

Richard Baxter's

A Breviate of the Life
of Margaret Baxter

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A BREVIATE
OF THE
LIFE
OF
MARGARET

The Daughter of
FRANCIS CHARLTON, of *Apply* in *Shropshire*, Esq;
And Wife of *RICHARD BAXTER*.

For the use of all, but especially of their Kindred.

There is also Published the Character of her Mother, truly described in her Published Funeral Sermon, Reprinted at her Daughters Request, called, *The Last Work of a Believer, His passing-prayer, recommending his departing Spirit to Christ, to be received by him.*

LONDON:

Printed for *B. Simmons*, at the *Three Golden Cocks* at the West-end of *St. Pauls*. 1681

TO THE
READER.

Reader,

GOD having called away to his Blessed Rest and Glory, the Spirit of the most dear Companion of these last Nineteen Years of my Life, or near; I found in her Last Will a request, that I should reprint five Hundred of her Mothers Funeral-Sermons, written by me 1661, being now out of Press, called The last Work of a Believer, his Passing Prayer, &c. Not only her very great Love and Honour of her remembered Mother moved her to it, but the apprehension of the Usefulness of that subject to Dying Christians; a Subject about which her Soul was awakened the more, by the Death of many Friends and excellent Christians taken away this Year. And the day somewhat excited her, for it was written by her on Decem. 30, the same day which she kept secretly as an Anniversary Remembrance of the Sentence of Death from which she had been delivered; and the same day when

our dear Friend Mr. Corbet lay dying. And I finde some expectations of her own speedy Death, had some hand in it.

Being thus obliged by her Request, mine own Affections urged me to premise this Breviate of her own Life: Written, I confess, under the power of melting Grief, and therefore perhaps with the less prudent judgment; but not with the less, but the more Truth: For passionate Weakness poureth out all, which greater Prudence may conceal. Conscionable mens Histories are true; but if they be also wise, they tell us but some part of Truth, concealing that which would do harm, and which the depraved world cannot bear without abusing it: But we that are less wise, tell all the Truth, too little regarding how men will receive it. And hence comes all History, which hath not evidence equal to natural, to be of less credit than most men think; while bad men lie, and good men leave out so much of the Truth, as makes the rest to be as another thing than altogether it would appear.

And having purposed to write this Breviate concerning my dear Wife, God having the same year taken away two more of my ancient Family, I wrote a Breviate of their Lives also; One was my excellent holy Mother-in-Law, Mary the Daughter of Sir Thomas Hunks, Widow to my dear Father. She was one of the most humble, mortified, holy persons, that ever I knew; and lived in longing to be with Christ, till she was an Hundred years old wanting three or four, in full understanding, and at last rejoicing in the triumphant frequent hearing and repeating the 91 Psalm.

The other was my old Friend and Housekeeper, Jane Matthews, who lived in pious humble Virginity, with eminent worth, to about Seventy six or Seventy seven years, and Died of mere decay, without considerable Pain or Sickness, about a Month, or six Weeks before my Wife.

To these I added a fourth, a Breviate of the Life and Death of that worthy Mother of my Wife, as to the time since I knew her. But I have cast by all these later three, and much of the first, by the Counsel of wise Friends, as things which they think that Strangers will not make so great a matter of, as Love and Nearness made me do. And I must confess that God's Image is the same thing on all his Children; and when you have described one, you have described all, as to the Essentials. But (as in Faces and bodily Strength) they so much differ in Integrals, Degrees and Accidents, that the Lives of some are far more Exemplary and Honourable to Christ their Lord, and their Christian Profession, than others are. And some are so much blemished by Errours, Soul-Diseases, and miscarriages of Life, yea and injuries to the Church of Christ, by their carnal Animosities and Divisions, as rendereth the Examples of the more wise, holy, loving and peaceable, and patient Christians, the more conspicuous and honourable by the difference.

On this account, finding young people naturally much delighted in History, and that for want of better, abundance are quickly corrupted and ensnared by Tale-books, Romances, Play-books, and false or hurtful

History, I have long thought that true and useful History is of great use to prevent such evils, and to many profitable ends: And that to young people it is very profitable to begin with the Scripture-History, and next the Lives of holy persons, and next to read the true Church-Historians, and the History of our Native Country; Melchior Adamus in Germany, Beza in his Icones, Thuanus and many others in France, have done the Church this way great service, by a due Commemoration of Exemplary persons. And such as Junius, Scultetus, Thuanus, and others who have recorded the chief passages of their own Lives, have done a profitable work, though Mom'es will say, They publish their own Praise in Pride. There is no saying or doing any good in the world, which bad men will not reproach, or put an evil face on, or make an ill use of to themselves. But he that reads such Lives as Bucholtzers, Melanchtons, and their like, and then readeth their Church-Histories, will the better discern that they were no Liars.

As it is Satans work to counterwork Christ by the Abuse and Perversion of his own Ordinances and Means, (as to disgrace Revelation by feigned Revelation, and Spirituality by false pretendings to the Spirit, and Magistracy by wicked Magistrates, and the Ministry by worldly and ungodly Ministers, and Christianity by hypocrite false Christians;) so he doth enervate the credit and use of History by false History. And how great use he hath made of this to promote Popery, he that readeth Jacobus de Voragine, and many other of their Legends, or Saints Lives and Miracles, and such as Tympius and many more, be-

sides their voluminous deceitful Histories of Church, Popes and Councils, may quickly finde.

And being my self a vehement Hater of false History, I beg Pardon of the Reader for interposing this Digression: Lately writing of the Judgment of Cranmer and others, as cited by Dr. Stillingfleet in his Irenicon, about Episcopacy, that the Reader might know where to find it, I added in a Parenthesis, that it was left out in Dr. Burnet's Book: For this I am accused, as disgracing him and his Book falsly. I here do him right, and confess it was ill done of me to judge so hastily without better tryal: But I must tell him wherein my fault consisted; Not in accusing him; I take it not to be a fault in D. B. that he hath omitted many things that are in Fuller, Fox, and others: I had not thought that his Book was disgraced, if he wrote not over again all that every one else had written before him. But my fault lay, 1. In believing Dr. Stillingfleet, who tells us, That these Papers were written in K. Edward's Reign, which made me look for them in Dr. Burnet's Second Volume, where they are not. And another affirming to me, that he saw them in that second Volume, and I perusing it purposely a second time, confirmed me. But Dr. B. saith, Dr. Stillingfleet was mistaken many years, and that they were written long before, in the Reign of Hen. 8. and so he hath them in his first Volume, which I had not perused, not expecting them there. And for this hasty judging, I beg his Pardon.

As to these little private Histories of mine own Family forementioned, I was loath to cast by mine own Mother-in-Laws Life, She being a person of so long

and extraordinary Holiness, living (long with Sir Robert Harley, whose Lady was her Cousin-German, and after at Shrewsbury, and after with my Father and me, &c.) in so great Communion with God, contempt of the World, and all its Pomp and Vanity, so great Victory over the flesh, and so long desires to die, and especially in much constant, fervent, successful Prayer, that had marvellous answers, as very few Christians attain.

And I was loath to have cast by the Narrative of my Wifes Mother, for some Reasons not now to be mentioned, and because her Daughters extraordinary Love to her, made her just honour very dear to her: (But her Character is in the Sermon truly given you).

But I am convinced by the judgment of my Friends, that publick things are fittest for publick notice. And I feel that Love, Grief and Nearness affect me with the matters that are so near me; and as it doth not much concern the world to know whether I am sick or well, dead or alive, or whether ever I had a being, (though it concerns me:) So I should think of the concerns of my Friends. Affection makes us think our own or our Friends affairs to be such, as the world should be affected with: I perceive this weakness, and submit.

That which is left out of the Narrative of my Wifes Life, is the occasions and inducements of our Marriage, and some passages between some Relatives and her, which the world is not concerned (yet at least) to know.

If this that is written seem useless to any, it will

not hurt them, if they leave it to others that find it more suitable to them: All things be not agreeable to all: That may be useful to persons of her own quality, which is not so to many others. To her Nephews, and Nieces, and some other Kindred, who were also near to her, and for whose sake above most others I write it, you cannot think that it will be altogether useless. O that they would all imitate her in all that is praiseworthy, and needful to themselves. The grand Objection I foresee will be, That I seem but to predicate some of mine own good Works by praising hers. And must I needs bury the memory of them as hers, for fear of the sting of such Objectors? I have told them truly, It is not my own acts, but those that were properly hers, that I there mention. It is not her giving of my Money which I there recite, but that which either was her own and none of mine, or else procured by her for those uses; and the Works such, in which I was but the Executor of her Will.

She is gone after many of my choicest Friends, who within this one year are gone to Christ, and I am following even at the door. Had I been to enjoy them only here, it would have been but a short comfort, mixt with the many troubles which all our Failings and Sins, and some degree of unsuitableness between the nearest and dearest, cause. But I am going after them to that Blessed Society, where Life, Light and Love, and therefore Harmony, Concord and Joy are perfect and everlasting.

Reader, While I give thee but the Truth, forgive the effects of Age, Weakness and Grief. And if before

I get over this (owned) Passion, I publish also a few Poetical Fragments partly suited to the condition of some sick, or sad afflicted Friends, and partly to my own; if thou accept them not, forgive them only and neglect them. As the man is, such will be his thoughts and works. The Lord prosper our preparation for our great approaching Change. To leave this world for ever, and enter upon an endless Life, where we shall speed according to the preparations of this little inch of time, doth certainly bespeak the most serious Thoughts, the wisest and speediest Care and Diligence, the most patient Suffering, the most unwearied Labour, the most frugal use of all our Time, the most resolute resistance to all Temptations; and to the Faithful the most joyful Hopes.

July 23. 1681.

Rich. Baxter.

*A Breviate of the Life of Margaret,
the Daughter of Francis Charlton,
Esq; and late Wife of Richard Bax-
ter, who dyed June 14. 1681.*

CHAP. I.

Her Parentage, and the occasion of our acquaintance.

§. **T**Hough (due) affection make me willing to give the world a Narrative which else I had omitted; yet the fear of God hath not so forsaken me, that I should willingly deliver any falshood through partiality or passion: but as I knew more of this person than any other, for the good of the Readers and the honour of Gods grace in her, I shall by Gods assistance truly report the things which I knew.

§. 2. We were born in the same County within three miles and an half of each other; but she of one of the chief Families in the County, and I but of a mean Freeholder (called a Gentleman for his Ancestors sake, but of a small Estate, though sufficient): Her Father, *Francis Charlton* Esq was one of the best Justices of the Peace in that County, a

grave and sober worthy man, but did not marry till he was aged and gray, and so dyed while his children were very young, who were three, of which the eldest daughter and his only son are yet alive. He had one surviving Brother, who after the Fathers death maintained a long and costly suit about the Guardianship of the Heir (yet living): *This Unkle (Robert)* was a comely sober Gentleman, but the wise and good Mother *Mary* durst not trust her only Son in the hands of one that was his next heir. And she thought that *Nature* gave her a greater Interest in him than an Unkle had. But it being in the heat of the late Civil War, *Robert* being for the Parliament, had the advantage of strength, which put her to seek relief at *Oxford* from the King, and afterwards to marry one Mr. *Hanmer*, who was for the King, to make her interest that way. Her house being a sort of a small Castle, was now garrisoned for the King. But at last *Robert* procured it to be besieged by the Parliament's Soldiers, and stormed and taken; where the Mother and the children were, and saw part of their buildings burnt, and some lye dead before their eyes; and so *Robert* got possession of the children.

But at last she by great wisdom and diligence surprised them, and secretly conveyed them to one Mr. *Bernards* in *Essex*, and secured them against all his endeavours.

§. 3. The Wars being ended, and she as Guardian possessing her Son's Estate, took him (as only Son) as her self, and used his Estate as carefully as for her self, but out of it conscionably paid debts of her Husbands, repaired some of the ruined houses, and ma-

naged things faithfully, according to her best discretion, until her Son marrying, took his Estate into his own hand.

§. 4. She (being before unknown to me) came to *Kederminster* (twenty miles) desiring me to take a House for her alone: I told her that I would not be guilty of doing any thing which should separate such a Mother from an only Son, who in his youth had so much need of her counsel, conduct, and comfort; and that if passion in her, or any fault in him, had caused difference, the love which brought her through so much trouble for him, should teach her patience, rather than forsake him. She went home, but shortly came again, and took a house without my knowledg.

§. 5. When she had been there alone a while, her unmarried daughter *Margaret* (about seventeen or eighteen years of age) came after her from her Brother's, resolving not to forsake the Mother who deserved her dearest love; and sometime went to *Oxford* to her elder sister (Wife to Mr. *Ambrose Upton*, then Canon of Christs Church, both yet living). In this time the good old Mother lived as a blessing among the honest poor Weavers of *Kederminster*, strangers to her, whose company for their piety she chose before all the Vanities of the world. In which time my acquaintance with her made me know, that (notwithstanding she had formerly been somewhat passionate) she was a woman of all that manly patience in her great tryals, that prudence and piety, and justice and impartiality, and other Virtues which I mentioned in her Funeral Sermon. Of her death anon. It is her daughters case that this is the Prologue to.

CHAP. II.

Of her Conversion, Sickness, and Recovery.

§. **I**N her vain youth, *Pride*, and *Romances*, and *Company* suitable thereto, did take her up; and an imprudent *rigid* Governess that her Mother had set over her in her absence, had done her hurt, by possessing her with ill thoughts of strictness in Religion; yet she had a great reverence for some good Ministers (especially Mr. *Tho. VVright*) and she thought that she was not what she should be, but something better (she knew not what) must be attained.

In this case coming to *Kederminster* for meer love to her Mother, she had great aversion to the POVERTY and STRICTNESS of the people there, glittering her self in costly Apparel, and delighting in her *Romances*. But in a little time she heard and understood what those better things were which she had thought must be attained.

And a Sermon of Mr. H. *Hickman's* at *Oxford*, much moved her (on *Isa. 27. 11. It is a people of no understanding, therefore he that made them will not save them, &c.*) The Doctrine of Conversion (as I preached it as now in my Treatise of Conversion) was received on her heart as the seal on the wax. Whereupon she presently fell to self-judging, and to frequent prayer, and reading, and serious thoughts of her present state, and her salvation.

§. 2. A Religious Maid that waited on her, ta-

king notice of this (for she kept all her matters so secret to her self, as was her great hurt all her life) acquainted her Mother with it; and when it would be hid no longer, but her frequent Closet-prayers were sometimes over-heard, and her changed course of life discerned, her Mother (who as far as I could discern, before loved her least of her three children) began to esteem her as her Darling; and all her Religious Friends and Neighbours, were glad of so sudden and great a change.

§. 3. I will here give you one of her self-judging Papers, which I find since her death, upon her then sad convictions. When I had on *Rom. 8. 9.* told them how it may be known whether we have Christs Spirit or not, she thus repeated the signs with her self-condemnation.

Mark 1. *The Spirit of Christ is the Author of the Scriptures, and therefore suiteth your disposition to it, and guideth you by it.*

Judgm. 1. “I fear then I have not the Spirit of “Christ; for I yet feel no love to Gods word, nor “closure with it as suitable to me, but I am questi- “oning the truth of it, or at best quarrelling with “it.

Mark 2. *The Spirit of Christ is from heaven, from God our Father, and leadeth us upward unto him. Its work is spiritual, of heavenly tendency, making us cry Abba Father, and working the heart by uniting love to God.*

Judgm. 2. “It is not so with me; for I have a “Spirit tending only to selfishness and sin.

Mark 3. *The Spirit of Christ uniteth us to Christ, and one another by love, and is against hatred, division, and abusing others.*

Judgm. 3. "Mine then is the spirit of Cain, for "I cannot endure any that are not of my opinion "and way, and it inclineth me to malice, and un- "peaceableness, and division.

Mark 4. *The Spirit of Christ is a spirit of Holiness, and doth not favour licentiousness in doctrine, or in life.*

Judgm. 4. "Though I am for strict Principles, I "am loose in practise.

Mark 5. *Christs Spirit inclineth to love, humility and meeknest, and makes men stoop to each other for their good.*

Judgm. 5. "None more uncharitable, proud and "ensorious than I.

Mark 6. *The Spirit of Christ makes men little, low, and vile in their own eyes, it is pride that puffeth up.*

Judgm. 6. "My self-conceitedness shews that I "am unhumbléd.

Mark 7. *The Spirit of Christ doth work to the mortifying of the flesh, even all its inordinate desires, and to self-denial.*

Judgm. 7. "I am a stranger to the work of mor- "tification and self-denial. I can deny my self no- "thing but the comfort of well-doing. I cannot de- "ny my sloth so far as to go to prayer when I am "convinced of my necessity.

Mark 8. *"The Spirit of Christ is a prevailing spirit, "and doth not only wish and strive, but overcome the "flesh as to its rule.*

Judgm. 8. "The flesh prevaieth with me against "the spirit.

Mark 9. *Christs Spirit is the author of his Worship, Ordinances, and suits the souls of believers to them, the Word, Sacraments, &c.*

Judgm. 9. “They seem not suitable to my soul; “I am against them, and had rather not use them, “if I durst.

Mark 10. *Christs Spirit is in all the Saints, and inclineth them to holy Communion with each other in love, especially to those in whom this spirit most eminently worketh.*

Judgm. 10. “It is not thus with me: I desire not “the Communion of Saints: my affections are most “to those who are best to me, whether they have “more or less of the Spirit.

“To go no further, it is now evident that I am a “graceless person: Though all these things be imperfect in the best, and some are more wanting in one “particular than in another; yet where all their “contraries are predominant, as in me, that person “is told by this Sermon, *that they are none of Christs*; “how much doth my behaviour at this time make “this appear, when I can with a hard heart, and a “dry eye, and a steady hand declare my self at present heir of everlasting wo! But the longest day “will quickly come, though I strive to put it as far “from me.

§. 4. It would be too long to recite a paper which I find next to this, containing the great necessity of self-judging, the reasons for it, the rules for performing it, and the due manner; especially in dangers, and before the Sacraments, or any Conclusions of our state of Grace.

§. 5. But these Convictions did neither die, nor pass unto despair, but to serious conversion; yet put her to struggle hard against backwardness to secret duties, and the forsaking of some vanities; but presently God seemed sharply to entertain this returning soul. And while we were all rejoicing in her change, she fell into a Cough and seeming Consumption, in which we almost despaired of her life. Mr. *Jackson* the Physician, and my self, seeing the case too hard for us, described it to Dr. *Prujean*, and Dr. *G. Bates*, who both judged it a Consumption arising from the obstructions of the vessels in the Lungs, and corrupting the tender adjoining parts, and both prescribed her the same Medicines. But all these, and change of air long, and breast-milk, &c. did no good. I and my praying-neighbours were so sorry that such a changed person should presently be taken away before she had time to manifest her sincerity, and do God any service in the world, that in grief they resolved to fast and pray for her. For former experience had lately much raised their belief of the success of prayer. They had lately prayed for one that seemed Demoniac, that (after some years misery) was suddenly freed of that disease. They had oft prayed for me in dangerous illness, and I had speedy help. I had lately swallowed a Gold-bullet for a Medicine, and it lodged in me long, and no means would bring it away, till they met to fast and pray, and it came away that morning. A young man yet living, falling into a violent Epilepsie, and after all means long remaining uncured, they set to fasting and prayer in his hearing, and the second day he was suddenly cured, and never had a fit since.

God did not deny their prayers, though they were *without Book*, and such as some deride as extempore. I was not with them in any of these, but laymen that were humble praying persons only.

But I was with them at prayer for this woman; and compassion made us all extraordinary servant, and God heard us, and speedily delivered her as it were by nothing, or by an altogether undesigned means. She drank of her own inclination, not being directed, a large quantity of syrrop of Violets, and the next morning her nose bled (which it scarce ever did before or since) and the Lungs seemed cleared, and her pulse suddenly amended, her cough abated, and her strength returned in short time.

CHAP. III.

*The workings of her soul in and after this
Sickness.*

§. I. **S**HE being of too timerous and tender a nature, and the sharp work of her *Repentance* being yet upon her spirit; for *Death* to come and seem to summon her away to Eternity at *such a season* and *unsetled state*, must needs greatly encrease her fears, when the strongest long experienced Christians find it no easie work to dye in peace, and willing resignation. But she had still a concealing temper, which made it never the easier within.

§. 2. When God had recovered her, her Mother

invited those that fasted and prayed for her, to keep a Day of Thanksgiving for her Deliverance. I asked her what she would have us give thanks for particularly? And in the morning as we began, she (that was recovered) gave us in this following Paper.

“**M**Y life hath been a life of very great mercies, and these have *aggravated* my sin in overlooking them. Some of those which God hath most affected my heart with, I shall here mention; but alas! with a heart very insensible of the greatness of them.

“1. My Mothers restoration first I thank God did for; and next, for many Mercies of mine own. Four times before this, I have been delivered from great danger of death.

“And now I desire to acknowledg his mercy in delivering me from this death threatning disease, and that in answer to prayers I am here now in competent health to speak of the goodness of the Lord.

2. “I desire to acknowledg it a mercy that God afflict me; and though I cannot with the *Psalmist* say, *but now I keep thy statutes*; I can say, *before I was afflicted I went astray*. And how many great sins God hath prevented by this affliction, I cannot tell; but am sure that God hath dealt very graciously with me; and I have had many comforts in my sufferings, which God hath not given to many of his beloved ones.

3. I desire to acknowledg Gods great mercy to me in bringing me to this Town, under so useful means of Grace; and that at such a time when I was even ready to *engage in a course of sin and vanity*,

“beyond what I had formerly lived in. This mercy
 “is much *greatned* by the time; for had the Lord
 “brought me hither in Infancy, and removed me at
 “riper years, the mercy would not have been so
 “great. And if I had gone longer on in a course of
 “hardning sins, it had been less than now it is.

4. “I desire to acknowledg it a great mercy that
 “I want no outward thing, but am enabled to be
 “helpful unto others, and have all the temporal
 “mercies that I can well desire, for my encourage-
 “ment in the ways of God.

5. “I desire to acknowledg it a great mercy that
 “God hath given me an interest in the hearts and
 “prayers of so many of his faithful servants in this
 “place.

6. “I desire to acknowledg it a great mercy,
 “that God hath made me the child of godly Parents,
 “and a child of many prayers.

7. “I desire to acknowledg it a great mercy,
 “which I can never be thankful enough for, that
 “God hath given me a heart in any measure willing
 “to acknowledg his mercies, and be thankful for
 “them; and that notwithstanding all that sin and
 “Satan hath done to hinder it, he hath made me de-
 “sirous this day to *give up my self and all that*
 “*I have, to him; taking him only for my God and*
 “*chief felicity.*

“And now the Requests that I desire you to make
 “to God on my behalf, are these.

1. “That he will give me a more thankful soul,
 “that I may praise him all my days.

2. “And an humble heart, that I may be taught
 “of God, who looketh on the proud afar off.

“3. And a tender conscience, that I may fear to
“offend him, and hate all sin.

“4. And strength so to resist temptations, that I
“be not led by Satan to dishonour God, or to pro-
“voke him.

“5. And a meek and quiet frame of spirit, that I
“may be contented to bear the afflictions that God
“shall lay me under without murmuring or repi-
“ning.

§. 3. This being that which she gave us in, I find
under her hand this secret renewal that same day of
her Covenant with God, which I annex.

“This being a day set apart for returning thanks
“to God for his mercy in delivering me from the
“gates of death, these people being they that have
“earnestly supplicated the throne of grace on my
“behalf; I here now renew my Covenant with Al-
“mighty God, and resolve by his grace to endea-
“vour to get and keep a fresh sense of his mercy on
“my soul, and a greater sense yet of my sin: I re-
“solve to set my self against my sin with all my
“might, and not take its part or extenuate it, or keep
“the Devils counsel, as I have done, to the wrong-
“ing of God, and the wounding of my own soul.
“I resolve by Gods assistance to set upon the pra-
“ctise of known duty, and not to study shifts and
“evasions to put off those which are either trou-
“blesome, chargeable, or likely to render me disho-
“nourable and vile in the eyes of the carnal persons
“of the world. And this I do upon these considera-
“tions, and for these reasons.

“1. My life hath been a life of great mercy. God
“hath preserved it more than this once, and hath
“done exceeding great things for me, which engageth
“me more than many others, though all rational
“creatures are obliged to live to God their Maker.

“2. God hath not only given me life, but in some
“measure ability and opportunity to do him ser-
“vice; yea, and already some encouragement in the
“hopes of the success of some of my poor endea-
“vours. [*I suppose on some of her servants.*]

“3. God hath more engaged me to himself, by
“taking me into his Family, and planting me in his
“Garden, and watering me with the dew from hea-
“ven. He hath set me in a fruitful soil: He hath gi-
“ven me the high priviledg of a part in the hearts
“and prayers of his people; and I may say that I
“live to speak it, That God is a God hearing prayers,
“and hath heard and answered them. Though the
“Tempter be busie to make me think diminitively
“of this mercy, yet I must not, but must acknow-
“ledg the greatness of it.

“4. As all these and more engagements are upon
“me; so I am already engaged by the Baptismal
“Covenant to God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
“as my God and chief Good, and only happiness,
“and as my Redeemer, Head and Husband; and as
“my Sanctifier and Comforter; and I have renewed it
“in the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper; and how can I
“go back that have thus far engaged my self, and dai-
“ly receive from God more obligations? Yea, God will
“expect more from me than from many others. Let
“me therefore see that I be in good earnest with
“God, and think not to put him off with hypocri-

‘sie; let me not deceive my self, for God will not
‘be mocked; what I sow, I shall reap: if I belong
‘to God, though I suffer whilst I am in the body,
‘they will be but light afflictions, and but for a mo-
‘ment; but the everlasting Kingdom will be mine
‘inheritance; and when this life is ended, I shall
‘reign with Christ; I shall be freed from sin and
‘suffering, and for ever joyce with Saints and An-
‘gels. But should I prove an hypocrite, I lose my la-
‘bour, I lose my God, and damnation with Devils
‘and damned ones will be my reward for ever, and
‘this the greater as my mercies have been abundant
‘and great.

‘Therefore I here desire this day to renew my
‘Covenant with God, and to beg the prayers of this
‘people that God will not leave me to my self, but
‘help me (by the sufficient Grace of Christ) to keep
‘the Covenant which I have made. And I intend to
‘keep this Paper by me, to help to remember me and
‘quicken me to duty, and hinder me from sin, and
‘encourage me to go on cheerfully against temptati-
‘ons, looking still to Christ, who forsaketh not
‘those that by faith and repentance come to him.

‘To all this let me add these Considerations of
‘the vanity of the creature, and of all false
‘hopes.

‘It is contrary to the nature of the creature to be
‘our peace; they are our discomforts and troubles,
‘further than they help to lead us to the Creator.
‘Let me not forget the time when I seemed near
‘death: What comfort had I then in creatures?
‘What ease from them? Was not all my hope in
‘God? All creatutes shewed me that side on which

'vanity was written, and they had nothing that
 'could satisfie my soul; Though I had as much mer-
 'cy in means and friends, as I could possibly desire,
 'yet all this was nothing to me: the trouble of
 'parting with them was much more than the com-
 'fort of enjoying them; and so it will be with me
 'still: which should teach me to keep my heart loose
 'from the Creature, and not over-love any thing on
 'this side Heaven: Why should my heart be fixed
 'where my home is not? Heaven is my home; God
 'in Christ is all my happiness: and where my trea-
 'sure is, there my heart should be: Come away, Oh
 'my heart, from vanity; mount Heavenward, and
 'be not dead, or dull, if thou wouldst be free from
 'trouble, and tast of real joy and pleasure. Hath not
 'experience yet taught thee, that creature-comforts,
 'though they may be Roses, have their pricks? canst
 'not thou be content to look on them, and smell
 'them at a distance, and covet no other use while
 'thou art in the Garden where they grow, and be
 'content to leave them there behind thee? If thou
 'must needs have them in thy bosome, thou must
 'scratch thy fingers to get them; and when thou hast
 'them, though the smell a while delight thee, they
 'will quickly wither, and are gone. Away then, O
 'my carnal heart; retire to God, the only satisfying
 'object. There mayest thou love without all danger
 'of excess! Let thy love to God be fixed and tran-
 'scendent. *Amen.*

§. 4. Though these were the strivings of her heart
 towards God, her fears and troubles did not so pass
 away; settled peace of soul doth seldom come quick-

ly to young Converts, though their sincere resolutions may be settled. I find among her Papers yet more of that days work, upon her after examination and review. Bear with the length, if I transcribe it as I find it under her hand.

‘Christ saith, *In the world you shall have trouble, in me you shall have peace.* Something of both now I find at this time: This night after returning thanks to God for my recovery, I find my heart sad, and trouble upon my spirits; and well it may be so: for the sins of this day have been very great: My heart hath not answered the expressions of thanks which have been uttered by the mouths of those that spake them to God. No, no, my heart hath not stirred, and been drawn out towards my God! The thoughts of his love have not ravished my Soul: Alas! I scarce felt any holy spark to warm my Soul this day. This day, which was a day of the greatest mercy of any in all my life; the day in which I have had an opportunity to give thanks for all the mercies of my life, and thanks it self is a greater mercy than the rest: All other mercies are to prepare for this: This is the work of a glorified Saint, even a Saint in heaven before the blessed face of God: It’s his everlasting business to Sing the Songs of Thanksgiving and Praise to the Most High: But my thoughts have not been filled with the sweet foretasts of this blessed work which I might have had this day! O God,! I beseech thee forgive my sin, and lay not my deadness to my charge, but overlook all my transgressions, and look on me in Jesus Christ my Saviour. I am thine, Lord, and not mine own: This day I have

‘under my Hand and Seal in the presence of Witnes-
‘ses, nay in thine own presence (who art Witness suf-
‘ficient, were there no eye to see me or ear to hear
‘me) Thou Lord that knowest all things, knowest
‘that I have devoted my All to thee: Take it and ac-
‘cept my Sacrifice: Help me to pay my vows! Wilt
‘thou not accept me because I do it not more sincere-
‘ly and believingly? O Lord I unfeignedly desire to
‘do it aright! O wilt thou strengthen my weak de-
‘sires! I believe, Lord help my unbelief. Thou that
‘canst make me what I am not, O make me what thou
‘wouldst have me be! In thee there is all fulness, and
‘to thee I desire to come by Christ. Wilt thou now
‘cast me off, because I do it not *unreservedly*? Lord,
‘I confess the Devil tempteth, and the flesh saith,
‘*Spare something: what! let all go?* And I find in
‘me a carnal selfish principle, ready to close with
‘the temptation. But thou canst prevent and con-
‘quer all, and speak death to these corruptions, and
‘bid the Tempter be gone. It is thy pleasure here
‘to suffer thy dear children to be tempted; but
‘suffer not temptations to prevail against thy Spi-
‘rit and Grace. If temptation be like a torrent of
‘water, to smother, quench, or hide the flame, yet
‘wilt thou never let all the sparks of thy Grace be
‘put out in the soul where once thou hast truly
‘kindled it. But Lord! suffer not such floods to
‘fall on my soul, where the spark is so small alrea-
‘dy, that it is even scarce discernible. O quicken it,
‘and blow it up to a holy flame: Most gracious God!
‘O do it here, who hast done it for many a soul! O
‘what have I said! that I have a spark of grace! why
‘the least spark is worth ten thousand times more

‘thanks than I can ever express! and I have been
‘dead and unthankful, as is before confessed! And is
‘that a sign of grace? Unthankful, dead, and dull
‘I have been, and still am; but yet it must needs
‘be from Gods gift in me, that I have any desires
‘after him; and that this day I have desired to de-
‘vote my self to him, and that I can say I would be
‘more holy, and more heavenly, even as the Lord
‘would have me be. Nay, I do know the time when
‘I had none of these desires, and had no mind to
‘God, and the ways of godliness; and do I not
‘know that there be many in this condition who
‘have no desires after Christ and holiness? Here
‘then is matter of comfort given me from him that
‘doth accept the desires of his poor creatures, even
‘the Lord Christ, who will not quench the smoak-
‘ing flax, nor break the bruised reed. I see then
‘that I have yet matter of rejoycing, and must la-
‘bour to be so humbled for my remaining sins, as
‘may tend to my future joy in believing; but not
‘so as to be discouraged and frightned from God,
‘who is longsuffering and abundant in mercy. Rouze
‘up thy self then to God, my soul; humbly, but be-
‘lievingly repent that thou hast been so unthankful
‘and insensible of the benefits this day received:
‘up, up, and lie not down so heavily; God hath
‘heard prayers for thee, and given thee life and op-
‘portunity to serve him. He hath given thee all the
‘outward mercies thy heart can desire. He hath gi-
‘ven thee dear, godly, able friends, such as can help
‘thee in the way to heaven; yea he hath set them
‘to beg spiritual mercies for thee, who prevailed
‘for temporal for thee, and oft for many others; why

‘then shouldst thou not watch and pray, and wait
‘in hope that he hath heard their prayers this day
‘for thy soul, as formerly for thy body? They are
‘things commanded of God to be asked; and we
‘have his promise, that seeking we shall find. It may
‘be this night many of Gods dear children will yet
‘pray for my soul; I doubt not some will; and shall
‘I not be glad of such advantage? I heard this day
‘that *I must not forbear thanks, because the mercies*
‘*are yet imperfect* (else we should never give thanks
‘on earth). Though therefore my Grace be yet
‘but a spark, and weak, my body weak, my heart
‘sad; all these administer matter of *thanks* and
‘*praise*, as well as of *supplication*. Let me therefore
‘keep close to both, they being the life of my life
‘while I live here; and having daily need of supply
‘from God, let me daily be with him, and live as
‘in his presence: Let him be the chief in all my
‘thoughts, my heart and life. And let me remember
‘to be earnest for my poor Relations, and dear
‘Friends, and the Church and people of God in ge-
‘neral. And let me strive to keep such a moderate
‘sense of sorrow on my soul, as occasion requireth.
‘I have now cause of sorrow for parting with my
‘dear friends, my Father, my Pastor. He is by pro-
‘vidence called away, and going a long journey:
‘what the Lord will do with him, I cannot foresee;
‘it may be he is preparing some great mercy for us,
‘and for his praise; I know not but such a day as
‘this may be kept here on his account. The will of
‘the Lord be done, for he is wise and good; we are
‘his own, let him do with us what he pleaseth; all
‘shall be for good to them that love God. I have

'cause to be humbled that I have been so unprofitable under mercies and means; it may grieve me 'now he is gone, that there is so little that came 'from him left upon my soul. O let this quicken and 'stir me up to be more diligent in the use of all remaining helps and means. And if ever I should enjoy this mercy again, O let me make it appear that 'this night I was sensible of my neglect of it.

'And now here is comfort, that I have to deal 'with a God of mercy that will hear a poor repenting sinner; a God that will in no wise cast out 'those that come to him, but loveth whom he loveth, 'to the end. This is the God whom I have chosen and 'taken for my portion; the same God is his God, his 'Guide and Comforter. The whole world is but a 'house where Gods children dwell a little while, till 'he hath fitted them for the heavenly Mansions; and 'if he send them out of one room into another to 'do his work, and try their obedience; and if he 'put some in the darkest corners of his house, to 'keep them humble, though he separate those that 'are most beloved of each other, it is but that they 'may not love so much as to be loth to part and 'come to him who should have all their love. How-ever it fareth with his children in this house (or 'howling wilderness) the time will come, and is at 'hand, when all the children shall be separate from 'the Rebels, and be called home to dwell with their 'Father, their Head and Husband; and the elect shall 'all be gathered into one. Then farwell sorrow, farwell hard heart! farwell tears and sad repentance! 'And then blessed Saints that have believed and obeyed! Never so unworthy, crowned thou must

'be! This was the project of redeeming-love!
 'When the Lord shall take our carkasses from the
 'grave, and make us shine as the Sun in glory; then,
 'then shall friends meet and never part, and remem-
 'ber their sad and weary nights and days no more!
 'Then may we love freely! What now is wanting
 'to dispel all sorrow from my heart! Nothing but
 'the greater hopes that I shall be one of this number.
 'This, this can do it. No matter if I had no friend
 'near me, and none on earth; if God be not far
 'from me, it's well enough; and whatever here be-
 'falls the Church and people of God, it's but as for
 'one day, and presently the storm will be all over.
 'Let me therefore cast all my care on God: Let me
 'wait on him in the way of duty, and trust him: let
 'me run with patience the race that is set before me,
 'looking to Jesus the Author and finisher of my
 'faith, and believingly go to him in all my troubles;
 'and let me so labour here, that I may find rest to my
 'soul in the Rest that remaineth for the people of
 'God.

'Rest! O sweet word! The weary shall have rest,
 'they shall rest in the Lord.

'April 10. on *Thursday* night at twelve of the
 'clock; a day and night never to be forgotten by
 '*the least of all Gods mercies, yea less than the least,*
 '*Thy unworthy, unthankful, hard-hearted creature,*

M. Charlton.

§. 5. Is not here in all these Papers (which I saw not till she was dead) a great deal of work for one day, besides all the publick work of a Thanksgiving day. If I should give you an account of all her following Twenty One years, what a Volume would it amount to? If you ask, why I recite all this, which is but matter well known to ordinary Christians? I answer, 1. It is not as matter of *knowledge*, but of *soul workings* towards God. 2. Is not this extraordinary in a Convert of a year, or few months standing? 3. The love of God, and her, makes me think it worth the publishing: They that think otherwise may pass it by; but there are souls to whom it will be savoury and profitable.

§. 6. Yet she continued under great fears, that she had not saving Grace, because she had not that degree of holy affection which she desired: And before in her sickness, her fears increased her disease and danger. I will here, for the use of others in the like case, recite some scraps of a Letter of counsel, as I find them transcribed by her self.

I Advise you to set more effectually to the means
 ‘of your necessary consolation; your strange si-
 ‘lent keeping your case to your self (from your mo-
 ‘ther, and all your friends), is an exceeding injury
 ‘to your peace. Is it God, or Satan that hindereth
 ‘you from opening your sore, and make you think
 ‘that concealment is your wisdom? If it be pride
 ‘that forbids it, how dare you obey such a com-
 ‘mander? Many of our sores are half healed when

‘well opened: if Prudence foresee some forbidding
 ‘inconvenience, you have prudent friends, and two
 ‘prudent persons may see more than one. But because
 ‘you will not tell us, I will disjunctively tell it
 ‘you.

‘I. Your trouble of soul is either some *affliction*.
 ‘2. Or some *sin*. 3. Or the doubt of your *sincerity*
 ‘and true grace.

‘I. If it be *affliction*, dare you so indulge impa-
 ‘tience, as to conclude against your future comforts,
 ‘while you have Gods love and title to salvation?
 ‘Dare you say that these are of so small weight,
 ‘that a cross like yours will weigh them down? and
 ‘that you will not rejoice in all the promises of life
 ‘eternal, till your Cross be removed?

‘II. If it be *sin*, it is either past or present: if
 ‘past, why do you not repent, and thankfully accept
 ‘your pardon? If *present*, it is *inward corruption*, or
 ‘outward transgression. Which ever it be, if you
 ‘love it, why do you grieve for it, and groan under
 ‘it? If you grieve for it, why are you not willing
 ‘to leave it, and be holy? If you are willing to leave
 ‘it, and would fain have Gods grace in the use of
 ‘his means, to make you holy, this is the true na-
 ‘ture of Repentance: And why then are you not
 ‘thankful for grace received, for Pardon, Adoption,
 ‘and your part in Christ, more than you are trou-
 ‘bled for remaining sin? Should none rejoyce that
 ‘have sin to trouble them, and keep them in a daily
 ‘watch and war? Read *Rom. 7. & 8.* if you will
 ‘see the contrary: *If any man sin, we have an Advo-*
 ‘*cate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and*
 ‘*he is the propitiation for our sins.* Dare you refuse

‘your comforts on such reasons as would deny com-
 ‘fort to all the world? He that saith he hath no
 ‘sin, is a liar. And will you for this deny the known
 ‘duty of thanks and praise for all that you have re-
 ‘ceived? You have been taught to difference be-
 ‘tween cause of Doubting, and cause of *filial hu-*
 ‘*miliation*. And if it were any particular sin that
 ‘needs particular help and counsel, why do you not
 ‘open it for help (which its probably would do
 ‘more against it, than many years secret trouble and
 ‘dejection alone will do.)

‘3. If it be *doubts* of *your sincerity and grace*, why
 ‘do you refuse to reason the case, and say what it
 ‘is that persuadeth you that you are graceless, that
 ‘we may try it by the word of God? What evidence
 ‘is it that you want? You have confest that some-
 ‘time you are convinced of sincerity; and can you
 ‘so easily deny what you have found, as to conclude
 ‘your self so miserable as you do? Should all do
 ‘thus that have not constant apprehensions of their
 ‘evidence, and whose assurance is hindred by imper-
 ‘fectious? You have heard the contrary.

‘But suppose that you have yet no saving-grace or
 ‘part in Christ, why stand you complaining, while
 ‘Christ stands intreating you to accept his mercy?
 ‘Is he not in good earnest? The offer is free; it is
 ‘not your purchase and merit, but *consent*, that will
 ‘prove your title: Why do you *complain*, and not
 ‘*consent* even to the Baptismal Covenant? Or if you
 ‘*consent*, why do you complain as if Christs pro-
 ‘mise were not true, or as if consent were not a
 ‘a proof of saving-faith? If you confess that you
 ‘should not doubt and be dejected on such terms;

‘methinks the Cure should be half wrought. Dare
 ‘you indulge it while you know it to be your sin?
 ‘Have you not sin enough already? And is it not
 ‘unkindness to deny so great a mercy as the con-
 ‘verting-grace which you so lately felt, and to su-
 ‘spect his love who is love it self, and hath so largely
 ‘expressed his love to you? Would you easily believe
 ‘that your Mother would kill you for such defects
 ‘as you fear that God will damn you for? Yea, tho’
 ‘she were perfectly just and holy? Is it congruous
 ‘to hear Ministers tell men from Christ, that he be-
 ‘seecheth them to be reconciled to God, and will re-
 ‘fuse none that are willing of his grace and cure;
 ‘and at the same time to hear such as you almost
 ‘ready to despair, as if God would not be reconci-
 ‘led, nor give grace to them that fain would have it,
 ‘but will be inclined to reject humbled souls?

‘Reason not for your distrustful fears and sor-
 ‘rows, but still disowne them and accuse them, and
 ‘then they will vanish by degrees and dye: yea then
 ‘you will sure oppose them your self, and God will
 ‘help you: Can you look that God should
 ‘help you against the sin which you plead for, and
 ‘defend? If faith and love be the vital graces, di-
 ‘strust of God, and denying his love, must not be
 ‘defended as no sin. As the ungodly cannot expect
 ‘the grace which they refuse; so how can you ex-
 ‘pect the peace which you oppose, and say as *Psal.*
 ‘77. *My soul refuseth to be comforted;* and say of
 ‘your passionate fear and grief, as *Jonas* of his an-
 ‘ger, *I do well to be angry, even unto death.* Be con-
 ‘vinced that Christ is yours, if you accept him, and
 ‘consent; and then that comfort is your interest,

‘right and duty; and then you will do more to comfort
 ‘fort your self, than I am endeavouring when I
 ‘chide you for your fears. Sure sinful sorrow is
 ‘no desirable thing, nor to be pleaded for; you
 ‘durst do nothing to the murder of a friend, no nor
 ‘to his grief; and you are bid to love your Neigh-
 ‘bour as your self. Away then with your weakning
 ‘griefs and troubles, *lest they prove a degree of self-*
 ‘*murder*. If you care for your self, the comfort of
 ‘your Mother and Friends, and the honour of the
 ‘unspeakable riches of Gods grace, at least own it
 ‘to be your duty to oppose sinful fear, and to re-
 ‘joice in God, and serve him with delight and cheer-
 ‘ful praises, and do your best against all that is against
 ‘this duty. And suffer not your sore to fester by
 ‘your silence; but open your case to some one that
 ‘is able to help you impartially to try it by the
 ‘word of God, and to pray with you that God
 ‘will mercifully discover your infirmities, and the
 ‘remedy. It were but wisdom to conceal your case
 ‘from others, if you can well be cured without their
 ‘help.

§. 7. Some strivings against her fears and sorrows
 I find next in this Paper following, dated by her *A-*
pril 3.

‘The sadder my present condition is, the greater is
 ‘the mercy that I am yet alive: why then should I not
 ‘give God thanks for that, and beg the rest which
 ‘yet I want? And though my life seem but a burden
 ‘to me sometimes, it is my great mistake: for the
 ‘greatest afflictions are nothing to hell-torments:
 ‘Were they as great as ever any had, while I am a-
 live

'live on this side Eternity, there is hope. The time
 'of grace is yet continued; if I be found in mer-
 'cies way, I know not but God may yet be graci-
 'ous, and give in my soul as he hath done my life
 'at his peoples prayers. For I cannot but look on
 'my life as an answer of their prayers. And sure
 'they desired my life only that I might live to God.
 'I desired it my self on no other terms. It was my
 'earnest request that I might not live, if not to him.
 'Why then should I be persuaded by Satan to think
 'that God will not give me grace as well as life?
 'May I not rather be encouraged with patience to
 'wait for further mercy? It is a mercy that I am in
 'any measure sensible of my danger, and have any
 'desire to be holy. I will therefore stir up my soul
 'to thankfulness, and be humbled that I can be no
 'more thankful. I will acknowledg the mercy I
 'have received, and the probability of future mer-
 'cy: and this by Gods assistance the Devil shall not
 'hinder me from doing.

§. 8. I will add one of her Papers, containing her
 resolutions after her recovery, in some few particu-
 lars.

'Decemb. 30. was my worst day: I did not then
 'think to be alive this day; I ought not to forget
 'it. On *Jan. 1. New-years-day*, I first bled at the nose
 'largely, and after mended. The fourth day was
 'kept in humiliation for me. *April 10.* was a day of
 'Thanksgiving.

'When I thought I should dye, I was more than
 'ordinarily sensible of my unprofitable life; and had
 'such convictions as usually people in my condition

‘have; and I then made many resolutions as in such
 ‘cases others do. I remembered that I had heard much
 ‘of the promises that many made in sickness, which
 ‘they never performed; and I thought it was gross
 ‘hypocrisie to speak now of that which I was past
 ‘performing (as I thought); but that I were bet-
 ‘ter write down my purposes, and discover them if
 ‘God recovered me, that they might be as strong an
 ‘engagement on me, as if I had spoken them to
 ‘men.

‘I. I resolved that I would endeavour to get and
 ‘keep a sense of that great mercy of Gods restoring
 ‘me from the peril of threatned death, in answer of
 ‘prayers; which was the greater, in that God threat-
 ‘ned to take me hence when I was but in the birth,
 ‘and had scarce well begun to live. This mercy I
 ‘promised to be thankful for, and to acknowledg o-
 ‘ther mercies as God should make me able.

‘II. I resolved that I would endeavour to be in a
 ‘fixed state and way of duty; and in order to this,
 ‘I would take advice of one who is (I conceive)
 ‘most fit to advise me. And I resolve by Gods as-
 ‘sistance, that I will not consult with flesh and blood,
 ‘nor study my carnal interest, but resolutely set on
 ‘the way of my duty, and freely discourse my
 ‘thoughts, so far as is requisite to my just advice.
 ‘And that I will speak my reasons and heart-risings
 ‘against any thing that is propounded to me, which
 ‘I judg unmeet. And I resolved when I saw my du-
 ‘ty, cheerfully to do it, and keep a sense of the sweet-
 ‘ness and obligations of Gods love and mercy.

‘III. I resolved to pray and labour for a true sense
 ‘of the sins of this Nation in general; and in par-

‘ticular of the sins of my Relations, and of my
 ‘own. And that till it please God to give me cause
 ‘of rejoicing on the behalf of my Relations, and
 ‘of my own souls recovery and spiritual welfare, I
 ‘will continue with humiliation to supplicate the
 ‘Lord. And though I would not shut out a greater
 ‘duty by a lesser, yet I will avoid all manner of
 ‘Feastings as much as I well can, and all noxious sen-
 ‘sual delights; and when I must be present, I will
 ‘use some mortifying restraint. And this I would do
 ‘in my habit, and all other things, but that I would
 ‘lay no snare on my self, by renouncing what occa-
 ‘sions may oblige me to; but by all means I would
 ‘strive to keep upon my heart a sense of my friends
 ‘danger and my own.

IV. I resolve, if Providence concur, to go to *Lon-
 ‘don* as soon as I can after the day of Thanksgiv-
 ‘ing, for the reasons mentioned in another place.

§. 9. What these reasons were, I find not. This
 following fragment of hers, hints something of it.

I begin already to be sensible of my misusing the
 helps which God had given me; I know now how
 I should love Ordinances and means of grace, and to
 what end; not to break my heart when Providence
 removeth them from me, or me from them; but I
 should love them for God, and use them for him,
 and expect my greatest comfort from him, and not
 from men and means themselves: This is no more
 than what I thought I had known long ago, but I
 never knew it indeed till now. And now I do but
 begin to know it. When I felt my heart ready to

‘sink under a burden of sorrow, God was pleased
 ‘to ask me *what I ailed?* Was my condition worse
 ‘than ever? Had I less hopes of his love than here-
 ‘tofore? if not, why do I mourn more than when
 ‘I lay under that curse? What is it that I have cho-
 ‘sen for my hope and happiness? is that lost and
 ‘gone? Am I left in such a place or case as God can-
 ‘not be found in if I truly seek him? or that God
 ‘cannot sweeten with his presence? if not, why do
 ‘I not contentedly thank God for what I have alrea-
 ‘dy had? I cannot say it’s better that I had never
 ‘had it, than now to leave it: no, I must be willing
 ‘to submit to God, and be humbled in the sense of
 ‘my abuse of mercy, so far as it may quicken me to
 ‘diligence for the time to come. And if ever God
 ‘more trust me with such treasure as once I had, I
 ‘will strive to shew that I better know the worth
 ‘of it than I did before. My thoughts often tell me,
 ‘that if I were but in a condition in which I had op-
 ‘portunity to serve God with more cost to the flesh
 ‘than I here do, it would either shew my hypocri-
 ‘sie, or give me more assuring evidence that I am in-
 ‘deed sincere.

§. 10. And it is a useful note that I find added to
 this by her.

‘If my trouble be for my sin, 1. My care will be
 ‘more for the removing of my sin, than of the af-
 ‘ffliction.

‘2. And if God should take away the affliction, it
 ‘would not content me, unless sin be taken away,
 ‘and my heart amended.

‘3. If it be sin that I am troubled for, it will be my
‘great care not to sin in my trouble.

‘4. And if it be my sin that troubleth me, I have
‘the more cause to submit to Gods hand, and silent-
‘ly bear the punishment of my iniquity; it shameth
‘murmuring, when we truly look on sin the cause,
‘though it bring the wholsome sorrow of repent-
‘ance.

‘5. And if I mourn for fear lest God be depart-
‘ing, I should seek him, and cleave the closer to
‘him, and not depart from God, and then he will
‘not depart from me.

§. 11. I will conclude this Chapter with a Coun-
trety Poem of her honest Kinsman Mr. *Eleazer Cares-*
well, of *Sheffnall* in *Shropshire*, whom I never knew
to Poetrize but now that tender love and passion
taught him; it signifieth these, though it want the
flowry part. Her danger of death so near to her
conversion, was very grievous to him.

'MARGARET' CHARLTON:

‘Anagram,

‘Arm to later change.

‘The prudent soul refin’d from earth, doth ever
‘Arm to her later change, and fears it never.
‘Those glittering Monarchs who seem to command
‘This Ball, shall be by deaths impartial hand
‘Put out, and doom’d to an eternal state,
‘(No mortal sinner can decline this fate).

'Death conquers Scepter-swaying Kings; but I
 'Shall conquer Death, being now arm'd to dye.
 'Arm Soul for this one change, and wed thy heart
 'To Christ, and then no death shall ever part
 'Your joined souls; and thou, because that He
 'Hath Life, of Life shalt still possessed be.
 'Death will but this snarl'd knot of Life untie,
 'To unite Souls in a more blessed tie,
 'When Faith, renewing grace, repenting tears,
 'Hath cleared the soul from filth, and she appears
 'Unspotted, holy, pure, invested in
 'Christ's milk-white snowie Robes, quite freed from sin.
 'Wholly deliver'd from this fleshly thrall,
 'And Hells black Monarch, and adorn'd with all
 'Gods perfect grace: Triumphantly these sing,
 'Death and Hell conquer'd are by Christ our King.
 'Faith, Hope, and Love, such Souls now fortifie,
 'And armed thus, why should we fear to dye?
 'Tho' Death divorce those long acquainted friends,
 'And lodg earth in the earth; the soul ascends
 'To those high glorious Regions, where she
 'With Christ and blessed souls shall ever be.
 'Soul troubling sin shall then molest no more,
 'Which clog'd, which wounded her so long before.
 'Poor souls go fetter'd here with flesh and sin,
 'Death doth her great deliverance begin.
 'Thy soul renew'd by grace, shall quickly see
 'How blest a change that day will bring to thee.
 'Death shall those weeping eyes dry up and close,
 'And pained weary flesh to rest repose.
 'The grave will be a safe and quiet bed,
 'To that frail body when the soul is fled.

‘This aking head shall there be laid to rest,
 ‘Whilst thy glad soul of glory is possest.
 ‘As banisht griefs end in that quiet sleep.
 ‘Thy dust is holy, it thy Lord will keep
 ‘Till the last trumpet sound; and he shall raise
 ‘The just and unjust at the last of days.
 ‘Then the refined body shall again
 ‘Its late dislodged soul re-entertain;
 ‘And re-united chant well-tuned lays
 ‘Unto the Lamb, whose soul-enamouring rays
 ‘Shall ravish Saints with blessed perfect joy,
 ‘Freed from whatever would their rest annoy.
 ‘Where they with flaming love and pleasure sing
 ‘Holy melodious praise to God their King.
 ‘Rise then my soul; thy thoughts from earth estrange;
 ‘The first is wrought, *Arm to thy later change.*

Thus the good mans affections workt to prepare his dear Kinswoman for death; but he dyed (and most of his) before her.

CHAP. IV.

Some parcels of Counsel for her deliverance from this distressed Case, which I find reserved by her for her use.

§. I. **W**HILE in her languishing, and after it, she was still cast down, condemned her self as a graceless wretch, and her good Mother and Friends afraid that her grief would encrease her

sickness, as it did their sadness; and yet she obstinately concealed it from all, save a few sad complaints to one person, who wrote thereof some fragments which she extracted for her use; I shall here recite them for others that have the same fears.

§. 2. The miscarriage of a Relation troubling her, this was set down.

‘When God hath done so much for you, will
 ‘you leave it in the power of an unconstant crea-
 ‘ture to trouble you, and rob you of your peace?
 ‘Is the joy in the Holy Ghost so subject to the ma-
 ‘lice of your enemies, *or the weakness of your friends?*
 ‘Delight your self in an Allsufficient constant God,
 ‘and he will be to you a sufficient constant delight,
 ‘and will give you the desires of your heart. I see
 ‘you are yet imperfect in self-denial, while you are
 ‘too sensible of unkindnesses and crosses from your
 ‘friends, and bear them with too much passion and
 ‘weakness: know you not yet what the creature is,
 ‘and how little to be expected from it? Do you not
 ‘still reckon to meet with such infirmities in the
 ‘best, as will be injurious to others, as they are
 ‘troublesome to themselves? It’s God that we most
 ‘wrong, and yet he beareth with us; and so must
 ‘we with one another. Had you expected that crea-
 ‘tures should deal as creatures, and sinners as sin-
 ‘ners, how little of this kind of trouble had you
 ‘felt? Especially take heed of too much regard to
 ‘matters of meer reputation, and the thoughts of
 ‘men; else you are like a leaf in the wind that will
 ‘have no rest. Look on man as nothing, and be con-

‘tent to approve your self to God; and then so
 ‘much honour as is good for you, will follow as the
 ‘shadow. If every frailty and unkindness of the
 ‘best friends must be your trouble, it is to be impa-
 ‘tient with the unavoidable pravity of mankind;
 ‘and you may as well grieve that they were born in
 ‘sin, and made your acquaintance. And it should be
 ‘used as a mercy to keep you from inordinate affe-
 ‘ctions to friends. It’s a mercy to be driven from
 ‘creature-rest, though it be by enemies. Keep a fix-
 ‘ed apprehension of the inconsiderableness of all
 ‘these little things that cross you, and turn your eye
 ‘to God, to Christ, to Heaven, the things of un-
 ‘speakable weight, and you will have no room for
 ‘these childish troubles.

‘Yet turn not the discovery of this your weak-
 ‘ness, into dejection, but amendment. I perceive
 ‘you are apter to hold to the sense of your own
 ‘distempers, than to think what counsel is given
 ‘you against them.

§. 3. On another occasion she recorded these words.

‘How hard is it to keep our hearts in going too
 ‘far even in honest affections toward the creature,
 ‘while we are so backward to love God, who should
 ‘have all the heart, and soul, and might? Too strong
 ‘love to any, though it be good in the kind, may be
 ‘sinful and hurtful in the degree. 1. It will turn too
 ‘many of your thoughts from God, and they will
 ‘be too oft running after the beloved creature.
 ‘2. And by this exercise of thoughts and affections

‘on the creature, it may divert and cool your love
 ‘to God, which will not be kept up, unless our
 ‘thoughts be kept more to him; yea, though it be
 ‘for his sake that you love them. 3. It will en-
 ‘crease your sufferings, by interesting you in all the
 ‘dangers and troubles of those whom you over-
 ‘love.

§. 4. When she seemed to her self near death.

‘You now see what the world and all its plea-
 ‘sures are, and how it would have used you, if you
 ‘had had no better a portion, and God had not
 ‘taught you a happier choice. Providence now tells
 ‘you that they are vanity, and if over-valued,
 ‘worse; but if you learn to see their nothingness,
 ‘you will be above the trouble of losing them, as
 ‘well as the snares of too delightful enjoying them.
 ‘Pardon all injuries to men, and turn your thoughts
 ‘from them, and keep your heart as near as possible
 ‘to the heart of Christ, and live as in his arms, who
 ‘is usually sweetest when the creature most faileth
 ‘us, if we do but turn our hearts from it to him.

§. 5. Another time.

‘Can you find that you are resolutely devoted
 ‘to Christ, and yet doubt whether Christ be resol-
 ‘vedly and surely yours? Are you willinger or
 ‘faithfuller than he?

Hence she gathered her self as followeth.

‘When I read the evidence of my self-resignation
 ‘to Christ, I should as it were see Christ standing

‘over me with the tenderest care, and hear him say,
 ‘*I accept thee as my own.* For I must believe his accep-
 ‘tance, as I perform my resignation. O what is he
 ‘providing for me? What entertainment with him
 ‘shall I shortly find? Not such as he found with
 ‘man, when he came to seek us; it is not a Manger,
 ‘a Crown of thorns, a Cross, that he is preparing for
 ‘me: when I have had my part of these in follow-
 ‘ing him, I shall have my place in the glorious *Je-*
 ‘*rusalem.*

§. 6. This fragment she wrote next.

‘For the sake of your own soul, and life, and
 ‘friends, and for the honour of that tender mercy
 ‘and free grace which you are bound to magnifie,
 ‘Let not Satan get advantage against your peace and
 ‘thankfulness to God, and the acknowledgment of
 ‘his obliging love. Let him not on pretence of hu-
 ‘miliation, turn your eyes on a weak distempered
 ‘heart, from the unspeakable mercy which should
 ‘fill your heart with love and joy, notwithstanding
 ‘all your lamented infirmities. You perceive not
 ‘that it is Satan that would keep you still under
 ‘mournful sadness, under the pretence of repentance
 ‘and godly sorrow. You are not acquainted with
 ‘his wiles. You have cause of sorrow, but much
 ‘more of joy. And your rejoycing in Gods love
 ‘would please him better than all your sad com-
 ‘plaints and troubles, though he despise not a con-
 ‘trite spirit. *I charge it on your conscience,* that when
 ‘you are in prayer, you confess and lament your di-
 ‘strustful, suspicious, unthankful, uncomfortable

‘thoughts of God and Jesus Christ, more than all
 ‘your want of sorrow for him. And you trouble
 ‘your self for such kind of sins, *the honesty of whose*
 ‘*occasion may give you more comfort than the fault doth*
 ‘*sorrow*. I know we have not our comfort at com-
 ‘mand. But see that your endeavour and striving
 ‘be more for a comfortable than for a sorrowful
 ‘frame of spirit.

‘Two things I must blame you for, 1. That you
 ‘take the imperfections of your duties and obedi-
 ‘ence, to be greater reasons for discomfort, than the
 ‘performance and sincerity are reasons for comfort:
 ‘as if you thought any thing were perfect here, or
 ‘that it were better do nothing than do it imper-
 ‘fectly: or as if you would have no comfort till
 ‘you can perform such duty and obedience as hath
 ‘no need of pardon and a Saviour; and so no man
 ‘living might have any comfort in any thing that he
 ‘doth.

‘2. That when unreasonable fears and troubles
 ‘are upon you, and troubling thoughts are still up-
 ‘on your mind, you say that *you cannot help it, nor*
 ‘*turn your thoughts away to any thing else*. I know
 ‘you have not an absolute power over your
 ‘thoughts, but some you have: why else hath God
 ‘made a Law for our thoughts, and laid so much
 ‘duty on them, and forbidden their sin so much?
 ‘Much may be done, if you will be resolute.
 ‘Think whether Christ came from the Father to
 ‘bring tidings of sadness and despair, or of great
 ‘joy: and whether Angels preached not *Glory to*
 ‘*God in the highest; on earth peace, and to men good*
 ‘*will*? And whether *Fatih, Hope, and Love*, which

‘are the things which Christ will work on souls, be
 ‘not more powerful to destroy your sins, than de-
 ‘spair or discouragement of mind?

‘And because you complain so much of sin, I ask
 ‘you, why doth not your conscience more accuse
 ‘you of the sin of unthankful denying or exte-
 ‘nuating the mercies of God, and no more magni-
 ‘fying them. And for overlooking so much the me-
 ‘ritorious righteousness of Christ, while you com-
 ‘plain for want of more of your own. I would not
 ‘deceive you, by telling you that you need none in
 ‘your self; and that all your righteousness is out
 ‘of you in Christ: I know that your righteousness
 ‘must exceed that of the Pharisees, and the unright-
 ‘eous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God, and
 ‘that he that doth righteousness is righteous: But
 ‘at what Bar or Tribunal? Only at that of Grace,
 ‘which *supposeth the Reconciling Pardoning Righte-*
 ‘*ousness of Christ*: it is not at the bar of *Rigorous*
 ‘*Justice*, according to the Law, which requireth *In-*
 ‘*nocence* to Justification; there *Christ only* is your
 ‘*Righteousness*; and you have none, and must dream
 ‘of none but that which floweth from his, and stands
 ‘in subordination to it, and is your title to it, and
 ‘improvement of it, *even your thankful accepting a*
 ‘*free-given Saviour, Head and Lord, and Pardon and*
 ‘*the Spirit to sanctifie you more, and fit you for com-*
 ‘*munion with God and for glory; esteem most, chuse*
 ‘*first, and seek most the love of God the Father, the*
 ‘*Grace of Christ, and the Communion of the H. Ghost,*
 ‘and this subordinate righteousness will certainly
 ‘prove the meritorious perfect righteousness of
 ‘Christ to be for you, instead of a perfect righte-

'ousness of your own. There is no defect in his Sa-
 'crifice or Merits; if you wanted a title to Christ,
 'you were unjustified; but none wants that, who
 'consenteth to his Covenant, as before: and that
 'consent you cannot deny. Will you live like a for-
 'saken Orphan exposed in a Wilderness, while Gods
 'tender love is saving you, and Christ is glory | ing
 'in you as the fruit of his blood, and the Angels
 'of God are serving you, and rejoycing at your con-
 'version? I entreat you think whether it be not the
 'great work that God hath called you to, to honour
 'his grace, and propagate to all about you, as you
 'are able, a joyful, thankful, hoping and praising
 'frame of soul; and to stir up all to the delightful
 'praise of God? As Ministers must do it by preach-
 'ing, all must do it by conference and example. And
 'is your dejected sadness the performance of this?

§. 6. When she desired to be prayed for, she
 wrote down this Answer which I find now in her
 Papers.

'It's well if you know what prayer to put up, or
 'what to desire; I'll pray for you according to the
 'best of my judgment; and I'll tell you for what, that
 'you may know what to pray for for your self:
 'First, I'll pray that your thoughts may be turned
 'to the magnifying of Gods love; and you may
 'remember that he is as *good* as he is *great*; and that
 'you may be more sensible of his mercy, than of
 'your own unworthiness. 2. I'll pray that you may
 'have so lively an apprehension of your everlasting
 'felicity, as may make you long to be with Christ.

‘3. That you may have more self-denial, and that
‘humility which makes you little in your own eyes.
‘4. That you may be much less tender, and liable
‘to commotion, and disquiet of mind, and less sensi-
‘ble of unkindnesses, and of bodily dangers, yea,
‘and of sin it self, while the sense of it hinders the
‘sense of mercy. A meek, and a quiet, and pati-
‘ent spirit is of great price in the sight of God. I
‘will pray that you may be delivered from too
‘much inward passion, of fear, grief, or discon-
‘tent. 5. I will pray, that no creature may seem grea-
‘ter, better, or more regardable, or necessary to
‘you than it is; and that you would look on all as
‘walking shadows, vanity and liars (that is, *untru-*
‘*sty*), further than you can see God in them, or
‘they lead you up to him; that they may never be
‘over-loved, over-feared, over-trusted, or their
‘thoughts too much regarded. 6. Above all, I’le
‘pray that you may be less *self-willed*, and not to
‘be too passionately or unmovably set upon the ful-
‘filling of all your will; but may have a will that
‘is compliant with the Will of God, and can change
‘as he would have it; and will follow him, and not
‘run before him; and can endure to be crost, and
‘denied by God and man, without discomposed-
‘ness, and impatient trouble of mind. 7. I shall
‘pray, that seeming wisdom may not entangle you,
‘either in the concealment of any thing which
‘greatly needeth your friends advice, or in the hi-
‘ding of your talents by unprofitable silence, as to all
‘good discourse, upon the enmity which you have
‘to hypocrisie; and that you will not live in sins
‘of omission, for sear of seeming better than you

are. By this you may know wherein I think you faulty.

§. 7. The next I find, is this advice against her resolution to go to *London*.

‘It’s not lawful to speak an idle word, and especially deliberately; much less to go an idle journey. What if you fall sick by the way, or some weakness take you there, will not conscience ask you, who called you hither? Your weakness of spirit, that cannot endure this or that, at home, with your dearest friends, is so far below the quiet composed fortitude which you should have, that you ought not to give way to it. If you are at the command of your impatience, how are you obedient to the command of God? It’s a greater work to bring your mind and will to the will of God, than to change place, or apparel, or run away as *Jonah* in discontent. O for a mind and will that needed no more to quiet it, than to know what is the will of God, and our duty; and in every estate therewith to be content. When you know your duty, do it resolutely and cheerfully, and scorn to run away, and turn your back, that you may do it without censure where you are unknown. Use well the means God here vouchsafes you, and do your duty with a quiet mind, and follow God in your removes.

§. 8. Much more of such counsels she transcribed, but I forbear reciting more. She ends those Papers with these words:

‘The best creature-affections have a mixture of
 ‘creature-imperfections, and therefore need some
 ‘gall to wean us from the faulty part: God must
 ‘be known to be God, our rest, and there-
 ‘fore the best creature to be but a creature! O mi-
 ‘serable world! (how long must I continue in it?
 ‘And why is this wretched heart so loth to leave
 ‘it), where we can have no fire without smoak, and
 ‘our dearest friends must be our greatest grief; and
 ‘when we begin in hope, and love, and joy, be-
 ‘fore we are aware, we fall into an answerable mea-
 ‘sure of distress. Learn by experience, when any
 ‘condition is inordinately or excessively sweet to
 ‘thee, to say, *From hence must be my sorrow.* (O how
 ‘true)!

CHAP. V.

Her temper, occasioning these troubles of mind.

§. I. **T**HE soul while in the body, works much ac-
 cording to the bodies disposition. 1. She
 was of an extraordinary sharp and piercing Wit.
 2. She had a natural reservedness, and secrecy, in-
 creased by thinking it necessary prudence not to be
 open; by which means she was oft mis-understood
 by her nearest friends, and consequently often crost
 and disappointed by those that would have pleased
 her. And as she could understand men much by
 their looks and hints, so she expected all should
 know her mind without her expressing it, which

bred her frustrations and discontents. 3. And she had a natural tenderness, and troubledness of mind, upon the crossing of her just desires: too quick, and ungovernable a sense of displeasing words or deeds. 4. She had a diseased irresistible fearfulness; her quick, and too sensible nature was over-timerous: and to increase it, she said she was four times, before I knew her, in danger of death (of which, one was by the Small-Pox): And more to increase it, her Mothers house (*Apply-Castle*, near *Wellington*), being a Garison, it was stormed while she was in it, and part of the housing about it burnt, and men lay killed before her face, and all of them threatened, and stript of their cloathing, so that they were fain to borrow cloaths. 5. And the great work upon her soul, in her conversion, moved all her passions. 6. And then her dangerous sickness, and the sentence of death to so young a Convert, must needs be a very awaking thing; and coming on her before she had any assurance of her justification, did increase her fear. 7. And in this case she lived in the Church-Yard side, where she saw all the Burials of the dead, and kept a deaths head (a skull) in her Closet still before her. And other such mortifying spectacles increased her sad disposition.

§. 2. And the excessive love which she had to her Mother, did much increase her grief when she expected death.

§. 3. Though she called it melancholly, that by all this she was cast into, yet it rather seemed a partly natural, and partly an adventitious diseased fear-

fulness in a tender over-passionate nature, that had no power to quiet her own fears, without any other cloud on her understanding.

§. 4. And all was much increased by her wisdom, so stifling all the appearances of it, that it all inwardly wrought, and had no ease by vent.

§. 5. And having keen spirits, and thin sharp blood, she had a strong *Hemicrania* or Head-ake once a month, and oft once a fortnight, or more, from the age of fifteen or sixteen years. All these together much tended to hinder her from a quiet and comfortable temper.

§. 6. And in a word, all the operations of her soul were very intense and strong; strong wit, and strong love, and strong displeasure. And when God shewed her what *Holiness* was, she thought she must presently have it in so great a degree as the ripest Saints do here attain; and that because she had not as much heavenly life, and sense, and delight in God as she knew she should have and desired, she concluded of it that she had none that was sincere.

§. 7. One of the first things by which her change was discovered to her Mother and Friends, was her fervent secret prayers: for living in a great house, of which the middle part was ruined in the Wars, she chose a Closet in the further end, where she thought none heard her: But some that over-heard her, said, they never heard so fervent prayers from any person.

§. 8. Yet she desired me to draw up a form suited to her own condition; which I did, and find it now reserved among her Papers; but I cannot tell whether she ever used it, having affections and freedom of expression without it. I had thought to have annexed it for the use of afflicted Penitents: But it will be but a digression in this Narrative.

CHAP. VI.

Of our Marriage, and our Habitations.

§. 1. **T**HE unsuitableness of our age, and my former known purposes against Marriage, and against the conveniency of Ministers Marriage, who have not sort of necessity, made our marriage the matter of much publick talk and wonder: And the true opening of her case and mine, and the many strange occurrences which brought it to pass, would take away the wonder of her friends and mine that knew us; and the notice of it would much conduce to the understanding of some other passages of our lives: Yet wise Friends, by whom I am advised, think it better to omit such personal particularities, at least at this time. Both in her case and mine, there was much extraordinary, which it doth not much concern the world to be acquainted with. From the first thoughts of it, many changes and stoppages intervined, and long delays, till I was silenced and ejected with many hun-

dreds more; and so being separated from my old Pastoral Charge, which was enough to take up all my time and labour, some of my dissuading Reasons were then over. And at last, on *Septemb. 10. 1662.* we were married in *Bennet-Fink Church* by Mr. *Samuel Clerk* (yet living), having been before Contracted by Mr. *Simeon Ash*, both in the presence of Mr. *Henry Ashurst* and Mrs. *Ash*.

§. 2. She consented to these Conditions of our Marriage: 1. That I would have nothing that before our Marriage was hers; that I (who wanted no outward supplies) might not seem to marry her for covetousness. 2. That she would so alter her affairs, that I might be intangled in no Law-suits. 3. That she would expect none of my time which my Ministerial work should require.

§. 3. When we were married, her sadness and melancholy vanished; counsel did something to it, and contentment something; and being taken up with our household affairs, did somewhat. And we lived in inviolated love, and mutual complacency, sensible of the benefit of mutual help. These near nineteen years I know not that ever we had any breach in point of love, or point of interest, save only that she somewhat grudged that I had persuaded her for my quietness to surrender so much of her Estate, to a disabling her from helping others so much as she earnestly desired.

§. 4. But that even this was not from a covetous mind, is evident by these instances. 1. Though her

Portion (which was 2000 l. besides that given up aforesaid) was (by ill debtors) 200 l. lost in her Mothers time, and 200 l. after, before her Marriage; and all she had reduced to almost 1650 l. yet she never grudged at any thing that the poverty of Debtors deprived her of.

2. She had before been acquainted with the Lord Chancellor's offering me a Bishopruck; and though it might have taken off the censure of those Relations that thought she debased her self in marrying me, and also might have seemed desirable to her for the Wealth as well as the Honour; she was so far from desiring my accepting it, that I am persuaded had I done it, it would have alienated her much from me in point of esteem and love. Not that she had any opinion against Episcopacy then (that ever I could perceive) but that she abhorred a worldly mercenary mind in a Minister of Christ, and was a sharp Censurer of all that for gain, or honour, or worldly ends, would stretch their consciences to any thing that they thought God forbid. And I am assured (though towards her end she wisht she had been abler to relieve the needy, and do more good; yet) she lived a far more contented life in our mean condition, even when she stoopt to receive from others that had been strangers to her, than she would have done had I been a Bishop, and she had had many thousand pounds more at her dispose; yea I am persuaded she would not easily have endured it.

3. Another tryal of her as to Wealth and Honour, was when I, and all such others, were cast out of all possession, and hope of all Ecclesiastical maintenance; she was not ignorant of the scorn and the

jealousies, and wrath and prosecutions that I was like to be exposed to; yea, she had heard and seen it already begun by Bishop *Morley's* forbidding me to preach before, and preaching himself, and his Dean, and many others, fiercely against me in *Kederminster* Pulpit; she had quickly heard them that were cast out and silenced, deeply accused as if they had deserved it. To chuse a participation of such a life that had no encouragement from any worldly Wealth or Honour, yea, that was exposed to such certain suffering which had no end in prospect on this side death, did shew that she was far from covetousness. Much more evidence of this I shall shew you as it falls in its place.

§. 5. Among other troubles that her Marriage exposed her to, one was our oft necessitated removals; which to those that must take Houses, and bind themselves to Landlords, and fit and furnish them, is more than for single persons that have no such clogs or cares. First, We took a House in *Moorefields*, after at *Acton*; next that, another at *Acton*; and after that, another there; and after that, we were put to remove to one of the former again; and after that, to divers others in another place and County, as followeth; and the women have most of that sort of trouble. But she easily bare it all.

And I know not that ever she came to any place where she did not extraordinarily win the love of the inhabitants (unless in any street where she staid so short a time, as not to be known to them): Had she had but the riches of the world to have done the good that she had a heart to do, how much

would she have been loved, who in her mean and low condition won so much?

And her carriage won more love than her liberality; she could not endure to hear one give another any sour, rough, or hasty word; her speech and countenance was always kind and civil, whether she had any thing to give or not.

And all her kindness tended to some better end, than barely to relieve peoples bodily wants; even to oblige them to some duty that tended to the good of their souls, or to deliver them from some straits which fill'd them with hurtful care, and became a matter of great temptation to them. If she could hire the poor to hear Gods word, from Conformist or Nonconformist, or to read good serious practical Books, whether written by Conformists or Nonconformists, it answered her end and desire: and many an hundred books hath she given to those ends. But of these things more hereafter. This is here but to answer the foresaid objection, and to lead on to the following particular passages of her life.

§. 6. While I was at *Acton*, her carriage and charity so won the people there, that all that I ever heard of, greatly esteemed and loved her. And she being earnestly desirous of doing good, prepared her house for the reception of those that would come in, to be instructed by me, between the morning and evening publick Assemblies, and after: And the people that had never been used to such things, accounted worldly ignorant persons, gave us great hopes of their edification, and reformation, and filled the Room, and went with me also into the

Church (which was at my door): And when I was after removed, the people hearing that I again wanted a house (being ten miles off), they unanimously subscribed a request to me, to return to my old house with them, and offered to pay my house-rent; which I took kindly: and it was much her winning conversation which thus won their love.

§. 7. When I was carried thence to the common Goal, for teaching them, as aforesaid, I never perceived her troubled at it: she cheerfully went with me into Prison; *she brought her best bed thither*, and did much to remove the removable inconveniencies of the Prison. I think she had scarce ever a pleasanter time in her life than while she was with me there. And whereas people upon such occasions were not unapt to be liberal, it was against her mind to receive more than necessity required. Only three persons gave me just as much as paid Lawyers and prison-charges, and when one offered me more, she would not receive it: But all was far short of the great charges of our removal to another habitation.

§. 8. The Parliament making a new sharper Law against us, I was forced to remove into another County; thither she went with me, and removed her Goods that were movable, from *Acton* to *Totteridge*, being engaged for the Rent of the house we left: At *Totteridge*, the first year, few poor people are put to the hardness that she was put to; we could have no house but part of a poor Farmers, where the Chimneys so extreemly smoak't, as greatly

ly annoyed her health; for it was a very hard Winter, and the Coal-smoak so filled the Room that we all day sate in, that it was as a cloud, and we were even suffocated with the stink. And she had ever a great straitness of the Lungs, that could not bear smoak or closeness. This was the greatest bodily suffering that her outward condition put her to; which was increased by my continual pain there. But her charity to her poor Landlady, set her Son Apprentice, who now liveth well.

§. 9. Thence we removed to a house; which we took to our selves, which required so great alterations and amendment, as took her up much time and labour: and, to her great comfort, she got Mr. *Corbet* and his Wife to dwell with us. And in all these changes and troubles she lived in great peace.

§. 10. When the Kings Declarations and Licenses gave Nonconformists leave to build Meeting places, and Preach, she was against my going to *London*, till others were there settled, lest I should anticipate them, and gather any Auditors, who would else go to others, especially their old ejected Pastors; but when others were settled, she was earnest with me to go, for the exercise of my Ministry.

§. 11. Upon our remove to *London*, out of tender regard to my health, which she thought the situation might contribute much unto, she chose, and took for us this most pleasant and convenient house in *Southampton-Square*, where she died. These were our removes.

CHAP. VII.

Of her exceeding desires to do good.

§. I. **A**S at her conversion, and in her sickness, she absolutely devoted her self, and all that she had to God; so she earnestly set her self to perform it to the last. At first she gave but the tenth of her incomes to the poor; but I quickly convinced her, that God must not be stinted, but as all was his, so all must be used for him by his stewards, and of all we must give account; only in his appointed order we must use it, which is, 1. For our own natural necessities. 2. For publick necessary good. 3. For the necessities of our children, and such Relations as are part of our charge. 4. And then for the godly poor. 5. And then for the common poors necessities. 6. And lastly, For conveniencies; but nothing for unuseful things.

§. 2. To name the particular great instances of her private charity, is neither suitable to my ends, nor her desires. I will instance but some of her more publick cares.

§. 3. She was earnestly desirous of the winning of souls, and of the utmost improvement of mine and other mens labours to that end. At *Acton*, I told you how she promoted it; and at *Totteridge*, out of *Church-time*, she gladly opened her doors to her

Neighbours, that would come in for instruction.

§. 4. At *London*, when she saw me too dull and backward to seek any Employment till I was called, and that most places in the City had some Supplies; she first fisht out of me in what place I most desired more Preaching. I told her in *St. Martins* Parish, where are said to be forty thousand more than can come into the Church, especially among all the new Buildings at *St. Jameses*, where Neighbours many live like *Americans*, and have heard no Sermon of many years.

When she had once heard this, without my knowledge she sets one to seek after some capacious Room there; and none was found, but divers Rooms over the Market-house laid together. She gets one to take them. And they two agreed to importune me to preach each morning, and in the afternoon to get by turns the ablest Ministers they could procure in *London*. And to that end she got a Minister an hundred miles off to come up to help me, promising him 40*l.* a year to go from day to day to supply the places of such eminent Ministers as should be got. All this charge, besides paying a Clerk, and a woman to look to the Seats, rose high. Part of it the people paid, and the rest she paid her self.

§. 5. Hence God was pleased to remove us, but by the interposition of a marvellous deliverance. The Roof of that Market-house is a vast weight, and was ill contrived to lye much on one Beam in the middle of the Floor: the place being greatly crowded, the Beam gave so great a crack as put all

the people in a fear. But a second crack set them all on running, and crying out at the windows for Ladders: I having seen the like before at *Dunstons Fleet street* while I was preaching (which occasioned the pulling down and new building of the Church) reproved them sharply for their fears, and would have gone on to preach; but see the strange hand of God on her that set all the work on foot! After the first crack she got down the stairs through the crowd, where others could not get that were stronger. The first man she met, she askt him what Profession he was of? He said a Carpenter. Saith she, Can you suddenly put a prop under the middle of this Beam? The man dwelt close by, had a meet prop ready, suddenly put it under, while all we above knew nothing of it; but the mans knocking encreased the peoples fears and cry. We were glad all to be gone; and the next morning took a skilful Workman to take up the boards, and search the Beam; which we all saw had two such rents, so long and so wide, and the sound part left was so slender, that we took it for a wonder that the house fell not suddenly.

§. 6. But this fright encreased my Wives diseased frightfulness; so that she never got off all the effects of it while she lived. The fear, and the marvellous deliverance, made her promise to God two things: 1. To keep the Anniversary memorial of it in publick Thanksgiving (which she did.) And 2. to build a safer place, where they might meet with less fear. And it too deeply toucht her mind to think that it was she that took the place, and brought them all

thither. And if 800. persons had been there buried in the ruins, as the *Papists* were at *Blackfryers*, O what a dreadful thing it would have been in the heavy loss, the many dolorous Families, and the publick scandal! These were too great thoughts to fall on a weak and too passionate nature.

§. 7. According to her promise she paid for that place, and presently set to seek and build another. And there was there no fit grounds near it to be had, but two; of which one was in *Oxenden-street*, which she could not have without giving 30. l. a year ground-rent, and to be at all the charge of building on it, and this but for a Lease not very long. But she *must do it* by promise and desire. She gets a Friend to make the bargain, takes the ground, and begs money to build on it a Chappel (which tempted us by the ill advice of Friend, to take also the front-ground to the street, and build two little houses on it, to our great loss, all her own money, and many times more, being laid out upon them, much against her inclination).

§. 8. When that Chappel was finished, I began and preacht there but one day, being to go on the morrow into the Countrey. It unhappily fell out, that Secretary *Henry Coventry's* house was on the back-side of it, who resolved that it should not be used by us. The next Lords day, when I was far off, and left my Wife at home, she got one Mr. *Seddon*, a *Derbyshire*-stranger then come to Town, to preach there (an humble pious man, that had suffered imprisonment formerly by *Cromwell's* Party

for being for the King's Restoration at the rising of Sir *George Booth*): Secretary *Coventry* thinking I would be there, had got three Justices with a Warrant as for me, to have apprehended me, and sent me to Goal. But it fell on Mr. *Seddon*. But because the Warrant made for me, was so altered as to the name that it suited not his case, after some time of Imprisonment he had his *Habeas Corpus*, and by the Justice of worthy Judg *Hale* and other Judges, was delivered. But he was a tender man, and my Wife sensible that she was the occasion (which did her no good), and all the burden lay on her to maintain him, to visit and comfort him, to pay the Lawyers, and discharge all fees; which as I remember cost her 20 l. And yet we were calumniated as if I (that was twenty miles off) had put another to suffer in my stead.

§. 9. When she saw that we could not be suffered to preach in the place which upon her promise she had built; she was very glad that Dr. *Lloyd* and the Parishioners accepted of it for their publick Worship; asking them no more Rent than we were to pay for the ground, and the Room over for a Vestry at 5 l. and asking no advantage for all the moneey laid out on the building: yet since the purchase of the fee-simple of the Chappel-ground hath cost me 200 l. more (and the adjoining ground 200 l. more, to my great loss).

§. 10. So much was her heart set on the helping the ignorant untaught poor about St. *Jameses*, that she set up a School there to teach some poor chil-

dren to read, and the Catechism freely; and thereby also relieved a poor honest man that taught them, who hath a Wife and many children, and no other maintenance of his own. [Mr. *Bruce*.] And she would fain have set up more, had she had money: For this she beg'd a while of her good friends; but they quickly gave over, and she paid him mostly of her own, six pound a year, till her death. I mention this, to move some charitable people to continue it; and to tell them, that in the many great out-parishes of *London* there are multitudes of the children of the poor, that spend their time in idleness, and play, and are never taught to read; and that there are many good women very poor, that would be glad of a small stipued to teach such to read, and the Catechism; and so both might have relief and help: and I think Charity can scarce be better used, as honest Mr. *Gouge* hath in *Wales* found by experience. And I would such places in *London* where the tenth or the fourth person in the Parish cannot come to Church, and many thousands have disused themselves from Gods publick Worship, and breed up their children accordingly, were pitied as well as *Wales*.

§. II. When she saw that I could not use the Chappel which she built, she presently hired another near (ready built, for gain) in *Swallow-street*, that the poor people where I had begun (through Gods mercy with considerable success) might still be taught: and when I had there a while continued, and was kept out (by the Officers standing at the door with the Justices Warrant many Months toge-

ther) it was her care and act to refer it to many good Ministers, to choose one for the place that would be better endured by them that would not endure me; and a faithful painful self-denying man was chosen, who hath there done much good, and still doth.

§. 12. When I was thence driven, it was her choice that I should go quite to *Southwark* each Lords-day, to Preach to a Congregation of poor people there.

§. 13. When Dr. *Manton's* place, at *Covent-Garden*, was void, it was her desire that I should Preach once a day there, because being near, many of the poor of St. *James's* would come thither, as they did.

§. 14. She got from her friends also money to help to build another very useful Chappel for another, among a numerous poor people, where still much good is done. And she promoted two or three such more.

§. 15. She was very impatient of publick Collections for the Ministers, or for the Rent of the place, because it sounded ill, and prejudiced the ignorant and covetous, and troubled the poor that had no money; and therefore did the utmost she could with her own Purse and her friends to avoid it, knowing that Rent must be paid, and Ministers and their Families must have Bread (and it's pity they should be under the cares of want).

§. 16. She was so far from crossing me in my preaching freely without Salary, or gathering a Church that would maintain me, or making Collections, or getting Subscriptions, that she would not have endured any such thing if I had desired it; though she knew that the labourer was worthy of his hire, and that God had ordained, that they that Preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel: yet she knew that all must be done to the furtherance of the Gospel, and to edifying; and was of *Paul's* mind, that would rather die than any should make his glorying void, and deprive him of that reward. Therefore it was so far from offending her (as it would be with many Ministers Wives that were in want, and might have such maintenance as is their due), that I neither conformed, nor took any place of gain, that it was as much by her will as my own, that for the first nine or ten years of my ejected state I took not so much as any private gift to supply my wants, except Ten Pounds a year from Serjeant *Fountaine*, which his importunity, and my civility would not permit me to refuse.

§. 17. And I take it yet for a greater part of her self-denial and charity, that when her own Estate proved much too short to maintain her in the exercise of such good works as she was devoted to, she at length refused not to accept with thanks the liberality of others, and to live partly on Charity, that she might exercise Charity to them that could not so easily get it from others as we could do: And accordingly of latter years divers faithful pious friends (no way related to us, or obliged by us) have been so free, kind and liberal, that I have much ado to for-

bear here naming them, in expression of their bounty, and my thanks. And I must say of her, that once her pride would not have stooped to be so much beholden, as to live on the Charity of strangers.

§. 18. When Warrants were out (from Sir *Thomas Davis*) to distrain of my goods for fines for my Preaching, she did, without any repining, encourage me to undergo the loss, and did her self take the trouble of removing, and hiding my Library a while (many score being so lost), and after, to give it away, *bonâ fide*, some to *New England*, and the most at home to avoid distraining on them. And the danger of Imprisonment, and paying 40. *l.* for every Sermon, was so far from enclining her to hinder or discourage me from any one Sermon, that if she did but think I had the least fear, or self-saving by fleshly wisdom, in shrinking from my undertaken Office work, it was so great a trouble to her, that she could not hide it (who could too much hide many others).

§. 19. She was exceeding impatient with any Nonconforming Ministers that shrunk for fear of suffering, or that were over-querulous and sensible of their wants or dangers; and would have no man be a Minister that had not so much self-denial as to lay down all at the feet of Christ, and count no cost or suffering too dear to serve him. She greatly hated choosing, or using the sacred Ministry for wealth, ease, or honour, or any worldly end, serving the flesh under the name of serving Christ, and looking to be revered and honoured in this taking of Gods Name in vain.

§. 20. Accordingly after some years, wherein a larger course had been taken, she was against my perswading Parents to devote their children to the Ministry, that had but good Wits and Parts, and were not prophane; though my success with some did much encourage me to it heretofore: But her sense of the sin and mischief of bad Ministers, made her perswade all, that in that case she had to do with, to take heed of devoting their Sons to the Ministry, till they had good reason to judg them truly godly; and as she would not have pious persons to Marry such as were not pious, on pretence of hopes that God would convert them; so much less would she have such hopes that have no promise from God, pretended for devoting unsanctified lads to the Sacred Office: she saw how many, even of good mens children, prophaned the Ministry, and turned to any course that did but serve their worldly interest; that she was vehemently against addicting any to that Office, that had not besides good Wits and Parts, so great a love to God and Souls, as to come to it with absolute self-denial, resolved to serve Christ at the dearest rates, and take his acceptance, and the winning of Souls for their Benefice.

She was not willing to entice any into the way of the Ministry, as a common Trade to live by in the world; and would have had two or three Reading, Writing, and Catechising-Schools set up instead of one Grammar-School: And she would not have Parents make *Scholars* of bad children, nor send them to the Universities, lest when they had a little wordy Learning they should make themselves Ministers,

whether their Parents would or not; and so a swarm of such as had been a few years at the University, should think a Benefice their due, and take the charge of the souls of many, that never knew the worth of one, nor how it must be qualified and guided.

§. 21. Her expectations of liberality to the poor from others were too high, and her displeasure too great towards them that denied her; whereupon when she saw a worthy person in debt, or Prison, or great want, she would promise to gather them such a Sum, and sometimes she was put to pay most of it her self: But a Fortnight or Month before she died, she promised to get 20. *l.* towards the relief of one of known name and worth, and could get but 8. *l.* and somewhat over of it, and paid all the rest her self.

§. 22. Her judgment was, that we ought to give more or less to every one that asketh, if we have it; and that *Neighbourhood*, and *notice*, and *asking*, next to *known indigence*, and *great worth*, are the marks by which to know to whom God would have us give. I thought, that besides these, we must exercise prudence in discerning the degrees of need and worth. But she practised as she thought, and specially to them in Prison for debt; and blamed me if I denied any one.

§. 23. Alas! I know many poor Widows, and o-thers, that think they have now lost a Mother, and are left desolate, whom I could wish some that are able would help, instead of the help which they have lost.

§. 24. She was much more liberal to many of my own poor kindred than I was: But her way was not to maintain them in idleness, but to take children, and set them to some Trade, or help them out of some special straits.

§. 25. To her own kindred she bare a most tender love: but her care was most to get them to be good, and save their souls, and next to settle them well in the world. I had ever been greatly averse to motion Marriages, yet she even compelled me (first satisfying my reason) to be a motioner of a Wife to her only Brothers Son, who, it's said, was worth to him above 20000. *l.* And her Sisters children she loved as if they had been her own, especially three Daughters.

§. 26. There are some things charged on her as faults, which I shall mention. 1. That she busied her head so much about Churches, and works of Charity, and was not content to live privately and quietly. But this is but just what prophane unbelievers say against all zeal, and serious godliness: *what needs there all this ado? Doth not Paul* call some women his helps in the Gospel? He that knows what it is to do good, and makes it the business of his life in the world, and knows what it is to give account of our stewardship, and to be doomed as the unprofitable slothful servant, will know how to answer this accusation.

§. 28. Another accusation is, that she was wasteful and imprudent in leaving me so much in debt.

To that I answer, 1. Let any one that reads what went before, consider what she did, and he will not wonder at her debts: It was not to pamper her own body; she used mean clothing, and a far meaner diet for her own person, I think much less than *Cornario's* and *Lessius's* proportion.

2. And she went into no debt but (by mortgage, or otherwise) she gave the Creditors good security for.

3. But I confess she and I differed in this; I thought I was to give but all my Income, and not to borrow to give, unless in some publick, or extraordinary case: she thought otherwise, that while she could give security, she ought to borrow to relieve the poor, especially the most worthy. Nor did she draw upon us any debt, but what there was not only sufficient security for, but also a fair prospect of our selves having a competency left, had it pleased God to lengthen her life: and I am far from fearing want my self.

But so much for opening the course of her studies, labours, expences, and indeed her delights.

CHAP. VIII.

Of her Mental Qualifications, and her Infirmities.

§. 1. **I**Doubt not but some of these accusers will say, *Why open you all this? Were not you the Master? and do not you hereby praise your self; or else confess that she was your governess.*

Ans. 1. Perhaps love and grief may make me speak more than many will think fit. But though some passion blind the judgment, some doth but suscite it to duty; and God made it to that end: and I will not be judged by any that never felt the like.

2. Did not Christ say of *Marys Box of Ointment*, that it should be remembered wherever that Gospel was Preached? And was it not *Judas* that said, *what need this wast?* And were not the poors clothing, made by *Dorcas*, shewed to move *Peter*? The poor we have always with us. Do the covetous believe, that what we do to his people, we do to Christ?

3. It was not mine which she gave, but her own, that I am now mentioning, and what she procured.

4. But I am not ashamed to have been much ruled by her prudent love in many things. And you will the less wonder when I have told you what she and I were.

§. 2. For my self, my constant pains, and weakness, and Ministerial labours, forbad me the care of outward things. I had never much known worldly

cares: Before I was Married I had no need; afterwards she took the care on her: and disuse had made it intolerable to me. I feel now more of it than ever I did, when yet I have so little a way to go.

§. 3. And as for her (I speak the truth), her apprehension of such things was so much quicker, and more discerning than mine; that though I was naturally somewhat tenacious of my own conceptions, her reasons, and my experience usually told me, that she was in the right, and knew more than I. She would at the first hearing understand the matter better than I could do by many and long thoughts.

§. 4. And the excellency of her reason lay not so much in the speculative, as the *prudential practical part*: I must say, that in this I never knew her equal: In very hard cases, about what was to be done, she would suddenly open all the way that was to be opened, in things of the Family, Estate, or any civil business. And to confess the truth, experience acquainted her, that I knew less in such things than she; and therefore was willing she should take it all upon her.

§. 5. Yea, I will say that, which they that believe me to be no liar, will wonder at; *Except in cases that require Learning, and skill in Theological difficulties, she was better at resolving a case of conscience than most Divines that ever I knew in all my life.* I often put cases to her, which she suddenly so resolved, as to convince me of some degree of over-sight in

my own resolution. Insomuch that of late years, I confess, that I was used to put all, save secret cases, to her, and hear what she could say. Abundance of difficulties were brought me, some about Restituti, on, some about Injuries, some about References, some about Vows, some about Marriage promises, and many such like; and she would lay all the circumstances presently together, compare them, and give me a more exact resolution than I could do.

§. 6. As to Religion, we were so perfectly of one mind, that I know not that she differed from me in any one point, or scarce a circumstance, except in the prudential management of what we were agreed in: She was for universal love of all true Christians, and against appropriating the Church to a Party, and against censoriousness and partiality in Religion; she was for acknowledging all that is of God in Conformists and Nonconformists: But she had much more reverence for the elder Conformists than for most of the young ones, who ventured upon things which Dissenters had so much to say against, without weighing, or understanding the reasons on both sides, meerly following others for worldly ends, without a tender fear of sinning; especially if any young men of her own friends were inclined meerly to swim with the stream, without due tryal of the case, it greatly displeased her, and she thought hardly of them.

§. 7. She had in her Youth been tempted to doubt of the Life to come, and of the Truth of the Scripture: But she was so fully resolved and settled

herein, that her confident Assurance of it was the life of all her Life and Practice.

§. 8. After all the doubts of her Sincerity and Salvation, and all the Fears and Sadness thereupon, which cast her into Melancholy, she so far overcame them all, that for near these Nineteen years that I have lived with her, I think I never heard her thrice speak a doubting word of her Salvation, but oft of her hopeful perswasions, that we should live together in Heaven: It being my judgment and constant practice, to make those that I teach, understand, that the Gospel is glad Tidings of great Joy; and that Holiness lies especially in delighting in God, his Word and Works, and in his joyful praise, and hopes of Glory, and longing for, and seeking the Heavenly *Jerusalem*; and living as fruitfully to the Church and others, as we can do in the world: And that this must be wrought by the most believing apprehensions of God's Goodness, as equal to his Greatness, and of his great Love to Mankind manifested in our Redemption, and by believing the Grace and Riches of Christ, and the Comforting-Office of the Holy Ghost, and studying daily God's Promises and Mercies, and our everlasting Joys. And that Religion consists in doing God's commanding Will, and quietly and joyfully trusting and resting in his promising and disposing Will. And that Fear and Sorrow are but to remove Impediments, and further all this.

And this Doctrine by degrees she drunk in, and so fully consented to, that (though Timorousness was her Disease) her judgment was quieted and settled herein.

§. 9. The nature of true Religion, Holiness, Obedience, and all Duty to God and man, was printed in her conceptions, in so distinct and clear a Character, as made her endeavours and expectations still look at greater exactness, than I and such as I could reach. She was very desirous that we should all have lived in a constancy of Devotion, and a blameless Innocency: And in this respect she was the meetest helper that I could have had in the world (that ever I was acquainted with): For I was apt to be over-careless in my Speech, and too backward to my Duty; And she was still endeavouring to bring me to greater wariness and strictness in both: If I spake rashly or sharply, it offended her: If I carried it (as I was apt) with too much neglect of Ceremony, or humble Complement to any, she would modestly tell me of it: If my very Looks seemed not pleasant, she would have had me amend them (which my weak pained state of Body undisposed me to do:) If I forgat any Week to Catechise my Servants, and familiarly instruct them personally (besides my ordinary Family-Duties) she was troubled at my remissness. And whereas of late years my decay of Spirits, and diseased heaviness and pain, made me much more seldom and cold in profitable Conference and Discourse in my house, than I had been when I was younger, and had more Ease, and Spirits, and natural Vigour, she much blamed me, and was troubled at it, as a wrong to her self and others: Though yet her judgment agreed with mine, that too much and often Table-talk of the best things, doth but tend to dull the common hearers, and harden them

under it as a customary thing: And that too much good talk may bring it into contempt, or make it ineffectual.

And of late years, my constant weakness and pain made me unable to speak much in my ordinary course of Duty; and my Writings, Preachings and other publick Duty (which I ever thought I was bound to prefer before lesser) did so wholly take up those few hours of the day, which I had out of my Bed, that I was seldomer in secret Prayer with my Wife than she desired.

§. 10. Indeed it troubleth me to think how oft I told her, *That I never understood Solomon's words, Eccles. 7. 16. but by the Exposition of her case, [Be not righteous overmuch, neither make thy self overwise: Why shouldst thou destroy thy self?] I doubt not but Solomon spake of Humane Civil Righteousness and Wisdom, as a means respecting Temporal Prosperity or Adversity, rather than Spiritual, holy Righteousness, respecting God's everlasting Reward: Or if it were extended to Religious Righteousness, it can be but against Superstition, falsely called Righteousness.*

But as to our present case, I must thus resolve the Question, *Whether one can be religiously wise and righteous overmuch?* And I Answer, That we must distinguish between, 1. *Material and Formal Righteousness.* 2. *Between Objective and Subjective measures of it.* 3. *Of the good and bad consequents and effects.* And 1. no man can be *formally and properly too wise or too righteous.* Else it would charge God with Er-

rour: For formal proper Righteousness is nothing but our Conformity to God's governing Will. And if our Obedience were too much, and to be blamed, God's commands were to be blamed, that required it. But very strict actions are commonly called *Righteousness*, as a written Prayer or words are called a Prayer, though properly wanting the Form, it is not so. And not only a good Object, but a right End, Principle, and *Mode*, and Circumstances, go to make an Action righteous. 2. That Action which compared with the Object cannot possibly be over-wise and righteous, yet as compared with the Agent, or Subject, may be too much: No man can know, believe, or love God too much, nor answerable to his Perfections. But one may possibly be transported with so earnest a desire of God, Christ, Christian Society, Holiness and Heaven, as may be more than Head and Health can bear: And so it may be too much for the subject. 3. Therefore the probable effects must be weighed. He that should meditate, read, yea love God so intensely as to distract him, would to it overmuch. He that would do a good work precisely, when the exactness would hinder the substance of another, perhaps a better, would be righteous overmuch. And I thought this the case sometime of my dear Wife; 1. She set her *Head* and *Heart* so *intensely* upon doing good, that her *Head* and *Body* would hardly bear it. As holy set Meditation is no Duty to a Melancholy person that cannot do it without confusion and danger of distraction; so many other Duties are no Duties, when they will do more harm than good. 2. And a man is limited in his Capacity and his Time: No man

can do all the good he would; and to omit a greater for the better doing of a lesser, or to omit the substance of the one for exacter doing of another, I thought was to be unrighteous by being righteous overmuch. She (and some others) thought I had done better to have written fewer Books, and to have done those few better. I thought, while I wrote none needlessly, the modall imperfection of two was less evil than the total omission of one: She thought I should have spent more time in Religious exercise with her, my Family, and my Neighbours, though I had written less. I thought there were many to do such work, that would not do mine; and that I chose the greatest, which I durst not omit, and could not do both in the measure that I desired else to have done.

§. II. As she saith (before cited) her self, that *if she was but in a condition, in which Gods service was costly to her, it would make her know whether she were sincere or not*; so she had her wish, and proved her sincerity by her costliest obedience: It cost her not only her labour and Estate, but somewhat of her trouble of body and mind; For her knife was too keen, and cut the sheath. Her desires were more earnestly set on doing good, than her tender mind and head could well bear; for indeed her great infirmity was the four Passions of Love, Desire, Fear, and Trouble of Mind. Anger she either had very little, next none, or little made it known. She rarely ever spake in an angry manner: She could not well bear to hear one speak loud, or hastily, or eagerly, or angrily, even to those that deserved it: My

temper in this she blamed, as too quick and earnest: When her servants did any fault unwillingly, she scarce ever told them of it; when one lost Ten Pounds worth of Linnen in carriage carelesly, and another Ten Pounds worth of Plate by negligence, she shewed no anger at any such thing. If servants had done amiss, and we could not prove it, or knew not which did it, she would never ask them her self, nor suffer others, lest it should tempt them to hide it by a lye (unless it were a servant that feared God, and would not lye).

I took her deep and long sense of the faults of over-loved and obliged persons, to be one of her greatest faults. But no one was ever readier to forgive a fault confessed, or which weakness and religious differences caused. I will give but one instance: The good woman whom she used to hire the Rooms over St. *Jameses* Market-house, was greatly against the Common-prayer, and first made my Wife feel whether I meant to use it, before she would take it. I told her I intended not to use it, but would not promise her. Upon that my Wife told her that I would not. After this I caused the *Reader* to read the Psalms, Chapters, Creed, Decalogue, and I used the Lord, Prayer; and I openly told them, that we met not as a Separated distinct Church, but for the time to supply the notorious necessities of the people, and as helpers of the allowed Ministry. The good woman thought this had been reading the Common-Prayer, and in a Letter which I now find, accused my Wife with five or six vehement charges, for telling her I would not read the Common-Prayer. My Wife was of my mind for the Matter; but greatly

offended with me for seeming to do it for the avoiding of danger; and was so far from not pardoning these false smart accusations, that she never once blamed the good woman, but loved her, tendered her, and relieved her in sickness to the death, but hardly forgave me; and yet drew me from all other places, if the Ministers were not of my mind (by prudent diversity).

Much less did her sufferings from the times distemper her. She hath blamed me for naming in print my Losses, Imprisonment, and other sufferings by the Bishops, as being over selfish querulousness, when I should rather with wonder be thankful for the great mercy we yet enjoyed. Though I think I never mentioned them as over-sensible of the sufferings, but as a necessary evincing of the nature of the cause, and as part of the necessary history or matter of fact in order to decide it. She as much disliked the silencing of the Ministers, as any; but she did not love to hear it much complained of, save as the publick loss; nor to hear *Conformists* talkt against as a Party; nor the faults of the conscientious sort of them aggravated in a siding factious manner. But 1. she was prone to *over-love* her *Relations*, and those good people (poor as much as rich) whom she thought most upright. The love was good, but the degree was too passionate. 2. She *over-earnestly* desired their spiritual welfare. If these whom she over-loved, had not been as good, and done as well as she would have them, in innocent behaviour, in piety, and (if rich) in liberality, it over-troubled her, and she could not bear it.

3. She was apt when she set her mind and heart upon some good work which she counted *great*, or the welfare of some dear Friend, to be too much pleased in her expectations and self-made promises of the success; and then almost overturned with trouble when they disappointed her. And she too impatiently bore unkindnesses from the friends that were most dear to her, or whom she had much obliged. Her will was set upon good, but her weakness could not bear the crossing or frustration of it.

§. 12. But the great infirmity which tyrannized over her, was a diseased *fearfulness*, against which she had little more free will or power, than a man in an Ague or Frost, against shaking cold. Her nature was prone to it; and I said before, abundance of sad accidents made that, and *trouble* of mind, her malady. Besides (as she said) four times in danger of death. 2. And the storming of her Mothers house by Soldiers, firing part, killing, plundering, and threatenng the rest. 3. The awakenings of her conversion. 4. The sentence of death by sickness presently, before her peace was settled. 5. The fire next her Lodgings in *Sweetings-Alley*. 6. The burning of a Merchant, his Wife and Family, in *Lothbury*, overagainst her Brother *Upton's* door. 7. The common terror and confusion at *Dunstans* Church in *Fleet-street*, when they thought the Church was falling on their heads while I was preaching, and the people cast themselves down from the Galleries. 8. Her Mothers death. 9. The friendless state she thought she was then left in. 10. The great Plague. 11. The Burning of *London*. 12. The crack and danger of her Chamber in *Aldersgate street*. 13. The crack

and confusion at St. *Jameses* Market-house. 14. The many Fires and talk of firing since. 15. The common rumours of Murderings and Massacres. 16. The death and dangers of many of her friends, and my own illness. More than all these concurred to make *fear* and *aptness* to be troubled, to be her disease: so that she much dreamed of fire and murderers; and her own dreams workt half as dangerously on her as realities; so that she could not bear the clapping of a door, or any thing that had suddenness, noise, or fierceness in it. But all this was more the malady of her body than of her soul; and I accounted had little moral guilt: and I took it for an evidence of the power of grace, that so timerous a person 1. had overcome most of her fears of Hell and Gods desertion. 2. And was more fearless of persecution, imprisonment, or losses and poverty thereby, than I or any that I remember to have known.

§. 13. And though her spirits were so quick, and she so apt to be troubled at mens sin whom she much loved, she greatly differed from me in her bearing with them, and carriage towards them. My temper and judgment much led me to use my dependents, servants and friends, according to the rules of Church-discipline; and if they heard not loving, private admonitions once, twice, and thrice, to speak to them more sharply, and then before others, and to turn them off if yet they would not amend. But her way was to oblige them by all the love, kindness and bounty that she was able, and to bear with them year after year while there was hope, and at last not to desert them, but still use them so as she though was likest

at least to keep them in a state of hope from the badness which displicency might cause. I could not have born with a Son, I think, as she could do where her kindness was at her own choice; and yet she more disliked the least fault than I did, and was more desirous of their greatest innocency and exactness.

§. 14. Indeed she was so much for calmness, deliberation, and doing nothing rashly, and in haste, and my condition and business, as well as temper made me do, and speak much so suddenly, that she principally differed from me, and blamed me in this; every considerable case and business she would have me take time to think much of before I did it, or speak, or resolved of any thing. I knew the counsel was good for one that could stay, but not for one that must ride Post: I thought still I had but a little time to live; I thought some considerable work still called for haste: I have these Forty years been sensible of the sin of losing time: I could not spare an hour: I thought I could understand the matters in question as well at a few thoughts as in many days: and yet she (that had less work and more leisure, but) a far quicker apprehension than mine, was all for staying to consider, and against haste and eargerness in almost every thing; and notwithstanding her over quick, and feeling temper, was all for mildness, calmness, gentleness, pleasingness and serenity.

§. 15. She had an earnest desire of the conversion and salvation of her servants, and was greatly

troubled that so many of them (though tollerable in their work) went away ignorant, or strange to true godliness, as they came: And such as were truly converted with us she loved as children.

§. 16. One infirmity made her faulty in the omission of much of her duty: She was wont to say, that she had from her childhood Imprinted a deep fear and hatred of hypocrisie on her mind, that she could never do the outside of her duty, as to the speaking part, for fear of hypocrisie: I scarce ever met with a person that was abler to speak long, for matter and good language, without repetitions, even about Religious things; and few that had more desire that it were well done; and yet she could not do it her self for fear of seeming to be guilty of ostentation. In good company she would speak little of that which she most desired to hear. When I was at any time from home, she would not pray in the Family, though she could not endure to be without it. She would privately talk to the servants, and read good books to them. Most of the open speaking part of Religion she omitted, through a diseased enmity to ostentation and hypocrisie. But of late years, when she saw me and others too sparing in profitable speech to young and ignorant people, she confest that she saw her error, and that even an hypocrite, using but the words and outside of Religion, was better to others than silence and unprofitable omission was.

§. 17. Her household-affairs she ordered with so great skill and decency, as that others much praised that which I was no fit judg of: I had been bred among plain mean people, and I thought that so much washing of Stairs and Rooms, to keep them as clean as their Trenchers and Dishes, and so much ado about cleanliness and trifles, was a sinful curiosity, and expence of servants time, who might that while have been reading some good book. But she that was otherwise bred, had somewhat other thoughts.

§. 18. Her great tender impatiency lay much in her ears: She could not bear (without great reason) a disputing contradiction; nor yet to hear sad tidings, nor any hard prognostick; and it was because she felt the weakness of her own head, and for Twenty years lived in too great fears of the overthrow of her understanding. And I was apt to think it was but a passionate fanciful fear, and was too apt to be *impatient with her impatiency*, and with every *trouble* of her mind, not enough considering how great tenderness in all our discourse she needed; though I remember nothing else that ever I shewed impatience to her in: but ever since her first danger, and *strong* affection, I could hardly bear any signification of her displeasure and discontent. And she was wont oft to say, It is a great mercy of God not to know what will befall us in this world, nor how we shall be sick, or suffer, or die, that our fore-knowledg may not anticipate our sorrows, though in the general we should be always ready.

§. 19. She was the greatest honourer of her Mother, and most sincerely loved her, that ever I knew a Child do to a Parent: She believed the Promise of the Fifth Commandment, and believed that it did imply an answerable Curse to them that broke it. And that as honouring Parents hath even the Promise of Blessings on Earth, so the dishonouring them is like to bring a Curse upon the Person, or Family, that is guilty of it: And that how great soever their present Prosperity may seem, it is coming and will overtake them, either in their Bodies, Children, or Estates. Prov. 30. 17. *The eye that mocketh at his Father, and despiseth to obey his Mother, the Ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young Eagles shall eat it:* And such by Moses's Law were to be put to Death, Deut. 27. 16. CURSED BE HE THAT SETTETH LIGHT BY HIS FATHER OR HIS MOTHER; AND LET ALL THE PEOPLE SAY, AMEN. And will God suspend it till the Sinner saith, *Amen?* O no. And what is that persons Case that liveth under this Curse of God? If the *Body* escape it, and *Posterity* escape it, and the *Estate* escape it, yea and a seared *Conscience* scape it few years, the *Soul* will not escape it for ever, without deep and through Repentance; for Christ hath redeemed none but sincere Penitents from the Curse: Yea, even such seldom scape the Temporal sharp Chastisement.

And very worthy was her Mother of her Love and Honour; All her Letters to her when she was from home, I find now laid up by her as a Treasure:

sure; I will transcribe part of some of them, that you may perceive her plain and honest Care of her Childrens Souls.

§. 20. In one, 1657. to this Daughter at *Oxford*, she writes thus.

‘I Cannot but put you in mind of your Duty you
 ‘owe to God; I mean, that you see that you
 ‘lose not your time: If you be where you may im-
 ‘prove your time for Grace, and getting down Sin,
 ‘I shall give you my consent for your stay [*with her*
 ‘*Brother Upton, Canon of Christ Church.*] But be
 ‘sure you do not deceive your self herein, for God
 ‘will not be mocked: He that doth righteously
 ‘and liveth to Christ, shall enjoy all the Blessings
 ‘promised by God to them that trust him, and obey
 ‘him. I bless my God, I have my Health as well as
 ‘I can wish; and my heart runs out wholly to God,
 ‘in seeking a Blessing for Children, and Childrens
 ‘Children. O that I may prevail by Prayer to see
 ‘such hopes of you all, upon good grounds, as will
 ‘be a gracious return to my Prayers. This is my
 ‘work. Be not you wanting to your selves (your
 ‘Endeavours and Prayers also are necessary). Who
 ‘knows but God will give you that One thing ne-
 ‘cessary, which if you shall make it your chiefest
 ‘choice, shall never be taken from you? Let the
 ‘Word of God dwell plentifully in you, that it may
 ‘be the Rule of your Life; which is the Prayer of
 ‘your truly Loving Mother,

Mary Hanmer.

§. 21. In another, 1657. thus.

‘**I** Know not why you should write in Tears, be-
 ‘cause of an apprehension of my Displeasure;
 ‘and that you can see it at so great a distance, is
 ‘strange to me. If your Information be of God, to
 ‘whom you appeal, look to it; if of men, believe
 ‘it not. Many false Fears may arise, for want of
 ‘the true Fear of offending a Good and Gracious
 ‘God: All your Fears and all your Joys must be
 ‘founded in him, or else your life here will be very
 ‘uncomfortable. Had not I my Comforts from my
 ‘God, and not only in the Creature, I had sunk
 ‘long since, and often in Despair. Take my Expe-
 ‘rience, or rather hear the Word of God, which
 ‘saies, *It is better to trust in God, than to put confi-*
 ‘*dence in Riches: It is better to trust in God, than to*
 ‘*put confidence in men.* Be well acquainted with the
 ‘Will of God, and be sure in all things to please
 ‘him, and then all other Cares and Fears will be of
 ‘no value to you. O let it be your daily study, and
 ‘let me in writing see some fruits of your labours,
 ‘before I go hence and be seen here no more. Be
 ‘not wanting to your own Comforts, and you can-
 ‘not displease God nor your Mother, who longs
 ‘more after your Eternal Good, than I can now ut-
 ‘ter. My Love to you all, and Prayers for you all.
 ‘I continue,

Your most tenderly Loving Mother,

M. H.

§. 22. In another to *Oxford*, 1657.

‘**A**LL will work for good to them that love
 ‘God; I hope you are one of those: The
 ‘Lord direct your paths, that you may work out
 ‘your Salvation with fear and trembling in your
 ‘Youth, and not let time slip till Age, which will
 ‘come (or Death before it) on all flesh, and an ac-
 ‘count must be given of the precious Time which
 ‘we now neglect. I have more to say; but when I
 ‘see you, it will be done with more ease. The Lord
 ‘keep you all, and make you faithful to the Death,
 ‘that you may receive the Crown of Glory; which
 ‘is the Prayer of her that tendreth the good of
 ‘your Soul. M. H.

§. 23. In 1659. In another she writes thus;

‘**M**Y dear Child—— My greatest Trouble is,
 ‘that I can have no better account of your
 ‘health of Body; yet surely the cure of the Soul is
 ‘of far more worth: Therefore I faint not: Else I
 ‘could not subsist under the heavy stroke which I
 ‘have justly deserved. Who knows, but my sins may
 ‘be some cause of thy distress of Soul? However,
 ‘let us return to the Lord, and he will heal all our
 ‘breaches, and will bind up all our Sores, and will
 ‘give us a house not made with hands, eternal in the
 ‘Heavens, where we shall never be forc’d asunder,
 ‘and all Infirmities shall be left behind; and we
 ‘shall take up all pleasure in the enjoyment of our
 ‘Heavenly Redeemer. In the mean time, let us

‘with courage and confidence press hard toward the
 ‘mark, for the price of that calling which was set
 ‘before us: *For the things which are seen are tempo-
 ‘ral, but the the things which are not seen are eternal.*
 ‘I can go no further, but cannot forget to be

Thy truly Loving Mother,

M. H.

This was written to her in her sickness, when, for better Air, she lay at Old Mr. *Richard Foly’s* house, at *Stourbridge*.

§. 24. I have transcribed these, to shew the mind and care of the good Gentlewoman, and what cause I and my Neighbours had of comassion to her in her Sorrows, when she was separated from an only Son, whose welfare she had prosecuted with so strong affection, and long labour and patience, and began to have much comfort in this Daughter whom she had formerly least valued, and thought she must so suddenly leave her. Let those that think these too little matters to be told the World, remember, that *Neerness, Love and Sorrow*, may be allowed to make things greater to me, than they seem to those that are not so concerned in them. *And that Mr. Fox in his Book of Martyrs, publisheth a great number of as mean Letters as any of these, even some of women, and some written to the Martyrs, as well as those written by them.* And while I say that, I will add, that though for Nineteen years I was so seldom from her, that she had few Letters of mine,

yet those which she had I find now among her reserved Papers: And that you may see what it was that I' thought she most desired, and what she her self most valued, I will here add one of them (not venturing to trouble such with more, as are affected little with any matters but their own, which is the case of most). I recite this rather than others, partly also as an act of repentance for those failings of her just expectations, by the neglect of such helps as I should have given her, which I had here mentioned. For though she oft said, that before she Married me she expected more sowness, and unsuitableness than she found; yet I am sure that she found less zeal, and holiness, and strictness in all words, and looks, and duties, and less help for her soul than she expected: And her temper was to aggravate a fault much more in her nearest and dearest friends than in any others, and to be far more troubled at them. But this use she made of my too cold and careless converse, and of all my impatience with her impatience, and of all my hasty words, that she that had long thought she had no grace, because she reach't not higher than almost any reach on Earth, and because she had many Passions and Infirmities, perceived by me and many other esteemed Teachers, that we were all as bad as she; and therefore grace doth stand with more faultiness than she had imagined, and that all our teaching much excelled the frame of our souls and lives, and was much more worthy to be followed; and therefore that God would also pardon such failings as her own.

‘Though

‘**T**Hough I have received none from you, but
‘one by Mr. *H.* I will not be avenged on
‘you by the like. I have nothing of News, or bu-
‘siness to communicate, but to tell you, that we
‘are all here yet as well as you left us, excepting
‘what your absence causeth. And yet I must con-
‘fess, I find that it is easier to be oft speaking to
‘God, when I have no body else to speak to, than
‘when there are other Competitors, Expectants, or
‘Interpellators. Just as I can easier now fill my Pa-
‘per to thee, with some speech of God, when I
‘have nothing else to put into it, than I can when
‘many other matters are craving every one a place.
‘It is our shame that the Love and Glory of God
‘doth not silence every other Suiter, and even in
‘the midst of crowds and business take us up, and
‘and press every creature and occasion for their ser-
‘vice. But while we are weak, and compassed with
‘flesh, we must not only consider what we *should*
‘do, but what we *can* do. It is our great fault that
‘we are no skilfuller, and faithfuller in helping one
‘another, that we might miss each other on better
‘reasons, than meerly from the inclinations of Love.
‘I hope God will make us better hereafter, that
‘when we are asunder, each of us may say, I miss
‘the help for Watchfulness and Heavenliness, for
‘true Love and Thankfulness to God, which I was
‘wont to have. But O! what an enemy is a naugh-
‘ty heart! which maketh us unable for our duty a-
‘lone, and makes us need the help of others, and yet
‘will not suffer us to use it when we have it. When we
‘are alone, it maketh us impediments to our selves, and
‘when we are in company it maketh us impediments

'to others. Yet is there none, no, not the weakest of
 'Christians, but there is much in them that we
 'might improve. But we are so bad and backward
 'at it, that Satan too commonly hath his end, in
 'making us unprofitable to each other: If a good
 'Horse, or a good House be a valuable mercy, how
 'much more is a good friend? But Art and Industry
 'are necessary to the improvement. And no won-
 'der when we fetch not the help and comfort which
 'we might have from God, from Christ himself, from
 'Heaven, from Scripture, for want of improving
 'skill and industry. O how easie is it, when our
 'friends are taken from us, to say, Thus, and thus I
 'might, and should have used them, rather than so
 'to use them while we have them! I hope God will
 'help me to make some better use of thee while we
 'are together: and at a distance, O let not a hearty
 'request to God for each other, be any day want-
 'ing. Dear heart, the time of our mutual help is
 'short (O let us use it accordingly); but the time
 'of our reaping the fruit of this, and all holy en-
 'deavours, and preparatory mercies, will be endless.
 'Yet a little while, and we shall be both with Christ.
 'He is willing of us, and I hope we are willing of
 'him, and of his Grace, though the flesh be weak.
 'I am absent, but God is still with you, your daily
 'Guide and Keeper; and I hope you will labour to
 'make him your daily Comfort. And now you
 'have none to divert and hinder you, to say, [*When*
 '*I awake, I am still with thee.*] And when you are
 'up, [*I have set the Lord always before me; because he*
 '*is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.*] And
 'when Thoughts crowd in, [*In the multitude of my*

'thoughts within me, thy Comforts delight my Soul.
'And when Thoughts would trouble and perplex
'you, My Meditation of him shall be sweet, and I will
'delight in the Lord. And when your Wants and
'Duty call you to him, It is good for me to draw
'nigh to God.

'All other comforts will be, as the things are
'which we take comfort in; that is, Helpful if the
'things be helpful, and used but as Helps: Hurtful
'if the things be hurtful, or hurtfully used; Vain if
'the things be vain; Short if the things be transitory;
'and durable if the things are durable to us. And this
'is the chief comfort which you and I must have in one
'another, that is, as helpful towards God, and as our
'converse with him will be durable. The Lord for-
'give my great unprofitableness, and the sin that
'brought me under any disabilities to answer your
'earnest and honest desires of greater helps than I
'afford you, and help me yet to amend it towards
'you. But though my Soul be faulty and dull, and
'my strength of Nature fail, be sure that he will be
'a thousand fold better to thee, even here, than
'such crooked, feeble, useless things, as is

From *Hampden*.

Thy *R. B.*

CHAP. IX.

Of her Bodily Infirmities, and her Death.

§. 1. **H**ER diseased frightfulness, and many former sicknesses, I have mentioned before. A great pain of the Head held her from her youth, two or three days every Fortnight, or little more; and upon every thing that did irritate the matter, she had a constant straitness in the Lungs, a great incapacity of much exercise, motion, or any heating thing. Ever since her sickness, 1659. she hath lived in an ill-conceited fear of distraction, which greatly hurt her; It was because she had an Aunt long so, deceased, and her Parents were naturally passionate, and her spirits over-quick, and her blood thin and Mobile; and though wisdom hid it from others in her converse, she felt the trouble of her own mind in things, as aforesaid, that much displeased her; and so lived in a constant fear, which tended to have brought on her what she feared: But her understanding was so far from failing, that it was higher and clearer than other peoples; but like the treble strings of a Lute, strained up to the highest, sweet, but in continual danger.

§. 2. About three years ago, by the mis-perswasion of a friend, drinking against the Collick a spoonful of powdered Ginger every morning, near a quarter of a year together, and then falling into some over-whelming thoughts; besides it overthrew her Head for a few days, but God, in great mercy, soon restored her.

§. 3. Ever since that time her Head-ach abated, and she complained of a pain in one of her Breasts, and her uncurable timerousness setled her in a conceit that she should have a Cancer (which I saw no great cause to fear); but she could neither endure to hear that it was none, or that it was; but in fearing uncertainty, prepared constantly for a sad death: And several Friends, Neighbours and Relations lately dying of Cancers, increased her fear: but she seemed to be prepared cheerfully to undergo it.

§. 4. The many and weekly rumors of Plots, Firings, Massacres, &c. much increased this fear, as is aforesaid; and the death of very many Neighbours, young, strong, and excellent Christians, of greatest use, and many near friends, did greatly add to her sadness and expectations of death. But little of this was seen to any; she purposely carried it pleasantly, and as merrily to others, when she was troubled.

§. 5. The fears of a Cancer made her take the Waters for Physick often, and she kept down her body so in her diet, that about five Ounces of Milk, or Milk and Water, with a little Chocolate in it, morning and night, and about one or two bits at Dinner was her diet for many years.

§. 6. At last, about ten weeks before her sickness, almost all her pain went out of her Breast, and all fixed in a constant pain upon the right Kidney, and with the pain *her Urine* stopt, that about four parts of

five ceased for about ten weeks. She divers days drunk *Barnet-Waters*; but I think they were the last occasion of her sickness, and too much tincture of Amber, which work't too powerfully on her Brain, and suddenly cast her into strong disturbance and deliration; in which, though the Physicians, with great kindness and care, did omit nothing in their power, she died the 12th day: She fell sick on *Friday, June 3. 1681.* and died *June 14.*

§. 7. Though her understanding never perfectly returned, she had a very strong remembrance of the affecting passages of her life, from her childhood. Mrs. *Corbet* (whom she dearly loved, and had newly got into the house to be her companion), with others, standing by, she cried out to me, *My mother is in Heaven, and Mr. Corbet is in Heaven, and thou and I shall be in Heaven.* And even in her last weakness was perswaded of her salvation.

§. 8. She oft shewed us, that her soul did work towards God, crying out (complaining of her Head), *Lord make me know what I have done, for which I undergo all this. Lord, I submit; God chooseth best for me. She desired me to pray by her, and seemed quietly to join to the end:* She heard divers Psalms, and a Chapter read, and repeated part, and sung part of a Psalm her self. The last words that she spake were, *My God help me, Lord have mercy upon me.*

§. 9. God had been so many years training her up under the expectations and preparations for death, as made the case of her soul less grievous to me, as

no way doubting of her salvation; and knowing that a distracting Feaver, or a Phrensie, or an Inflammation, or disturbance of the Animal Spirits, or Brain, or an Impostume may befall the best as soon as the worst. I thank God that she was never under any Melancholly, which tempted her to any of those doleful evils, which many Score, I think, that have been with me (of several ways of education) have been sadly tempted to. She near 19. year lived with me cheerful, wise, and a very useful life, in constant Love, and Peace, and Concord, except our differing Opinions about trivial occurrences, or our disputing or differing mode of talk.

§ 10. She was buried on *June 17.* in *Christs-Church*, in the Ruines, in her own Mothers Grave. The Grave was the highest, next the old Altar, or Table in the Chancel, on which this her Daughter had caused a very fair, rich, large Marble-stone to be laid, *Anno 1661.* about 20. years ago; on which I caused to be written her Titles, and some Latin Verses, and these English ones,

*Thus must thy flesh to silent dust descend,
Thy mirth and worldly pleasure thus will end:
Then happy holy souls, but wo to those
Who Heaven forgot, and earthly pleasures chose:
Hear now this Preaching Grave without delay,
Believe, repent, and work while it is day.*

But *Christs-Church* on earth is liable to those changes of which the *Jerusalem* above is in no danger. In the doleful-flames of *London*, 1666. the fall of

the Church broke this great Marble all to pieces, and it proved no lasting Monument; and I hope this Paper-Monument, erected by one that is following, even at the door, in some passion indeed of love, and grief, but in sincerity of truth, will be more publicly useful and durable than that Marble-stone was.

CHAP. X.

Some Uses proposed to the Reader from this History, as the reasons why I wrote it.

IF this Narrative be Useless to the Readers, it must needs be the sin of the publisher; for idle writing is worse than idle words: But I think it useful (with that which followeth) to all these ends to considering men.

§. 1. It may help to convince those that are inclined to *Sadducism*, or Infidelity, and believe not the testimony of the sanctifying spirit to the truth of the Word of God, but take holiness, as it differs from Heathen-morality, to be but fancy, hypocrisie, custom, or self-conceit: A man that never felt the working of Gods special Grace on his own heart, is hardly brought to believe that others have that which he never had himself. And this turneth usually to Diabolical malignity, inclining them to hate those, and revile or dispise them as deluded proud Fanatick hypocrites, who pretend to be any better than

they are, or to have that which they take to be but a conceit: All their Religious thoughts they take for the Dreams of crazed, or proud persons; and their holy discourse, and Prayers, but for canting, or vain babbling. But acquaintance, if intimate with gracious persons, might convince them of their mortal error; and true History methinks may do much towards it.

§. 2. I confess, with thanks to God, that having these Forty years found that all our holiness and comfort depends upon our certain perswasion of the life of Retribution following, and that our certainty of this depends upon our certain belief of the Holy Scriptures; and we being here in the dark, and too apt to doubt of all that we see not, there are several sensible, or experienced present certainties, which have been a great succor to my Faith, to save me from temptations to unbelief and doubting, and confirm my assurance that the Scripture is Gods Word.

I. In that I undoubtedly by see and hear, that through all the world there is just such a pravity in humane nature, as the Scripture describeth for original sin; which cannot be the state of mans integrity, when his reason is much convinced of much of the duty to God, man and himself, which he will not do, and of most of the great sins which he will not forsake.

II. I see the Scripture clearly verified in mentioning the common enmity and War between the Serpent's and the holy Seed; It is notorious through the world, in all Ages and Countries, an enmity

which no Relation, or Interest reconcileth.

III. I feel and see the Scripture verified, which describeth all the temptations of Satan, and the secret War within us between the spirit and the flesh.

IV. And I feel and see the Scripture fulfilled, which promiseth a blessing on Gods Word, and his Ordinances.

V. And I feel and see the Scripture fulfilled, which describeth the renewing work of the Holy Ghost, and the spiritual difference of the sanctified from all others. This is not only in my self, but in others (O how many hundred holy persons have I known) the witness of Christs Truth and Power; and as *Joshua's* and *Caleb's* bunch of Grapes, to assure me of the land of Promise, and Gods Truth, which I see fulfilled in them. Can I doubt of holiness when I feel it, and see it in the effects?

VI. Even as it perswadeth me the easilier to believe that there are Devils, when I see their very nature, and works, in Devils incarnate, and see what a Kingdom he plainly ruleth in the world; and to believe that there is a Hell when I see so much of Hell on Earth.

§. 3. It may teach us that the state of Godliness is not to be judged of by the fears and sorrows in which it usually begins: A mans life is not like his Infancy at his birth. The fears and penitent sorrows which foolish fleshly sinners fly from, do tend to everlasting peace and joy: and perfect love will cast out all tormenting fears, unless it be those of a timorous diseased temper, which have more of sickness than of

sin, and will be laid aside with the body, which was their cause. A life of peace and joy on earth *may succeed* the tremblings of the new-born Convert; but a life of full everlasting joy will certainly succeed the perseverance, and victory of every believing holy soul.

§. 4. It may warn all to take heed of expecting too much from so frail and bad a thing as man: My dear Wife did look for more good in me, and more help from me than she found, especially lately in my weakness and decay. We are all like Pictures that must not be looked on too near. They that come near us find more faults and badness in us than others at a distance know.

§. 5. It should greatly warn us to take heed of small beginnings; even a spark of affection, honest in the kind, may kindle a flame not easily quenched. How great a matter may a little fire kindle! almost all sin beginneth in a seed or spark, which is very hardly known to be a sin or danger.

§. 6. Yea, it should warn all to keep all the *thoughts, affections* and *passions* under a constant watch and obedience to God; and know first, whether God command them and allow them.

§. 7. And this History may teach us, that though God usually begin (as is said) our conversion in *fears* and *penitent sorrows*, it is holy and heavenly joy which it tendeth to, as more desirable; and we should chiefly seek, and should labour to moderate

fear and sorrow, and not think we can never have enough. It is too common an error with honest souls, to think that a hard heart lieth most in want of sorrow and tears, when as it lieth most in want of a tractable compliance, and yielding to the commands and will of God, and in an iron neck, and obstinate disobedience to God; and to think that a new and tender heart is principally a heart that can weep and mourn, when it is chiefly a heart that easily receiveth all the impressions of Gods commands, and promises, and threats, and easily yieldeth to his known will.

§. 8. And this may greatly warn us to fear and avoid *self-willedness*: I mean a will of our own that runs before the will of God, and is too much set on any thing which God hath not promised, and knows not how to bear a frustration or denial, but saith as *Rachel, Give it me, or I die*. We must learn to follow, and not to lead, and to say, The will of the Lord be done; not mine Lord, but thine; and in every estate to be content. There is no *rest* but in *Gods will*.

§. 9. Yet this tells us, that God dealeth better with his weak servants than they deserve, and turneth that oft times to their good, which they deserved should have been their greatest suffering.

§. 10. This History (and my great experience) saith, that *there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother, Prov. 18. 24.* and that it was Gods spirit

that said, *Prov. 27. 10. Thy own friend, and thy fathers friend forsake not: neither go into thy brothers house in the day of thy calamity; for better is a neighbour that is near, than a brother that is far off.*

§. 11. This History tells us how great a mercy it is to have a body meet to serve the soul, and how great an affliction to have an unruly inclination from the bodies temper; and what a tyrant excessive fear is, and how great a blessing it is to have such a passion as Faith can rule, and easily quiet.

§. 12. It tells you also how manifold temptations and afflictions Gods servants are liable to in this life.

§. 13. And it tells you, that our greatest good or evil is nearest us. Next God, the best is in our souls, and there is the worst; and next in our bodies, and next in our nearest friends: And it may teach all to expect their greatest sorrows from those, or that which they most excessively love, and from whom they have the highest expectations: Only God cannot be loved more than he deserveth. Sorrow beginneth in *inordinate love*, and joy in *good*.

§. 14. And it tells us, that Gods service lieth more in deeds than in words. My dear Wife was faulty indeed in talking so little of Religion in company (expect it were irresistibly to confute in few words an opposer, or reviler of Religion). But her Religion lay in *doing* more than talk.

§. 15. Yet her example tells us, that it is one of Satan's wiles to draw us to one sin to avoid another; and to make us think that nothing is a due that hath great inconveniences, or which we can fore-see some men will receive hurt from; and so to be unrighteous by being righteous over-much, and leave much undone for fear of doing it amiss; by which Rule we should scarce ever do any thing that God commands; *He that observeth the winds shall not sow, and he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap, Eccles. 11. 4.* I speak this on her (at last confessed) error of omitting seasonable speech and duty to avoid hypocrisie and ostentation (which my great friend, Judge *Hale*, was just so guilty of, as I know, and the Writers of his Life confess; He would make no great shew of zeal in Religion, lest if he did any thing amiss, Religion should be reproached for his sake). Cardinal *Richlieu* was wont to say (as is written of him), that he hated no Counsellor more than those that were alway saying, *Let us do it better*; by that hindering the doing of much at all.

§. 16. You see here, that suitableness in Religious judgment and disposition preserveth faster love and concord (as it did with us) than suitableness in Age, Education and Wealth; but yet those should not be imprudently neglected. Nothing causeth so near, and fast, and comfortable an Union, as to be united in one God, one Christ, one Spirit, one Faith, one Church, one hope of Heavenly Glory; yet accidental unsuitableness should be avoided as far as may be.

§. 17. There are some great men who know their own names, who (as I have most credible information) have, to greater than themselves, represented me not only as covetous, but as mutable for my Marriage.

To whom I now give this satisfaction. 1. As to Covetousness, my Vindication is a matter unfit for the ears of the world, if Reverend mens backbitings (the same that troubles our common peace) did not make it partly necessary. Through Gods mercy, and her prudent care, I lived in plenty, and so do still, though not without being greatly beholden to divers friends; and I am not poorer than when I Married: but it is not by Marriage, nor by any thing that was hers before.

2. And as to my mutability. Whereas one of them reports that I said to him, that *I thought the Marriage of Ministers had so great inconveniences, that though necessity made it lawful, yet it was but lawful; that is, to be avoided as far as lawfully we may.* I answer, that I did say so to him; and I never changed my judgment; yea, my Wife lived and died in the same mind. And I here freely advise all Ministers that have not some kind of necessity, to think of these few reasons among many.

1. The work of the sacred Ministry is enough to take up the whole man, if he had the strength and parts of many men. O how much is there to do oftentimes with one ignorant, or scandalous, or sad despairing soul? And who is sufficient for all that's to be done to hundreds or thousands! In the primitive Church every Congregation had many Ministers;

but covetousness of Clergy and people will now scarce allow two to very great Parishes. I did not marry till I was silenced and ejected, and had no flock or Pastoral Cure. Believe it, he that will have a Wife, must spend much of his time in conference, prayer, and other family-duties, with her. And if he have children, O how much care, time and labour, will they require! I know it, though I have none. And he that hath servants, must spend time in teaching them, and in other duties for them; besides the time, and perhaps caring thoughts that all his Family expences and affairs will require. And then it will disquiet a man's mind to think that he must neglect his Family or his Flock, and hath undertaken more than he can do. My conscience hath forced me many times to omit secret prayer with my Wife when she desired it, for want of time, not daring to omit far greater work.

2. And a Minister can scarce look to win much on his Flock, if he be not able to oblige them by gifts of charity and liberality. And a married man hath seldom any thing to spare, especially if he have children that must be provided for, all will seem too little for them. Or if he have none, House-keeping is chargeable, when a single man may have entertainment at easie rates; and most women are weak, and apt to live in fear of want, if not in covetousness; and have many wants real or fancied of their own to be supplied.

3. In a word, St. *Paul's* own words are plain to others, but concern Ministers much more than other men, 1 Cor. 7. 7, &c. *I would that all men were as I my self— It is good for them they abide even as I—*

28. *Such shall have trouble in the flesh.* 32. *I would have you without carefulness. He that is unmarried, careth for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord: but he that is married, careth for the things of the world, how he may please his wife.* This is true. And believe it, both caring for the things of the world, and caring to please one another, are businesses, and troublesome businesses; care for house-rent, for children, for servants wages, for food and rayment, *but above all for debts*, are very troublesome things; and if cares choak the word in hearers, they will be very unfit for the mind of a Student, and a man that should still dwell on holy things.

And the pleasing of a Wife is usually no easie task: There is an unsuitableness in the best, and wisest, and likest. Faces are not so unlike as the apprehensions of the mind. They that agree in Religion, in Love and Interest, yet may have daily different apprehensions about occasional occurrences, persons, things, words, &c. That will seem the best way to one that seems worst to the other. And passions are apt to succeed, and serve these differences: Very good people are very hard to be pleased: My own dear Wife had high desires of my doing, and speaking better than I did, but my badness made it hard to me to do better. But this was my benefit; for it was but to put me on to be better; as God himself will be pleased: That it's hard to please God and holy persons, is only our fault. But there are too many that will not be pleased, unless you will contribute to their sin, their pride, their wastfulness, their superfluities and childish fancies, their covetousness and passions: and too many who have such

passion, that it requireth greater skill to please them, than almost any, the wisest can attain. And the discontents, and displeasure of one that is so near you, will be as Thorns or Nettles in your bed.

And *Paul* concludeth, to be un-married is the *better*, that we may *attend the Lord without distraction*, v. 35, 38.

And what need we more than Christ's own words, Mat. 19. 10, 11, 12. when they said then, *It is not good to marry*; he answers, *All men cannot receive this saying, save they to whom it is given: For there are some Eunuchs, who were so born from their Mothers womb; and there are some Eunuchs who were made Eunuchs by men; and there be Eunuchs which have made themselves Eunuchs for the Kingdom of Heavens sake: He that is able to receive it, let him receive it.*

Oh how many sad and careful hours might many a Minister have prevented? And how much more good might he have done, if (being under no necessity) he had been sooner wise in this?

§. 18. Another Use of this History is, to shew men, that it is not God's or our Enemies afflicting us in worldly losses or sufferings (especially when we suffer for Righteousness sake) which is half so painful, as our own inward Infirmities. A man's Spirit can bear his Infirmities of outward Crosses; but a wounded Spirit, who can bear! My poor Wife made nothing of Prisons, Distrainings, Re-proaches, and such Crosses; but her burden was most inward, from her own Tenderness, and next from those whom she over-loved. And for mine

own part, all that ever either Enemies or Friends have done against me, is but as a flea-biting to me, in comparison of the daily burden of a pained Body, and the weakness of my Soul in Faith, Hope, Love, and Heavenly Desires and Delights.

§. 19. And here you may see, how necessary Patience is, and to have a Mind fortified before-hand against all sorts of Sufferings, that in our Patience we may possess our Souls. And that the dearest Friends must expect to find much in one another that must be born with, and exercise our Patience: We are all imperfect. It hath made me many a time wonder at the Prelates, that can think it the way to the Concord of Millions, to force them to consent to all their Impositions, even of Words, and Promises, and Ceremonies, and that in things where Conscience must be most cautelous; whereas even Husband and Wife, Master and Servants have almost daily Differences in judging of their common Affairs.

§. 20. And by this History you may see, how little cause we have to be over-serious about any worldly matters, and to mind and do them with too much intensness of Affection; and how necessary it is to possess them as if we possess them not, seeing the time is short, and the fashion of this world passeth away. And how reasonable it is, that if we love God, our selves, yea or our Friends, that we should long to be with Christ, where they are far more amiable than here, and where in the City of God, the *Jerusalem* above, we shall delightfully

dwell with them for ever: Whereas here we were still sure to stay with them but a little while. And had we here known Christ after the flesh, we should so know him no more: Whereas *believing* that we shall soon be with him, even those that never saw him, may rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of Glory.

§. 21. Lastly, Here you may see, that as God's Servants have not their portion or good things in this Life, so they may have the same Sicknesses and manner of Death as others: *Lazarus* may lie and die in his sores, among the Dogs at the door; when *Dives* may have a pompous Life and Funeral. There is no judging of a mans Sincerity, or of his future state, by his Disease, or by his Diseased Death-bed words: He that liveth to God, shall die safely into the hand of God, though a Fever or Deliration hinder him from knowing this, till Experience and sudden possession of Heaven convince him. *Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord, from henceforth; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them*, Rev. 14. 13. Therefore in our greatest straits and sufferings, let us comfort one another with these words, *That we shall for ever be with the Lord*. Had I been to possess the company of my Friends in this Life only, how short would out comfortable converse have been! But now I shall live with them in the Heavenly City of God for ever. And they being there of the same mind with my forgiving God, and Saviour, will forgive all my Failings, Neglects and Injuries, as God forgiveth them

and me. The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away: And he hath taken away but that upon my desert, which he had given me undeservedly near Nineteen years. Blessed be the Name of the Lord. I am waiting to be next: The door is open. Death will quickly draw the Veil, and make us see how near we were to God and one another, and did not (sufficiently) know it. Farewel vain World, and welcom true Everlasting Life.

F I N I S .
