the settlement of a minister to be a matter purely spiritual, in which the ecclesiastical courts have an exclusive jurisdiction, he did not hesitate about the part it became him to take on the occasion ; and, without minding the injunction issued by the temporal judge, he proceeded in discharging the duties annexed to the office, conferred upon him by the Presbytery, of minister of the New North Church.”—(*Morren's Annals*, i. p. 303.)—No notice is taken of further proceedings in either of these cases.

I was hoping for your remarks on the introduction. I am sure you wanted not matter in such a great heap of things. I don't expect to be in Edinburgh till the Assembly, if I live so long, and, indeed, I am wearying of our Church judicatories, though once they were my pleasure to wait on. But our darkness is an evening, and, I fear, a growing darkness.

You have much obliged me with the memorial on the last Act of Assembly. I have glanced it, and that is all. I doubt the writer, as I, would have many things that will not be got in our present Assemblies. Many of his exceptions were thrown up in the Committees when that act was a forming. A clause complaining of Patronages was once in the act, Protestant heritors was all that could be got, and it's what the ministers at the Revolution were satisfied with. The act runs much on the plan of the act of Parliament 1690, and the constant practice of the Church till 1710 or 11, when Patronages came in. To exclude heritors as the fixed (at least the most fixed) part of the parish, and come back to the 1649, will scarce bear at this time of day I fear. I wonder what the exceptions are against elders being representatives of the people. I have still thought this agreeable to their divine institution, though I am far from wishing the people to be excluded in a call. It's exceeding hard, and it will take time to settle this matter, and, indeed, I see no great inclination in many to have it settled, but rather to have things left loose. Indeed, we are in a very ill situation, when we have a law in our teeth, (and many will scarce complain of it as burdensome,) to form acts of this nature. I wish several things in it were bettered, and people would come in to them. But I wish also we had things wherein we can agree settled. Thus you have my thoughts at the first view of the paper *raptim*.

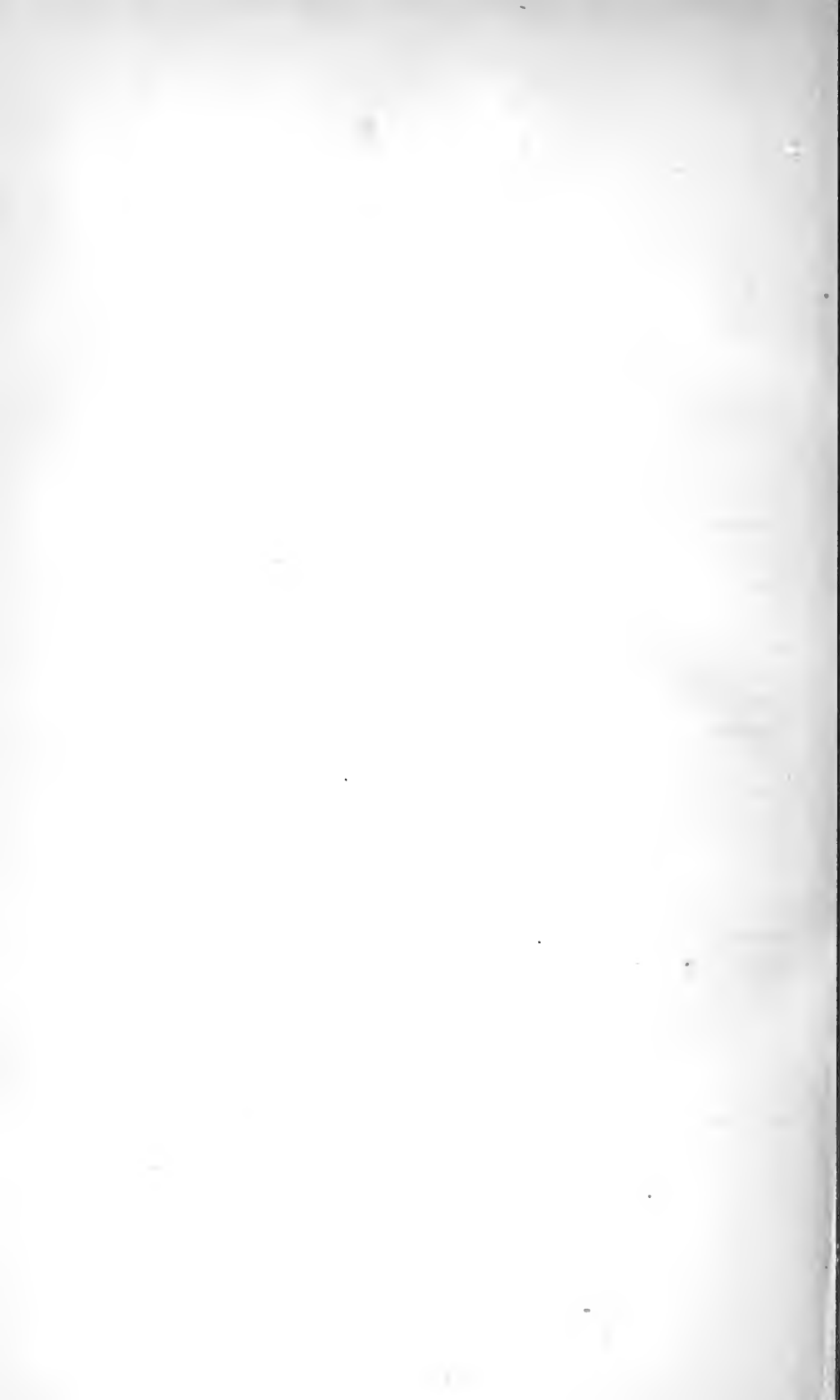
Mr Grant, when here, did desire the introduction to read at Neilston, and I told him it was in your hands. I did not think he would have any leisure at Edinburgh to glance it. Pray give him my kindest respects, and tell him, if he can think of reading it in Session time he may have it from you. Beg him to make his remarks, and send it me by John Trail, when he has got through it.

If he cannot find time for this amusement and diversion, he shall have it when he comes west next summer.

You'll oblige me by letting me hear from you with all your news by post. I am, Dear Sir, yours most affectionately.

Nov. 8, 1731.

END OF THE CORRESPONDENCE.



APPENDIX.

ORDER ON THE TREASURY FOR ONE HUNDRED GUINEAS TO WODROW FOR HIS HISTORY.¹

(See page 191.)

GEORGE R.

TRUSTY and well-beloved, we greet you well. Whereas our trusty and well-beloved * * * * Robert Wodrow, Minister of the Gospel in Glasgow, did, some time since, dedicate and present unto us his History of the Persecutions in Scotland, from the Restoration to the Revolution, consisting of two large volumes in folio; now, we being minded to testify our esteem of the said author and his works, by bestowing on him some mark of our favour and bounty, in consideration thereof; our will and pleasure is, and we do hereby authorise and empower you to issue your warrant to the Receiver General of our Revenues, there to pay, or cause to be paid, out of any monies that are or shall be in his hands for the use of our civil government, unto the said Robert Wodrow, or his assignees, the sum of one hundred and five pounds as of our royal bounty, for the consideration aforesaid, and for so doing, this shall be, not only to you, but also to our said Receiver General, and to all others that shall be concerned in passing and allowing the payment upon his account, a sufficient warrant. Given at our Court at St James's, the 26th day of April 1725, in the eleventh year of our reign.

By his Majesty's command,

R. WALPOLE.

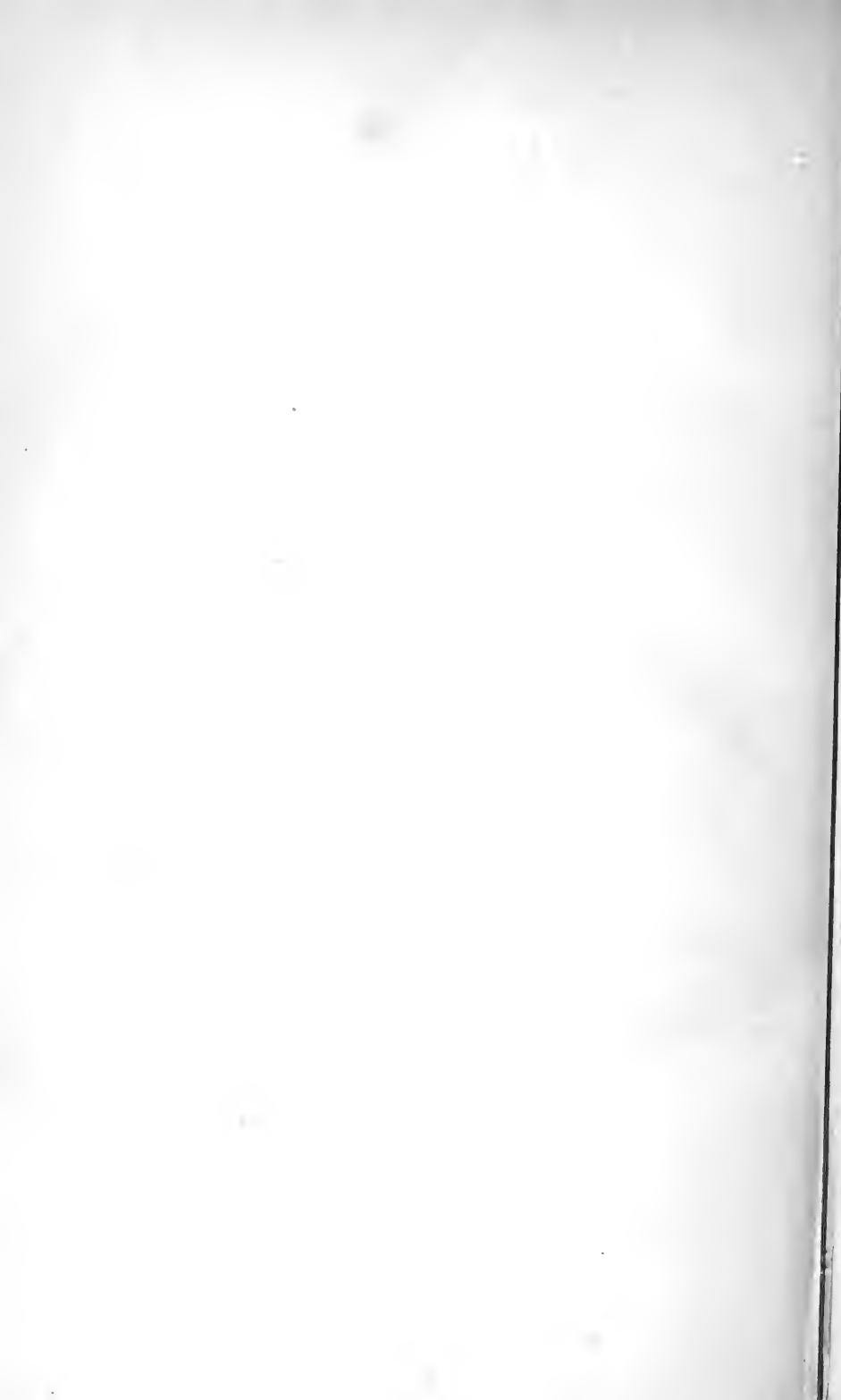
To our trusty and well-beloved, our Chief Baron, and the rest of the Barons of our Court of Exchequer in Scotland.

GEORGE BAILLIE.
CHARLES TURNER.
WILLIAM YONGE.
GEORGE DODINGTON.

¹ Letters to Wodrow, vol. xxi. No. 25.



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