



SCS #1262



Lahn Scott

Thomas Torrance



SCS #1262

# COLLECTION OF LETTERS,

Consisting of Ninety-three.

Sixty-one of which wrote by the Rev. Mr. *James Renwick*; the remainder, by the Rev. Messrs. *John Livingston, John Brown, John King, Donald Cargil, Richard Cameron, Alex. Pedan, and Alex. Shields.*

Also a few by Mr. *Michael Shields*, at the direction of the General Correspondence.

From the years 1663 to 1689 inclusive.

Containing many remarkable Occurrences hitherto unknown in that Period.

Wherein is discovered the true State of the Cause and Testimony at that Time.

[The most of which never before printed]

EDINBURGH.

Printed by DAVID PATERSON,  
And sold by him at his Printing house, Law-  
market, MDCC LXIV.

[Price Eighteen Pence bound]

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

PHYSICS DEPARTMENT

PHYSICS 309

LECTURE 1

1.1. THE CLASSICAL LIMIT

1.2. QUANTIZATION

1.3. THE HEISENBERG UNCERTAINTY PRINCIPLE

1.4. THE SCHROEDINGER EQUATION

1.5. THE WIGNER FUNCTION

1.6. SUMMARY

# P R E F A C E.

*Christian Reader,*

**T**HOU hast here presented to thy view, some of the valuable letters of the worthy and now glorified Mr. *James Renwick*, whose memory will be dear while reformation-principles are regarded in *Scotland*; together with some others, all relative to the sins and duties of that day, and not at all impertinent in our day, wherein such duties are much slighted, and the same or like defection, as keenly and effectually carried on and corroborated, not only by professed enemies to the covenanted interest of Christ, but by professed friends thereunto. It is certain that *Zion's King*, did in a signal manner, display his banner in the Isles of the sea, and engaged them to himself by solemn sacred oaths and covenants: he animated the spirits of his followers with zeal, resolution and faithfulness in their appearances and contendings for him and his truths, and especially for the dignity of his kingly office; he defeated the designs of enemies, and advanced to himself a most glorious building, of a most beautiful church, *founded upon the prophets and apostles, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone*; so that this church and nation was blessed with a more glorious and perfect reformation than any of her neighbour churches: The doctrine, worship, discipline and government, in all points agreeable to the word of truth, was established by ecclesiastic and civil laws, sworn and subscribed to by the king's majesty, and all ranks and degrees in the land: but it is no less certain, that this church and nation, which was once so

great a praise in the earth, is deeply corrupted, and hath turned aside quickly out of the way, into the most shameful defection, and heaven-provoking apostacy, from the purity of a covenanted reformation; so that the Lord's controversy against *Britain* and *Ireland*, but especially harlot *Scotland*, is, as expressed, *Jer. ii. 21. I had planted thee a noble vine, wholly a right seed: how then art thou turned into the degenerate plant of a strange vine?* Yet, as an evidence that our *Israel* hath not been forsaken, nor *Judah* of his God, of the Lord of hosts; though their land was filled with sin against the holy One of *Israel*; it hath pleased the covenanted God of the *Ites*, for his own glory, and for keeping up the memory of his work in these lands, ever since the national overthrow of reformation, and almost universal defection of all ranks, to preserve a remnant, to witness and testify for his kingly authority, cause and covenants, many of which were animated with divine courage to triumph over the greatest difficulties and dangers, and seal their testimony to his cause with their blood, in the open fields, on scaffolds and gibbets, to the confuting of enemies, and the strengthening and confirming of the faithful; and still the Lord has left a very small remnant, whom he hath determined to declare and testify against the defections, evils and abominations of the times; endeavouring to follow the voice of the great Shepherd, and to go forth *by the footsteps of the flock*, and example of the faithful cloud of witnesses, feeding by the shepherds tents, and to keep close by his standard who is *the chiefest among ten thousand*, and to follow him, upon all hazards, *through good report and bad report.*



As these Letters need not human commendation, so neither will the detraction of any who are so disposed blast their reputation; they are above the one, and despise the other. They will recommend themselves to all who have their senses exercised to discern good and evil, and can savour the things that are of God; whoever have any acquaintance with the sweet breathings of the Spirit of God, and have placed their satisfaction so intirely in the light of his countenance lifted up upon their souls, that they cannot enjoy themselves when they do not enjoy a God in Christ, will here find exemplified in an eminent manner, what a heaven the saints sometimes have, or may have, on this side of glory.

Perhaps some inaccuracies may be met with in the following Letters, which would not have been found in them, had the honoured writers either designed, or corrected them for the press; but, if any such are, it is hoped the candid reader will throw the mantle of love over them; as these Letters were never intended for the reflections of critics, but the instruction of Christians. As a fine stile or florid language is no great recommendation in itself; so the embellishments of oratory could not be expected to be met with in such an age; when men were continually harrassed, and in danger every moment of falling a prey to their enemies: but they are full of the language of heaven, which is many degrees more forcible than all artificial rhetoric. We indeed live in an age when men are generally more taken with the manner of address than with the matter spoken, at least, as to the concerns of God's glory, their own salvation, or what God hath done for us in these lands. *Israel* of old commemorated

memorated the wonders God had wrought for them with an outstretched arm; saying, *I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously; his right hand and his holy arm hath gotten him the victory, and calls all to remember his marvellous works that he hath done, his wonders, and the judgments of his mouth.* Such was the exercise of the church and people of God of old, while we, in this age, are so far from saying, *What hath God wrought?* that the most part desire not the knowledge thereof: We are at ease in *Zion*, although Christ's crown is profaned, his prerogatives royal trampled on, his ordinances contemned, his church and people oppressed; yet we, like *Gallio*, care for none of these things; yea, our backslidings are justified, and what immediately brought on the national overthrow of the Lord's work, *viz.* the admitting of malignants into places of power and trust, contrary to the nations vows unto God; when now it is done, is defended and pled for, as lawful and right; and the memory of our renowned martyrs, whose dying testimonies witness their explicit rejecting the pretended authority of the impious brothers, who then tyrannized, is belied by professed witness-bearers for reformation truths.

The Reader, by the perusal of these letters, may see by what a different spirit these worthies were acted, what value they put upon truth, what a lively sense they had of their vows and obligations to Christ, personal and national, therefore they durst not deny his name, nor break his bonds and cast away his cords, as the wicked do; what hardships they underwent, rather than part with a good conscience, or comply with e-

nemies



nemies in the least; and indeed, the smallest compliance would have been a yielding so far to the ruin of the work and people of God, which was undoubtedly the principal design of their oppressors, and what, even in their favours, as they called them, they intended; thereby verifying that scripture, *The tender mercies of the wicked are cruel.* They had such large discoveries of the love of Christ, especially under the cross, that their hardest trials were accounted light: But how unlike are we to them. They were zealous for the honour of Christ, and burnt in love to him, his truths, ordinances and people, but we are cold and lukewarm, have little concern for the cause of Christ; what they accounted their ornament and glory, we are ashamed of, and look upon it as a disgrace.

By these letters also the Reader may evidently discover what a false and invidious calumny it is to alledge, that an owning of the lawfulness of an Erastian authority is agreeable to the principles and practice of our Reformers, and of our Martyrs, in the bloody reigns of *Charles II.* and *James VII.* such an ignorant and lying aspersion is abundantly confuted from the contents of these valuable letters.

As the manuscripts, from which these letters are carefully printed, are still in the hands of the publishers, any who shall question their authenticity may easily be satisfied.

Thus much, Christian Reader, by the importunity of these concerned in the publication, I have been constrained to say. That the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who enabled his people to witness a good confession, for his  
truths

truths and cause, may make these Letters useful to unite all the lovers of truth in the way of duty, and animate them with the like resolution, in striving together for the valuable interest of our reformed religion; and that they may be blest for awakening a secure sleepy generation, to attend to the concerns of God's glory, the interests of religion in themselves, and in the world; and to create in them a love to reformation principles, is the earnest desire of

*Thine, to serve thee,*

PENTLAND, }  
June 21. 1764 }

*in the gospel of Christ,*

JO. M' MILLAN.

The

# The CONTENTS.

Sixty-one Letters from Mr. James Renwick,  
to different persons, from page 1. to 221

Letter	Page
I. To the Honourable Mr. Robert Hamilton, <i>Edinburgh, July 8. 1682.</i>	1
II. To ditto. <i>Edin. Sept. 6. —</i>	5
III. To ditto. <i>Edin. Oct. 3. —</i>	9
IV. To Mr. Henry Jenkinson, &c. at New- <i>castle, Edin. Oct. 3. —</i>	13
V. To the Rev. Mr. William Brackett minister <i>in Holland, Edin. Oct. 5. —</i>	16
VI. To the Laird of Earlston, at Lewarden, <i>Rotterdam, Nov. 20. —</i>	20
VII. To Mr. Robert Hamilton, <i>Rott. Jan. 18. 1683.</i>	22
VIII. To ditto. <i>Rott. Jan. 22. —</i>	24
IX. To ditto. <i>Groningen, Feb. 6. —</i>	25
X. To Mrs J. H. at Lewarden in Friesland, <i>Gron. Feb. 13. —</i>	27
XI. To Mr. R. Hamilton, <i>Gron. Feb. 22. —</i>	29
XII. To ditto. <i>Gron. March 6. —</i>	32
XIII. To ditto. <i>Amsterdam, March 30. —</i>	35
XIV. To Mrs. J. H. at Lewarden, <i>Gron. March 31. —</i>	36
XV. To Mr. R. Hamilton, <i>Gron. Apr. 23. —</i>	37
XVI. To Mrs. J. Hamilton, <i>Gron. Apr. 25. —</i>	38
XVII. To Lady Earlston younger, <i>Gron. May 5. —</i>	40
XVIII. To Mr. Robert Hamilton, <i>Amst. May 30. —</i>	43
XIX. To ditto. <i>Amst. May 31. —</i>	44
XX. To ditto. <i>Rott. June 18. —</i>	46
XXI. To ditto. <i>Rott. June 23. —</i>	51
XXII. To ditto. <i>Dublin, August 24. —</i>	52

Letter	Page
XXIII. To Mr. R. Hamilton, Sept. 26. 1683.	54
XXIV. To the honourable society of strangers at Lewarden in Friesland, Nov. 13. 1683.	59
XXV. To Mr. R. Hamilton, Edin. Nov. 14. —	63
XXVI. To the Ladies Van Heerm. at Lewar- den in Friesland 1683.	66
XXVII. To Mr. R. Hamilton, Jan. 1684.	69
XXVIII. To ditto. March 29. —	70
XXIX. To Mrs. Jean Hamilton at Lewarden, in Friesland, June 20. —	73
XXX. To Mr. R. Hamilton, July 9. —	75
XXXI. To ditto. August 23. —	85
XXXII. To ditto. —	89
XXXIII. To — Feb. 28. 1685.	93
XXXIV. To Mrs. J. Hamilton, Mar. 2. —	98
XXXV. To Mr. Robert Hamilton, Edin. May 13. —	100
XXXVI. To ditto. July 9. —	101
XXXVII. To Robert Speir at Edinburgh, October 23. —	104
XXXVIII. To Mrs. J. Hamilton, Nov. 18. —	106
XXXIX. To the honourable society of strangers at Lewarden in Friesland, Feb. 18. 1686.	109
XL. To Mr. Robert Hamilton, May 3. —	120
XLI. To the Ladies Van Heerm. May 8. —	124
XLII. To the hon. Lady E. B. May 13. —	128
XLIII. To Mr. Robert Hamilton, May 22. —	132
XLIV. To ditto. Aug. 13. —	136
XLV. To ditto. Oct. 23. —	141
XLVI. To — January 10. 1687.	146
XLVII. To Mr. R. Hamilton, Jan. 11. —	148
XLVIII. To the Laird of Earlston, Jan. 27. —	162
XLIX. To Mr. Jacob Koelman minister of the gospel in Holland, April 4. —	165
L. To — April —	170
LI. To Mr. Robert Hamilton, July 15. —	171
LII. To ditto.	180
LIII. To the honourable Ladies — Aug. 13. —	185
LIV.	

Letter	Page
LIV. To Mr. <i>Robert Hamilton</i> , Nov. 5. 1687.	194
LV. To ditto. Dec. 2. —	197
LVI. To some persons under sentence of banishment,	200
LVII. To Mr <i>Alex. Shields</i> , Jan. 12. 1688.	203
LVIII. To the prisoners in the <i>Cannong</i> . tolbooth,	206
LIX. To the prisoners in the tolbooths of <i>Edinburgh, Glasgow</i> , and elsewhere in <i>Scotland</i> ,	207
LX. To ——— Feb. 6. 1688.	216
LXI. To Mr. <i>Robert Hamilton</i> , Feb. 17. —	219
LXII. Mr. <i>John Livingston's</i> letter to his parish of <i>Ancrum</i> , being his farewell before his banishment, upon his refusing the oath of Supremacy, <i>Leith</i> , April 13. 1663.	221
LXIII. From Mr. <i>John Brown</i> , to Mrs. <i>Jean Ker</i> , daughter to the Laird of <i>Kerland</i> , prisoner in <i>Dumbarton Castle</i> , Utrecht, Sept. 24. 1670.	227
LXIV. From ditto. to ditto. Aug. 9. 1677.	230
LXV. From Mr. <i>John King</i> , to the prisoners in the <i>Gray-friars</i> church-yard, 1679.	232
LXVI. From Mr. <i>Denald Cargil</i> , to the Lady <i>Earlston</i> younger, Feb. 22. 1680	240
LXVII. From ditto, to <i>Alexander Gordon</i> of <i>Earlston</i> , &c. <i>Gilkie</i> , April 14. 1680.	242
LXVIII. From Mr. <i>Richard Cameron</i> , to Mr. <i>A. Gordon</i> of <i>Earlston</i> , Mar. 22. 1680.	244
LXIX. From ditto to ditto. May 22. —	246
LXX. From ditto, to the Lady <i>Earlston</i> younger,	247
LXXI. From Mr. <i>Alex. Pedan</i> , to some friends.	249
LXXII. From Messrs. <i>James Renwick</i> , <i>William Boyd</i> and <i>John Flint</i> , to their friends in <i>Scotland</i> , <i>Groningen</i> , Feb. 24. 1683	253
LXXIII. From Mr <i>William Brackel</i> minister in <i>Holland</i> , to the strict persecuted party of the Presbyterians in <i>Scotland</i> 1682.	258
LXXIV. From ditto to ditto, Feb. 9. 1683.	263
LXXV.	



Letter	Page
LXXV. From Mr. <i>Alex. Shields</i> , to the prisoners for Christ in <i>Dunnottar Castle</i> , <i>Edinburgh, June 1685.</i>	267
LXXVI. From ditto, to the Ladies <i>Van Heer</i> . <i>October 1687.</i>	306
LXXVII. From Mr. <i>Robert Hamilton</i> , to some friends in <i>Scotland, Lerwarden, May 24. 1683.</i>	315
The following letters were wrote by Mr. <i>Michael Shields</i> , mostly at the direction of the General meeting.	
LXXVIII. To some friends, <i>July 5. 1683.</i>	341
LXXIX. To ——— <i>August 1. ———</i>	347
LXXX. To friends at <i>Dublin, Oct. 3. ———</i>	350
LXXXI. To friends in <i>Friesland, Oct. 28. ———</i>	358
LXXXII. To the classis of <i>Groningen</i> , <i>November 28. ———</i>	362
LXXXIII. To the Protestant churches, <i>November 28. ———</i>	364
LXXXIV. To the reformed church at <i>Embden</i> , <i>July 31. 1684.</i>	368
LXXXV. To Mr. <i>Robert Hamilton</i> , ——— ———	372
LXXXVI. To the reformed church at <i>Groningen</i> , ————— ———	375
LXXXVII. To some friends in <i>Newcastle</i> , <i>Jan. 8. 1685.</i>	380
LXXXVIII. To the Laird of <i>Earlston</i> , ——— ———	382
LXXXIX. To Mr. <i>David Houston</i> , <i>Sept. 23. 1686</i>	386
XC. To friends in <i>Ireland, March 2. 1687.</i>	388
XCI. To Mr. <i>Robert Hamilton</i> , <i>July 6. ———</i>	416
XCII. To friends in <i>Ireland</i> , <i>Sanquhar, Jan. 24 1689.</i>	421
XCIII. To the hon. Mr. <i>Robert Hamilton</i> , <i>Crawford-John, Feb. 14. 1689.</i>	426

A  
COLLECTION  
OF  
LETTERS.

---

LETTER I.

*From Mr. James Renwick, to the Honourable  
Mr. Robert Hamilton.*

*Much honoured Sir,      Edinburgh, July 8 1682.*

WE do not question your concernedness with  
us and our cause at the present; neither  
do we doubt of your desire to know how  
and what the remnant here are doing, in refer<sup>ence</sup>  
to that which God is calling them to in this day.  
Upon that consideration, and out of obedience to  
your desire, intimate to me in a letter from our  
friend *And. Hend.* I have presumed, though unac-  
quainted, which is to my great loss, to write this  
line (though confused) unto you. And as to mat-  
ters before your brother S. his departure from us,  
whom we expect you shall see very shortly, God  
willing, we remit you to his information, as be-  
ing more seen and perceiving than we; and as to  
our procedure in matters since, I shall labour to  
give you a brief, yet true account. We do not  
question but ye know already, how that, by the  
A  
Lord's

Lord's special providence, there is a general correspondence, which, for a while by-past, hath been kept up among the societies of this land, who profess to own the way of God, and not to say a confederacy with this untoward generation; for which end there have commissioners from their respective societies met together, at least once a quarter, that they might treat and confer anent what is required in this day. And as to what was done the last meeting, the first thing after prayer, which was fallen about, was this: The commissioners names, together with the names of the shires from which they came, were written down; and out of these, fifteen were selected, because the whole would breed confusion, and these being thus selected went by themselves: then it was asked at every one of them, man by man, if they knew the mind of those with whom they were embarked in society; and how they and their society carried as to the owning of our public declarations, and if they any ways contributed brick to Babel, by actively strengthening the hands of the enemies of our Lord; and if they joined with these once ministers, who had now left their Master, and stepped aside from the way of the Lord. All professed that they and their societies were clear for our declarations; but there were some found, who joined with those who payed cess and locality, which we may observe in those who say they own our declarations, to be a confessing God with the mouth, but denying him in works; and though they were not guilty of those things themselves, yet being clothed with the authority of these who were guilty, they were for that time casten, and desired, if the persons in their societies would not forbear these sinful courses, to separate from them; and



and though there were none to be found in that corner where they lived, who would forbear them, by keeping at a distance from them while so, they should be received in the convention as particular persons. There were also some there, who were found to have accepted the sacrament of baptism and ordinance of marriage, administered by Mr. *Pedan*, who were for the time suspended from sitting, but this was after a long and stiff debate; for some said, how could they upon Mr *Pedan's* account be suspended, before trial was made and he was found unfaithful? Then it was replied, that he had been many times tried, and practice had proved him unfaithful in this time bypast; so the most honest thought it only best, not to trust implicitly, but after trial, to trust according as he was found to be. Then their empty places being filled with commissioners selected, who were not found to be guilty of these things; it was proceeded (as ordinary) First, to ratify and approve what had been done by the foregoing convention; from which some receded, because it had been enacted, that your brother should go abroad, and give true information of our case, and the heads of our sufferings, to any godly Christian desirous to know, and unwilling to believe misinformations and false calumnies, which enemies of all sorts are very vigilant to cast upon us. And some (though few) who were for his going abroad at first, and would approve of sending, were not for his continuing any longer. But as to the illegal and disorderly manner of their dissentment, having at first agreed with the thing, we remit you to our friends, your brother, or *A. H.* Whereupon there was a great confusion, and nothing could be done till, the dissenters drawing aside, there was a new election of

those who were both for his going <sup>a</sup>broad and continuance for a while. And the day being spent all that was gotten done was only a ratification of what had been done by the foregoing convention; another day when to meet appointed, and some fast days nominated.

Now Sir, you have here a brief account of our late confusions; but I think we ought to look upon them as the Lord's breaking us by these things, ay and while we break fully off from our sinful courses direct or indirect: But this is very observable, that those who dissented from that duty of sending our friend, your brother abroad, are the only pleaders for trusting Mr. *Pedan* before trial, and justify their joining with the abominators of the time, though they do not justify the abominations, which in them is a direct sinning, and an indirect following of their duty. But O! Sir, wrestle much for the poor remnant, that they may be united in truth and holiness, which cannot be without separating from both the abominations and abominators of this time: for as the Lord hath said, *There is no peace to the wicked*, consequently there will be no peace to these who are at peace with the wicked as such. No more to trouble you at the time, but leaving you on him who hath kept you hitherto, that he may keep you to the end. I am,

S I R,

*Your entire and obedient*

*servant in the Lord,*

JAMES RENWICK.

LET-

## L E T T E R II.

*From Mr. James Renwick, to Mr. R. Hamilton.*

*Much honoured Sir,*

*Edin. Sept. 6. 1682.*

**T**HE conscjousness of my duty makes me presume to write unto you; and also your honouring me with a particular line from your hand, (being unworthy so far as to be countenanced by you) superadds a tie upon me thereunto. We received these soul-refreshing letters of yours to our friends, which to them are very encouraging, they being desirous to be thankful to the Lord for what he hath done, and to cry that he would carry on what he hath so nobly begun, and to be co-wrestlers with all that wrestle for Zion, upon the account of her desolation. And according to your desire, all friends, having occasion to come to this place, see what ye wrote; and I also take some copies thereof and send them to several corners of the country: But indeed I cannot express how all that hear thereof are refreshed and overjoyed. But, O! Sir, pray that we may not be abusers of mercies, and that we may get the Lord put and kept in his room; and because of these things, that our hearts may only rejoice in the Lord. I cannot indeed admire enough how some behaved toward you while here; but we may have peace, because it was upon the account of duty. But this I think is observable in such cases, that the Lord then lets out himself to refresh the souls of his people; and it is ordinary with him when there is least outward encouragements to give most inward encouragement from himself; *He stays his rough wind in the day of his east-wind.* O! doth not this magnify his

wisdom and graciousness? who killeth, and yet maketh alive: and does it not tell us that he is unwilling to afflict? and should it not teach us only to look to himself for encouragement, with whom there is no shadow of change? And as to your call abroad, and especially your staying where you are, surely the Lord's hand hath been only in it, which his dispensations since hath confirmed. But, O! labour to be thankful to the Lord, who hath made you any ways useful where he casts your lot: And, if my heart deceive me not, my soul shall be thankful, to him upon your account; and whatever he does, or whoever he makes use of to do any thing for him, let us only attribute the praise thereof to his free grace and mercy that honours any so far.

When these refreshing news came to our hands, my spirit was overjoyed with the hearing of them; but immediately this thought struck into my mind, that what if the Lord be now going to leave *Scotland*, seeing he is making his candle shine so clear in another place; but this thought got no abode, for it was greatly resented in the time; and the thought of the many noble testimonies that he hath honoured a remnant here to give for him, and the precious blood that he had taken in fields and on scaffolds, to seal his cause and quarrel. I say, the cries of these, I thought, (though there were no more) would not let him give up altogether with this land, especially seeing it was married unto him, and his keeping a remnant in it even to this very day, speaking good unto us. Then again, I was made to think that this rather might be the thing which the Lord would do, because we have been generally so treacherous a people, that he might not possibly honour any of us to have any hand  
in



in the delivery; yet he would deliver, and could command deliverance from afar. However I desire to believe, that he who hath preserved a remnant here to contend for him, will do so still: But O! he is a sovereign God; well would it become us to put a blank in his hand, and to leave the filling up thereof to himself, and not to limit the Holy One of *Israel*, but rather believe in his word, who hath condescended so far as to tell us, *that all shall work together for good to them that love and fear him*; he is wise and mighty, his end (which is his own glory, and the good of his people) cannot be frustrate, and he can well make means work together for that end, when the contrary is intended by them. And what you wrote, Sir, among many things, I think, to me it speaks this, the making out of his word, that *he shall see the travel of his soul*, and that *he is able*, if it were, *out of stones to raise up children to Abraham*, and that he will not want a testimony; yea, that if these were silent *the stones would cry out*: So this should learn us to credit him with the cause who is the maintainer thereof, and will shew himself to be the avenger thereof also.

Be pleased to show Mr. *Brackel* that some friends here, and I, have our services presented to him; and that, when friends meet, I think, they will write to him in particular, from them in general, and show him that the last day of the last month was nominate by some friends, having met in this place, a day of thanksgiving, for the noble testimony the Lord had helped him to give, and for his enabling him so signally to stand out, and not to quit any of his Master's rights. The relation of the whole business (which ye wrote) being in the entry of the day read in their hearing, that it might  
prove

prove a mean to frame them for that duty, and show that they are not omitters of what he desires of them, they seeing it greatly their duty, and rejoice in the Lord upon his account. And that you, and friends with you, and friends here, may be one in the Lord, and one in all our duties, I thought it fit to intimate here, that (as we reckon) the last *Thursday* of this instant, and the second *Thursday* of *October* are denominated days of public fasting by the remnant here, and that the next general meeting of our friends is to be on the second day of *November*. And as to what was done the last meeting, we refer you to the confused account thereof in your brother's letter.

You shall receive from the bearer all our martyrs testimonies that are unprinted, but there are writen in with the , two particular testimonies, or rather letters, of *James Skeen*, which he never intended to publish as testimonies; so, if you think it fit (it being congruous with reasons) they need not be printed, or at least, not as such; the one whereof is directed to all professors in the shire of *Aberdeen*; the other, to all and sundry professors in the South. Receive also some sermons of *Mr. Welwood's* in a little book; but let the sermons, and also the testimonies, be well noticed; for not having correct copies, though I write them, I cannot answer for the correctness of them.—We have sent you also a letter, with a paper written by *Mr. Donald's* own hand, in answer thereunto: but it is unperfected, he being taken away before he got time to finish it. But as for that book which is in *Glasgow*, it is not as yet come to our hand; but when corrected, it is promised, and when gotten it shall be sent, with all the (so called) acts of parliament. So, leaving you and  
all

all his people upon the Lord, for counsel and direction, I am,

S I R,

*Yours, to my full power*

*to serve you in the Lord,*

JAMES RENWICK.

### L E T T E R III.

*From Mr. James Renwick, to the much honoured  
R. Hamilton at Lewarden.*

*Much honoured Sir,*

*Edin. October 3. 1682.*

WE received yours, which was very refreshful unto us, and also very seasonable, because of the many wholsome advices therein unto us, whereof we greatly stand in need, especially in this juncture of time. Bat O that we could get the Lord acknowledged in all our ways, then he would direct our paths; for they are only well led and guided whom the Lord leads and guides. O noble guide! O sufficient guide! O true guide! and O constant guide! he is nearer than a brother; though father and mother should both forsake, yet he will not; *he will not leave us, nor forsake us.* Tho' oftentimes we be so unperceiving that we know not that it is the Lord who upholdeth, yet afterwards we will be made to say, that *when our feet was slipping God's mercy held us up,* as the Psalmist speaketh in another case, *Psal. xciv. 17. 18.* and when we were as beasts and fools in many respects, God held us by the hand, *Psal.*

*Pfal.* lxxiii. 22, 23. O is not such a guide well worth the following, with all joy and alacrity? Is not such a master well worth the serving, with all the soul, heart, mind, and strength? He is not like other masters; for there is an infinite disproportion betwixt his work and his reward; and he gives no work, but he gives also a heart for the same, and all furniture suitable and requisite for the doing thereof, which is the thing that other masters cannot do. And, the more he gives, the more we may expect; for the more he gives, there is not the less behind; because that which is infinite cannot be exhausted, yea, not diminished: O this is not after the manner of man! that the more he gives, the more we may expect. And doth he not many times lay abundantly what ever we need unto our hand, when we dare not say, that either we were right in seeking thereof, or exercising faith and dependence upon him for the same? O! does not this hold forth the freedom, freedom, of his free, free grace? And should not this stop our mouths, and cause us be silent before him? and should not this shame us out of our misbelief, and cause us credit him fully and freely with all his matters, and our matters? for *his foundation standeth sure, he knows who are his; and whom he loves, he loves unto the end.* There is no shadow of change with him. O let us follow him! O let us serve him! O noble Master! O noble service! In serving of him, therein we shall get all our ambition satisfied. O let us follow him, and serve him in his own way: he cannot be found out of his own way; in his light we shall see light; in the light of his paths, and there only, we shall see the comfortable light of his countenance: O light! O comfortable light!

*There*



*There be many that say, who will shew us any good? but let us say, Lord lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us.* He can, yea, doth gladden our hearts more than the enemies hearts in the time when their corn and wine were increased. O let us leave the world and follow him: Is he not saying, *Come with me from Lebanon, my spouse, with me from Lebanon.* O if his company will not allure us, surely nothing will; and both to ravish us therewith, and make us sure thereof, he says, *With me from Lebanon, with me from Lebanon.*

O worthy Sir, the Lord hath been kind unto you, and made you an instrument of much good; O ye are the more obliged to his free grace! Therefore, O be humble, and O be thankful; and my soul shall desire to be thankful to him upon your account: and the more he does for you, and by you, be ye the more engaged to be for him, and for him only.

We have no news to write unto you; but this is very observeable now, and clearly to be seen, That the fear and terror of the Lord is legibly written upon the consciences of malignants and backslidden professors: there is not so much heart and hand to be seen amongst any, as amongst the poor remnant. And how can it be otherways with these backslidden and backsliding professors? for they are suffering and sinning, sinning and suffering; and in their suffering they want the world's peace; and by their sinning, they want the sweet, sweet enjoyment of a peaceable conscience, and breaks and mars their peace with God. They are really deadened, their hearts are stricken with fainting, and their knees with feebleness: and any life or heart that is to be seen, is among the poor remnant, whom the Lord helps,

in any measure, to make *Moses* and *Joshua's* choice, O! what means all this terror? Is it not the forerunner of sudden and sore judgments? He is on his way, he is on his way; blessed are they, who, when he comes, shall be found in his way, and prepared to meet him. Worthy Mr. *Brackel's* letter was very refreshful to all who have heard it; and there are copies thereof englished, and sent to several corners of the country. He may expect a line from the remnant when they meet, which, God willing, will be on the eleventh of this instant, it being called sooner than expectation, for choosing out of these young men. But go who will, the work they are to go for is most weighty; and their going in such a manner is also most weighty: but there is all furniture with him, who is the life and the light of men. O that none may go but these whom the Lord sends, and goes along with; and whom he helps, and will help to look to himself, and to himself only, for all frame and furniture suitable. But we marvel greatly what you mean in your letters, by speaking of ordination against the Spring; for your worthy brother knows assuredly, that we have none of whom that, or any thing like unto it, can be expected.

The acts of the pretended parliament (according to your desire) and the book ye wrote for, shall come with the next occasion, God willing. Let us know if you received these papers, and that book, which we sent with your cousins. We know it is the desire of the people, and we expect it will be done at the meeting, that you should be conjunct with your brother in his commission. We hope we need not desire you, and friends  
with

with you, to mind us. So, leaving you on him who is wise, mighty, and gracious, with my endeared love to yourself, and worthy Mr. Brackel, and all our godly and concerned friends in our Lord Jesus. I am,

*Much honoured Sir,*

*Yours, to my full power*

*to serve you in the Lord,*

JAMES RENWICK.

## L E T T E R IV.

*From Mr. James Renwick. to Mr Henry Jenkinson, &c. at Newcastle.*

*Endeared Friends, Edin. October 3 1682.*

WE wrote to you, and gave you notice of our appointed public fast days, but we never heard if it came to your hands; and our still waiting to hear from you in answer to ours, was the cause of our so long delay now: But, however, at this time our concernedness with you, and the great love we have unto you in the Lord, puts us to it, that we can no longer forbear; and that because we have heard, that one Mr. *John Hepburn*, a preacher, was amongst you; and we see it assuredly to be our duty to desire you to beware of him; for he is one of these who handles the word of God deceitfully: and though he be not altogether so guilty of the public defection, and of compliance, as some,



yet he condemns the laudable practices of the godly party, who were helped to give testimony for truth, and against the enemies thereof: and he is incorporated with the rest in calumniating, reproaching and condemning these, who, in any measure, were kept faithful for their Lord and Master Jesus Christ; and his incorporation with them therein is enough to us, though there be other variances amongst themselves. Let us not own the way of God by halves, but wholly, fully, and in all things. And particularly, he is against our noble and faithful declaration published at *Sanquhar*, whereby that wretched tyrant *Charles Stewart*, and all his accomplices were cast off by us, as we ought; which, alas! was too long a doing: and by this he buries the blood, and condemns the faithful testimonies of so many worthies who have died upon that head, and therein have been eminently owned and assisted of the Lord. Indeed, herein he will run this subterfuge, and say, He acknowledges he ought to be rejected, and deposed; yea, possibly grant, that he deserveth death, both by the laws of God and the just laws of man; yet he cannot see how that can be done without another magistrate or magistrates: But we would answer, If he sees no otherways than so, he is but blind, and that is a deceitful and double dealing; for magistrates have no power but what is derivative from the people; and magistrates have nothing actually, but what the people have virtually; yea, and more than virtually, for they may actually confer it upon whom they think most fit, for the power of government is natural and radical to them, being unitely in the whole,

and



and singularly in every one: so whatever magistrates may do, the people may do the same, either wanting magistrates, or the magistrates failing or refusing to do their duty. We need insist no further upon the lawfulness of the thing; for is not this most consonant to the law of God, and the law of nature? and is sufficiently cleared by all our most sound divines, particularly worthy Mr. *Knox*, who herein had the approbation of *Calvin*, and other learned divines of his time, under their hand-writings: and also is clear enough by the laudable practice of our resolute and worthy Reformers. But as to the necessity of the thing, to wit, of the rejecting *Charles Stewart*, as he is installed this day; hath he any power to govern, but what is established upon the ruins of the land's engagements? and hath not the exercise thereof been still according thereunto? What then can we own in him, if neither the establishment nor the exercise of his authority? And does he not act in all things by virtue of his blasphemous supremacy? And the owning of him in less or in more, is the owning thereof, because the supremacy is made the essential of the crown; and it is but one supremacy that he arrogantly hath both in matters civil and ecclesiastical, which is clear from the Explanatory Act of the Supremacy: so that it is essential to the crown, is the same with the crown, and that which is one cannot be divided.

Now, dear friends, what ye have done in this, to wit, in your joining with Mr *Hepburn*, we do not impute it to your wilful stepping aside, but to the insinuation, or reasonless recommendation of Mr. *Young*, who was hugely overseen

therein, and which is both a grief and an offence to the remnant. But, O! stand still, go not ye to them, but let them come to you: join with none out of the way of God, but labour to bring all into it that ye can, yet go not out of it yourselves to fetch them thither; and give not ear to the instruction that causeth to err.

We hope we need not bid you beware of Mr. *James Welch*, for he will soon kyth in his own colours. Labour to walk according to that paper sent by you unto us, and walk with none but these who will walk according thereunto. And we are sure if you would pole Mr. *Hepburn* upon these things in your paper, you should not find him to satisfy you. And if you will defend or continue in your joining with him, or any other who stands where he is, or where he was while he was here, we must deny correspondence with you: But, hoping for better things of you, and desiring an answer hereof we leave you on the Lord for light and life. I am,

*Your friend and servant in the Lord,*

JAMES RENWICK.

---

## L E T T E R V.

*From Mr. J. Renwick, to the Rev. Mr. William Brackel minister of the gospel in Holland.*

*Most Rev. Sir,*

*Edin. October 5. 1682.*

Although our friends when met, are intended, with one consent, to write unto you,  
in

in token of thankfulness unto the Lord, for what he hath helped and honoured you to do for himself; and in token of their soul concernedness with, and real affection for all those whom the Lord helps and honours to follow himself in his own way, in owning of, adhering to, and contending for the faith once delivered to the saints: But especially; I say, in token of their soul concernedness with you whom the Lord hath so signally helped to advance in his own way, and contend for all his rights and privileges, being carried above the fear of frail mortal man, whose breath is in his nostrils, and only fearing him who is *Lord of lords, and King of kings*, the terrible Majesty of heaven and earth, the *high and lofty One who inhabiteth eternizy*: Yet my soul is so unite unto you upon that account, and because of your real concernedness and soul-sympathy with all of us in *Scotland* who desire to be helped of the Lord, to espouse his quarrel to be only ours, and his concernments to be only ours; I say, so unite (tho' little or nothing I can say as I ought) that I cannot keep silent.

But, O! What shall I say? Is not the Lord God of hosts worthy and only worthy of all service, if we could serve him? May not that infinite and transcendent love (in the profound depth of the admiration whereof angels are drowned) which he bore unto man before the foundations of the world were laid, so ravish and fill our souls, as that we might say, Him only will we serve who loved us; nothing present or to come shall be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus? O! is not *his yoke easy, and his burden*



light? his cross is no cross, for he bears it himself, and also those who take it up. His will is holy, just, good and spiritual in all that he does. O! what is more desirable than to live and die with him, and for him? for our light affliction which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. Let us not weary in well-doing, for in due season we shall reap if we faint not. It is a faithful saying, if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him; if we suffer, we shall also reign with him; if we deny him, he will also deny us. O! is not Moses's choice very desirable? Are not all his ways pleasantness, and his paths peace? Where is peace to be found? is it not in his way? and when he gives peace, who can create trouble? He gives, and can give joy which no man can take from us. Now,

Most Reverend Sir, my soul desires, while I live, to praise the Lord, for what great things he hath helped you to do, in so nobly, faithfully and freely witnessing for his noble cause, and sweet Scotland's cause: and my soul desires to honour you, because he hath so honoured you; and to love you, because he loves you, and hath caused you to love and own his cause, and receive his truths in love; and also to be afflicted in all the afflictions of his people, and to be such a sympathizer, and a burden-bearer with his poor remnant in this land, as that we may say of you, as Paul of the Hebrews, *Ye have had compassion on us in our bonds.* O Sir, go on in his way, and advance valiantly; be zealous for him and he shall animate you: *Cast not away your confidence,*



science, which hath great recompence of reward; for ye have need of patience that after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise: for yet a little, and he that shall come, will come, and will not tarry: Now the just shall live by faith; but if any man draw back my soul shall have no pleasure in him, saith the Lord. O! who is he that will harm you if ye be followers of that which is good. Therefore, cease from man whose breath is in his nostrils for wherein is he to be accounted of? Now, the Lord let you feed upon his all-sufficiency, and give all suitable frame and furniture unto you for his work in your hands; and give you his Spirit whereby you may go on in his way, with all magnanimity, Christian boldness, and free speaking for him unto the sons of men.

O Sir! do not impute any thing said to you in this short and confused line to arrogance in me; for what may, if mistaken, give occasion thereof, flows only from my concernedness and soul-union with you. So, at the time I shall trouble you no further. But this I must tell you, and I think it is to be remarked, and may be clearly seen all this time, that the terrors of the Lord is greatly engraven and legibly written upon the consciences of all the compliers with the horrid abominations of this land. They are really deadened, and it is no wonder, for they have forsaken the Lord, and he hath forsaken them: He cannot be found out of his own way. A guilty conscience is bad company, and what means all this terror of sudden and sore judgments from the Lord? and there is not so much spirit, courage, and voidness of slavish fear among any, whether avowed malignants or compliers

pliers with them, as amongst the poor remnant, who are desiring to be helped of the Lord, in all things to make a right choice. O! pray for the Lord's return to poor *Scotland*, and for his appearance unto the rejoicing of his people, and confusion of his adversaries. And pray for him, who is,

*Most reverend Sir,*

*Yours, to his full power*

*to serve you in the Lord,*

JAMES RENWICK.

## L E T T E R VI.

*From Mr James Renwick, to the honourable the Laird of Earlston, at Lewarden.*

*Much honoured Sir, Rotterdam, Nov. 20. 1682.*

**I**T is not a little troublesome to me, that I should be in this place so long; but I have occasion to go away whenever the wind offers: and I hope, your Honour will be careful to get conveyed unto *Scotland*, with all expedition, an account of what you think fit to be contained in that letter which is to be written; for out of *Scotland* I cannot come, if once it pleased the Lord that I were there, untill that I get that letter with me. And it will be also very necessary that some should be pitched upon for catechizing; and this must be recommended to the carefulness of some who will see it done at the general meeting.

And



And if *J. V.* be gotten reclaimed (for your honour knows, that he walked contrary to his own duty, and our appointments, in joining with *Mr. Hepburn* while out of the way of God; I say, if he be gotten reclaimed, amongst others, he may be one, as I think. It is reported in the *Scottish* news, that the actually indulged (so called) ministers are required, either immediately to take their test, otherwise to lay down their charges at the feet of those men of whom they took them up; and if it be so, let the world think what they will. I dare not be sorry thereat, but on the contrary rejoice, because that indulgence hath been, and is yet a stumbling-block unto the people of God; and is not the removing of stumbling blocks a token of sudden good to his people, how low soever they be brought! It is also reported, that *Charles Stewart* hath ordained his council in *Scotland* to proceed against *Haltoun* in making him accountable for the mint: *Haman's* rejoicing is short. O Sir, I cannot get the thoughts of the weighted case I left you in, when we parted, out of my mind. But this I think, the Lord is taking several ways with your honour, in discommending all other things unto you, that so he may commend himself unto your soul, and that ye may be kept from rejoicing in any thing but himself alone; and when he is the matter of our joy, that is the joy that no man can take from us. O! 'tis himself that is the portion of his people, and the world cannot deprive them thereof, and this is our comfort.

Remember me to your worthy brother, your lady and her sister: and as I have been partly an eye, but more an ear witness unto some of the troubles ye have been put to upon our blessed  
 Lord's

Lord's account; so I hope also, to be a witness to the everlasting inconceivable joy ye shall be filled with, when these who overcome shall be sitting in white robes, upon thrones, with crowns upon their heads judging the world. O are ye not high up now! are ye not far ben in the king's palace, when ye are sitting upon thrones giving your *amen* to the sentence, which he will pals upon the world. Walk worthy of the name by which ye are called. So leaving you on him who is the Rock of ages, whose work is perfect, for perfecting what concerns you. I am,

*Your Honour's servant in all Christian duty,*

JAMES RENWICK.

## L E T T E R VII.

*From Mr. James Renwick, to the much honoured Mr. Robert Hamilton.*

*Much honoured Sir, Rott. Jan. 18. 1683.*

**I** Received your letter, but the interveening of some dispensations put me so that I was not in case for answering it. Our friend *G H.* having written to you; therefore, I shall not now speak, neither of our own progres, nor of what sad news otherwise we have heard. The Lord help us to patience, for we have need of it, and make us submissive to his will, who can do nothing but good. O they are happy who are well away! and they are happy who will be carried through, for there are sad days coming,  
and



and thir lands shall not escape. I cannot express the weighty impressions I have of it, especially since the last fast day that they had in this province, in the morning whereof I fell into a dream, and thought, that I was preaching upon these words, *Zech. vii. 5.* at the end of the verse, *Did ye at all fast unto me, even unto me?* (spoken by the Lord) and thought that I brought in this from it, that they were hypocritical, formal and outside folk, or outward-only in their fastings, that did not fast unto the Lord. And 2dly They who fasted, and yet retained sin, and refused to let it go. And then, made application to many particular sins in thir lands. I think little of this as a dream, however it hath some impression upon me. O to be helped to obey our Lord's command, and to exhort others thereunto, *Luke xxi. 36. Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the son of man.* O dear Sir! I cannot express the case I am in, partly, with our dear friends falling into the hands of our Lord's enemies, and partly, with my being so long detained from my brethren. I cannot tell what may be before my hand; but, my longings to be in *Scotland* I cannot express, I would spare no pains, or travel, and fear no hazard; only, I do not think it duty to go on deliberately in a seen hazard, where there is no probability of safety. O! I say, that the Lord would be pleased to provide some occasion which might be my duty to embrace; and that he would order all things aright for the enlargement of his kingdom: O precious kingdom! and O noble way that he is taking this day to enlarge it, by stretching out the borders

ders thereof with blood! His house is a costly house, and it is well worthy of costly cementing. I hope I need not bid you labour to submit cheerfully to the holy and wise will of the Lord, and be strengthening unto these with you. The Lord strengthen, the Lord comfort and give himself instead of all things to them, and to you, is, and shall be the earnest prayer of him who is,

*Much honoured Sir,*

*Yours, to serve you in the Lord,*

*while he hath a being in time,*

JAMES RENWICK.

## L E T T E R VIII.

*From Mr. J. Renwick, to the much honoured Mr. Robert Hamiltoun.*

*Rott. Jan. 22. 1683.*

*Right hon. and dear Sir,*

**T**His afternoon I have received two letters from you, wherein ye call me unto you, by the desire of that worthy lady and her family. I am very sorry I cannot get you so soon answered as I would desire; for this day or tomorrow I cannot come, being detained here by a certain dispensation fallen out, of which I cannot now write; but when met (if the Lord will) I shall give you an account of the matter and manner of it. However upon *Monday* I resolve to



to come away, and shall stay so long as I may and can be serviceable to any there. But O! that I could commend the Lord and his noble way to the world: and I must say this to his praise, that he is daily giving me confirmations of his way, and engaging me thereunto, and folding me in all circumstances with his own concernments. Being in haste I shall say no more; recommending you and that worthy family to the Lord, for all ye stand in need of. I am,

*Yours to serve you in the Lord, while*

JAMES RENWICK.

## L E T T E R IX.

*From Mr. J. Renwick, to the much honoured Mr. R. Hamiltoun.*

*Much honoured Sir, Groningen, Feb. 6. 1683.*

O That now when I write to you there were for every drop of ink that falls from my pen, a tear falling from my eye: There is more than cause enough for it, yea, I cannot say but I am made to see the same; for, in some measure, I see and know the poor afflicted, tossing and wandering remnant, in such a case as the waters have overflowed their heads, the Lord having covered himself with a cloud. But for all this (woes me) my eye doth not rightly and thoroughly affect my heart. O! if we could consider, that the Lord doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men; and

then reflect upon our griefs and afflictions in this day, we would be put, with amazement, to wonder at the greatness of our sins: And instead of coming to the Lord with this in our mouths and in our hearts, *That which we see not, teach thou us: Wherein we have offended, we will offend no more,* we are still adding sin to sin, which are both the tokens and the causes of the Lord's displeasure. O! there is nothing, I think, so sad as the spiritual judgments of the Lord, and nothing betokens so much of his displeasure. O Sirs! cry and wrestle, and desire all that love *Zion*, to cry to, and wrestle with the Lord, that he would preserve a remnant from being swallowed up by this weighty cloud of wrath hanging over our heads, ready to break forth, now when we are so ripening for the same.

I shall let you know my mind in all our particulars; but as yet I can say nothing: but as for my own present case, ye may know that from what I have said; for these things that ought, and that I see, do not rightly affect my heart: And by seeing this also, I am in a confused, anxious, and disconsolate condition at present; yet I dare not say but the Lord is kind, though I be froward: and, I think, that which my soul would take as the greatest proof of his kindness, would be a melting frame of spirit from himself. But O! in all cases, let us have our recourse to that Rock that is higher than we, where we shall find comfort for our hearts that are perplexed; and let us lay our All under the feet of all men, but quite a hoof of God's matters to no man. Let us be lions in God's cause, and lambs in our own. Remember me to your brother

ther *E* and sisters: I hope, God willing, to write to him shortly. I am,

*Much honoured Sir,*

*Your soul's sympathizer,*

JAMES RENWICK.

---

## L E T T E R X.

*From Mr. J. Renwick, to Mrs. J. H. at Lewarden in Friesland.*

*Worthy Madam,*

*Gron. Feb. 13. 1683.*

**T**HE sense of my duty will not let me omit writing unto you; although, if it would please the Lord, I would desire a clearer sight of some things than I have at present, that so I might be admitted to tell you my thoughts more distinctly: but his way with me is in the depths. I cannot tell what method he would have me to take in things; for I find my ordinary studies that are more directly for exercitation than for edification, put me out of a concerned frame with the afflictions of *Joseph*. And then seeing this, when I set upon other things, my thoughts begin to slight these ordinary means. What the Lord would have me to do therein, as yet I wot not. O that he that hitherto hath condescended, would condescend to let me know what course he would have me to take, and make me willing to follow the same. O it is hard to carry within measure, and to give any thing its own place. O let us earnestly

earnestly labour to get a sympathizing frame of spirit kept up, with that poor, afflicted, chattered, and broken remnant in *Scotland*; for I observe this palpably, that I am never in any sort of a good frame, but when they are lying near my heart, and when their afflictions are touching me. There are many things that are very discouraging like; but there is comfort, Jesus Christ is a King, and seeing he is a King, he will have subjects; yea, he will reign till he put all his enemies under his feet. Shall not the pleasure of the Lord prosper in his hand? *He will see the travel of his soul, and be satisfied.* And may not our souls feed upon the ravishing thoughts of the pureness of that church which he will have in *Scotland*? What shall be the end of all these things? shall they not all tend to the purging *Jacob* from his sin.

O Madam, live near the Lord, and labour to get him present with you; his presence will make all trials sweet. Who would not come off with him from *Amara*, I say with him from *Amara*? *He is the chief among ten thousand; his countenance is comely as Lebanon, excellent as the cedars; yea, he is altogether lovely.* A sight of the preciousness that is in him will cause us to go through fire and water with him and for him: Will not the consolations of his Spirit bear up the soul in all its difficulties? especially when it is ay made to see in the end, that it could not want one dram weight of its cup. And O the great need that there is of the consolations of his Spirit this day! for I have had these thoughts this long time, that many would be trusted with such dispensations, as would not so much call for  
light

light to lead them, as for heart comforting grace to bear up their spirits in them. I think some of our dispensations will be to some more discouraging than darkening. O mind sweet *Scotland*, and him who is

*Your Ladyship's servant*

*in all Christian duty,*

JAMES RENWICK.

## L E T T E R XI.

*From Mr. J. Renwick, to the much honoured  
Mr. R. Hamiltoun.*

*Honoured Sir,*

*Gron. Feb. 22. 1683.*

I Cannot express my obligation to you for writing to me, a poor empty nothing; and considering my present case, your letter was very seasonable: for my great exercise is, and was, how to know the motions of the Spirit, and what he would have me to do in the circumstances wherein I stand; and ye have given some marks thereof, which I think indeed are very holding. But in this I must reverence a higher hand than yours. I have, since I saw you last, had as sad conflicts, yea more sad than ever I had heretofore: but O that I could bless and praise the name of the only holy and wise God. There is not one dram in the mixture of my cup that I can want; yea, I see a necessity for all that I meet with: and though I have had



very sad conflicts, the Lord (O infinite condescendence!) hath made me to possess sweet hours both in the night and day. And as to my case, I may say, *The Lord stays his rough wind in the day of his east wind*; for notwithstanding that *deep calleth unto deep*, yet the Lord keeps my spirit, in some measure, stayed and stablished as to that: but when I ponder other circumstances, I am put to many strange thoughts; yet the Lord makes me even feed many times upon this, and that even with great joy, that as he is dealing with his church this day, so is he dealing with me; yea, I see not one circumstance in the one, but I must see it in the other: yea, and is not this matter of great joy. The Lord forbid that I should desire to be otherwise dealt with than his church: O how unnatural like would that desire be! When his way is in the depths with his church, why should it not be so with us? But, O Sir, I see a cloud of wrath ready to fall out; and I fear, I fear that we will not be found free of it. O may not any thing be easily born; but how can this be born? O for grace to turn speedily and repent, it may be the Lord would repent him of the evil. There is mourning and humiliation that the Lord is calling for; and the Lord will ay, I think, give us stroke upon stroke, and blow upon blow, until he get that effectuate. If my heart deceive me not, I could submit (at least desire to submit) to any thing in time, but to this, *viz.* to have a deep hand in drawing more wrath forth, I cannot submit, I ought not to submit: O that the Lord would rather take me away in the midst of my days. But I ought not to misbelieve; he can keep my feet from falling, he

can

can perfect strength in my weakness. But this is the way that the Lord would have me to take; yea, I think assuredly, this is the course he would have me to fall upon, to seek all that I need from himself by prayer: for, to the praise of his free grace I must speak it, when he helps me either to pray or meditate, he is not wanting; but in other things I do not find him. However, I think, this may be the cause of it, I cannot win to use them and keep them in their own places. But there are some things good in themselves, and good when made right use of; but to me they are as *Saul's* armour to *David*, I can put them on, but I cannot walk with them: and I cannot say but I could put them on, unless I should lie of the Lord, who (blessed be his name) hath given me, in some measure, a disposition.

O Sir, as your letter was very refreshful, on the one hand; so, upon the other, it was very weighty unto me; because you say the trouble you told me of is not yet away: But, O I fear there may be much of a temptation in it, for I cannot see cause for trouble upon that account. But my hearing that you are troubled is no surprizal unto me, for you were often brought before me since I parted with you, and you was ay represented as one overwhelmed and weighted, and this was sometimes troublesome unto me; but when I thought upon the case of the Lord's church, I was then made to think, why should I wish it to be otherways with you, than it is with your mother: But is not the Lord taking all ways with us, to spean us from all things; yea, even to make us denied to one another? He will have us to take himself for all

all our contentment and satisfaction: O noble contentment! O sweet satisfaction! Other airths may fail us, but the Lord will never fail any that put their trust in him: and whatever the Lord hath to do with you in any place, as he calls you forth, so he will also, in his own blessed time, lead you whither you should go; *Heb. xi. 8. By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out unto a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.* O Sir, pray for sweet Scotland; pray that zeal and tenderness may be kept there: and pray for him who is,

*Much honoured Sir,*

*Your soul's-sympathizer,*

*and servant in the Lord,*

JAMES RENWICK.

## L E T T E R XII.

*From Mr. James Renwick, to Mr. Robert Hamilton, at Lewarden.*

*Much honoured Sir,*

*Gron. March 6. 1683.*

**I** Received your letter with worthy Mr. *Brackel's*, which were very surprizing to me, in respect of the circumstance of the time; and the sence of the work, together with my own unfitness, came so upon my spirit, that I began to give place to this resolution, that I would desire some more time; but therein I could find no peace,  
the

the mind being tortured and racked. And upon the other hand, when I considered the afflicted and affecting case of the remnant, both in respect of the open adversaries, and of treacherous sitters at ease, who stand in the cross-way; I say, when I considered how the glorious truths of God were wronged, by cruelty against them, on the one hand, and perfidious treachery and double-dealing on the other; I thought it would be a honourable thing, the Lord calling me thereto, and fitting me therefore, if it were but to give one public testimony against the same: Yet many objections arose in the heart, flowing all from the sense of my unfitness; but the Lord, (O praise be to his holy name!) answered them all with your letters, and with that word, *Psal.* lxxxix. 19. *I have laid help upon one that is mighty.* And also I thought, that it was to like the way of his dealing with his church, and saw so much of glorious wisdom and infinite love toward me in it, (for if I had any thing in me, I would be ready to forget him, and not to resort to that inexhaustible and precious treasure; but now I was put to run to himself, having no other airt to betake me to) that I could find no place for my objections more. But O! a weighty work indeed; I see that we can never run to him to get the weight of any thing taken off our spirits and laid on himself, till he let us once find somewhat of the weightiness thereof, and get it, as it were, laid heavy upon us. O! I say, a weighty work indeed! who is fit for opening up the mysteries of salvation? Who is fit for declaring our sweet Lord Jesus Christ, prophet, priest and king in *Zion*, without any competitor; and for opening up the same? Who

is

is fit for dispensing these glorious benefits of the covenant of redemption? O! who is sufficient for these things? And why is he calling poor unworthy nothing me out to such a great and glorious work? I think that he is saying, that *the excellency of the power may be of himself, and not of me.* So, having the mouth of all objections stopped, I offer myself in all trembling, fear and humility; yet having great reason to believe in him for all things, though I be altogether unfit. O dear Sir, wrestle, wrestle, and desire all true lovers of *Zion* to wrestle with the Lord, that ye and we may be directed in this great affair. O set time apart, and seek the mind of the Lord therein; ye will meet with difficulties in it; but I hope the Lord will have a care of his own work, and direct you wisely. For my own part I desire nothing but what may be for the advantage of the cause, and I hope the Lord hath so framed my affections, that whatever is seen not to be advantagious, I shall not desire.

We desire humbly to thank you for your books, the Lord he will repay you: and as for your letter from *Scotland*, which ye sent to me, it was very refreshful: I am sure the Lord moved you to send it; for I was made therein to see a great proof of the Lord's condescendency to poor me. That which it contains of *Andrew Young*, being the thing which I was expecting, for he was still brought before me, and represented as a man full of bitter passion; yea, he was so brought still in my way, that the day, or two days before I received the letter, I said several times to my neighbours, that I was sure I would hear something of him. O! that I had the tongue of  
the



the learned, to set forth the praise of that so glorious and excellent, yet so condescending a God. O! there is none that knows him but they will love him. The many proofs of his kindness and condescendency, make me many times to cry out, *What is man that he is mindful of him, or the son of man that he shouldst visit him?* But he loves, because he loves; and there can be no other reason given for it. I shall trouble you no further at the time, but present my love and service to your worthy brother; I hope he is not unconcerned at this time: and as for his going to *Scotland*, the Lord will direct him what to do: and I shall labour, through the Lord's strength, to obey your answer hereof. O Sir! wrestle, wrestle, and desire all to wrestle with the Lord, that he would carry on his own work, and get glory to himself in fitting instruments, and in making his people a zealous people, a holy people, a self-denied people. I am,

*Much honoured Sir,*

*Your sympathising friend,*

*and servant in the Lord,*

JAMES RENWICK.

### L E T T E R XIII.

*From Mr. James Renwick, to the much honoured Mr. Robert Hamilton.*

*Much hon. Sir, Amsterdam, March 30. 1683.*

AFTER I had sent away your *French* mail, and a letter with it, I received yours, but the

the post being just now going away, I have no time to write. But O! what would I, or could I say, but only desire to be submissive to the Lord's will, who hath made a necessary separation betwixt us, that I cannot have the comfort and advantage of your company: But, though you be absent from me as to bodily presence, you are not long out of my mind; I wish I may get you kept in your own place, and be kept from murmuring and discontent at my want. I resolve to pass for a while under the name of *James Bruce*. I have no time now to write to these worthy ladies; but before I go to *Scotland* I shall see to get it done, yet if once I were there, I think, I would know better how to write of matters. The Lord himself be with you. I am,

*Much honoured Sir,*

*Yours to serve you in the Lord,  
while I have a being in time,*

JAMES RENWICK.

---

## L E T T E R XIV.

*To Mrs. J. H. at Lewarden in Friesland.*

*Worthy Madam, Groningen, March 31. 1683.*

I have no time to write any thing to you, but I hope you will not think me to be so far out of my duty as to be unmindful of your case; for I am very sensible of the circumstances where in you stand: However, though your trials be  
many,

many, and your fears not few, yet I think not your case strange, the like hath happened to the Lord's people. O take all well out of the Lord's hand; look to his purposes in his dispensations, and then you will be made to read love to you in the saddest of them. Away with scrimpit sense, which constructs ay God's heart to be as his face is: Faith is a noble thing, it soars high, and can read love in God's heart when his face frowns: Have you not reason to construct well of him? Bode good upon his hand: your evening of sorrow shall be turned unto an everlasting morning of joy. Let the faith of this sweeten your present case unto you. The Lord be with you all. Mind him who is,

*Worthy Madam,*

*Your friend and servant in the Lord,*

*and a sympathizer with you in your trials,*

JAMES RENWICK.

## L E T T E R XV.

*From Mr. James Renwick, to the much honoured Mr. Robert Hamilton.*

*Much honoured Sir, Gron. April 23. 1683.*

I Received the inclosed yesterday, but I have no time to write any thing for the occasion is now going; only I have written this day to Mr. Br at Lee and by the Lord's gracious free condescendence, was put and kept in a good  
D
frame

frame all the while: O! that I could praise him for his free, free love. He lets me see much sin, and yet lets me see also, that he does not contend for the same, which cannot but be great matter of wonder. O! no fight, I think, is so sweet as that fight, for it is backed with admiration of his free love, and also with self-loathing. Hoping that ye will be mindful of poor unworthy me, as with my whole heart I desire to be of you. I am,

*Much honoured Sir,*

*Yours at command,*

*to serve you in the Lord,*

JAMES RENWICK.

## L E T T E R X V I.

*From Mr. James Renwick, to Mrs. Jean Hamilton at Lewarden.*

*Worthy Madam,*

*Gron. April 25. 1683.*

**I** Thought it my duty to acquaint you with what great things the Lord hath done in this place, for his own noble cause, and for us poor, weak, empty nothings: For when upon *Thursday* last; being the 19<sup>th</sup>. of this instant, Mr. *J. F.* and I went in before the Synod, which was then sitting, and sought ordination from them; they, for the most part not knowing us, after we had removed for a little space, began to ask among themselves what we were, and what

what we were seeking, having heard something thereof from ourselves. Whereupon, first *Dom. Philingius*, then *Dom. Albringha* rose up and declared unto them somewhat of the case of our church; at which, some of them fell out with tears, and said, Though the kings of the earth should be against them, they would go on in our affairs. Whereupon, we were called in again unto them, and three men were appointed for our trials; and the tenth of the next month, for the day; the ministers of this town having undertaken for the expence which we ought to have been at. So, having many things to do, I shall detain your Ladyship no further. But O! is not this great matter of praise, that the Lord should let his own hand be so much seen, in procuring such testimonies to his noble cause; yea, before he want a testimony, *the very stones would be made to cry out*: Therefore, come and let us worship him, come and let us exalt his name together; he reigns, and therefore let his followers be glad. Recommending you to his fatherly care; hoping, that ye will not be unmindful of poor unworthy me, upon whom the Lord hath laid so many obligations to be for him, and whom he is now calling forth to his vineyard in such a weak condition: But my sufficiency is of him, and to be found faithful is all my desire. My love and service to your worthy sister, the Lady and her children.

*Worthy Madam,*

*Yours, to my full power,*

*to serve you in the Lord,*

JAMES RENWICK.



## L E T T E R XVII.

*To the Lady Earlston Younger.*

*Worthy Madam, Groningen, May 5. 1683.*

I Received your Ladyship's letter; but I am sorry I had not the time to write sooner back to you: However, I hope you will excuse me, considering the circumstances I stand in at this time. Your letter represents to me a troubled case; but, I think, not a bad case, because ye have the sense of it upon your spirit. You say, a hiding God, who can bear it? O that I could see these pleasant days, to hear many crying that cry, to hear many signifying their desire after himself, by crying out, they could not want him, that they could not be content without him; yea, and that they could not be content with any thing else, being wilful in the matter. It is true indeed, they who know what his sensible presence is, they will not get born up in his conceived absence; and if I could, I would desire to mourn over their unperceiving temper, who can equally bear up in both: But, when the soul, not being filled with sense, pants after him *as the hart pants after the water-brooks*, and getting up, and running through the whole fields, crying out, *Saw ye him whom my soul loveth*; I cannot but think, that the Lord is eminently present with that soul, though not to its own apprehension; yea, and though there be no changes in the Lord, nor in his love; yet of all times, as to the outletting thereof, he is at such a time, most fash't to keep it in. And who knows not,  
that

that love, the more it is covered, the more it burns; as fire, the more it be covered, the more it smokes, unless it be extinguished; for, *whom he loves, he loves unto the end.* O let us not misconstrue him, for he doth not abide it. And for mine own part, I am made many times to go and bless his holy name, because of his withdrawing; for I see much more of his love manifested therein, than if he were sensibly present; because then I am made to see many things in myself I saw not before; for, it is most difficult to carry aright upon the mount: Do we not find this, that in such cases, we forget ourselves many times? as *Peter*, when he was with our Lord on the mount and saw his glory, said, *It is good for us to be here; let us make three tabernacles, one for thee, one for Moses, and one for Elias;* which *Luke* notes with that, that *he knew not what he said.* O! let us study that noble life of faith, which the Lord is at so much pains to learn us; for it is faith followed with holiness that all the promises are made unto, not one unto sense.

Your Ladyship writes, that since you came unto this land, the Lord's way hath not been ordinary with you; and I think, it looks the liker his way that it is so: and though (possibly at the time) you cannot see what is the language thereof, I am sure that afterwards he will let you see it; we have the swellings of *Jordan* to pass thro' yet, and the Lord seems to be training you up for what is before your hand learning you only to live the life of faith. O let us wait upon him, for we many times lose our aims because we want patience to wait on a little. Let us lie near himself, that we may not be confused, nor surprised in a day of fiery trial, not knowing where to

run. And as for that trouble which ariseth from the finding of friends like to take offence at your not going to the kirk; I confess, in its own place, it is a matter of concernment; but we have one who is higher, whom we must look to that we offend not; and to seek their countenance such a way, I dare not, nor will not counsel you to it. Labour to follow the Lord leading you, for I think, your case in that particular is from the Lord; and although that ye are humbled with your sabbath days being your worst days, be not too much troubled, for the Lord seems only to be trying you; and if Satan get in his foot, and make you to question duty for the want of sense, he will get his end mightily gained. O what is the matter though all the world should forsake us, and though all men should turn against us, if he be for us we need not care. O sweet word, Though father and mother should forsake us, yet he will not: And though our heart and flesh faint and fail us, yet he never will fail us. O Madam! I have not time to say what I would, but I shall omit the rest until meeting, which, if the Lord will, shall be shortly. Our ordination is going on; but, for ought I think, Mr. J. F. will not go thorow. O! pray, pray that the Lord may let his hand be seen, with poor weak, unworthy me; without him I can do nothing; O what excessive madness will it be for me to go on without himself. If he go not with me, I pray that he may not carry me up. My love and service to your worthy sister and all your family. I am,

*Your Ladyship's servant*

*to serve you in all things in the Lord,*

JAMES RENWICK.

## L E T T E R XVIII.

*From Mr. James Renwick, to the much honoured Mr. Robert Hamilton.*

*Much honoured Sir, Amst. May 30. 1683.*

**Y**OU know what a great work the Lord hath laid upon me, and how he hath laid so many obligations upon me to be for him, and him only: I hope that ye will be mindful thereof; praying that he will endow me with zeal, courage, resolution, constancy, tenderness and humility; and give a door of utterance, that with all boldness I may speak all his words, and that he may follow the same with his rich blessing. I do not think, but tryals and difficulties are abiding me, but if he be with me I shall not care. We must not this day seek ourselves great things, when the Lord is bringing evil upon all flesh, and is breaking down what he hath built, and plucking up what he hath planted. O! I must say this indeed to the praise of his free grace, that he is continuing and increasing his kindly dealing with my soul. O that I could praise him, and commend him to all flesh. Remember me to all our friends in the Lord, particularly to worthy Mr. *Brackel*, if ye have occasion; your worthy sister, and the worthy lady *Van Her*. whom I am singularly obliged to be mindful of, and not only I, but the church of God. The Lord's blessing be with you, and the earnest good wishes of him who is,

*Much honoured Sir,*

*Yours to serve you in the Lord,*

JAMES RENWICK.



## L E T T E R XIX.

*From Mr. J. Renwick, to the much honoured  
Mr. Robert Hamilton.*

*Much honoured Sir, Amst. May 31. 1683.*

**H**AVING met with *E. D.* who is coming to be your sister's servant, I thought it my duty to acquaint you, that your worthy brother *Earlston* is a long while ago come from *Scotland*; having met with friends there, and, as I hear, there are three papers drawn up; one including some reasons why we have rejected the tyrant; another, some reasons of our separating from these (so called) ministers; and the third, she says, is a call to, and a protestation against them: I wish it may be a bringing us out of the mire (and not a casting us into it over again) as I hope it will. But the reason of your brother's not coming hither ere this time, is his coming by *London*: I hope he knows his errand and call thereunto, tho' I cannot see it. *E. A.* is also coming alongst with him; but I hope ye will not meddle with *J. N.* the Lord counsel him and lead him, for that land is a valley of snares, especially at this time. Of the seven who were apprehended, four have taken the Test; whereof one is *Alexander Millar*, a young man. O! *all flesh is grass*; for I thought once, if there was a zealous man in *Scotland*, he was one: yet the Lord hath not left us so; for he hath accepted a bloody sacrifice off our hands two men being execute, viz. *John Wilson* in *Lanerk*, a young gentleman, and *David M-Millan* in *Galloway*,



*Galloway*, of whom I hear nothing but what is matter of praise, and cause of encouragement. O! let us go on and run our race rejoicing, and with patience: The cup of the *Amorites* is fast filling, and their day is near at hand, when they shall get their own blood to drink, for they are worthy. *Robert Lawson* is saying he will not die at this time, but I like not such prophecies as our case stands. *John Gib* and his companions are freed both from death and banishment, and have their liberty to go through all the prison, and large expence daily allowed unto them, by him whom they call the Chancellor. If the enemies had done otherways, they would not act like themselves. Courage, dear Sir, they will drop ripe very suddenly.

I have sent you with the said *E. D.* the exposition of the text which you desired, and shall take care to get a true copy of your letter secured unto you. I shall add no further at the time, but praying that the Lord may be unto you a present help in all times of need; for I think difficulties and discouragements are many, but ye know where your strength lies, and what must comfort you. O! hitherto he hath not been wanting, neither will he be wanting, for he is a faithful God, who keepeth covenant; and he knows this, that if he had not now put another work in mine hand, and were calling me to another place, it would be my hearts desire to serve you (as indeed is my duty many ways) and to take part with you in all your troubles; but what I cannot do by bodily presence, I hope the Lord will help me to do it by heart sympathy and willing-

willingness. Leaving you on your Master's hand,  
I am,

*Much honoured Sir,*

*Yours, to serve you in the Lord,*

*while I have a being in time,*

JAMES RENWICK.

---

## L E T T E R · XX.

*From Mr. James Renwick, to the honourable  
Mr. Robert Hamilton.*

*Honourable Sir, Rotterdam, June 13. 1683.*

I Have received both your former and later letters: but you may see an emblem of the case I was in when I wrote last unto you, by my not answering some particulars in your former letter, which I ought to have done. However, I have heard that our friend G. hath written to you, wherein, I hope, he hath given you a full account of his passage at *Utrecht*; and also of some strange disapointments that have happened unto us since, which made me often remember a word of yours to myself, That ye thought I should meet with some strange things in my going home. I have met with some strange things indeed, and have nothing to boast of, but only of the Lord, who is to be admired in all his doings; for they are works of wonder: and O that he would help me to submit to his holy and wise will, in keeping me so long here; yet I think the work is the liker his work  
that

hat there so many difficulties in the way of it. But as for Mr. *A. Cameron* I did not see him, but I hear that he is come unto you. The Lord, I hope, will let you know your duty, and will clear that best unto you, by conversing with himself. O! add not drunkenness to thirst; but, if the Lord call, see that you bestir yourself in it all that you can: he that hath had his hand singularly with you in many pieces of great service, will not leave you in this. And as for *A. H.* and *A. H.* they know indeed of my ordination; and the way they came to know it was, by their peremptor questions, to which I could not negatively answer; and then finding them gather the affirmative, I told them it was so, but enjoined silence upon them: but as for other particulars of our affairs they know none by me, save that *James Russel* and we, when we met, could not agree.

You wrote anent Mr. *Flint* and Mr. *Boyd*, their bestowing three hours each day upon *James Russel* and his comrade, in teaching of them; but as matters stand, I cannot approve of it, upon many considerations; for it is both encouraging and hardening to them: I say, encouraging to them to hold on their courses, for I see very little hope of what they pretend unto. I fear that there be rather in it a faction seeking to make a party. And as for Mr. *Binny's* being employed to teach our expectants, the Lord, I hope, will give me to know my duty in it, abstracting from all persons whatsoever.

As for what you wrote of fairs and mercats on saints days, I agree heartily with it; it was my own thought before, but confusedly. However, I desire to bless the Lord, who hath made you a  
mean

mean in that (as in some other things) to make me more distinct therein. O! I cannot express what I owe unto you; I say, I cannot express what I owe unto the Lord, whom I desire to bless while I live, that ever I saw your face. The Lord hath also made you to back what I was resolved on before, by your wholesome advice, in counselling me to take up an inventory of the Lord's way of dealing with friends and enemies in their persons and families, particularly and generally. And be assured, much honoured and dear Sir, that I shall, as I ought, keep nothing back from you; for, under the Lord himself, I have none that I can expect such counsel from as from you: therefore you must still be giving me your advice, and lay it out before the Lord ere you give it to me; for, indeed, I will lay much weight upon it: however, I desire to weigh it in the balance of the sanctuary. As for your going further away, I desire indeed to believe, that the Lord hath some work ado further abroad; but, I think, the change of dispensations calls you to stay still a while with our friends that are with you; for assuredly they will be much affected with the news of our dear friend Earlston, your dear brother's being taken: and also, I think, you cannot move until you hear what comes of him, (the Lord, I think, hath a great kindness for him, and will honour him) and till you receive letters from *Scotland*, both to yourself, to the presbytery of *Groningen*, and other friends.

I am not a little sorrowful at the very heart, that I am not in *Scotland*, to obey all your commands anent your dear brother. The Lord himself knows, that nothing that ever I was  
 trusted



trysted with, was such an exercise to me, as my being detained now out of it is. My longings and earnest desires to be in that land, and with that pleasant remnant, are very great. I cannot tell what may be in it, but I hope the Lord hath either some work to work, or else is minded presently to call for a testimony at my hand; and if he give frame and furniture, I desire to welcome either of them. O! dear Sir, mind me, become of me what will. I have much ado, many obligations lying upon me; and the Lord hath laid on not a few of them by your hands; and therefore you are the more engaged to be mindful of me: and, I may say it, your God lets me not be unmindful of you; and I am of the mind, that sometimes he is very kind unto you, putting mixtures of joy and rejoicing in himself, into your cup of sorrow.

When I am writing this line, I received from *Scotland*, a packet of letters, directed for your sister the Lady *Earlston*; but, expecting that there were letters for myself therein, I presumed to break up the packet, but did not read her letter; and found three for myself, but none from some that I most expected a line from, *viz.* *M. B.* neither hear I any word of news, for they are not dated, but I expect it is long since they were written. However, I hear that all the forces of *Scotland*, the rendezvous of hell, are a-foot, because there is one *Alexander Smith* one of our societies, and a godly youth, whom I heard was apprehended, rescued from the enemy, who were taking him from *Edinburgh* to *Glasgow*\* to be executed, and one of their

E guard

\* *Mr. Woodrow*, in his *History*, p. 219 thinks it was from *Glasgow* to *Edinburgh*, at *Loch-belly Bridge*.

guard being slain. The Lord be thanked, that he is stirring up any to vex the *Midianites*, and to account their brother's case to be their own. I must also tell you this, that I hear in one of my letters, that the Lord is making the increasing of the persecution to blow up some's zeal to a greater height than it was before. O good news! dear Sir, it minds me of *Paul's* words, *Phil. i. 28.* - *And in nothing terrified by your adversaries, &c.* It is not long till the cup of the *Amorite* and *Edomite* shall be brim-full. Courage yet, for all that is come and gone; the loss of men is not the loss of the cause: what is the matter tho' we should all fall, I assure all men that the cause shall not fall.

I thought fit also to send you the Martyrs Testimonies (not having gotten one of them read) altho' that my letters speak nothing of them, yet I know none else that they are ordained for, or that should have them but you. And as for the taking away of that every way abused oath, if it be not already taken away, through the Lord's strength, I shall see unto it. But do not think, much honoured and dear Sir, that Mr. *Boyd* will get any thing done, as he vents himself; for no presbytery will ordain him, unless he be called by the remnant of the church of *Scotland*; and if they shall now write to the contrary, he will have no ground to plead upon from their sending of him hither, and giving him a commission; For, *Posterior ult. evertere priorem.* I shall say no more, but my love and service to Mr. *Brackel*, and these ladies *V. H.* whom, I hope, the Lord will help to sympathize with you in your present condition. The blessing

ing of the God of *Jacob* be with you, and the earnest good wishes of him, who is,

*Hon. and dear Sir,*

*Yours, to serve you in the Lord,  
while he hath a being in time,*

JAMES RENWICK.

## L E T T E R XXI.

*From the Rev. Mr. James Renwick, to Mr. Robert Hamilton.*

*Hon. and dear Sir,* *Rott. June 23. 1683.*

I Thought it fit (supposing that possibly you may not see it nor hear of it) to write to you, that I have seen in the *English* News Papers, that there was a company of granadiers appointed to meet *Meldrum's* troop, that they might receive from them our worthy friend *Earlston*, in order to the bringing him to *Edinburgh*: but it is also inserted, that some say he is escaped. O! if it hath pleased the Lord so to order it, both his taking and his escape may have many languages unto us: But what I think I see is in the one, and will be in the other; if it be true (as I would gladly hope it will, because they never use to insert such things but when they are true) I forbear to mention until meeting, which, if the Lord will, shall be on *Monday* night, or *Tuesday* morning: O dear and honourable Sir, we have many enemies, let us

ly near our strength: wicked men and backsliders will do more and more wickedly. I shall say no more, having many things to tell you when met; but think it fit that notice hereof be sent to your worthy sister Mrs. Jean, if so be that ye think she will not otherwise hear. Leaving you on our Master. I am,

*Honourable and dear Sir,*

*Yours to serve you in the Lord,*

*while I am*

JAMES RENWICK.

---

## L E T T E R XXII.

*From the Rev. Mr. James Renwick, to the honourable Mr. Robert Hamilton.*

*Honourable Sir,*

*Dublin, Aug. 24. 1683.*

I Am assured that ye will think it strange that ere this time I should not have written unto you, but many hinderances hath been cast in my way, by reason of the difficulties and dangers of this time; all thir lands being, in a manner, in an uproar, by reason of challenging and suspecting all persons, and the transmitting of any letters. However, I can no longer, forbear to write, though it should never come to your hand; having many things to say to the commendation of the Lord's wisdom and power in out-witting and restraining men. But O I think, the Lord hath had a special hand in my coming to this place;

for



for he hath not suffered me to be idle; and blessed be his name, he hath kindled a fire which, I hope, Satan shall not soon quench: For all the people of this place were following men who did not follow the Lord, and thought these were right enough; yet now, some of them are saying, we have been misled; we never knew before this, that we were standing between the Lord's camp and the adversary's. O! what shall I say? blessed be the name of the Lord, who lets me see that *he will see the travel of his soul and be satisfied*; and gives me many confirmations of his calling me to this work, wherein my desire is only to be faithful. O rejoice in him who hath called me forth to fight against these who oppose themselves, notwithstanding of all their malice at me; and pretended friends their meeting to consult upon my apprehending. I shall say no more, he hath found some who have engaged to do for me, in taking me home to *Scotland*. But I have the more patience here, because of the Lord's doing great things. The Lord be with you, and all his *Israel*.

*Honourable Sir,*

*Yours, to serve you in the Lord,*

*while I am*

JAMES RENWICK.

## L E T T E R XXIII.

*From the Rev. Mr. James Renwick, to the Honourable Mr. Robert Hamilton.*

*Hon. and dear Sir,                      Edin. Sept. 26. 1683.*

I Have been thinking much long for an opportunity of writing unto you, but I hope, your goodness will not draw any wrong constructions from my necessitate delay; for, blest be the only holy and wise Lord, I am made to rejoice in him thereanent, and have been kept, by his grace, from murmuring and quarrelling against him, because I saw much of himself, and his holy and wise purposes, yea, even toward me, in the circumstances I stand in, in every step, since my departure from your Honour. For, being kept some days at the *Texel*, where I was, in some measure, exercised to know what might be the language thereof, which I could not know till afterwards; we launched forth into the sea, where we were tossed for some days with a violent contrary wind, and driven within uptaking of the coast of *France*, before that we could get the *English* coast taken up; and all with very great hazard, for the vessel was but little, and not at all firm, which occasioned our setting into an harbour in *England* called *Rye*; where we went ashore and were much noticed by the tyrant's waiters, it being upon the back of the discovery of their plot; yet, the Lord so restrained them that we were not challenged; however, we thought it not fit (fearing snares) to stay ashore, and therefore went aboard again. But after some days, the said waiters in their passing by, came  
abroad

aboard of us, and asked very rudely of the skipper, where we were; who replied, that we were aboard; and then asking what men we were, was answered by the skipper, that he knew not; which I overhearing, thought that his answer would make the said waiters more inquisitive: However the Lord so restrained them, that when they came unto us, they had no power to challenge us. Now all this time, we still concluded that we were already apprehended, seeing no probability of shunning it: But, blessed be the Lord, that was no way terrifying to me; for notwithstanding of his other special assistance, I saw so much of his hand in it (we being driven seven leagues back unto that place) that I could not quarrel, but was much refreshed with that word, *It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good.* Then, after this, the skipper did what he could to ensnare us on the sabbath-day, but the Lord so struck him with his own hand, that he was not able to go forth to give any information of us; and in the *Munday* morning the Lord sent a fair wind, which was embraced, and so brought us safe away, far beyond our expectation. O! all this should learn us to credit him with his own cause, and with our cause; and may let us see, that enemies, further than is permitted, shall not prevail. Then after this, winning forward unto *Dublin*; from whence there was no way of departing without a pass; but desiring to wait the Lord's time, and to commit our case unto him, he wonderfully provided an occasion for our friend *G. Hill*, but in no ways they would condescend to take me with them, which was a piece of exercise unto me to know what might be the language of it; yet in  
the

the time, I could not see it fully; but afterwards was made to see, that the Lord had some piece of work to do there. O! blest be his name, for he hath set some upon a search of their ways, and to know that they had not been right; who were so affected with my departure from them, (when the Lord had wonderfully provided an occasion, whereby I was cast out in the night-time at a hill-side, some few miles below *Greenock*,) that they entreated me with tears to stay; saying, that their necessity was greater than *Scotland's*; and would not part with me, until, that upon some suppositions, I promised to return again. But, as the Lord stirred up some people to all this, their (so called) ministers increased their malice, especially one Mr. *Jack*, the ring-leader of the rest, who sought to speak with me; which I would not, nor could, without stumbling of the people, refuse; who, when met, we reasoned upon several heads, particularly this, Whether or not a person attacked for duty might choose a punishment? whereof I held the negative. But, in a second conference, he having some of his companions trusted with him, fell on more briskly, and asked, How came I to draw away his congregation? To which I replied, That I denied him to have a congregation, and did only labour and desire to draw the people from sin unto their duty; and for accepting his call to preach, that I ought not, nor would not, because I could not own him as a faithful minister of Jesus Christ; for he had betrayed the cause of the Lord. And for satisfying him anent my ordination, I told, when I met with faithful ministers of Christ, I should subject myself to them, but him I declined as



competent to require that of me; and also, that I behoved first to be satisfied anent his entry to that congregation; the exercise of his ministry during his continuance therein; and now his yielding it up at the enemies command; all which was to be reconciled with the word of God, our engagements, and the duty of a minister; which when he heard, he grew mightily passionate, falling out in bitter reflections; and I perceiving the dishonour done to God thereby, told him, that I would speak no more to such men in such a frame, and so departed. I had also some battles upon your account; but the Lord assisted in that, as in all other things; for I saw it was not you, but the cause and party which they reviled. O! honourable and dear Sir, What shall I say to all those things? It is good keeping the Lord's way; for he will not leave nor forsake.

Now, since I came to my own land and people, I have seen several things which are encouraging and promising; as the Lord's helping some, of whom little was expected, to shew both zeal and steadfastness in his cause: And other things which speak out wrath to be at the doors, as the neutrality and lukewarmness, yea declining of many, who have been helped to be hitherto valiant. O! blessed be the Lord, who will not give his glory to another, and blasts every thing that our eyes are upon.

As for news, the Lord is wonderfully to be seen in every thing, and assists in what he calls unto. For in coming through the country, we had two field-meetings, which made me to think, that if the Lord could be tied to any place, it is to the muirs and moles in *Scotland*. O! he will  
have

have a day of his power to be seen in this land. I say, he is to be seen in hiding, preserving and providing for his people in such a day of the enemies cruelty, and seems to have some strange thing upon the wheels, especially in your Honour's dear brother's case, which we desire to wait upon and behold; for enemies cruelty and threatenings against him are great, and their snares and subtilties no less; however, they are wonderfully restrained, and he strangely reproached, but very causelessly. And as for *Robert Lawson*, (so sad and sweet in several respects) he is suffered to cast all his former doings, to the hardening of backsliders, and the grieving of the godly. But *Edward Aitken* is escaped, and intends to come to you and follow his books: but his carriage in the public matters hath been very hurtful to the cause, and in private, very unchristian, opening mouths to reproach and blaspheme; therefore, I hope ye will not move in it, without the general meeting's advice. Also, I expect that *Thomas Linning* will be sent to you, and hope, ye will be satisfied with him, for he hath been very satisfying, refreshing and encouraging to me since I came home.——

We are in some confusion now through the want of time, and upon other accounts. However, as occasion offers, I will labour to get a full information of every thing sent unto you; for I am sensible of the advantage that it will be unto the Lord's cause.

Now, the Lord be with your honour, making you a brazen wall and iron pillar against all enemies and forsakers of his truth as hitherto, by his grace, he hath done; and point out unto you your duty in every case, helping you to follow

low it. Write to friends, for your letter was very refreshing, rejoicing, and strengthening unto them, and to him who looks upon you as his father and brother; and remains

*Your Honour's assured friend,*

*sympathizer, and servant in the Lord,*

JAMES RENWICK.

## L E T T E R XXIV.

*From the Rev. Mr. James Renwick, to the honourable Society of strangers at Lewarden in Friesland.*

*Nov. 13. 1683.*

*Honourable and dear Friends in our Lord,*

I Have not only heard, but also, in the little space I was amongst you, saw, many tokens and evidences of your love to our lovely Lord, and tender sympathy with his afflicted sufferers; which was no small refreshing and encouragement to me, and also a great engaging and endearing of my heart unto you; so that I know not how to unfold my thoughts, nor unbofom my ardent affections. But as my heart is much with you, so, I may say, you are frequently with me, and that in the times which you most require, when I desire to prostrate myself at the footstool of the throne of grace. However, I could not forbear, neither thought I it my duty to omit writing unto you. But, what shall I say, but that which you yourselves know? the  
 Lord

Lord, being the only object whereupon all our desires can satisfiably terminate, is worthy of all honour, fear, love, and service; yea, and at the mentioning of this, we may stand astonished, and wonder, that he in himself, supertranscendently and infinitely glorious, incapable of receiving any additional glory from his creatures, should call such unworthy worms, self-destroyed creatures, to serve him; which, though he had not freely and graciously promised any reward after time, would be a reward unto its self. But, O! what can be his end in calling and drawing out such destroyed and unworthy creatures, as any of the lost posterity of *Adam*, to love and serve him? It is not that he may get good (of which he is incapable) but that he may give good. O! praised be his free grace, he hath provided and laid open a way whereby we may have both access and right unto him, by the mediation of his Son, our Lord Jesus Christ: Therefore let us answer his call, and come unto him, where all, and only our happiness lies, with hearts so enlarged, and conceptions so framed and shapen out, as that nothing less than himself may satisfy; for more cannot be desired: Let us come unto him, follow him fully; take up his cross, and our engagements against the world, the devil, and the flesh; for he is a noble and glorious Captain whose banner we have to fight under, who not only bears his soldiers charges sufficiently here, all their stock being only in his own hand, but also makes them sure of the victory, and of the kingdom and crown in the end of their battle; they being to walk with him in glorious white robes, throughout all eternity. Let us espouse his quarrel for our  
own,



own, and not be discouraged for what opposites can do; for, in all their intended actings against him, they are but pulling down themselves, and setting up his kingdom; and neither be annoyed with the difficulties in time, but look above and beyond these, unto the rich recompence of reward; for the day is near at hand, when these tabernacles of clay shall fall down about our ears, and we shall be set at liberty; made incapable of grieving his Spirit, or sorrowing any more, and fitted for the blest, full and eternal enjoyment of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. O what a day will that be, when the saints shall get their fill of him, incircling him with both their arms; or rather being incircled by him? Let us wait and look out for it, longing for the day when that shall be heard in heaven; O! how sweetly will it be sung! *Arise, arise, arise, my love, my dove, my fair one, and come away; for behold your winter is past, and your everlasting summer is come.* O let the thoughts of that summer, and tasting of the first-fruits thereof, sweeten this our winter unto us; making us chearfully to travel through the same, with songs of our Beloved in our mouths, and patiently to endure what travel or tribulations, either for our chastisement or instruction, he who doth all things well may be pleased to let out upon us. And as ye have been helped thro' grace to become companions with us in our tribulation; so I would have you look out for the same upon yourselves, for the Lord will come and shake terribly the earth, and punish the inhabitants thereof for their iniquity, lay waste cities, and desolate lands: for all nations are overspread with a supine and loath-

some formality; yea, avowed profanity, and dreadful blasphemy against the heavens. I say not this, my honourable and dear friends, to discourage you, but rather for the continuance and encrease of your holy zeal, which ye manifest towards the Lord's cause and interest. O! go on in it, for therein shall be your peace as to duty, and he himself is your exceeding rich reward.

Now, for your great kindness, love unto, and sympathy with our bleeding and wounded mother-church, which I saw amongst you; and particularly for your heart love and tender respects toward myself, though altogether undeserved, I cannot express how I am engaged to the Lord, and obliged unto you; yea, it passeth my apprehension. But I am singularly obliged indeed; so I must beg further matter (though already enough be had) by the continuance of your mindfulness of our distressed and wounded church; and of that exceeding great and weighty work, which ye know the Lord hath laid upon me. But why should I fear? the work is his own; and he sends none a warfare on their own charges; and, ever blessed be his holy name, I may say this from sweet experience; for I have found him a present help in all my necessities, and many ways beyond my expectation, confirming my call, and countenancing his work both at home, and elsewhere were he was pleased to cast and detain me. Now, the Lord be with you. Again mind me, as I desire to do you. Remaining,

*Honourable and dear Friends,*

*Your hearty wellwisher,*

*assured and obliged friend and servant,  
to my full power in the Lord.*

JAMES RENWICK.

## L E T T E R XXV.

*From the Rev. Mr. James Renwick, to the honourable Mr. Robert Hamilton.*

*Honourable and dear Sir, Edin. Nov. 14. 1683.*

**T**Hough I have many things that I would and could say, yet I am so busied, which I think ye may know, that I cannot be so large in writing to you as I would: However, I see many encouragements and discouragements; encouragements from the Lord's omnipotency, condescendency, and faithfulness; yea, the glory that is to be seen in his noble way of managing his own cause: and discouragements from several airths which I expected not; for since I came home, I have found some, of whom I expected better things, cleave to crooked and perverse ways; yea, and turn very embittered against us: and at the present (oh sad! but too true) we are pestered with a company of prejudiced evil persons, who join hands and issue with backsliders, and make known every thing unto them; wherein I only desire and labour, that the particular persons may be found out, that so we may proceed against them according to the word of God, and our duty.

My coming home hath had such effects as I expected indeed, for enemies are more cruel and eager in persecution than ever, and backsliders more embittered with malice than heretofore; but some of whom I expected to be cordial with, I have not found it so; neither should I in the ways that they are upon: and this hath

been chiefly occasioned by my testimony ; which as it hath, by the Lord's goodness, been refreshing, encouraging and strengthening to some, so it hath made others vent more what they were. And herein I rejoyce, yea, and will rejoyce (there being not an article in it, but what I am more and more confirmed of) because it hath a tendency to the siding of us, either for or against the Lord. But among all friends none so helpful and strengthening unto me, as our friend *George Hill*. However, I must say, that I find the Lord countenancing and blessing his work, yea, and giving testimonies for his cause : O! ever blessed be his holy name therefore.

As for informations in other things, there is little to give your Honour ; only at our last meeting, all that we did was the reading of the testimony, some papers for coming to you, and subscribing them ; laying aside the abused oath of secrecy ; and ordaining *T. L.* to teach our scholars. At this meeting presently ensuing, I know of nothing to be done, but some other papers to be subscribed ; our scholars, some of whom we are jealous of, examined ; and some sought out to be sent unto your Honour, with our letters and papers ; and (that which will be our continual work) a way thought upon for finding out of these, whose tongues and hands are so against the Lord. And as for myself, in other things, since I came home, I have been more pained and indisposed of body, than these several years before : however it was made sweet unto me, for I saw two things in it ; first, when before I was casting up, and counting all pieces of cost, I thought I saw my All in the Lord's hand, but only bodily strength, thinking that



that there was enough of that in mine own; and he takes that way with me, which, O! is glorious, that I may have the strength as well as other furniture from his own hand, in more than an ordinary manner, that so his name may get the more praise therefore. Secondly, I saw this in it, that though I have been in some places of the country, yet I have but win through little of it: and where I have not been, I fear more an anxiety after the ordinances, than a thirsting after the Lord; so that, I think, the Lord is seeking to get his people both to prize, and yet to be denied to the means.

O! dear Sir, the thoughts of our long absence is frequently troublesome unto me; but shall we not have a joyful, a joyful meeting in heaven; and who knows, but we may meet in time? In the mean time, only be mindful of me, and the work which you know the Lord hath laid upon me, as I am, and desire to be of you, both in public and private. The Lord be with you. I am,

*Your Honour's hearty wellwisher,*

*real sympathizer, greatly endeared friend,*

*and most obliged servant in the Lord,*

JAMES RENWICK.

## L E T T E R XXVI.

*From the Rev. Mr. James Renwick, to the Ladies Van. Heermaen, at Lewarden in Friesland, 1683.*

*Worthy Ladies, beloved in the Lord,*

**T**HOUGH it hath pleased the holy God, in his wise providence, to carve out my lot unto me, since my departure from you, that I had no time and occasion of writing; yet the Searcher of hearts knows (as I hope your goodness will construct it) that I have not been forgetful of you, nor of your heart-concernedness with *Zion's* case, and sympathy with her afflicted children, particularly us in *Scotland*; whereof I have seen great tokens and evidences. O go on in holy tenderness: go on in zeal, for therein shall ly your peace, as to duty. Follow the Captain of Salvation fully, for he makes all his followers to enjoy the prize; his soldiers he makes them overcomers, and his servants kings, to reign with him for ever more, in his inheritance, whereunto he, their elder Brother, hath entered, to take possession in their names. What shall we say of these unspeakable privileges of his people? Shall we not stand still struck with wonder and admiration, having our mouths filled with the praise of him, who left the glory of heaven, and the bosom of the Father, to come down, and to take upon him our nature, that therein he might interpose himself betwixt the Father's wrath and us, both by his suffering, and fulfilling of the law for us, that we might

not

not only be freed from sin and the consequents thereof, but be made partakers of such inconceivable privileges, and be restored to a more happy and sure estate than what we fell from. It is angels work to desire to look into this, and it will be our work throughout all eternity; and should we not study to be more in it now, viz. in praising of him for his covenant of free grace, and for his works of wonders done unto the sons of men; who delighteth to manifest his mercy, his power, and his holy wisdom, and to let poor things find something of himself in all his attributes, in their own experience; so that they are made to say, *He is good, and does good.* And for mine own part I may say, that tho', when I had the occasion to see your Ladyships, he had done great things for poor unworthy me; so that I had great reason to set forth his praise, if I could have done it; yet now he hath done much more, which may furnish new matter of praise: for, since my departure from you, the Lord hath been pleased to tryt me with several difficulties, that he might have occasion of manifesting himself, in bringing me through the same. In fire or water I dare not say he hath left me or forsaken me; and though perils by sea, and perils by land, and the snares of enemies to the cause and cross of Christ, have been many, yet he hath wonderfully brought me hitherto through the same, and frustrate the expectations of the wicked; and not only hath been at great cost and pains to lay obligations on me to be for him; but also hath taken many ways to train me up for this work he has laid upon me, and the circumstances of the time wherein my lot is fallen. But the greatest of all, I think, is, the  
many

many confirmations he hath given me of his own cause; and also, of his call to such a weighty business; and his letting me see what hath been a great part of his end in detaining me so long from my own land and people; which was, to cast me and keep me a little space in *Ireland*, where he hath kindled a fire, which I hope, he will not suffer to die out; and hath put some people upon a searching of their ways, wherein they had turned from him. O! blessed be his name, who will *see of the travel of his soul, and be satisfied*; and who is that good shepherd, out of whose hand none shall pluck his sheep; for *the gates of hell shall not prevail against his church*; and no wonder, for it is a rock, and built upon a rock. O! come, let us lift ourselves under his banner, and take his part against a lukewarm generation, and resolve upon trials; for, I think, he loves none whom he lets want them: But consider for whom it is, it is for his name's sake, who is *the chief among ten thousand, who is altogether lovely*.

Now, the Lord, who is not unrighteous to forget your labour of love, be all things unto you, and reward you for your sympathy and concernedness with the Lord's people in this land, who are very sensible of your becoming companions with them in their tribulations, and that ye have had compassion upon them in their bonds, and desire the help of your prayers for the desolations of the Lord's holy mountain. So, no more at the time, being assured of your concernedness with our much honoured friend *Robert Hamilton*, of whose courage, constancy, and zeal for the Lord's cause ye have proof; for, what is done to him is, as it were done to us all. Mind poor me,  
and



and the great work the Lord hath laid upon me.  
The Lord be with you.

M A D A M S,

*Your Ladyships affectionate servant,  
and sympathizer in the Lord.*

JAMES RENWICK.

L E T T E R XXVII.

*From the Reverend Mr. James Renwick, to the  
honourable Mr Robert Hamilton.*

*Hon. and dear Sir,*

*Jan. 1684.*

**B**Eing by the Lord's providence with the Lady Earlston, when sending away her letters, I behoved to salute you with this line, shewing you, that (blessed be the Lord) I am well every way, though my case be singular, and my trials no less such; yet I may turn my complaints into triumphant songs; for I have seen the Lord's wonders in the land of the living, and he is still increasing the number of his followers: for, tho' I should go over and over again to any countryside, at every time there come others ay out who did not come out before. But enemies are intending sad things against us; for they are now leading out their forces to the West, threatening to lay it desolate; saying, That we will never be curbed till they make that country a hunting-field. But, let them prat, a higher hand rules all: and I am persuaded, that we shall thereby  
be

be more affrighted than skaited; though our fears be not great, whatever be the fears of the apostate party. Know also, that Mr. *Shields* is brought to *Scotland*: I know that he and Mr. *Andrew Cameron* and Mr. *Flint* were joined together in seeking after ordination, that they might come home to *Scotland*: But when I heard it, was not satisfied that you was not owned in it. However, this hath a strange language: the Lord hath crushed it; for their papers anent the same and many books were cast away at sea. O! the majesty of your God and my God, that shines in his management of affairs: Let you and me stand still and admire this. So, leaving you to his all-sufficiency; with my love to all my friends with you. I am,

*As formerly,*

JAMES RENWICK

## L E T T E R XXVIII.

*From the Rev. Mr. James Renwick, to the honorable Mr. Robert Hamilton.*

*Hon. and dear Sir,*

*March 29. 1684.*

I Have very much to say, but I have no time to express myself: However, though I had ten thousand times ten thousand years, yea, the faculty of angels, I could, in no ways, lay out mine obligations to free grace; but behoved, when I had babled my fill, to seal up all with this, CHRIST IS MATCHLESS: O he is the wonder of the higher house! and will he not be  
your

our wonder and my wonder throughout the  
ages of lasting eternity! Come away then, let us  
labour to keep up that work now, wherein eter-  
nity will not weary us: We cannot now think  
rightly of him, but we shall get eternity to the  
work: His beauty and excellency is so ravishing,  
that a poor weak, doilt-fond soul will be made  
to turn its dazled eyes away from him, when yet  
the heart will be melting in love's hand. O!  
that we be narrow vessels that can receive no-  
thing; but hereafter we shall see him as he is.  
O what is he! Angels cannot define him, and  
we must be silent; yet this I must say, he is  
matchless: all perfections meet in him; he is  
glorious, and he is the only best of choices; O!  
he is glorious in himself, and manifests that in  
all his actings; his doings are like himself, and  
carry large characters of all his attributes engraven  
upon them. Why are such confusions upon his  
Church, but that he may get occasion to make  
his wisdom conspicuous in bringing order out  
of hereof? O! he will do it, and his carrying on  
this strange work of discovery is a pledge of it: his  
faithfulness is engaged to do it. Let us not fear,  
though enemies cruelty, and steppers-aside's ma-  
lice, be more than formerly, yet his word shall  
stand sure: And poor mad fools, what are they  
doing, but crushing themselves, and letting up  
his throne? Now,

Right honourable and dear Sir, there are ma-  
ny particulars which I would write, but I cannot  
get it done; howbeit I shall wait to catch some  
opportunity for it. Our friend *George* having  
given you at the time, a brief touch of some  
things; the Lord helps him to give many evi-  
dences of sincerity and stedfastness to the cause,  
and

and affection to such in all places who are most sorely shut at upon the cause's account. I thought to have written something unto you anent *T. L.* but *George* having spoken my mind, I shall forbear. Yet there is one thing which is your duty, and which is also my duty to mention unto you, and that is, that you would take pains upon *J. F.* to wear out that bad impression which *James Russel* hath given him of us: O deal tenderly with him, for he is but young, yet I hope, of zealous intentions. Be concerned with him in that strange place, for he is a child of many prayers; his relations bear a great affection to the cause, and to all who own the same; and your name is very favourable unto them. It is weighty to me, that *James Russel* hath insinuated himself so much upon him; for, his being sent abroad was, in some measure, upon expectation that he and I should be together. Now,

Right honourable and dear Sir, let not difficulties damp you; there is nothing that falls out but what is in kindness both to the remnant and to you: Regard not the reproaches of tongues; are not these the badges of your honour? our lot must not be thought strange, for the Lord's people heretofore have met with the like. Remember ye have need of patience: we have enemies now upon all hands; and I must say, that man *James Russel* hath been a costly *James Russel* to the poor church of *Scotland*. I shall say no more; but as malice of opposites to the cause increaseth, let our love thereunto and to one another increase.

*Your assured friend and servant in the Lord,  
and your unworthy brother in afflictions  
and reproaches for his name's sake,*  
JAMES RENWICK.



## L E T T E R XXIX.

*From the Rev. Mr. James Renwick, to Mrs. Jean Hamilton, at Lewarden in Friesland.*

*Worthy Madam,*

*June 20. 1684.*

I Received your letter, which unbosomed to me a troubled case, which in no small measure does affect my spirit; but as I am affected with the trouble of spirit which ye express; so, I am refreshed with my observing that you are not insensible of your case, your great complaint being of the want of light and life: But I am persuaded, that a creature altogether wanting the one and the other, cannot be troubled anent their apprehended want of either; for none miss that which doth not belong unto them: a horse hath no sense of his want of the wings of an eagle, because these are not proper to him; but the want of his feet, he presently misseth the same, when he is put to go: These who never knew any thing of light and life cannot miss the same. I grant indeed, many unregenerate have a missing of common influences, which flashes are far from that heart-sealing that the believer is acquainted with. However I conceive, that as common influences are not permanent, and tend nothing to the changing of the heart; so, the poor creature gets leave to rest in them, seeking no further; and when missing them, is troubled chiefly, if not only, because external duty then is neither so easy nor pleasant. There are depths here that I dare not now launch out unto, lest time will not allow me to bring myself out a

gain. But, O Madam! what shall I say unto you? Let no less than Christ himself satisfy you; study to dwell under the impression of his preciousness, for the contemplation thereof fills the heart with love to him; and love, you know, is a most active and lively thing: and judge not your state by what you find your case, as to your sense, sometimes to be; for a very fruitful tree will bear neither fruit nor leaves in the winter season, while as much sap will be in the root: Spend not time in debating, but in the sincere and serious use of these means that ye have of union and communion with Christ, and this is both the surest and the shortest way to win to fixedness; neither seek sense's satisfaction for the present, but a well grounded assurance for the future: Look to the infinite power, and infinite love of Christ; *there* is a two-edged sword to cut assunder all your Gordian knots. Infinite power, what can it not do? and infinite love, what will it not do! Never seek any thing in yourself to commend you to Christ, for that will keep you still staggering; so to his grace who is able to perfect what concerneth you, do I recommend you. But as to your troubled case, in not knowing well whether you be called to stay where you are, or to come home; I confess, when I ponder all circumstances I find it very puzzling, and I may say, it hath given me some errands to God, and am in no small measure concerned therewith: But I would desire you, without anxiety, to wait on a little; for the Lord by his providential dispensations, or in a more extraordinary manner, will determine you: some concerned friends are also spoken to anent it, that they would ponder the case before the Lord, and see whether they will

will desire the babies to come home or not; and their mind, I think, will be soon reported to your worthy brother, as this comes into your hands; so at the time, I can write the less ament it, and therefore leave you upon the Lord, who is all in all; begging, worthy Madam, that you would not forget the case that ye know he is in, who remains

*Your Ladyship's soul's wellwisher, sympathizer,  
and obedient servant in the Lord,*

JAMES RENWICK.

---

## L E T T E R XXX.

*From the Rev. Mr. James Renwick, to the  
Honourable Mr. Robert Hamilton.*

*Hon. and dear Sir,*

*July 9. 1684.*

**Y**OUR letter which I received was wonderfully sweet and refreshing to me, and was made a mean, in some measure, to prepare me for what I was to meet with; for immediately thereafter I was involved in such troubles as before I had not been trysted with, but all indeed, to manifest, in a wonderful manner, the Lord's love and power to and for his people. For, upon the sabbath, I say, after your letter came to my hand, we met for public worship, near the *Whinn bog* in the *Monkland*; but that country being generally apostatized into an open hostility against the Lord, some went quickly away unto *Glasgow*, and gave notice unto the enemies

forces: Howbeit we heard thereof ere forenoon's sermon was ended, yet continued untill that part of the work was gone about: And thereafter, thought it fit to depart from that bounds, and that the armed men should keep together for their better defence and safety; which, through God's goodness, was a mean to keep the enemy from noticing and pursuing strangers, that being stricken into some confusion and terror, and keeping both their horse and foot in one body; yet they lodged all night, we not knowing of it, within a mile of some, and two miles of others of us, intending to set forward toward these houses where we were. But the Lord, whose ways are wonderful, made use of a malignant gentleman to detain them, he asserting that none of us went toward that airth. Notwithstanding, this wakened up the adversaries more; so that, they kept up a pursuit and search, which proved very obstructive to our general meeting, which was upon that *Thursday* thereafter: For upon that very day, they came with horse and foot to search these muirs where we were, and came near upon upon us ere we got any thing concluded; which thing moved us (we suspecting that they, some way or other, had gotten notice of some of us being together) to remove from that place some way off into a little glen, where we resolved to keep ourselves obscure: but after we had rested and refreshed ourselves a little, we espied four of their foot marching toward us, whereupon it was thought fit, to send out so many to meet with them, who when they came together fired upon one another: but, the Lord's gracious providence so ordered it, that there was not the least skaith upon our side; there being



one of the enemies wounded so that he died since. Howbeit the shots alarmed the rest of the enemies which were upon the hill; and, when we drew out to the open fields, we saw their foot not very far from us, and got present advertisement that the enemy was still upon the pursuit and near unto us: We, in all haste, set foreward through the moss, having no outward strength to fly unto, but by crossing the way of the adversary; whereupon we expected an encounter with them; yet committing ourselves into the Lord's hand, we went on, until we came unto another certain moss, where we staid until night, and got much of our business done. But in all this, the wonderful power of God was seen, both in spiriting his people for that exigence, and preserving us from falling amongst the hands of the adversaries: yea, though he shewed us wonders therein, yet he delighted to shew us more; for, upon the *Saturday* night thereafter, there was a competent number of us met in a barn for worship, and had not well begun until we heard both the drums and trumpets of the enemies; but we thought it most expedient to set watches without, and continue at our work until we saw further. Nevertheless, in all these tumults and dangers, the Lord's goodness was so manifested to his people, that he not only hid them under his wings, and preserved them; but also, he kept their spirits from the least fear, confusion or commotion; yea, the very sight of some of them, would have made resolute soldiers amongst us. So after this hazard was over, some of us thought it convenient to stay where we were (it being a woody place) until the sabbath day were past: But, ere the middle of the day,

we got an alarm that the enemy was within two miles or thereabout, coming toward that airth; whereupon we went over *Clyde*; but so soon as that was, we being in number about six or seven, had almost rencountered with a party of the enemy's horse, who at the crossing of our way, had inevitably met with us, if that the Lord had not so ordered it, that a friend of ours had seen them ere they could see us, who thereupon came running toward us with a white napkin (because conspicuous to us) flourishing in his hand; whereupon we halted, and when he came to us, we lurked among some bushes until the enemy past by; and thereafter we setting forward by two and two upon our journey, which was intended to be but short, some two of us met with one of the adversary's number upon horseback, who presently fled with all his might toward *Lanerk*, we being within three short miles thereof; which forced us to take a desperate course, in running through that plenished country unto *Darneath Moss*, still expecting to forgather with that hostile town of *Lanerk*, both horse and foot; but the Lord's power, and goodness was such toward us, that we escaped all their hands; which thing was great matter of admiration unto us all, and made me to wonder no little. That scripture, *Psal. cxxvi. 2, 3.* being my companion, *Then said they among the heathen, The Lord hath done great things for them. The Lord hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad.* And also, that other *Psalme, cxi. 6.* *He hath shewed his people the power of his works, that he may give them the heritage of the heathen.* O! all these things that he did to us and for us, were matter of great rejoicing in himself: But as I thought I saw them

the pledges of greater things, whereby his attributes might be more manifested, they were made matter of double and greater joy unto me. He hath given us proofs of what he can do for his people in the day of their strait, and gives us good cause to commit unto his faithfulness the management and raising up of his seemingly buried work, and the carrying through of his people: and ever since, it hath been my chief exercise, yea, and a while before that, the deep and abiding impression, of his unexpected, sudden and glorious appearing for his name and people.

I think we are like unto a poor helpless, deplorable, dead-like company, lying depressed in a valley; and he, as it were, by his word and works discovering himself upon a hill top in our view, stretching out his arms, and allightering to be at us, calling unto us that we would join our hearts and voices together, and cry him down unto us; offering that his power and love meeting together, shall trade down and dissipate unto nothing our dreaded obstructions of one sort and another; yea, I say, if I know any thing of the mind of the Lord, that this is his special call unto all his sincere followers this day, *Isa. lxii. 6, 7. Ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence; and give him no rest, till he establish Jerusalem, and till he make it a praise in the whole earth.* O! let us all join together in this exercise, and let us be sincere, fervent and constant in it. Let us be at no manner of ease while Zion is in trouble: for though we should be content with our calamity, yet we should in no ways be content with our sin procuring the same; nor with the preservation of enemies in their insolence and rebellion.

lion against the Lord, whereby his name is daily blasphemed; also procured by our backsliding. I say, let us join in this exercise, in crying to the Lord for his appearing; for his people delivery shall be so glorious, that it shall abundantly make up all the cost, wrestling, and suffering that they can be at: and though many of them with their bodily eyes may never see it, and though some of these that, in their places and stations, are employed about the building, many never see the cap-stone put thereupon, for as stout a work as the great Master-builder will make of it, yet what's the matter? they are about their duty; and their delivery shall be more complete and more glorious. And, for mine own part, though the enemy should not get me reached, seemingly this tabernacle of clay will soon fall; for I am oftentimes variously and greatly distempered in my body; but while the Lord hath any thing to do with me, I shall continue, and I desire to continue no longer; though many live longer than the Lord hath work for them. Howbeit, I many times admire the Lord's kindness toward me, for I never find any distemper of my body but when I am so circumstantiated, as, in many respects, I may dispense with it; and, through his grace, this all my desire, to spend and be spent for him in his work, until my course be ended: and for seeing better days with my bodily eyes (though I am persuaded they are near hand) I am not in the least anxious, neither was that desire either soon or late my exercise; for though they will be a happy people who will be so privileged; yet I count them more happy



who are altogether without fear, care, sinning, or sorrowing.

As for other news, Right honourable and dearly beloved in our Lord, very many of us, within these three quarters of a year, have fallen amongst the enemies hands, and some they executed upon scaffolds; but the Lord so owned and countenanced such, especially these five at *Glasgow*, that the sight of them took great effect upon the generality of the people, and raised such a frame amongst them, which was dreaded by the enemy; yea, and a grand persecutor, called Major *Windram*, had three children, who within a little while of other died, one of them a very young boy, and two daughters come to the years of discretion, who died very sweetly and satisfyingly; declaring, that the Lord's hand was stretched forth against them, because of the hand their father hath in shedding the blood of the saints; and obtested him before God, that he would quite the course that he followed: which things had some, though no promising effect upon him. Whereupon, since the enemy thought it most conducing to their purpose to banish them all; so many who carried very stedfastly were sent away, they leaving faithful joint testimonies behind them; whereof one was subscribed by twenty-two hands, twenty of them having carried honestly; and the other two acknowledging their fainting, in either seeking or consenting unto banishment: But, I think, the Lord hath a special end in the exile of such, sending them away to be witnesses against the many complying ministers and professors, who are going to that same place: and may not we be content to want a company of our friends  
out

out of our own land, that they may be a testimony for the Lord in another place. Howbeit the enemies hands are wonderfully bound up now from shedding of blood. I do not know what may be done, through the Lord's permission, by these new created powers, the Ear of *Perth* being called chancellor; but *York's* faction is discourted, there being a variance, a least pretended, betwixt his brother and him; but if real, I think, it may be a mean to shorten some of their days. And as for what we did at our last general meeting, after we had condescended to answer your desires, we laid it upon *T. Linning* to write his testimony, and shew it to the next meeting, which he engaged to do; and if the meeting be pleased therewith, I think he will go abroad unto you. And, for my own part, if his testimony be satisfying, I can say nothing against it; for I think he is the most hopeful lad, by appearance, that we have; and hath kythed much willingness to serve the remnant any way. But at our last meeting we got not Mr. *William Boyd* spoken to, nor heard: nevertheless I am sadly afraid that he breed us work yet: but I pray the Lord may disappoint my fears.

Now, right honourable and dearly beloved in our sweet and precious Lord, what shall I say unto you? or how shall I express myself? The incomparableness of times trials and sufferings, with the loveliness of Christ, and the glory that shall be revealed thereafter, makes me sometimes I see neither trouble nor danger, mine eyes being shut thereat, and carried to behold a small glimpse of that which is beyond tribulation's reach; but in such a case silent wondering

ing is most my exercise. O! what a life will it be, when we shall neither sin nor sorrow! when we shall lay down our arms, and take up the palm of victory and triumph in our hands, and follow the Lamb with songs of praise in our mouths! everlasting love and joy will be all the work that is there. O! what manner of work is that? The ardency of love, without abating or intermissions arising from the continual beholding of crowned Christ's supertranscendent loveliness and excellency, and the fulness of joy, without intermissions and alloyments, arising from the enjoyment of that so lovely and beloved object; What manner of work is that? They that get a sight of that, will be made to cry out, *We will spend no more labour for that which satisfyeth not.* O! the full and sufficient satisfaction that is in the matchless pearl, Christ: he is all things desirable. Let us bestow all our love, our whole affections upon him: and when we have done, let us wonder that he should seek it, and take it off our hands. While in these lists of juggling, let us put all our weapons in love's hand: love is a resolute soldier, love is an undaunted champion; love's eye is so much taken up with contemplating the Beloved, that it cannot see dangers in the way, but runs blindly upon them; and yet not blindly, but knoweth for whom, and for what it so ventureth. Love will never turn the weapons against the Beloved; yea, will never turn the back upon the Beloved's quarrel. O! what champion is love? I confess good company, and abiding company, is much to be desired, and love is that. Faith at length will vanish into sight, and hope into possession; but love is  
the

the Christian's continual companion, and a brave companion it is; for it is no burden to love, when there is the lasting enjoyment of the Beloved, and the full and continual assurance of immensurable love again, as it is when love is made perfect.

Ah! if time would stay, I would not weary to write unto your Honour; for, I do not know when, if ever, I may have the occasion again. But while I am, I desire to be concerned with you. O! go on, and fear not. The Lord, I hope, will shew you a token for good, that they who hate you may see it and be ashamed. Dread nothing in your intended journey, the Lord will be with you; and I pray again and again that so it may be, and that he may bless your labours, and make them contribute to the procuring an uniformity amongst churches, that so he may be one, and his name one amongst us. I hope I need not desire you to mind me a poor thing, who have much to do, and nothing in myself to do with, and who remains,

*Honourable and dear Sir,*

*Your real, constant sympathising friend*

*and servant in the Lord,*

JAMES RENWICK.



## L E T T E R XXXI.

*From the Rev. Mr. James Renwick, to Mr.  
Robert Hamilton.*

*Honourable and dear Sir, August 23. 1684.*

I Thought once that your expectation of our letters should have been more quickly answered than now it could be; but the holy and wise God, who doth all things well, so ordered it that it is fallen out otherwise: for upon the 30th day of *July*, when I was going, in company with other three, to the general meeting, we espied two dragoons meeting us, and not expecting any more to be following, we went forward, not dreading them; but when we came within word and shot, we saw a party of about twenty more very near upon us: whereupon, seeing there was no probability of resisting them, we turned up to a hill called *Dun-gavel*. But my three neighbours being on foot and I on horse-back, they compassed about the foot of the hill, but I took up to the height, being hotly pursued by many of that party; some whereof were at my right-hand to keep me from the mosses, and others behind, who always as they came within shot, discharged upon me: so being near unto the top of the hill, and finding myself beset round about, and seeing no visible door to escape, I thought fit to quit the horse which I had, and to wait till I saw what God did in it. But after I had lighted from the horse, I saw before me a piece of good equitable ground, whereupon I essayed to mount

H again

again upon the horse, but the beast would not stand unto me; whereupon I resolved to kill the horse, lest the enemy should be thereby strengthened; howbeit, having but one shot, I thought fit to keep it for a greater extremity; finding the beast such as would not stand still, I reached it with a shabble which I had, conjecturing, that possibly (the place being uninhabited) the beast might save my wallet and the papers, together with Mr. B's wallet. Thus I went up to the top of the hill upon foot, and seeing myself so encompassed that I could not run from them, and that I was in no ways able to fight with them, I judged it my best to clap upon the ground: so I went unto a caim, which by situation was about six or seven pace of ground out of all their eyes, thinking to ly down upon it; all the hill being green, and bare in that place, knowing that God could carry their fight over it; so coming to the top of it, I espied in it a pit, which when I saw, it entered into my mind, that it was ordained of God for hiding of me: Thus I lay down into it, winning by God's goodness, to a chearful submission to death, torture, or whatsoever his will might be. But I was, in no small measure confident, that no evil at that time could happen unto me, the Lord giving me that scripture, *Psal. vi. 8. Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity;*—which was so powerful, that I was made, I think, a hundred times to repeat it over, ere I could get myself stayed; together with that other *Psalme, xci. 11. For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways:* which was such unto me, that I lifted up my head to see these angels; but, considering my folly in  
that

that particular, I was made to laugh at my own witleſſneſs. So I lay ſtill until the ſun ſet, ſometimes praying and ſometimes praifing God, tho' Oh! I can do neither to purpoſe. But all the joy that the Lord's works of wonder for me did afford, were ſwallowed up in ſorrow, becauſe of what beſel my dear brethren, who (all that were with me) fell into the enemies hands, one of them receiving eleven wounds. Then, after all, when I thought upon drawing off the hill, not knowing the way to one friend's houſe in the whole country; I beſought the Lord, that as he had bid me, ſo he would lead and guide me. Thus I ſet my face toward *Clyde*, and after I had travelled about four miles, I met with *Wind-hill*, with whom I ſtayed two days, and kept a meeting upon the ſecond night, even while the militia was ſearching that ſide of the country; and twice that night I very narrowly eſcaped, as it had been even out of their very paws. O! time would fail me to relate the Lord's works of wonder for poor unworthy me: for even ſince, I have in one day eſcaped three or four ſignal hazards. O! what ſhall I ſay of the Lord's way with me? He will either have me taught, otherwiſe he will have me appear to be indocible. O for grace to anſwer his pains taken upon me. And as for the preſent caſe of our land, it was never ſuch; enemies have iſſued forth a proclamation, calling all the militia be-worth *Tay* to be in readineſs againſt the fifteenth of this month with fifteen days proviſion; and it is thought, to ſpread over the weſt-land Shires; but the Lord knows what their purpoſes are. However, they have proclaimed, that all men in country habit, wherever they are ſeen, are to be challenged, and kept till it be

known what they are. Now, the adversary is most cruel, and apprehends not only all men, but even the women whom they can get their hands upon, and use them most barbarously. O what meaneth this hot furnace! surely it is not to consume, it is to purge and refine. O for grace, for grace to endure unto the end. I think *Scotland* is now like a woman in hard labour, who must either get a speedy help and delivery, else she will be in peril of dying in travel. But courage yet, her sharpest shower is at the minute of her delivery. Die, die she will not, for the Lord is but hasting through her travel. The more sore the pains be, the more joyful her delivery will be; yea, the Lord will make brave mirth at it; for he will have a feast of many a man's carcase at it. As for more particular news, *N. K.* will give you an account; I have not seen his testimony, but I think, he is a good honest lad. *R. G.* hath carried always very stedfastly, and is now sentenced with banishment; a wonderful restraint upon enemies indeed.

I saw your honour's letters which you wrote home anent Mr. *Flint's* business; and I cannot pass this, that I observed in the strain of them much trouble, if not discouragement to be held forth. O fy upon you, where is all your undaunted boldness and true magnanimity now? what fear you? what can he and his party do? they are incapable of doing harm here; they are but rendering themselves such, as that their memories shall be written over with contempt and ignominy to all after generations.

Now, the Lord be with you, and teach you to use your weapons rightly for him in this day  
of



of rencounter. O cease not to pray for poor Scotland, now in travel, and for him who is,

*Yours, as formerly,*

JAMES RENWICK.

*P.S.* If time would permit, ilk day furnishes me both with sad and refreshful tidings to represent unto your honour; refreshful, for our prison houses are filled with songs of joy and praise, yea, they were never more refreshful, for they are palaces indeed. But our sad case otherwise still increaseth; for many are apprehended; yea, women incarcerate, and some of them banished, and men execute upon the very day when they receive the sentence of death.

JAMES RENWICK.

## L E T T E R · XXXII.

*From Mr. James Renwick, to the honourable Mr. Robert Hamilton.*

*Hon. and dear Sir,*

1684.

I Received yours, and was refreshed to see a line from your hand again; yet I am not a little troubled that our converse by letters should not be more frequent; but continual hurrying and tossing stops it on my part, together with such a multitude of business, that sometimes I would put a greater price upon an hour of time than upon much riches. O Sir! who knew my

work, if they had not hearts harder than adamants, they would be affected with commiseration; but why should I say thus, for who knew the Lord's kindness to poor unworthy me, they would make me the object of their envy. I may say this indeed, that the Lord suffers not my work, however unsupportable to flesh and blood, to be burdensome unto me; for, though the world think my case most miserable, yet, I think, it is so happy that I know not a man this day, upon the face of the earth with whom I would exchange my lot. O! it is more sweet and pleasant to be swimming in the swellings of *Jordan* for Christ and with Christ, than to wader in the pleasures of sin, and delights of the flesh; yea, though Christians had not a heaven hereafter, I cannot but judge their case, even here, happy beyond all others; as the Psalmist sayeth, *Thou hast put gladness in my heart, more than in the time when their corn and their wine increased, Psal. iv. 7.* And when the world frowns most, I know, it is the time wherein the Lord smiles most upon his own: O therefore, let none of them fear a suffering lot: enemies think themselves satisfied that we are put to wander in dark stormy nights thro' mofses and mountains; but if they knew how we were feasted, when others are sleeping, they would gnash their teeth for anger. O! I cannot express, how sweet times I have had when the curtains of heaven have been drawn, when the quietness of all things in the silent watches of the night, has brought to my mind the duty of admiring the deep, silent and unexpressible ocean of joy and wonder, wherein the whole family of the higher house are everlastingly drowned; each star leading me out to  
wonder.

ponder what he must be, who is the star of *Jacob*, the bright and morning star, who maketh all his own to shine as stars in the firmament. Indeed (if I may term it so) I am much obliged to enemies, for, though they purpose my misery, yet they are instrumental of covering many a fault to me; and while they are pining away in sick envy and pale fear, I am feeding in peace and joy. O poor fools! what can they do? the greatest wrong they can do, is, to be instrumental in bringing a chariot to carry us to that higher house, and should we not think this the greatest favour. Let enemies never think that they can make the people of God's case miserable, while he lives and reigns; and I wot well, he hath that to give, and will give that which will sweeten all the sour of his followers. And I may say this to his praise, that I have found so much of his kindness and supply in setting about his work in such hard circumstances, that through the prevailing of a body of death sometimes, and desire to be with himself, makes me long for a dissolution; yet, I think, I could be content to dwell if it were a thousand years in his infirm and weakened body of clay, with continual toil and hazard, to carry his name to his people.

Now, Right honourable, as to news here, now, that the Lord is still increasing his people in number and spiritual strength; and many sacrifice he is taking off their hands; for there are not many days wherein his truths are not sealed with blood, and that in all places, so that, I think, within a little, there shall not be a moor or mountain in the West of *Scotland* which shall not be flowered with martyrs. Enemies have brought

brought down the *Highlanders* upon us, and the with the forces do run through the countr (Lord give direction and strength) and kill al whom they meet with, if they do not say whatso ever they bid them. We are fearing massacres here is a massacre indeed. *Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that might weep without intermission, for the slain of the daughter of my people.* Also, they have given out, by act of parliament and open proclamation that all mipisters and hearers who are to be found in the fields, are to be killed presently; and if found in houses, the minister is to be killed, and the people fined. The devil now is come down in great wrath, because he knoweth his time to be but short. *Mr. Alexander Shields* is yet alive, and seems ay to be more and more right; he indeed hath made a foul fall, but I think, he is duly sensible. All the rest of the prisoners are very well encouraged. I have of late made a hasty journey into *England* the length of *Newcastle*, and (blessed be the Lord) with much more nor expected encouragement and success. I cannot at this instant grant your desire, but I shall keep your memorandum till I get it done, for I have been these eight days so hurried and chased with continual alarms, that I could not get sett'ed to write any; and the Lord, to manifest his power, gave me a most remarkable delivery.

Now, dear Sir, begging it of you and all friends, that you will be busy and instant with God, that he may be with us in the day of our extremity: and commending you all to the grace of God, with my love and service to yourself, and them of whose concernedness with the Lord's cause, we are all sensible, and that they are most strength-

ening



ening to you against all your antagonists, particularly to the *En. V. H.* to whom I purpose, God willing, to write. I am ever,

*As formerly,*

JAMES RENWICK.

---

## L E T T E R XXXIII.

*From the Rev. Mr. James Renwick, to ———*

*Hon. and dear Sir,*

*Feb. 28. 1685.*

I Received your letter, which was many ways refreshing unto me; as also, the way of its coming to my hand, for when I was upon my travels, about the setting forth of my master's ware, there arose such a storm of weather, which forced me to turn off my journey a little, to the nearest great inns, and there I got your letter, and also my wares better received off my hand than ever before in that place: Hence I am made to see, that divine providence is a mysterious thing, and that I never loss a whit more of a storm. Also, there is one thing in your letter which made me not a little to admire, to wit, your apprehension that I was sorely sick, that there was a great kaith among traders, and that my sickness was a great mean of my preservation; a leel guess indeed. In reference hereunto, I must tell you a pretty passage. Upon a certain night, after the dismissal of a market, there went about forty of our merchants foreward a little before me, upon the way that I was going, with whom I  
 trusted

trysted to meet the night following: But after a little sleep, sickness so possessed me that I was not able to keep my tryst; whereupon I sent away some merchants that were with me to go forward with the rest about their business; who upon the day following, were assaulted with a great multitude of our antagonists, who were six for one, so that our merchants were not able to stand; whereupon they took the retreat, and outstripped their antagonists without any skait, save the loss of one: Now, before this came to pass I dreaded it. But what think you of my sickness and your guess? for if I had been with the rest I had been taken from all trading; for my body is so weakened with much travel, that though I travel more than any, yet I cannot come so good speed as others, when need requireth: Also within two days my sickness left me. Now, I leave all this to your thoughts, for it would be tedious for me to write mine; and I think, you may guess at them, as you did at that which was more dark. But to come to the substance of your letter, you have opened up the mystery of our trade abroad, which I dreaded, yet I understood it not; but I agree with your advice, as to these men's subscribing of our principal accounts. But my master is taking the wisest way in it; for now he hath houghed off our antagonist's chief factor; so that I think, all merchants will now shortly side themselves, and when at the push they declare themselves willingly whose trade they are for, it will speak forth the more ingenuity, and we will know the better what to think of them; so we need not be rash in our proposals, till we see how these men settle, for now they must settle some way

way or other. This is my poor advice at the time, but I have not as yet met with any number of our merchants to consult with anent it. However, the same mystery from abroad is also at home with us, but I find all our merchants pretty stedfast; for all sorts are most earnest that we should tread with them, and they with us. But I judge, they respect not the advantage of our trade therein, but of their own: Nevertheless, what think you, makes them so earnest to trade with us? Our wares go well off our hands at home; this is part of the reason of it: Our merchants daily increase, this is another part: But I judge, the chief reason be this, They look upon us as venturous merchants, that dow not abide pinging with naughty commodities, but set out ay for wholesale; and that we are resolute, so that no storm will keep us back from our intended voyage: Whereupon they think, if we would trade with them, they would get us set upon all desperate traffic, and if we did won, it would be to their hand; and if we lost, we would but lose ourselves, which the most part of them would not regard much. Here, I think, lies the knack.

But, worthy Sir, for your further satisfaction and information anent our trade at home, these few things, I think fit to tell you that I observe,

- (1.) That the greatest part of the country give their approbation to our trade, and the way thereof, though they have not hearts to give their gold and money for our wares.
- (2.) That very many think our wares so worthy, that they spare not to bestow either gold or money upon them.
- (3.) That very many, who, I thought, would not have looked us in the face, resort to our markets

markets in all places. (4.) Very many are seeking to be in our incorporations, who, I think, are downright for our trade; but I fear some of them are seeking rather, that we should have a great stock, and that they should share with us, than that my master should get credit; whereas he respects his credit more than he doth all the gold and money in the world. (5.) None are received in amongst us, who either leave us, or rue their trading with us. (6.) Our merchants are all fearless, as if they could not lose any thing. (7.) They are resolute, they will not slip a market for a foul day, or ly in the harbour because of a storm. (8.) The waiters are so angry at our goods, that ordinarily they do not bring them, when they catch them, to public roupings, or to be burnt by the hands of the common hangman, but destroy them where they may find them: This is occasioned partly by the resoluteness of our merchants, who will not let the waiters carry away any of our goods, so they come to be destroyed when the waiters are the strongest party; and partly by the maliciousness of the waiters, who, unless our merchants renounce their trade, they presently destroy their goods. I may say, my master hath gotten us some brave resolute merchants, whom an hasty proposal never surpriseth. (9.) The waiters have gotten many of the best of our goods destroyed; yea, they have caped more from us within these two years, than I thought then we had; and the more they take, we have the more behind; but this is only through the wit of my master; yea, he is so wise, that ere he want wares he will make stones give silver. (10.) There is some difference amongst our merchants



anent the manner of seeking in our debts of the last accounts, which we gave in against our antagonists; but I do not fear that my master will suffer a breach among us upon that head, for we all agree in the matter.

Now, to come to what is your desire in your memorandum sent unto me.

1. As to that information anent Mr. *Lap*. I got it from young Mr. *Fisher*, who had it from his brother at *London*. As also, I know, that his brother hath left trading with the leading merchants at *London*, save with Mr. *Fife*, with whom I hear not that he trades much.

2. As to correspondence with *Groemvezyh*, (by whom I understand Mr. *Br.*) there hath been more sence his flitting; and as for any letters betwixt him and Mr. *Fisher* Elder, is a thing unknown to me; neither have I any distinct notion of his seeking to trade with us, save by the apprentice you sent over.

3. As to our late accounts, we shall see to get them unto you; as also how that money may be received off your hand.

Now, Right honourable Sir, at the time, I shall trouble you no further, not knowing well how to get this conveyed to your hand; but leave you to my master's direction and counsel, who, I know, can make known unto you the secrets of our trade, and the engines of our opposers. My love to all friends who wish us a good market, and show them I forget them not.

I am,

*Yours, to serve you to my power  
in my master's employment,*

J. RENWICK.

## L E T T E R XXXIV.

*From Mr. James Renwick, to Mrs. Jean Hamilton at Lewarden in Friesland.*

*Worthy Madam,*

*March 2. 1685.*

**Y**OUR letter was long in coming to my hand, and it hath been long in answering; but I had never the expectation of an occasion before this; as also your case was troublesome to me, and I knew not well what to say anent it; and the most that I can say yet, is, that I desire earnestly to sympathize with you, and to mind you before the Lord, for I know your burdens. However I dare not advise you to it;

1. Because of the many corruptions, which, I fear, are not so burdensome to them now, as once I apprehended they were to some of them.

2. Because of your own uncleanness anent it: I say this, not that I make our clearness a sufficient warrant either to do or not do; for then the scriptures would not be the rule; yet to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean: As also, I think, your uncleanness is not groundless. But here ariseth the difficulties.

(1.) How shall this be reconciled with your worthy brother's practice? yet I do not see them juggle together; for though he heareth, yet I know, he withdraweth from what is corrupt, which you would not get so handsomely done.

(2.) How shall this be reconciled with the ordination? yet neither is there any contradiction here; for in the ordination they came to us, and acted according to *Scotland's* reformation, and if these

these whom you were to hear, would do so in all points of worship, you need not have any scruple.

But as for your coming here with the children, I see not how you can resolve upon it as yet, for though your case be sad there, as to many things, it would be more sad here. Therefore my poor advice is, that you would contentedly stay a little, till you see what the Lord doth, and wrestle through your difficulties the best way you can; for we are expecting strange things suddenly at home: Yet if you saw a general calamity coming upon that place, better to come home and share in *Scotland's* calamity, in whose sin we have all a share, than to share in the calamities of another place.

Now, Dear Madam, my dear and worthy friend, look to the Lord himself for your direction, upholding, encouragement, comfort, and upmaking; for come what will it will be well with the righteous, and all shall end in public testimony of divine favour to these who wait upon the Lord; though he should shake heaven and earth yet he *will be the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel*, Joel iii. 16. Now, to the word of his grace I commend you;

*Worthy Madam,*

*Your Ladyship's*

*undoubted sympathising friend*

*in the Lord,*

JAMES RENWICK.

## L E T T E R XXXV.

*From the Rev. Mr. James Renwick, to the honourable Mr. Robert Hamilton.*

*Hon. and dear Sir,* *Edin. May 13. 1685.*

I Have been with your friend *Robert*, and got some account of affairs, which made me to wonder not a little; but *Andrew Cameron's* information hath made me to wonder much more; for I could not believe that policy could mask over temporal designs with so fair colours and pretences. Whereupon, we have great need of the wisdom of the serpent, as well as the harmlessness of the dove. I find, *Andrew Cameron's* drift is to get in with *Argyle*; but to me his arguments are more dissuasive than persuasive. But I dread *W. B.* greatly, having seen a paper from his own hand, where he yields to all their desire; I fear the hand of *Joab* hath been in it; and he, forsooth, would have it published in our name; but, through grace, I will oppose it with my whole vitals. I am likewise afraid of some others amongst us, but of none save of such as I had former jealousies, but could not bottom sufficient reasons against them. I have seen also your animadversions upon the association, which I agree with; for I look upon it as a *Cromwelian* and *Bothwelian* compound: But as for your animadversions on our declaration, I think, the commentaries of politics have made you look upon it after another sort than otherwise you would have done; for we designed it to be taken jointly alongst with our other testimonies and actions,

and



and so the door is not wider than it was: neither can any show any thing in that declaration but what I think may be easily reconciled with our other testimonies and actings; so, I think it a thing below you or me to trouble ourselves with the various expositions that persons, for their own ends, put upon it: for some represent it as the strictest thing that ever came from our hands, thereby to make us odious; some again, as the laxest that ever came from our hands, that thereupon they may get a door to enter; but there is none opened, and our wall is so well cemented, that, through our camp-master, they will not break thorough: If some shall jump over it, and go out from us, yet our wall shall stand inviolable. Wherefore trouble not yourself, O right honourable, about Logomachies, for our practice will comment upon it.

Hoping to meet with friends shortly, I will be in a capacity to inform you fully. And praying that the Lord may give light and life. I am,

*Right honoured,*

*Yours as formerly,*

JAMES RENWICK.

## L E T T E R XXXVI.

*From the Rev. Mr. James Renwick, to the honourable Mr. Robert Hamilton.*

*Honourable Sir,*

*July 9. 1685.*

**I**F I durst have ventured this with the post, or could have had another occasion, I would

have written to you ere this time; for, I know you will be anxious to hear how it is with us. But it would take a great volume, and require an accurate observing capacity to write our case. Howbeit this is no small comfort and encouragement, that the Lord so visibly takes our matter in his own guiding; for, before *Argyle* brake, many of our friends were greatly puzzled, whether the Lord was calling them to follow their former methods, or to draw altogether by themselves, and to emit a declaration of their own; whereupon, there was a meeting appointed to consider the matter, and also a day for prayer; but the Lord disappointed our meetings, one after another, until *Argyle* was apprehended and his party scattered; so this was put out of our heads: yet our snares since have been greater than heretofore; for Mr. *Barclay* and Mr. *Langlands* pass up and down the country, and have got themselves too much insinuate upon several of our wanderers, pretending no difference from us, but a willingness to join. Howbeit, I met with Mr. *Langlands*, and found him no otherways than when I was in *Holland*: He owned his writing that letter to Mr. *Brackel*, but would grant with no wrong therein; so the main thing that they drive at, is, to have us lay aside our challenges, and they would be silent. But it is clear to me, that the Lord doth not send them; for, if he did, they would not cover their iniquity; also their need, and not our need hath moved them; but if they shall, in such a strain, step to the fields with public preaching, I think, they will not keep them long, for he hath taken possession of our high places until he return to our temple again. Howbeit, if it were the Lord's will you were amongst

mongst us, I think (through the Lord's grace and assistance) that might be instrumental of very much good; but for my soul, I dare not advise you to come, considering what hazards you may run in your coming; yet you may lay it out before the Lord, and if he do not open a door for your journey, do not venture upon it; for, I hope, he is reserving you for some greater work. O be not anxious, for the Lord will make a stroke clear our controversies.

As for our news, *Argyle's* party is wholly dissipated; for they disagreed amongst themselves, not upon the stating of their quarrel, but upon the way of prosecuting it. No conditions to them were kept, and this rendered them very dissatisfied. *Argyle* is beheaded; *Rombold* executed, after the manner of worthy *Rathillet*; Sir *J. C.* apprehended, and his son, with several others. But *Monmouth* is yet busied in *England*, whereby the *Scots* forces are marched right towards the border, which animates *William Cleland*, &c. to make a new stir, and so our difficulties are as formerly. As for your brother Sir *William*, he was lieutenant to *Rombold*; he is yet alive, with some of his friends. I resolve to speak him out, and inform him I have seen *J. N.* who saith, he is with us in all things, and that he came with *Argyle* only for passage, being under no engagements, and taking no place from them. *Andrew Cameron* is a great agent for them, and not simple in their business; he refuseth joining with no ministers who were not actually indulged, or defenders of such. *G. H.*; *R. Smith*, and *David Steel*, are well; but *R. Smith* cannot find an open door to come unto you.

you. *M. B.* is like to die in prison. *Mr. Alexander Shields* seem not to be of a right stamp\*. Now, I hope your Honour will pardon my confusion, occasioned by my hasty pen. I cannot express my thoughts to you; but I say again, the Lord will take our matters in his own hand: O! let us be busy with himself, and commit all unto him, who hath the government upon his shoulders. *Scotland's* day is coming; happy those who are in their chambers. My love and service to all friends with you, foreigners and others. The blessing of him who is in the burning bush be with you. I am,

*Honourable Sir,*

*Your servant as formerly,*

JAMES RENWICK.

## L E T T E R XXXVII.

*From the Rev. Mr. James Renwick, to Robert Speir at Edinburgh.*

*Dear Friend,*

*October 23. 1685.*

W<sup>H</sup>at past at our last meeting time will not allow me to inform you off, neither need I be careful about the same; for I know that the bearer can do it as distinctly as I: however, I thought fit to write unto you, shewing that the meeting is no ways discontent with your purpose of

\* He took the Abjuration Oath the 6th of August after this, as *Wedrow* testifies, vol. ii.



of going abroad at this time. And as to what I have writtten to my honourable and dear friend; which I did let you see, though I judged it not fit to communicate the same to other friends; as I was telling you by word, so I desire that you would signify to him, that he must take it only as my thoughts at that time, which, in a great measure, were undigested, and through the multitude of business and contendings, and various weights upon my spirit, not a little confused: also, as I was telling you my mind more fully ament these things than I have written it, so I desire that you would speak with him concerning the same, shewing my thoughts more conspicuously than my letter doth. Moreover, if I have written any thing which is unseasonable; or not right and equal, I am content to be informed and instructed by him: but it is my desire, if he will agree therewith, that after his reading and considering the same it may be destroyed; for I think it not any advantage to the cause, to keep any letter from friends, but what is written as their fixed and deliberate thoughts about matters.

Now, for your coming home, I think you have seen many depths of mercy and judgment manifested to the poor church of *Scotland*; you have seen the afflicted remnant brought unto, and through many difficulties; you have seen much matter of joy and sorrow; so, I hope, your travels hither have not been without fruit. So, praying that the Lord may make his own hand appear at his own work, and establish a remnant in his own way, in the midst of snares and damping difficulties, and commending you to his direction,

rection, assistance, protection, and provision,  
am,

*Dear Sir,*

*Your assured friend,*

*and servant in the Lord,*

JAMES RENWICK

L E T T E R XXXVIII.

*From the Rev. Mr. James Renwick, to Mrs. J  
Hamilton, at Lewarden in Friesland.*

*Worthy Madam,*

*Nov. 18. 1685.*

**Y**OU doubtless think it strange of my long  
silence, and it is far contrary to my own  
resolution; but the abounding of inward care,  
and the continuing of outward tossing, blocketh  
me up from doing many things which I would:  
and it is no great wonder that a man under such  
variety of providences as I am, cannot be master  
of his own purposes. Howbeit, I may say, your  
case, and the case of the family, lieth in such a  
measure upon my heart, that I cannot get the  
same forgotten; and though this be an insignifi-  
cant thing, and of little purpose to your Lady-  
ship, yet I own it is my duty. I never look up-  
on your case but I think it is in some things  
singular. Your lot is cast in a strange land, se-  
parated from your friends and acquaintances,  
but communion and fellowship with God will  
make your lot sweet and pleasant unto you,  
and furnish you with abundance of joy in every  
outward

outward condition; and this, I hope, you are sometimes sensibly tasting: also, I doubt not but the company of your worthy brother, and some dear foreigners, is not a little refreshful unto you. Moreover, when I consider your circumstances, *Ruth's* cleaving to *Naomi* is still brought before me; and without the least of flattery I say it, I think what you have done for your dear sister's family (coming from sincerity, of which, charity which is not blind, will not let me doubt) is as acceptable before God, and as much to be praised amongst men. But knowing that this is a subject, which, though I could not pass, yet you, Madam, desire it not to be treated upon; therefore I shall forbear it, and shall shew you some of my thoughts (undistinct and insignificant as they are) anent our poor *Scotland*.

1. I think we are not yet entered our *Jordan*; for though we have come through a miry and thorny wilderness, yet our *Jordan* is before us, and it will be very deep, but it will not be very broad: when the ark of God enters it, it shall be like to drown, but it shall suddenly and admirably win to the other side.

2. I think safety shall only be to those who have their hands nearest the ark. Oh then! many a woe to the ministers and professors whose hands have been drawn back from the work, and these whose malice is against the burden-bearers; it shall be as is said, *Isa. xxvi. 11. Lord, when thy hand is lifted up, they will not see: but they shall see, and be ashamed for their envy at the people; yea, the fire of thine enemies shall devour them.*

3. I think that *Scotland* shall be made a waste land, ere God's controversy against it be ended;  
he

he will sell the heritages of earls, lords, and others, yea, and their carcasses good cheap.

4. I think the Lord (until he raise his work again) will guide and manage it more by providences than by instruments; and this is, that his hand may be alone seen in it, and that he may get the glory; and what is most glorifying to him, should it not be most pleasant and rejoicing to us.

5. I think that when the Lord returns to us again, it will be with such a measure and outpouring of his Spirit, that the remnant that shall be left shall have a very heaven upon earth, and our land shall be made the joy of all lands.

But as to these, or such like, I shall say no more, knowing you are both really and distinctly exercised anent our case: And what is for us this day, but that we make Christ sure for ourselves, and spend our days here below in admiring the loveliness and condescendency of our Beloved, and our own happiness in enjoying such a portion. But this is a great work, time is not equal for it, therefore we shall get eternity for it. O let us study the increase of the beauty of holiness, for happiness is inferior unto it. It is by holiness we are made like unto God, and is not this true nobility? O! what is like unto it! If we knew more of this study and attainment, desertion would be less of our exercise, and we should enjoy more of the smilings of his sweet countenance, and breathings of his Spirit. Also, while in this our pilgrimage, let his will be ours in all things; whatever he may carve out for us, or any that we are concerned in, let us say *amen* to it; for if he will it, it is enough for us: Yea, let us lay our account with  
the



the worst of it, that whatever come we may not be surprized.

Now, not to trouble your Ladyship further, praying that the all-sufficiency which is in Christ may be forthcoming for you, that so you may finish your course with his honour, and your own true joy, with the testimony of a conscience kept void of offence towards God, and towards all men; and that you may suck of the breasts of his consolations here, until you come to drink abundantly of the rivers of pleasure at his right hand. I am,

*Worthy Madam,*

*Your obliged and assured friend, and*

*sympathizing servant in our sweet Lord,*

JAMES RENWICK.

## L E T T E R XXXIX.

*From the Rev. Mr. James Renwick, to the honourable Societies of Strangers at Lewarden in Friesland.*

*Feb. 18. 1686.*

*Hon. and dearly beloved in our sweet Lord,*

I Have had often blushes with myself, when I thought upon my omitting to write unto you; but I may say, it was neither voluntary nor wilful, but necessity: for a man under such various exigences of providence as I am, cannot be master of his own purposes. And besides that, I am daily looking out, either to be presently kill-

ed, where I may be found, or else dragged into a prison or scaffold; various weighty and perplexing occurrences, day by day, come inevitably into my way, which take up my thoughts, filling my spirit with care, and my hands with business. But if I had proven as forgetful of you, as I have been blocked up from saluting you with a line from my hand, I had been far out of my duty before the Lord, and grossly ungrateful toward you. Howbeit, right honourable and dearly beloved, I need not insist in apologizing for myself with you, for I know you have such a feeling of our burdens, that ye commiserate our case, and pity our perplexities: therefore I'll break off this, and go on in what the Lord giveth me to say.

There is no rational creature which doth not set some one thing or other before its eyes, as its main end, and chief good; and according to the various predominants, in sensual and madmen, are their various main ends. Hence it is, that there did result so many different opinions among Heathen philosophers about man's chief good. But here is the great mistake with foolish vain men, that whatever they seek after, it is but few who bend toward the true chief good, which is God. There are indeed *gods many and lords many*; for whatever any fixeth his desires upon, and aimeth in all his actions at the obtaining and enjoying thereof, is his lord and his god, whether it be honour or riches, or some object or other of vile concupiscence; yet there is but one God who is truly and only desire-worthy, love-worthy, and honour-worthy. This one hath not a match, or a parallel; for what can equal him? yea, what in any worth can come the

the length of the latchet of his shoes? He is that inestimable jewel, invaluable treasure, and incomparable pearl of price, that only worthy desire of all nations. O! take a look of him as he is the Being of beings, having being of himself independent of all other beings; and upon whom all other things depend in their being and operations: *In him we live, in him we move, and of him we have our being.* Doth not all the pieces of the creation, heaven, earth, and sea, sun, moon, and stars, the commonest and unworthiest creature that moveth upon the earth, bear large characters of his wisdom, power, and goodness? Doth not his mysterious common providence, making the sharpest sighted of his creatures hide their faces, and become silent before him, declare him to be God, and that he is *of one mind, and who can turn him?* Do not the various instruments that execute his will, signified by four chariots, *Zech. vi. 1.* bringing about various dispensations, signified by the different colours of the horses; whether calamities of war, signified by the red; or other doleful miseries, signified by the black; mixed dispensations, black and white, so to speak, of mercy and judgment, signified by the grizzled and bay; or dispensations of mercy, signified by the white? I say, does not all these come forth from between the two mountains of brass? The one signifieth his unalterable decree, and the other his effectual providence, which watcheth and waiteth that instruments bring nothing to the birth but what has been conceived in the womb of his eternal purpose. O take a look of him in his perfections; he is without measure and



limits, without beginning and ending: he is one and the same in his nature, in his counsels, and in his love; he perfectly knoweth himself, and all things that are possible; he can do all things that do not imply a contradiction, and argue imperfection: he is good and doeth good; he is righteous in himself, and equal in all his ways of dealing with his creatures; he is true without any dissimulation; he is holy and delighteth in his own holiness, and in every resemblance of it, in his angels, and in his saints. But O! who can think of him, and who can speak of him? He is infinite in all his attributes; and every perfection hath a perfect meeting in him: albeit some of his attributes be in some degree communicable to his creatures, yet they are in him in an altogether incommunicable manner and measure: and there is nothing in God, but what is God; for this is his name, *I am that I am*. And again I say, Who can think of him, and who can speak of him? who can comprehend him, or compass him about? Who by understanding can search out God? Humble and believing ignorance is better than curious and prying knowledge: for all that we can know of him, is, to know that we cannot know him.

Let us yet come a little nearer, and take a look of him as he is our Saviour, in his condescendency, love, power, faithfulness, and other properties. O! how condescending is he? tho' he be that high and lofty One, the Father's equal, yet he stooped so low as to take upon him the nature of man, and all the sinful infirmities that attend it; he became *flesh of our flesh, and bone of our bone*, and that in the lowly condition of a servant. He suits the creature's affection



as if it were of some worth, and seeks men and women to match with him. O how loving is he! It is a strong love that he beareth to that seed of *Abraham*? Doth not this shine in all that he hath done? He emptied himself that they might become full; he made himself poor, though maker and possessor of heaven and earth, that they might become rich; he fulfilled the law for them, that he might purchase to them life and happiness; he made himself a sacrifice unto the death, that he might satisfy offended justice, and make reconciliation for them. O such a death! so cursed! so shameful! so painful! and so lingering! But above all, he had the full weight of the wrath of God to bear, which all the strength of angels and men could not have endured: but he being God, he could not fall under it. O what manner of love is this! In effect he did not care what he suffered; let justice charge home upon him with all its rigour and severity, seeing he was to gain his point, and purchase a part of mankind from Satan to himself, from sin to holiness, from misery to happiness: so that man, however unworthy, base, sinful, and miserable, yet is the centre of his love: O! how powerful is he? He is mighty to save, able to save to the uttermost; all the strong-holds of the soul cannot hold out against him; his power is irresistible, by this he can do what he will; and by his love he will do what we need: and again he is so faithful, that what he saith he doeth; he will not retract one promise that is gone out of his mouth; neither will he fail in fulfilling all his threatenings.

Much might be said of these things; but not the thousandth part of the truth can be told;

when we win to his house above, and see him as he is, we will be ashamed of all our babblings about him. They that have been most ravished with his love, and most eloquent to speak forth the praise of his comeliness and properties, will see that they have been but, at best, babes learning to speak. O what shall I say! he is the wonderful, matchless, and glorious inestimable jewel, and incomparable pearl of price: O who would not choice him! who would not give away themselves to him! Let man look thro' heaven and earth, and seek a portion where he will, he shall not find the like of Christ. O then! let us be altogether his, and nothing our own; our time let it be his, our understanding let it be his, our will let it be his, our affections let them be his, the travel of our souls let it be his, our strength let it be his, our names, lives and enjoyments let them all be his; let us be fully surrendered and entirely consecrated unto him. This is a comprehensive matter indeed. But what else should we be taken up with, but with the improvement of this resignation, always travelling through his properties, viewing them as our riches, delighting to improve our interest in him, by receiving from his hand what we need; and that he improve his interest in us, by doing with us, and taking from us, what he pleaseth. Let us see him, and observe, and say, *What have we to do any more with our idols.* Oh! that vanity should get so much as one look from me. I think, he never took more pains upon any that they might be emptied of all things beside himself, and not have a will of their own, nor affection to any other thing; and yet, ah! the bad entertainment he gets off my hand. I can neither esteem him myself, nor commend him to others;

others; though my work be to trumpet aloud his praise, and be an under suiter to gain the bride's consent to the lovely bridegroom, I can do nothing in it, and little can angels do in it to any purpose: Yet, I can tell this unto all, that my Master infinitely passeth my commendations; he is so excellent, that it would but be an obscuring his excellency, for me to babble about it.

O right honourable and dear friends, are ye not longing for the full enjoyment of him, looking out for the breaking of the day, and the flying away of the shadows, that ye may no more see him darkly as through a glass, but may behold him as he is, and enjoy him perfectly and constantly? This, O this! what a happiness is this? and what shall I say more? for ye know more of him than I can tell you; and all that I can say is but, as it were, to bring you to remembrance. I thank God on your behalf, that your zeal is heard of in many places: ye have become companions with us in our afflictions; your sympathy with this persecuted party is evident to us all, and we hear that we have a great room in your prayers. Man cannot repay your kindness to us, but I know ye look not to man in it, but do it out of love to the Lord, for ye have no outward encouragement to it. O that the Lord who hath joined together, a few in *Lewarden*, and a party in *Scotland*, in such oneness of mind and affection, may, when he returns to us again, join *Scotland* and *Friesland* in covenant together, to serve the Lord their God. And ye, O beloved, grow in grace, and endure to the end. I doubt not but ye have laid your all at Christ's feet. O take nothing back again: Be resolute in his cause,  
and



and valiant in his matters; when his kingdom is so low, let him want none of your help that is competent for you, and he shall help you; own him, and he will own you; stand with him, and he will stand with you, and make you victorious; whoever shall fight against you, ye shall overcome: It is good fighting in Christ's camp, for all his soldiers shall certainly prevail. O look to your captain and his encouragements that ye faint not; I apprehend that ye meet with fore-blows and bickerings; yea, I think, ye scarcely want any conflict that we have, save only that ye are not as yet in such hazard of your lives: But, as nothing more than this doth endear you unto us; so, no external condition will more draw out God's heart towards you. But, this I will say, be well resolved against whatever man can do unto you. I think, no Christian ought now to be secure, the man of sin is plotting and strengthening his force what he can, and he will not be content with part of Christ's kingdom, his aim is at all; he stirs himself now so fast in his saddle, that, I think, it is not long to his fall: However, many lands may look for strange plagues; though *Britain* and *Ireland* shall be made the center of his judgments, yet his indignation shall not be contained within their limits: O judgments! sudden and sore wasteing judgments are coming on *Britain* and *Ireland*; Christ mounted on the red horse of severity will ride through the breadth and length of thir lands. The appearance of some parties did so fill me with temporal expectations, but they did not make some change their thoughts. As they knew little of God's way, who looked for such good from such hands; so I thought them fools who conjectured, that a  
de-



delivery should come before a desolation. I say again, be well resolved against what man can do unto you; for, there are no more Christians than there are martyrs in resolution and affection: *The kingdom of heaven must be taken by violence, and the violent take it by force*; and the more and greater difficulties be in the way, a right fight of the kingdom makes the way the more pleasant. O fear not difficulties; for, many trials, that, when looked upon at a distance, seem big, and mounting, yet when they and you meet, ye shall find them nothing. If I could commend any thing beside Christ, it would be the cross of Christ: These things which make carnal onlookers think my condition hard and miserable, make me think it sweet and pleasant; I have found hazards, reproaches, contempt, weariness, cold, night-wanderings, stormy tempests, and desarts so desirable, that it is a greater difficulty to me, not to be ambitious of these things, than to submit unto them. O rejoice in the cross, for it is all paved with love; the fewer that will bear it, it is your greater honour to be friends to it. Follow Christ with the cross upon your backs, and set none else before you as your leader, for man is a poor fallible changeable creature; let it be your care not to fall upon the stumbling-blocks cast in your way: Wo to the world because of offences: Though ye have your own share of the revilings of this time, yet be not reproached with reproachers; though the sourness of others grieve you, yet let it not infect you; and let zeal be accompanied with meekness, that ye may be free from passion and prejudice; and let meekness be backed with zeal, that ye may be free of lukewarmness and indifferency;

ferency; let meekness be extended toward all persons, and zeal against all sins; and if ye would not lose your ground, be positive against sin in the first proposal and motion thereof; ye will not get it shifted by, and yourselves kept free of it by hating yourselves, and not appearing freely against it, though there may an unwillingness unto it. I conceive, *Aaron* had no will to make the golden calf, and he thought to have put it out of the *Israelites* minds, by bidding them break off their golden ear-rings, and bring them unto him; but this simple shift would not do it, the saint of God is pitifully ensnared; and if he was simple in opposing that abomination, he got as silly an excuse for himself; it would not have been thought that a child would have said, *there came out this calf.*

Now, commit your cause unto the Lord, for judgment and righteousness shall yet meet together again upon the earth: He is interested in his own work, and therefore he can neither forget it nor forsake it; and such as wait for him shall never be put to shame. But, O long and cry for his appearance, that he may right wrongs, and rule for himself and claim his own right of possession; that the promised day may come, that this shall be voiced along the heavens, *The kingdoms of the earth are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ:* He is busy in order to this; he is carrying on a discovery of all sorts of folk, enemies and others. I thought his discovery had been near through in *Scotland* before this, but he lets me see myself a fool for so judging; he sees many things to be discovered that man sees not: but happy are they who are sincere

cere and intire; they need not fear, for *when they are tried, they shall come forth as gold.*

Now, as to our present case, I wot not well what to say anent it, there are so many mercies and judgments in it to be spoken of. God hath taken this last year many from us, by banishment, and by death on scaffolds, especially on the fields, where none (for the most part) were to see them die, but the executioners; and yet God fills up their rooms again: neither are these things permitted to damp such as are left. Some have, which is more sad, fallen off from us; and yet God is filling up their places also, and making others more stedfast; and notwithstanding both of persecutions and reproaches, the Lord hath opened doors for me in several places of *Scotland*, where there used to be no such access before, and hath multiplied my work so upon my hands, (I speak it to his praise) that I have observed my work, I say, to be now in some thires threefold, and, in some, fourfold more than it was. O that God would send forth labourers, there seems to be much ado in *Scotland* with them: Also, it is almost incredible, to tell what zeal, what tenderness, what painfulness in duty, what circumspectness of walk, in many young ones of ten, eleven, twelve and fourteen years of age, in many places of *Scotland*; which I look upon as one of the visible and greatest tokens for good that we have.

But, right honourable and dearly beloved, not to detain you further, I acknowledge myself your debtor while I live, for your many prayers put up for this poor distressed church, whereof I know I have had a share; for your sympathy and kindness otherways manifested to us; for  
your

your care of that family with you, wherein we are all concerned; and particularly for your encouraging, strengthening of, and kindness to my dear and worthy friend, our right honourable delegate. I bless the Lord who hath given you zeal for himself, and hath helped you to stand with a poor despised party in making stours for his interest. I commend you to him, that he may make his rich grace abound in you; that he may perfect what concerns you, and make you persevere unto the end, and himself be your exceeding rich reward. I hope I need not desire you to pray for me. I am,

*Honourable and dearly beloved,*

*Your obliged friend, and*

*obedient servant in the Lord,*

JAMES RENWICK.

## L E T T E R XL.

*From the Rev. Mr. James Renwick, to the honourable Mr. Robert Hamilton.*

*Honourable and dear Sir,*

*May 3. 1686.*

I Have seen your letter to your dear and worthy sisters: as it speaks forth your sore bickerings and hot rencounters, it maketh me sad; but again I rejoice that your lot is squared out so like the case of the Lord's work this day. O though your travels be through many deeps, and the floods seem to be waxing upon you, yet  
when



when your feet shall be established upon *Canaan's* banks, you shall forget the same; though now you be standing in the swellings of *Jordan*, yet these shall away from you, and you shall be lifted up, and be set before the throne of the Lamb of God cloathed with the robes of righteousness, crowned with the crown of glory; with the palm of victory and triumph in your hand; with the song of *Moses* and of the Lamb in your mouth, singing hallelujahs for ever and ever. O what will you think of yourself then? O what will you think of that posture? Let your eyes be still upon these, and glory in your present tribulation; rejoice in your light affliction which is but for a moment; count your antagonists your greatest friends, for what are they doing by all the storms they raise against you, but contributing to the mass of your glory? O fear them not, but keep your Captain-general upon your right hand, and then cry to them to shoot their fill. I had written to your Honour far sooner, but as my work keepeth me busy, so much of it lies in the remote corners of the land, as *Galloway*, *Nithsdale*, *Anandale*, &c. I have not been near *Edinburgh* since the 16th of *October*, 1685, and I have travelled since through *Clydesdale*, *Eskdale*, some of the *Forrest*, *Anandale*, some of *Galloway*, *Kyle* and *Cunningham*; and all these ways I examined the societies as I passed through, several other persons coming to hear, and I found my work greater this last journey than ever before; also in lower *Cunningham*, where there had never been any field-preachings, I got kindly acceptance, and great multitudes came to hear; and I have had several calls since from that country-side; such like have I found through *Renfrew*.

*frew.* Moreover, the Lord hath wrought a great change upon the barony of *Sanquhar*, the parish of *Kirkconnel*, and these dark corners; generally they come to hear the gospel, and are quitting many of the defections of the time; yea, I may say (to the Lord's praise) that our meetings were never so numerous, and the work did never thrive more than since man opposed it so much. As for Mr. *Langlands* and my agreeing, there is little appearance of it; for I am where I was, and he is rather further off than nearer hand. As for disowning the *Lanerk* Declaration, I think, you look upon it as so false, that I need say nothing; and as for the ministers, they wot not what to do anent us, for, so far as I can know, they cannot two of them agree (for the most part) intent upon one thing. I heard of none of them coming forth to the country yet, but Mr. *Langlands* and Mr. *Alcorn*, and they travelled through some of *Kyle*, through *Carrick*, and some of the Shire of *Galloway*, and some of *Clydesdale*, and their preachings were kept, in a great measure, obscure. And as for such as are gone off from us, they are the most bitter against us. *Alexander Gordon* went into the *Bass* and *Blackness* with an information against us, containing many charges, wherewith, I hear, the ministers of *Edinburgh* are displeas'd, he having done it without their advice: Howbeit, we have written about six sheets of paper in answer to it, and we are to meet within two days about the concluding upon it; however we will do nothing in it rashly, for every word in such a matter ought to be well weigh'd and consider'd. But there are none gone off from us, but these who at that party's appearance in Summer, went off: also, we have had

had some conference with some of these, an account whereof I shall send you with some other papers. I have written a letter to the sweet societies at *Lewarden*, and will send it with the rest of the papers, and some other letters that I am to write: Moreover, I thought fit to acquaint you, that *M. S.* hath a purpose to go over again to *Groningen*; I desire you may be concerned with it, and lay it out before the Lord. O dear Sir, cry, cry for labourers to God's vineyard in *Scotland*, for I cannot express how much need there is of them, great is the work that is here for them. If an honest way of sending forth *T.* could be had, I would gladly have it embraced, for I do not dread the young man, he is not of a dangerous spirit; O lay it out before the Lord.

Now, go on resolutely in the strength of our God, and regard not your opposers. Hold fast what is right; but be not reviling unto a reviler, nor scoffing unto a scoffer; let zeal and meekness be your companions, the one in your one hand, and the other in your other hand, and wait on the Lord, and he shall give testimony for you.

Now, my love to the honourable sweet society, your dear sister, and all the sweet family. I am,

*Honourable and dear Sir,*

*Yours, as formerly,*

JAMES RENWICK.

## L E T T E R XLI.

*From the Rev. Mr. James Renwick, to the honourable Ladies Van. Heerm. at Lewarden.*

May 8. 1686.

*Right hon. Ladies, dearly beloved in the Lord.*

**M**ultiplied confusions, and not forgetfulness of you, have so long hindered my writing unto you; but being confident of your constructing favourably of me as to this, I shall add no more for my own apology, and what else can I say which ye know not? Ye have learned both from the Bible and experience, that the Christian's travel to the kingdom, is through much tribulation; and I hope, ye have laid your account, for all that can come in your way: Our natures would have the way so squared as we might travel without a rub, but it lieth thro' many a rencounter; we would have it through a valley of roses, but it lieth through a valley of tears; we would have it so as to be travelled sleeping, but it must be travelled waking, and watching, and fighting; we would have it to be travelled with laughing, but it must be travelled with weeping. But whatever folks do think, when great necessity for, and advantage by every difficulty is seen, the more that they meet with, the way is the more pleasant to the believers; and a sight of the recompence of reward maketh bold and resolute to pass through every opposition: If they were possible, ten thousand deaths, ten thousand hells, would seem nothing to a soul, who gets a sight of Christ at the other side of all these. O Christ  
is



is precious, Christ is your up-making. O what think ye of that noble exchange, to embrace Christ entirely, and quit self entirely? is not that receiving new wares for old? is not that a receiving of gold, yea, of gold more precious than the gold of *Sheba*, and a quitting of dust more vile than the dust of the earth? O lovely soul that hath embraced lovely Christ, rich and happy that hath embraced precious Christ! but wo unto them that would divide him, and not take him in all his offices; for they have not yet learned him: Wo unto them that think that they have no need of Christ; for they know not themselves: Wo to them that think they can close with him when they please; for they are ignorant of grace: Wo to them that would have Christ and their own something beside; for they have neither loved nor conceived rightly of him: Wo to them that make excuse for their not following of him; for they know not their folly: Wo to them that will not close with all the crosses and the inconveniences that they may meet with for Christ; for they are rebellious fools that look only to the cost, and not to the advantages of religion; they fear at it, and give this answer to Christ's call, His sayings are hard, and who can bear them? but none do account so of his yoke, but they who have not taken it on; for it is *easy, and his burden is light*. And these who will not believe his word for it, nor the experience of many saints and martyrs, let them take a trial of it themselves, and if they get leave to weary, let them cast it off again: But, I am sure, there was never one that fully engaged with him, that ever could find a heart to quit him again. O! that folks would not stand at such a distance, but

come near and take a view of him, and they would see that which would inevitably win their hearts. There are two things at which I cannot wonder enough; and these are, the invaluableness of Christ, and the low value which the children of men put upon him; *Judas* sold him for thirty pieces of silver, but many now a-days sell him for less; and though they could get ten thousand worlds for him, they but make a mad and foolish bargain, who would quit him for these! Yea, suppose that it were possible that one person could possess ten thousand worlds, and that everlastingly, they could not have, in the use thereof, so much contentment by far, as the smallest part of Christ can give; yea, one half hour's enjoyment of him would far surpass all the satisfaction in the supposed case. O then! what must the eternal and full enjoyment of him be!

Now, dearly beloved, ye who have made choice of Christ, what think ye of your choice? O! admire his excellency, and wonder at your own happiness; and bend all your love towards him, who hath made you so happy: seek to shed abroad the savour of his sweet ointments, by a holy and spiritual walk; and improve dispensations to his glory, and your own good; and lean upon him in your travel through the wilderness; and though there be fiery serpents and drought in it, yet solace yourselves with his company, who hath said, that *he will never leave you, nor forsake you*. Regard not losses, regard not reproaches, for he is your exceeding rich reward. I doubt not but you meet with your own measure of reproaches and contempt at the hands of this generation, for the great kindness you have shown to a wounded and wronged wrestling party

party in the furnace of affliction. But as this doth endear our affections unto you so much the more; so, I hope, you are better fixed than that should prove a stumbling-block unto you. The parties that we have to contend with, discover so much of a spirit of lying and prejudice, for the most part of them, that none of tenderness, who know them, will be in great hazard to be taken away with them. I am confident God will stain their pride, and silence their boasting, and that in a sudden: I may say, I am sorry for what I see coming upon them. But, O worthy Ladies, keep ye near God, and go on in your zeal, and persist in your stedfastness, and in the close of the day ye shall be made to rejoice.

Now, I cannot express how much we are obliged unto you, for your tender care of our family that is with you, and the great encouragement that ye are to our dear and honourable delegate: the Lord be your reward, and keep not back his hand from helping you in the time of your need.

No more at the time, but, taking my leave of you in the words of the Apostle. 1 Cor. xvi. 23, 24. *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. My love be with you all in Christ Jesus.* I am,

*Right honourable Ladies,*

*Your assured and obliged friend*

*and servant in our sweet Lord,*

JAMES RENWICK.

## L E T T E R XLII.

*From the Rev. Mr. James Renwick, to the  
right honourable lady E. B.*

*Right honourable Lady,*                      *May 13. 1686.*

**D**Early beloved in the Lord, my insufficiency being in part known to me, doth make me stand in awe to write to you; but if I had the tongue of the learned, and the pen of a ready writer, I would imploy them both in speaking well of the name of Christ, and commending his way. O! his name is as ointment poured forth; and whoſo gets a ſmell thereof cannot but love him; and his way is ſo lovely, that a poor ſoul that once gets his foot upon it, and the eye looking forward, cannot but chuſe to trade in theſe paths, though rubs and croſſes from enemies, both from within and without, ſhould be never ſo multiplied: and no wonder, for when the children of God begin by grace to turn their backs upon their old lovers, and to ſhake off their weights, they get in hand the hundred-fold, ten thouſand times told, and are made to ſay, as *Pſal. iv. 7. Thou haſt put gladneſs in my heart, more than in the time that their corn and their wine increaſed.* Many a time I think they can have no pleaſant life who have not the Chriſtian's life; whatever the world think, yet the believer gets that in time, which may ſufficiently engage him to go through, if it were poſſible, a thouſand deaths in obedience to the Lord. O then! ſince the imperfect and in-constant enjoyment of Chriſt is ſuch a thing,

what



what must the full and eternal enjoyment of him be! Of this it may be said, *Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.* The believer cannot but have a happy life, when they have our things which the scripture calls precious, viz. The precious redemption of the soul, a precious faith, a precious Christ, and precious promises; and the redemption of the soul which is precious, is by a precious faith, laying hold on a precious Christ, held forth in precious promises. But when their happiness shall be completed, than faith shall vanish into light, by the entire fulfilling of the promises, and the soul be drowned in the bottomless ocean of the love of precious Christ, and bursting up with love, continually flaming toward him again. O what a life must a life of love be? and what inconceivable joy will it yield? Christ will rejoice over his own spouse when he hath taken her home to his own house, made with his own hand, and clothes her with robes of his own making, and entertains her with a banquet of his own dressing; and the invitation-word of the giver of that banquet will be this, *Song v. 1. Eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved.* and that table will never be drawn, and the dainties will never wear tasteless; for, as our Lord saith, *Matth. xxvi. 29. the wine there is new,* and it never groweth old; and his spouse's stomach will never suffocate, nor her appetite be satisfied; so, in heaven there is a continual eating and drinking, and a continual hungering and thirsting; a continual resting, and yet a never resting: Then shall the spouse rejoice in her husband:

husband: all her love shall be bended toward  
 him, and her joy shall arise from her enjoying  
 him; her love shall be full and constant, not ad-  
 mitting of intermissions or variableness; her joy  
 full and perpetual, not admitting of defect or  
 changeableness: and that which is a great part  
 of the Christian's exercise here, to wit, the  
 doubting of Christ's love, and their complaining  
 of coldness of love to him again, shall then  
 be wholly removed; and instead of grief, at least  
 mixtures of sorrow with their joy, they shall then  
 have inconceivable joy: And is not Christ fully  
 enjoyed, a match to love, and a prize to rejoice  
 in? Now, long for this, and seek after the abiding  
 assurance of Christ's love, and more and  
 more love-communications thereof in your hearts  
 until you arrive at this; and separate yourself  
 more and more from every unclean thing, that  
 cannot enter the gates of the city, where all this  
 is to be enjoyed: and seeing such rich upmaking  
 is to be had in Christ, especially seeing he is so  
 worthy, regard not what you may be called to  
 undergo in your owning of him. I hope ye have  
 studied to let yourself, your name, your enjoy-  
 ments, and your all, lie at Christ's feet; so as  
 ye can say of these, they are not your own; and  
 the more ye do prove that they are his, by his  
 calling for them, and making use of them, the  
 more of his love he evidenceth towards you,  
 and the more honour he putteth upon you; and  
 I think, men and women are for no use, but so  
 far as they are for Christ: and whatever errands  
 he calls you to run, fear not skaith nor hazard,  
 for it is he that rideth these ways upon you, and  
 so ye shall not stumble: for he hath promised,  
*Psal. cxxi. 3. He shall not suffer thy foot to be*  
*moved.*

oved. Let the low state of the church of Scotland, and the dangerous case of the church in other lands, ly near your heart; for ah! we may say at this day, *The house of David is waxing weaker and weaker, and the house of Saul waxing stronger and stronger.* I fear a sad and general stroke before it be better with the churches, for few are valiant for the truth upon the earth; and nothing brings a church more low, and a readier destruction upon a land, than regardlessness of Christ's matters, and silly and nameful slipping from them; and this is that which hath occasioned our breaches, and bred all our divisions in this church: and because some of our worthies in our day, who have gone before us, have been honoured and helped to hold that our worthy fathers did conquer with their blood, and bind over upon us by holy covenants, and we are endeavouring to do the same, they and we have been reproached as followers of new ways; but *wisdom shall be justified of her children:* and seeing our way-marks in the scriptures, and our never to be forgotten reformation, and the cloud of witnesses walking in the same paths, we are not to regard much what men say; but it were good for our reproachers to be sober, for a little time will silence their boasting, and make them change their thoughts, when they shall not get space to amend them.

Now, dear and worthy Lady, I cannot express my sense that I even have of the many obligations which we all stand under unto you, for your bowels have not been shut up, nor your hands shortened towards us; for your benefices towards us in this land, and these of us who are amongst you, have been large indeed; but we

are not so refreshed with what we enjoy thereby as that these things are demonstrations of your love to God, and respect to his work. And what further shall I say, but go on in the way and strength of the Lord; be watchful, diligent, and spiritual; grow in grace, and persevere therein to the end. The God of all peace be with you. I am,

*Right honourable Lady,  
Your assured friend, and  
obliged servant in the Lord,*

JAMES RENWICK.

## L E T T E R XLIII.

*From the Rev. Mr. James Renwick, to the honourable Mr. Robert Hamilton.*

*Hon. and dear Sir,*

*May 22. 1686.*

I Have written to you a brief account of our affairs in another letter, but I know not if it be away yet; howbeit, I hope, it shall come to your hand; therefore, I shall now be the more short in what I have to say. As for news, they are not many amongst us: Only York hath written to his parliament for a liberty to the Papists, commending them, in his own way, very highly, as these who have been faithful to the crown upon all hazards; so the parliamentarians are consulting about rescinding the penal statutes against Papists, but are not like intirely to agree about



about the same; however, they have written back, that they will yield so far to his desire in that, as their consciences will allow; and have offered a bond themselves to oppose all who may rise against him upon any pretext whatsoever. But a great many folk are gaping for a dissention between the Popish and Prelatic parties; which if it be, there will be an uncouth hotch-potch, for the most part of old traders (to-wit *Argyle's* party) will strike in with the latter. *Kerstrand* and *Mr. Boyd* were both of some purpose to go to *Holland* when I last parted with them, but as to the time I am uncertain.

In my other letter I spoke of sending you some papers; but now, the shortness of time will not allow me to get them transcribed, but I purpose to do it afterwards. Also there is a rude draught of a vindication six sheets long or thereabouts, drawn up chiefly by *Mr. B.* in answer to what charges are cast upon us; in which are many things very useful. However, as it is not likely to have passage for the *Linning*, I durst not propose it to friends that they should send for it without being stamp'd (*i. e.* *Mr. Linning's* ordination) but this is my humble advice unto you, that if you can get it stamp'd, and think that it will do good service, to essay it; and if you have any exceptions against the stamping of it, our merchants will not press for it; but if you have no exceptions, but only fears, which may say something to yourself, but would not bear weight before men, then I would have these no more spoken of than necessity calls for, and not made mention of in the *Linning's* not being stamp'd. Also, it will be fitter that you propose to our merchants the sending for the *Linning*

M

than

than I, because I am rather for wrestling under a heavy burden, than to have an ill neighbour: Some apprehend that I am for no help at all, but it would be most fit that the *Limning* should speak, and signify to our merchants the case, and so you and I both should come under the less suspicion, for we have a strange generation to deal with. And as for *K.* his carriage here, so far as we can learn, he seems not to design the introducing of other parties; for he neither speaks nor acts in their favours; as for your Honour, I can hear of nothing that he speaks against you, relative to the public cause; but to some he hath said, that ye have not carried right towards their family: and as for Mr. *Flint* he is married by *Tho. Ruffel* to one Mrs. *Moor*, who had been one with *J. Gib.* Now, to be free with you about your letter, it hath indeed gained the end of it, in clearing you of what ye were charged with, and satisfied friends as to that; but many take it very ill; some saying, that it hath too much bitterness towards the antagonists, and adduceth personal failings. And some, that it insinuates too much of a commendation of yourself, holding forth that you are almost alone in all your actions; and some, that it seemed to flatter this party by too much commending of them; but, for mine own part, I could take it all in good part, and not misconstrue your intentions; but what you write to the whole, I would have you so to write as to men, some of whom may be your greatest reproachers the next day, and so may be seeking all imaginable advantages against you. But let the world say what they will, I must say this, and I say it without vanity or flattery, that a little of *Robert Hamilton's* spirit in such

such a day as this, is very much worth. Also, I think fit to intimate unto you my purpose of re-  
scribing my testimony; not that I am refusing  
from any article thereof, but that I would have  
the same wiselier, and yet as plainly and freely  
expressed, and more confirmed and corroborat-  
ed; and also my mind anent some other exi-  
gences and controversies inserted: Moreover, I  
know not a man under whose name and patroci-  
ny I would commend it to following generati-  
ons, but to despised, and yet much honoured  
*Robert Hamilton.*

Now, I shall say no more; Only, take such a wise  
way with foreigners, as truth may get no loss,  
and they kept as much upon your side as can be;  
for they come under another consideration than  
these that are under the same bond of a covenant  
with ourselves, and have the same word of testi-  
mony, and whose profession imports not an oppo-  
site party, such as Independents, Anabaptists, &c.

So, Worthy and dear Sir, go on in the name  
and strength of your God, and quit not your con-  
fidence, though probability be against you, for  
it is a changeable rule; and these who win not to  
judge by another rule, I never look for stedfast-  
ness at their hand; and wait upon the Lord,  
who will guide all matters aright, and brings forth  
advantage to his work out of every opposition,  
and that, as universal as the opposition hath been  
made. Pray for him, who is,

*Your Honour's most endeared friend,*

*and servant in the Lord,*

JAMES RENWICK.

## L E T T E R XLIV.

*From the Rev. Mr. James Renwick, to the honourable Mr. Robert Hamilton.*

*Hon. and dear Sir,*

*Aug. 13. 1686.*

I Have not many news to write to you at this time ; yet I thought it my duty to acquaint you with some things. Our condition is in some measure changed in this respect ; the enemies for this year now have not been so hotly pursuing after us as they were ; whatever it may flow from upon the enemies part, whether from the Popish party being so busied in their contrivance, and other grand persecutors discouraged, or from some other thing ; yet, we are to see the Lord's restraining hand in it, and that he *stays his rough wind in the day of his east wind*. We being so taken up with other things, that, I think, it shall be a plague to the generation in making them carnal and secure. I have been for a season in *England*, where, by the good hand of the Lord, we kept our Sabbath meetings, all except one day, in the fields, without any disturbance, but upon our days of the week they were kept in the night time. And in that land, I got some discoveries of the Sectaries ; for at one preaching, where there were many Anabaptists hearing, because that I asserted the divine right of infant-baptism from Scripture, clearing the same from the testimony of some ancient authors ; they who before had seemed to have much love and affection, would not afterwards carry civil ; and told us that they had been always willing to do, and had



had done for *Scottish* sufferers, and that other *Scottish* ministers had not fallen upon such heads. Such an upcast was a little troublesome unto me; but by it I perceived, as also I exprest, that their hospitality to *Scottish* ministers and sufferers had both done the ministers and themselves ill, for it stopp'd the ministers mouths from declaring the counsel of God, and made themselves lay weight upon such deeds, and look upon *Scottish* ministers as so much obliged to them, that they behoved to tolerate them: But this I say, that they that deal freely with them, will not get long their countenance. Howbeit, at my coming away, one of them told me, that they were resolv'd to collect for me, but they were informed that I would not accept thereof; whereupon I told, that they were my friends that informed so rightly, for I went not thither for necessity, neither to seek theirs, but them: also, at the desire of friends in *Scotland*, some of us went to converse with a Presbyterian minister, whom we heard to be well affected toward this party, and found him, as we thought, to be a very humble tender man, much exercised with that church's case, and after information, did agree with us in the word of our testimony, only he was not so streight as to some matters of *England* as we would desire; but it is not to be thought strange of, considering that he hath none, either to go before him nor with him in these things.

And now since we came to *Scotland*, I hear that some of these ministers, particularly Mr. Barclay, Mr. Langlands, and one Mr. Bay are travelling in different places through the country. I hear not tell of much breaking among friends: But some of the other party are going

through with as gross slanders as can be invented; for one thing they are saying, that they can prove that I was with the Chancellor at *Edinburgh*; and they most partly profess, that in their travels they are in a continual fear of us, that we deliver them up to the enemy.

Now, What shall I say? Our case is singular; it is matter of great concernedness, the Lord hath seen that our furnace by that inquisition and torture of the common enemies, hath not been searching enough, therefore he must carve another kind of furnace to try us better: Blessed are they who shall come forth as gold. God will arise, and dispell these present mists and confusions, and let it be seen what great need there hath been of all that comes to pass. O faith is a brave interpreter of dispensations, and never carries bad tidings.

O dear Sir, you are called forth to sail thro' a raging and rough-sea, but trust to your pilot, and he will bring you to your harbour. O fear not, he will not let the waves overwhelm you, and the rougher the sea be, the sweeter will your harbour be. Think not strange of that stumbling dispensation fallen out with you, for God hath a mind to let a generation stumble, whom he thinks' worthy of no other thing; it speaks out anger towards us, but more anger to them that stumble at it: God is taking pains to purify, refine, and purge us; and he says he will have a pure people in *Scotland*, else he shall have none at all: that dispensation seems to be so immediately from Go's hand, that we should say, *It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good*: and our study should be to make a right use of it.

As for the papers you received from *N. N.* sent you them, and left them unclosed, that in his passage he might let some friends see them, especially that these at *Newcastle* might see them. And I desire to know your thoughts of the reply to Mr. *Robert Langlands's* letter, which I wrote, mostly for the behoof of some that seem to be godly and exercised, whose affections are towards us, but through various informations are perplexed about some of our matters: so I laboured to take that way in it which I thought might be most convincing, and for their advantage, without truths prejudice. And as to the vindication we are about, it is not yet perfected; neither in it will we do any thing rashly; and friends have concluded, that you and I shall see it before it go forth. And concerning Mr. *Boyd's* business, friends (except a very few) were against the giving him a testificate for ordination, but yet did give it; and the occasion of a fast day upon his account, was to prevent disagreement that was like to be amongst friends anent his business. And as for that affair concerning you and *J. H.* I bless the Lord that he hath helped you to lay it aside. I think it is according to his will; and I hope you will have much peace in it. She was with us few days, and was pretty free with us anent several things, particularly the trials of their family, and their being puzzled whether or not to come home to *Scotland*, if so be their brother would not stay abroad; but I would not advise them to one thing nor another in that. As to your own coming home or staying abroad, I apprehend that friends would easily consent to your staying, or yet call you home, but I cannot

not well advise them to either of these, till I know upon what grounds to do it from yourself. 'Tis like that you and the family both will be necessitate through straitenedness in living in that land to come home; but if it come to that, I would have you acquainting me, that you might be called, which may be a mean to stop the insulting of many; or if it were better to stay there, and if a little supply from our hand could keep you there, we would be content to give it. But man's malice is so much against you, that I am afraid of you in staying, and I am afraid of you in your voyage hither, and I am afraid of you in your being here: but if the Lord bring you home, I think you and I must not part, till the Lord by death, or some signal way, do it.

Now, dear Sir, what shall I say? The Lord hath carved out your lot after a strange sort: O study to get good by all his dispensations toward you, that you may bring forth the more fruit, for *every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it that it may bring forth more fruit.* Let your burdens all ly upon the Lord, his back is strong enough. Is not his all-sufficiency your portion? Are you not then rich enough? and what can you want? O rejoice in reproaches, rejoice in ignominy, rejoice in wants, in perils, and in sufferings, for his name; the more of that you are called to endure, the more true honour is put upon you; and seek you the more to honour and glorify him: Fight not against the world with the world's weapons of the flesh, *viz.* Pride, passion, prejudice, lies, and contempt; but let yours be the weapons of the spirit, *viz.* Zeal, meekness, patience, and prayer to God, that he would ei-  
ther



ther pity them and heal them, else draw them out of the way. And whatever you write unto friends, write as unto men, who are for you to-day, and may be against you to-morrow.

Now, I pray that the Lord may be with you, and that poor and sweet family; that he may give you enlargement in your distresses; and when your sorrows abound, he may make your consolation to superabound. My love to your dear and worthy sister, the sweet children *J.* and *R.* the worthy ladies *V. Heer.* and any other of your strengtheners in the Lord. I am,

*Honourable and dear Sir,*

*Even as formerly,*

JAMES RENWICK.

## L E T T E R XLV.

*From the Rev. Mr. James Renwick, to the honourable Mr. Robert Hamilton.*

*Hon. and dear Sir,*

*October 23. 1686.*

**I** Received your letters, they were very refreshing unto me. Your rencounters are fierce, and you stand in the flour; but I hope you look upon your condition rather to be envied than pitied. O can you not say, that the fat feast of a peaceable conscience, and the enjoyment of the light of the Lord's countenance, is the hundred fold, a thousand times told? *Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart,* Psal. xcvi. 11. O read that psalm,

psalm, and meditate upon it; and when you mind it, remember me, for it is a golden Scripture unto me. What would you and I have more than that, *The Lord reigneth, let us rejoice: Righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne.* But O who can take him up? who can behold his glory? Therefore he casteth *clouds round about him: let us be glad because of his judgments. A fire goeth before him, to burn up his enemies.*

As to what you write about my testimony, I am refreshed; yet when I look back upon the frame that I was then in, I have much peace in my ingenuity, and though weakly, yet I think, it hath the right state of the cause in it, and I hope never to refile from it: Also, it, having your name, doth the more commend it unto me; and when I shall write (which I have been hitherto diverted from) it will be but an enlargement upon, and confirmation of the fore-said testimony, with reasons, together with some additions as to what hath fallen out since; and for my changing my method in dealing with parents of children to be baptized, I declare them to be misinformers who have so said unto you; for, these persons that have complied with one thing or other, I do not admit them to present their children, unless they have evidenced a right sense and practical reformation, by standing out the temptation unto these things they have been chargeable with, and their engagement to give due satisfaction when lawfully called for; or else the attestation of some acquainted with their case, that in the judgment of charity, they appear to be convinced of, and humbled for their sin, and their engagement to forbear  
their

their sin, and give satisfaction in manner fore-said. But when compliers and persons guilty of defection come, who have not as yet desisted from their offensive courses, I do not let them present their children; neither will or do I let other persons present their children, lest the parents should be hardened in their sin thereby, unless they engage to forbear, and give satisfaction as said is; and some prove true and some prove false: Further, when the parents are guilty of very gross compliance, even though they have given evidences of a right sense thereof, I do not admit them, but another to present their children, for fear of reproach, albeit I might do it lawfully.

But, dear Sir, my difficulty upon this head is often times very great, the different cases of persons puts me sometimes to a nonplus. And this I think strange of, that now when the ministers are passing through the country, many persons even involved in the courses of defection scruple to take their children unto them. But in answer to what you write concerning *Kerfl*. I know him to be nothing the better of the company of some, and I resolve that he shall be dealt with, both freely and tenderly at the next general meeting. And as for Mr. *Boyd*, I used freedom with him, in a line, before he went away; but the reports that I have heard of him since I saw him, have been both troublesome and displeasing unto me: I know not upon what grounds he can express his hope of union; for I see no way as yet how it shall be obtained in the Lord: yea, as matters now stand, I hold myself obliged to resent that information of his, for it puts such as are coming forward to stand still; and for mine

own part, though I should be left alone, and branded with singularity, while they continue as they are, I resolve not to unite, *dum spiritus hos regit artus*; and there is little hope of their growing better: Neither will Mr. *Boyd* find that party amongst us, who are inclined to hear these, &c. so strong as he expects; but after pains for information and admonition, we shall then show how we will carry towards them. And let me be mistaken as men please, this is my study not to partake in other men's sins, neither to cover them; but considering the confusions of this time, and the weakness of poor people, I hold it my duty to be a help and a prop, as I can, to these that are staggering, and to carry so toward such as will go off, as their stumbling neither in law, nor in my own conscience may be charged upon me: And this is like unto my Master, who hath promised to *save them that halt, and gather them that are driven out*. As for the vindication which Mr. *B.* did let you see, I need not speak any thing, for we have altered it, and sent unto you a transcript of the present draught, which is not yet condescended upon, until you and our societies see it. So let it not trouble you, neither the testificate that was granted unto him; for though the most part were dissatisfied with some things in him, and had their jealousies against him; yet considering what he left behind him written with his own hand, and that he was not fully discovered, they thought that they could not deny such a testificate unto him; but if he should make a bad use of it against us, he will be a man most ungrate, and will contradict what he hath left under his own hand amongst us; and if so, I wish, it had never been granted



granted unto him. Your cousin Mrs. J. K. was with us some days, and we were pretty free with her; but you know, she is ordinarily reserved. As for what you wrote about the laying aside of that business, I bless the Lord that he hath helped you unto it; for many considerations called for it.

Now, Right honourable and comfortable Sir, I remit you to the bearer for news amongst us; he can give you an account of my progress in *England*; and also of *Colin's* going to *Ireland*: But I think fit to shew you, that at the last correspondence, friends judged it convenient to send one to Mr. *Thomas Douglas* to converse with him, and know where he stands; (which this bearer is resolved, according to their conclusion, to set about) When they asked my concurrence and consent, I answered that I could not actively concur therewith, because I knew not what to expect by it; yet I should not oppose their sending any of their number to confer with him; for I thought the thing in itself could not well be denied to them: And also, I am (with many) under the suspicion, that I desire no help, though the persons were never so right; whereas, the Lord is my witness, it would be my greatest rejoicing this day, to have some ministers to concur with me; for it would be a great advantage to the work, and a great ease to me; for, notwithstanding of all breakings, my business multiplies still upon my hand, and people are more earnest now than ever I knew them after the gospel: O that the Lord would send forth labourers. As for this bearer, I am glad that he hath come unto you, for he hath his own dissatisfaction with you, whereupon he and I have had some

bickerings; but I do not know him to vent himself to your prejudice: Also he is very honest toward the cause, and singularly useful; therefore you may be free with, and tender of him, for I expect he will be free with you.

Now, Dear and honourable Sir, being in haste, and also disturbed yesternight from writing, by an alarm of the enemy, I shall add no further; but desires to know your mind anent a particular, which is like to break us more than any thing that the ministers can do; and it is, the joining of children, servants and others in the family-exercise of their parents, masters and others who are compliers. Thus committing you, your sister and the sweet family unto the Lord. I am,

*Honourable and dear Sir,*

*Ever as formerly,*

JAMES RENWICK.

## L E T T E R XLVI.

*From the Rev. Mr. James Renwick, to ———*

*Hon. and dear Sir,*

*Jan. 10. 1687.*

**I** Received yours, and am greatly refreshed with it, both in respect of its coming from you, and in respect of the strain of it; for I perceive in it a zeal for the right carrying of the ark of God through this howling wilderness: it would be matter of my joy to observe this spirit in any who beareth the ark, and in all who profess to follow it; for I am persuaded, that the wrong way  
of

of bearing and handling the ark, will keep it longer in the wilderness, but will never carry it thro' *Jordan* and settle it in the land of *Canaan*: And for mine own part, I see it so difficult a thing to move one step rightly forward with it, that I am in a continual fear anent what I do; and I wish, I were more in the exercise of that fear, for it would put me to look more unto the Lord, whom I desire and aim to set before mine eyes at all times; and if I shall give the ark a wrong touch, I may say (so far as I can see into mine own heart) it will be through blindness and not thro' byass'dness. O to be framed for the work of the day; for there is none fit for it but such as have honest hearts, ingenious spirits, and the faces of lions; they will be strange sort of folk whom the Lord will make any singular use of. As for the case of our societies, am I in some consternation of spirit when I reflect upon it: There are a choice handful amongst them, whom I hope, the Lord will not forsake; but some are not so fixed and resolute as they ought to be, and others, I fear, have little principle, but follow example; and severals little exercised with their soul's cases; and the Lord is hiding his face in some measure from the whole, which some are sensible of, and groaning under: Wherefore, I look for a more narrow sieve yet to go through us, and that the Lord will lay by many: O that fanning and winnowing that is coming! but the least good grain shall not fall to the ground. Yea, I do not look that the Lord's work shall be delivered till this generation of his wrath be hurled out of the way; and I think, they are blind who see not a desolation coming upon the land: *In mine ears said the Lord of hosts, Of a truth many houses shall be desolate,*

*solate, even great and fair without inhabitant; Isa. v. 9. But he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem; Isa. iv. 3. And for mine own part, I apprehend, that that dark hour is now very near hand, which shall come upon the church before the fall of Antichrist, and the Lord's glorious appearing for his church, which shall be in the last days. O blessed shall they be who wait for the Lord in the way of his judgments, and who are of the righteous nation which keep the truth, for the gates shall be opened unto them, Isa. xxvi. 2. 8.*  
I am,

*Your honour's sympathising friend  
and servant in the Lord,*

JAMES RENWICK.

---

## L E T T E R XLVII.

*From the Rev. Mr. James Renwick, to the  
honourable Mr. Robert Hamilton.*

*Hon. and dear Sir,*

*Jan. 11. 1687.*

**I** Conceive it is both to your loss and our loss, yea, to the disadvantage of the cause, that you hear so seldom from us, and how matters are amongst us; but for my part, I cannot help it; having always such throng of weighty business, continual travel through many a vast wilderness, and sometimes bad accommodation; so that it is a rare thing for me to get a spare hour.

How-



However, considering the importance of what was done at the last general meeting, I judge it necessary to give you a true account thereof. There came two ministers to the last meeting *December 22. 1686. viz. Mr. David Houston,* and *Mr. Alexander Shields.* But I shall first give you an account of our carrying toward the said *Mr. David,* and toward the foresaid *Mr. Alexander.* When I was in *England* the last Summer, the general meeting of our societies being informed that *Mr. David Houston* refused concurrence with, and subjection to the ministers in *Ireland* because of their defections, and that he preached faithfully against all the sins of the times, did send unto him *Colin Alison* and *William Nairn* to know the verity thereof; who after full and free communing with the said *Mr. David* ament all the heads of our present testimony, received great satisfaction; who also signified unto them his resolution of coming unto us. But before we sent any unto him again, we did convocate all our friends who had been living any time in *Ireland,* and now come over to us, that we might inform ourselves anent what they knew of the said *Mr. David,* who could not relate any difference in his principles from us, but gave in some accusation against him which they had but by report, and were all *personalia:* All which accusations were drawn up and delivered to *James Boyle,* who was sent to *Ireland* to get the verity or falsehood of every one of these things instructed, and finding them to be but calumnies, to conduct the foresaid *Mr. David* to us, according to his own resolution. So the said *James* laying out search for information anent these reports, conferring with some of *Mr. David's* ac-

cusers, bringing him and some of them face to face; likewise conferring with some of his neighbours and ordinary hearers, and finding no ground for the foresaid accusations, did conduct Mr. *David* unto us, that we might satisfy ourselves anent him in a free communing with himself.

Wherefore, Mr. *David* came to our last general meeting, which was upon *December 22. 1686.* being accompanied with one *James Kinloch*, who was particularly sent by some societies in *Ireland* to our correspondence, and who also testified before us all for Mr. *David's* honesty and innocency of the foresaid alledgances, after which, we did read over in Mr. *David's* hearing, the introduction to our vindication, wherein are summarily comprehended some signal steps of our churches defection, and a brief declaration of our present testimony, both as to what we own and disown, together with the fifth head of the same vindication, containing (among other things) ten grounds, every one of which, we judge sufficient for withdrawing from ministers of this covenanted and reformed church, to whom they are applicable in this broken and declining state: and then we asked Mr. *David's* judgment of what he had heard, and whether or no he was of one mind with us as to every part of our present testimony. To which he replied, that as to some matters of fact he was ignorant, but he agreed with our judgment and principles in all that he had heard, adding, that it was foretold by *Luzber*, That before Christ's glorious appearance for his church in the last days, the controversy should be stated and rid about ministry and magistracy. So Mr. *David* being desired to remove,

we

we gave in our minds about his answer, and it was sustained as satisfying in that point. After this, we consulted among ourselves what was further necessary to desire for our further satisfaction anent him; and having heard from himself, that he had some papers with him which could tend to our information and clearing, concerning his carriage for many years; we called him to us again, and desired to hear these papers. So, there was read in our hearing, first his licence, then his ordination, which was to the parish of *Strastrie*, a little before the Restoration. Next (as I remember) a paper which he had drawn up himself, and given to the ministers in *Ireland*, containing his reasons wherefore he would not be subordinate unto, nor concur with them, whereof their opposition to the suffering party in *Scotland* was one. Afterward were read some testificates, from the people in the respective places in *Ireland*, where he had exercised his ministry, some whereof being of a very late date, and one of them bearing, that they had been greatly refreshed and edified with his preaching the gospel amongst them; but that he had denied them other privileges for reasons satisfying to himself; by which he declared, they understood his refusing to baptize their children, because of their paying exactions to the enemy, and this we looked upon as the greater testimony. Further, we enquired how long he had kept a meeting-house in *Ireland*, and upon what terms; and declared the terms of his holding were not sinful; for he was settled by the ministers upon the call of the people; and whensoever he knew of any transaction of the said ministers with the so called magistrate, that he forsook his meeting-house,

and

and refused subordination to these ministers: which was a little after *Bothwel*. Moreover, he declared, and *James Kinloch* witnessed the same, that at the incoming of the associators, *Anno 1685*, he gave a plain and public testimony against that hotch-potch confederacy. Now, *Mr. David* being desired to remove again, we communed together anent what we had heard from his papers and from his own mouth, and found a great measure of satisfaction therefrom. Howbeit, to remove scruples yet further, we called him again to us, and dealt freely with him in telling him what was reported, by some, of him, desiring to hear what he would say to these things himself. All which alledgances he heard very patiently, and answered to them one by one, as they were given in, very pleasantly, and gave very demonstrating evidences of his innocency.

Now, from all the foresaids, we being in such a measure satisfied in our consciences, concerning the said *Mr. David*; our societies do both call him, and hear him preach for further trial, whereunto I gave my consent, seeing no reason wherefore I could deny it. But he is not as yet settled amongst us as our minister by a formal and a solemn call for that effect. Howbeit, for the time, I know not of any ground that will be for excepting against it; for I hear that he preaches very zealously and faithfully whither he goes, and carries strictly in administering the sacrament of baptism. And for mine own part, from his expressing himself at our correspondence; I thought he seemed to have the right state of the cause, to have a right impression of the case of the church, to be tender-hearted and zealous in the frame of his spirit, particularly for the  
royalties



royalties of Christ, and against the idol of the Lord's Jealousy, the ecclesiastic supremacy and civil tyranny.

As for our carriage towards the foresaid Mr. *Alexander Shields*, he having by the providence of God made his escape out of prison, after a little space of time (without seeking after any party of ministers against whom we have exceptions) came to the country, unto this contending and suffering party. And at length, upon the 5th of *December* 1686, came to a meeting which we had in *Galloway*, in the Wood of *Earlston*, for preaching; and so going alongst with me from thence, upon the day following, I told him, albeit I had some satisfaction concerning him from what I had seen under his own hand, and albeit I expected more by further converse with him; yet I thought it most rational in itself, most conducing to the preservation of union amongst us, and also according to the conclusion of our general meeting, viz. that nothing which concerns the whole should be done without acquainting them therewith; that the foresaid Mr. *Alexander* should not be employed in the public work until he came to the general correspondence, that all might be satisfied anent him: which he did take very well, and desired us to take that method with him which we would do with any backslidden minister, if God should touch his heart and bring him out from his defections unto the public work. Howbeit, we thought fit to employ him sometimes to go about family exercise, not seeing any reason why this should be forboren, for thereby we might attain to more clearness anent him. And indeed, in a certain family, where some neighbours (as is ordinary) were

were gathered unto the worship, I was greatly refreshed with what he spake from *Rom. xii. 12.* especially with what he had in prayer, with a heavy lamentation to this purpose; “ I cannot  
 “ longer contain, but I must confess unto the  
 “ Lord before this people, I am ashamed to of-  
 “ fer my body a living sacrifice to thee, yet I  
 “ must do it; for I a prisoner and a preacher,  
 “ might have been a martyr, and in glory with  
 “ thee and thy glorified martyrs above; but  
 “ I sinfully and shamefully saved my life with  
 “ disowning thy friends and owning thy e-  
 “ nemies; and it will be a wonder if ever thou  
 “ put such a honourable opportunity in my hand  
 “ again.” And very seldom did he go about ex-  
 ercise, but either in prayer, or in speaking from  
 the scripture, he brake forth into heavy lamen-  
 tations, confessing particularly his defections. So,  
 the time of our general meeting coming, which  
 was *December 22.* as said is, the foresaid Mr.  
*Alexander* came to the same; and we did read o-  
 ver in his hearing (he being present with Mr.  
*David*) the introduction to our vindication,  
 wherein are comprehended some special steps of  
 our church’s defection, and a brief declaration of  
 our present testimony, both as to what we own  
 and disown; together with the fifth head of the  
 same vindication, containing, among other things,  
 ten grounds, every one of which we judge suffi-  
 cient for withdrawing from ministers of this co-  
 venanted and reformed church to whom they are  
 applicable, in this broken and declining state.  
 And then we asked Mr. *Alexander*’s judgment  
 concerning what he had heard, and whether or  
 no he was of one mind with us as to every part  
 of our present testimony. To which he replied,  
 that

that he agreed cordially with us in all that he had heard, and particularly in the foresaid ten grounds, judging every one of them to bear a solidity and sufficiency in point of withdrawing. But, said he, there are some things there testified against, whereof I am guilty; and I will take a little time to unbosom myself unto you anent the same. So he began his confession with some pre-occupying cautions; desiring that none might think he was moved to what he was now about to do, from the affectation of applause from any man, or, that he might be in with a party (for he knew he would not want alluring employments if he had freedom to embrace it) but only that he might give God the glory, vindicate the cause, exoner his own conscience, and satisfy offended brethren: Intimating also, that he looked not upon the societies as competent for handling ecclesiastic matters, and that he knew, they did not assume the same unto themselves, though they were falsely branded therewith: Yet he held himself bound in duty, to declare with sorrow before them, wherein he had denied any part of the testimony which they did own. Then he proceeded to the particulars of his confession, and acknowledged,

1. That he had involved himself in the guilt of owning the (so called) authority of *James VII.* shewing an exceeding sinfulness in it, and taking shame unto himself.

2. He acknowledged himself guilty of taking the oath of Abjuration, and of relapsing into the same iniquity; the sinfulness whereof he held out at a great length, making it appear, that by that oath many orthodox principles which concern us greatly to contend for, are abjured. He de-

declared the occasion of his being inveigled in these transgressions, was, the entering into an accommodation with the enemy; for he could propose nothing unto them but they still added and yielded to it, until they got him a silly fish caught in their angle. Howbeit, hereby (as he said) he did not extenuate or excuse his sin, for, albeit he had as much to say for himself as any man could have, who had declared in such a measure, yet he would neither stifle his own conscience, nor blind the eyes of others; wherefore, he shewed both the sin and danger of entering upon any accommodation whatsoever with the enemy.

Now, he spoke largely to all these particulars, discovering such hainous and manifold sin therein, that, I think, none could have done it, unless they had known the terrors of the Lord: Shewing also the aggravations thereof, desiring every one to look upon their sin with the aggravating circumstances they can see in it: And he expressed so much sense and ingenuity, that none, I think, could require more of him, and I know not who would not have been satisfied as to the foresaids, who had heard him express himself so fully, so plainly, so freely, and with so much sense, grief, and self-condemning; and I thought it both singular and promising, to see a clergy-man come forth with such a confession of his own defections, when so few of that set are seen in our age to be honoured with the like.

So Mr. *Alexander* being desired to remove, we communed together about what we heard, and all declared, they found themselves satisfied as to the foresaids. After this, it was consulted amongst us, what was necessary to desire for our further



further satisfaction anent him; and we judged it expedient to enquire how and by whom he was licensed to preach; whereupon, I having conferred with him before thereanent, gave a brief account thereof; and signified that a considerable while ago, I saw it under his own hand, that if the business of his licence were to be done yet, he would neither take it from such persons, neither would they give it him; and that of late he had said unto myself, that he knew not one of these who had granted it, that now he could concur with. However, we thought it convenient to call himself, that he might give an account thereof before us all; which he did, showing that he went to *London* with an intention to be an amanuensis to *Owen*, or some of their great doctors, who were writing books for the press, and had a letter of recommendation to one Mr. *Blackie*, a *Scottish* minister, who trusted him to speak with him a certain season, and had several ministers convened, unknown to Mr. *Alexander*, and did press and enjoin him to take licence; so, he being carried unto it in that sudden and surprising way, he accepted it from the hands of *Scottish* ministers then at *London*, but without any impositions or sinful restrictions. However, a little after, the oath of allegiance becoming the trial of that place, the foresaid Mr. *Alexander* studied, as he had occasion in preaching, plainly and satisfyingly to discover the sin of it; which was so ill taken by the ministers by whom he was licenced, that they threatened and sought to stop his mouth, but he refused to submit unto them.

Now, to this very purpose was the relation that Mr. *Alexander* himself gave. So, considering what is before related, the societies for

themselves, and I, with the concurrence of some elders then present, did call him to officiate in preaching the word to the suffering remnant of this church. Wherefore, upon the Sabbath following he and I did preach together, he having his text 2 *Cor.* v. 11. in these words in the former part of the verse, *viz. Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men.* In which preaching, I may say, he particularly asserted every part of our present testimony, both as to non-compliance with enemies, non-concurrence with defective parties, and disowning the pretended authority of *James VII.*; and also doctrinally confessed his own particular defections; and cryed out, that *knowing the terror of the Lord* in these things, he *persuaded men.* And having appointed a fast upon the *Thursday* following, I briefly drew up about the number of forty four causes of humiliation, omitting no piece of defection of old or of late, that I knew or could remember, which causes he cordially agreed with, and expressed the same publicly in his preaching before the congregation, declaring every one of them to be a great cause of humiliation; and confessed again his own defections, holding forth the sin thereof to be very hainous, with much sorrow and regrete. So I find Mr. *Alexander* to be one with us in our present testimony; I look upon him as having the zeal of God in his spirit, and the poor remnant have much of his heart; and I think, the Lord is with him, and he cannot be challenged as deficient in the application of his doctrine; and, for mine own part, I have been refreshed with hearing of him, and have been animated to zeal by his preaching and discourse.

But

But there was a certain offence given by some, wherein Mr. *Alexander* was a partaker, and wherewith I was dissatisfied, and that was their deserting of the testimony which some eminent worthies at *Utrecht* keep up against Mr. *Fleming* minister to the *Scottish* congregation at *Rotterdam*, in withdrawing from him for his manifest scandal; which testimony I cordially (as heretofore) agree with, and look upon it (according as I know) as the first clear stating of our testimony in our latter times, against the daubers and plaisterers of defection. Wherefore I did speak with Mr. *Alexander* anent the same, who knows my mind well enough in that affair, and expressed my dissatisfaction, and apprehended him to be sensible of the evils of that breach: And as we were occasionally speaking of it at another time, he called their withdrawing, their testimony against Mr. *Fleming*. Howbeit, considering Mr. *Alexander's* partaking in the foresaid offence being very little here known in *Scotland*, and so, they not being the persons offended, considering his giving a practical testimony in that affair, by discountenancing the foresaid congregation, such time since that he hath been in *Holland*; considering his present strictness, and cordial agreement with us in all our present controversies, and not knowing how to manage that affair to the edification of the societies; I say, upon these and such considerations it was not brought before the general correspondence.

Now, Right honourable and dear Sir, I have given you a true and full account of our carriage toward Mr. *Alexander Shields*; and if you were with him now, I think, you would say as much for him as I have said, for he doth not carry a

mids-man betwixt us and other parties, or one who endeavours to obscure and cast dirt upon our contendings, to jumble us off our feet and pervert us from the right ways of the Lord, but hath taken the defence of every part of our present testimony. And when I was telling him in discourse that the famous Mr. *Cameron* had said in a sermon, that the *Sanquhar* declaration would shake the throne of *Britain*; Mr. *Alexander* replied, Yea, and the thrones of the kingdoms through the world: And he hath a high esteem of the *Queens-ferry* Papers, and expressed his dissatisfaction that they were not more valued. All which spoke forth his zeal and cordial agreement with the honest state of the cause; and in hearing whereof I was not a little refreshed. I think, the Lord hath suffered him to fall into the hands of enemies and fall before them, for laying him low in humility, and raising him up in zeal; so, whatever come to pass afterward, in the mean time, I am made to look upon both Mr. *David* and his coming forth in such a manner, as a mercy to the poor church of *Scotland*, and it hath been a mean to wipe away some of our reproach from among men, and to put some dash upon the confidence of our opposers, who, for ought I can hear, do look upon them both, as upon these whom they judge most obstinate among us. Howbeit, (*mi pater*) I shall be glad to have your thoughts anent what I have written, for I do reverence you and your judgment as much as ever.

Right honourable and comfortable Sir, I know your bickerings are hot, and your rencounters fierce, and these multiplied upon you: You are hated and despised of men for your faithfulness and jealousy for your God. Yea, I am in great  
fear



fear of your being in continual hazard of your life from *Scottish* men, or thro' their instigation; the consideration of all which fills my heart with sorrow, when it comes before me, and sometimes draws water from mine eyes. But again, when I remember what a fat feast you have of peace of conscience and joy in the Lord, together with what ye have in hope, I am made to rejoice in the midst of my sorrow, and to account you a blessed man. O go on in the strength of the Lord; fear not the antichristian enemies, nor all the men who are fallen in among the limbs of the whore. Grace is sufficient for you, victory is certain, and the prize waits for you.

Now, I leave the work upon him, upon whose shoulders the government is laid. I am apprehensive that the dark hour is now near hand, which will come upon the church before Christ's glorious appearance in the last days; but he will rise and make a discussion of his enemies, and who endureth to the end shall be saved. I am,

*Right honourable,*

*Yours as formerly,*

JAMES RENWICK.

*P. S.* I am sometimes very much exercised in my thoughts about your coming to *Scotland*, but, considering what strange things may come out of it, and what hazard you will run, I dare not be peremptor in desiring you, until I see a weighty and urgent call unto it; but if matters be so with you, as to determine positively, let me know, and a handful will call you,

who will be your brethren and servants in tribulation for Christ.

JAMES RENWICK

---

L E T T E R XLVIII.

*From the Rev. Mr. James Renwick, to the honourable the Laird of Earlston.*

*Hon. and dear Sir,*

*Jan. 27. 1687.*

**I** Have not been forgetful of you, though I have long delayed to write, and the real occasion of my so long delay was, the throng of business, (for having so much to do, I being in continual travel) together with a designed forbearance, until I had this course finished in *Galloway*, that I might give you an account of the present case of this country. I had great access in it to preach the gospel, the Lord wonderfully restraining enemies, and drawing out very many to hear, and moving them to give great outward encouragement. We kept thirteen field-meetings, whereof four were in the day-light; and I studied publickly to declare and assert in its own place, every part of our present testimony. We had also nine meetings for examination of the societies, casting the most adjacent together into one meeting for that effect: And I hope, through the Lord's blessing, that that small piece of labour shall not want its fruit. But upon the other hand, I meet with no small opposition in *Galloway*; I went to that shire, and preached there; a great many were vexed, and did their utmost

to

to oppose it: and when I came to *Kirkmabreck*, there came two men and gave me a paper, subscribed by one in *Carrick*, in name of all therein between *Cree* and *Dee*, and also in name of the whole; which paper overturns many noble pieces of our reformation, calling hearing of curates, paying of cess, and swearing the abjuration oath debateable principles, and above their capacity to determine, and bears a viperous protestation against my preaching, besides many other absurdities in it: Which when I read, I gave my animadversions upon it before the two men: And upon the *Thursday* following, we keeping a public day meeting in the fields, between *Cree* and *Dee*, I thought fit after lecture, which was upon the xv. *Psalms*, and sermon, which was upon *Song* ii. 2. to read over the paper before the multitude, that I might let them know what was done in their names, giving my own animadversions upon the same, and exhorting them, if any such were there, who had given their countenance and concurrence to it, that they would speedily with sorrow draw back their hand from such an iniquity; and these who were free to take their protestation before the Lord that they were innocent, and did resent the doing of such a deed in their name: and withal warning them of the dangerousness of that course, and spirit of that party. Likewise, when I came to *Irongray*, *Cornlee* came unto me, and before some few, who were meeting for examination, and some others who accompanied me in my travels, took instruments against me, and against my entering into *Irongray*; whereupon I gave some weighty reasons, wherefore I could not look upon his deed as the deed of a faithful elder in that parish,

and

and cleared some controverted points of our testimony. But he was so drunk either with wine, or with the fury of the Lord, or with both, that he could hear nothing, and answer with nothing, but with clamour and crying, (the depths of Satan!) that I had destroyed the church, and that the ministers had a libel drawn up against me; whereupon I, declaring that none of these things did terrify me, and that this was the work of the Lord, and that I was resolved, in his strength, to go on in it, while my breath governed my joints, and enjoined silence upon him. But, I think, by such an attempt that he hath done no skaith either to the work or to the owners of it.

Now, Right honourable Sir, you see some of my conflicts. I bless the Lord, none of these things terrify me: I think, they are very pusillanimous, who would not find such hot bickerings a mean to ding a spirit in them. O, that we might be such as we might say, *Isa. viii. 9. 10. Associate yourselves, O ye people; and ye shall be broken in pieces:—gird yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces. Take counsel together, and it shall come to nought; speak the word, and it shall not stand; for God is with us.* But further, as to the societies in *Galloway*; there are some of them simple, whom we have much ado to keep right, do what we can: But there are some others, both in *Glenkers* and other places, whom I look upon as bows of steel in the Lord's hand; and who, I hope, through his grace shall abide in strength.

Now, Right noble and dear Sir, I hope not to forget you, but to mind your case in my weak addresses to the Lord; I may say, you are very often brought before me; and next to my own



case, and the church's case, the case of you and your family, they abroad, and they at home, do ly upon my heart. Ly near the Lord and wait upon him; who knoweth what the Lord may do with you, and for you; he may be humbling and polishing you for some great piece of work. As to our way at our last meeting with Mr. *David Houston* and Mr. *Alexander Shields*, you will see it in the letter directed to your worthy brother, to whom I desire you may send this, and the other directed for yourself, for his information, at least so much extracted out of this, as you think fit, because I cannot have time to write aent the same things unto him. I commend you to your God, and am,

*Your Honour's obliged friend,*

*and servant in the Lord,*

JAMES RENWICK.

---

L E T T E R XLIX.

*From the Rev. Mr. James Renwick, to the right Reverend Mr. Jacob Roolman, minister of the gospel in Holland.*

*April 4. 1637.*

*Right Reverend and beloved brother,*

I Received your letter in *Latin*, but knowing that you are well versed in the *English*, I need not write back to you in that same language. I beg your excuse, for so long delay of

an answer; for, as it was a considerable space of time after the date of your letter, ere it came to my hand; so, since I received it, I have been in such a measure, busied with weighty work and excessive travel, that scarcely could I borrow one hour from the one or from the other.

I thankfully accept of your ministerial, friendly and brotherly advice unto union. So far as I can see into my heart (but a man cannot see far into a millstone) I am as much for a right qualified union as any, and looks upon that as good and pleasant, as *Psal. cxxxiii. 1.*: But, the union which is had without truth and holiness, I can call no other thing but a conspiracy; such as was found among the men of *Judah, Jer. xi. 9.* and the prophets of *Jerusalem, Ezek. xxii. 25.* I cannot unite, where I must thereby harden the hearts and strengthen the hands of such as are engaged in, and carrying on a course of defection and backsliding from the Lord; and so partake of their sins, and render myself obnoxious to their plagues. I cannot unite, where I cannot expect the propagating the words of Christ's patience, deposited to us at this time to contend and suffer for. In reference to both cases, in regulating my carriage toward ministers of this organical church in this her broken and declining state, I desire to mind what is given in command to *Jeremiah, Chap. xv. 19.* *Let them return unto thee, but return not thou unto them.* I must not divide from the Head, to unite with any professed members. But ministers, even of this church, who are clothed with Christ's commission, who are free of censurable personal scandal, who do own and maintain this church's testimony, and who either have kept free of the palpable and gross

detections

seditions of the time, or else do relinquish and  
 present the same; I say, with all such I account  
 it my joy, honour and duty to unite; and my  
 practice proveth as much as I say. As for my  
 principles, I am able to manifest them to have  
 their warrant both from the supreme divine au-  
 thority in the word of God in the scriptures, and  
 the subordinate ecclesiastic authority of our  
 church constitutions: So this is no new way that  
 I am following, but the good old way, wherein  
 I see the footsteps of our Lord, *cujus vita nos  
 omnia docere potest*, and the print of the feet  
 of our worthy and resolute reformers, and these  
 who in our day have valiantly and faithfully  
 maintained and sealed with their blood the re-  
 ceived and sworn principles of our reformation.

I acknowledge, as you write, (Reverend and  
 beloved) that I may learn many things from my  
 brethren into which I have not enough penetrat-  
 ed, for I am but of yesterday, and what know  
 I? Though they were in a worse course than  
 they are, I would learn what is good from them;  
 for as famous *Luther* says, *Fas est ab hoste doceri*.  
 I acknowledge many of them to be pious and  
 learned, and I will imitate them in what I find  
 to be right: But ah, I cannot see, as they now  
 stand, how I can learn faithfulness and zeal from  
 them; and as for their worldly prudentials, I  
 hope not to learn these; they have lost a good  
 special for the general; they have quit the Pres-  
 byterian plea for the Protestant, as is clear in  
 their declaration, wherein malignants and secta-  
 ries may compear for their interest: But for my  
 part, I much rather agree with our venerable  
 Assembly, who, in a paper bearing the date of  
*July 25th, 1648*, in answer to the offer of the

Committee of Estates, do shew, that they had represented to the high court of Parliament, that for securing of religion it was necessary that the Popish, Prelatical and malignant party be declared enemies to the cause, upon the one hand, as well as sectaries, upon the other; and that all associations, either in forces or counsels with the former, as well as the later, be avoided. I cannot see, that these means that have destroyed the work of the Lord shall ever be made use of by him, for raising up the same again. You say well, that this *irruita longe fortior est quam dispersa*; yet that must be taken with a grain of salt; for I must take heed *in quo et cum quibus vim irruitum*; I must unite my poor force both in a good cause, and with such persons as I may lawfully do it.

Now, I hope you will not take it in ill part that I desire you to beware of precipitancy, in receiving and spreading informations against us. I know you are informed in many falsities, and you do credulously believe and sedulously spread the same; (this from the hand of famous, learned and godly *Roolman* is most wounding to me) but you will find in the end that they have not been your friends who have prompted you to such a work.

I cannot but admire the difference of your discourse with Mr. *Hamilton* at *Lewarden*, from the strain of your discreet letter unto me. We little need any to cast oil into our flames: for my part, it is my study not to be bitter against the bitterness of others; not to be reviled into a reviler, nor scoffed into a scoffer; so as to turn the same to others as they are to me; neither to throw back my brother's fire-balls into his



own face, lest in censuring him I also be my own judge; though the sournels of others offend me, yet it should not. But I will quiet my spirit in waiting upon the Lord, until he bring forth the righteousness of his cause, and the innocence of his servants. I know some can accuse or excuse as they see it makes for their purpose: I can prove it by many witnesses, that Mr. *George Barclay*, and Mr. *Robert Langlands*, before a multitude, accused the church of *Holland* of Popery, in three sprinklings in baptism; and of the grossest of Erastianism, saying, That the magistrate would send the minister a pair of shoes, and dismiss him when he pleased. This was exhibited as a charge against your whole church; but now I am informed, that Mr. *Barclay* flatly denieth such a thing: I desire to know whither or no you judge the church of *Holland* wronged by this means? And certain I am that a cause maintained after such a manner shall not succeed. Likewise I must say, that I think strange that any of our ministers should seek to have an union procured betwixt them and us, while they do represent us to be as bad as heretics, and look upon us as unworthy of a charitable construction. I like not to beg charity, but I would not desire (if I may say, demand) what is not right. However, until he be melted, we can never be moulded up into one. If we had nothing a-do but to please one another; and if we were once set right in our ends, an accommodation about all the differences as to the means would be the more facile and feasible; *Prov. xi. 3. 5.*

Now, right Reverend, I shall not detain you further; I do thankfully accept your necessary and Christian advices, toward the close of your

P

letter;

letter; it is my prayer to the Lord that I may be helped to follow them. I heartily wish you may soon come to a better understanding of this poor afflicted, reproached remnant. I am,

*Right reverend and beloved Brother,*

*Your affectionate friend,*

*and servant in the Lord,*

JAMES RENWICK.

## L E T T E R L.

*From the Rev. Mr. James Renwick, to ———*

*Beloved Friends,*

*April, 1687.*

AS my time will not allow me to write largely unto you; so ye must accept this short and insignificant line, as a token of my consideration of your lot, and concernedness with it. Your case is somewhat singular; for banishment will readily be looked upon as a great trial for you, through the prospect of many snares, fears, and distresses, whereunto ye may be subjected; howbeit, ye may have no small peace and consolation from the consideration that ye could not evite it, unless ye had denied truth: and whatever sufferings ye may meet with from your country-men, from the seas, and from foreigners, ye may reckon it all upon the honourable account of your duty. But, my friends, O do not fear the difficulties and perplexities that sense and reason may apprehend to be abiding you; for the Lord's children have often

found

found it in experience, that their present fears have been greater than their future troubles; and that they have oftentimes been more frightened than hurt: He that made a passage for his chosen thro' the Red-sea and the swellings of *Jordan*, can give you dry-foot passage thro' all the waters and floods of your afflictions. Take your eyes off the vain things of this world; look not back to old lovers; but delight your souls in Christ alone, who is your exceeding rich reward, your satisfying and everlasting portion. Take him with you; O he is sweet company! and he *will never leave you, nor forsake you*; yea, in the time of your greatest trouble he will be most near you, and in your greatest distresses he will be most kind. Be careful of nothing but how to please him, and to honour him in all places whither ye may be scattered.

Now, commending you to his grace, which I pray may be sufficient for you, I am,

*Your sympathizing friend,*

*and servant in the Lord,*

JAMES RENWICK.

## L E T T E R L I.

*From the Rev. Mr. James Renwick, to the Honourable Mr. Robert Hamilton.*

*Honourable and dear Sir,*

*July 15. 1687.*

**Y**OU may readily be offended with my long delay in writing to you, but your know-  
 P 2 ing

ing the cause thereof, I am hopeful, will remove it; my business was never so weighty, so multiplied, and so ill to be guided, to my apprehension, as it hath been this year; and my body was never so frail: Excessive travel, night wanderings, unseasonable sleep and diet, and frequent preaching in all seasons of weather, especially in the night, have so debilitate me, that I am often incapable for any work; I find myself greatly weakened inwardly, so that I sometimes fall into fits of swooning and fainting: I take seldom any meat or drink, but it fights with my stomach; and for strong drink, I can take almost none of it. When I use means for my recovery, I find it someways effectual; but my desire to the work, and the necessity and importunity of people, prompts me to do more than my natural strength will well allow; and to undertake such toilsome business, as casts my body presently down again. I mention not this through any anxiety, quarrelling or discontent, but to show you my condition in this respect. I may say, that under all my frailties and distempers, I find great peace and sweetness in reflecting upon the occasion thereof: it is a part of my glory and joy to bear such infirmities, contracted through my poor and small labour, in my Master's vineyard. But to leave this, I tell you truly, that I have no more jealousy of you than ever, for I know no ground for it; and I hope you will not take up any suspicion of me: Therefore though multitude of business, or bodily sickness, may divert me from so frequent writing unto you, as need were, you would have me excused, and construct rightly and favourably of me; I say not this, that I purpose



to neglect it, or that I will allow myself in that neglect, but to prevent my need of using any further apology of this kind.

Right honourable and comfortable Sir, if I had the tongue of the eloquent, and the pen of a ready writer, my desire would be to employ both in praise of the great King. O! *Who is like the Lord amongst the gods? Who is like him, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders!* We are rebels and out-laws, we are lost and undone for ever; but he hath made a covenant with us, and given himself a ransom: this covenant is everlasting, *well ordered in all things and sure*: It hath all fulness in it, for the matter; all wisdom, for the manner; all condescendence, in the terms: it is most engaging in its end, being made to bring about the peace and salvation of sinners; and it is most necessary, for there is no journeying to heaven without it. This then is the chariot that will carry us into the joy and rest of our Lord;—this is the chariot wherein his glory, and our good, ride triumphantly together; for it is made for himself and the daughters of *Jerusalem*: this is the chariot that hath *the pillars of silver, the bottom of gold, the covering of purple, and the midst of it paved with love*. O what a pavement is there! what lining and stuffing is there! O happy are they who are taken up into this chariot! They stand upon love, they sit upon love, they ly upon love, and if they fall, they fall soft, for they fall upon love. These who are without, may see somewhat of its glistering and beauty, yet none can know the heart and the bowels of it, and the love that is there, but these that are within. O! Sir, can you not say, you are taken in with the

King into this glorious piece of his workmanship? Then why should you fear? though Satan and his instruments compass you about, and shoot at you upon all hands, yet you are well guarded; you are not only riding with the King in his chariot, but lying with him in his bed, which hath about threescore valiant men, of the valiant of *Israel*, standing well appointed, and in a ready posture, for your defence; the angels and the attributes of God are a good and sure defence: and however you are surrounded with the world's malice and hatred, his love is still about you, and always next unto you. O advance with that princely disposition and carriage that becometh one of so royal a descent, being a son of the great King, the Almighty Lord God, by your adoption and regeneration. O fear not what the worms of the earth can do unto you, they are his poor, chained, weak creatures; let them be counted as ashes under the soles of your feet; your cause is glorious, your leader gracious, your victory certain, your reward sure, and your triumph everlasting. O let all your care be to chuse and do, in every thing, what may please him; and encourage yourself in him, for he will not fail you nor forsake you; and you know not what great things he may do for you, and by you, ere you pass your sojourning and pilgrimage in this earth. The more dark and stormy that our night be, the nearer is our morning. The hour of our great tribulation and temptation is coming, it is fast approaching, and it will haste to its end, and bless'd shall every one be who keep the word of Christ's patience,

I can inform you of little, as to the case of  
this

this land, but what you know. The enemies are restrained from the execution of their rage in the former measure, but they are consulting and plotting the utter ruin and razing of the interests and followers of Christ; for they neither follow their nature nor designs, whatever method they follow: if this were believed, people would not so readily be hood-winked with their pretences of favour; but after so much sad experience, none, who will not wilfully blindfold themselves, need to be beguiled. There is a liberty now issued forth from the arrogated, absolute, and uncontroulable power of the intruder and usurper, upon the prerogative of the great God, bounded with the restriction that his government may not be spoken against, and nothing said that may alienate the hearts of people from him; prescribing the place of preaching to be only in houses, inhibiting the worship of God in the fields, commanding the severe execution of all the iniquitous laws against all such meetings; and requiring ministers to give up their names to some one or other of their civil powers; which restricted and strangely qualified liberties to Presbyterians, is conveyed through the casting and disenabling all our penal laws and statutes enacted against Papists, and toleration of all heresies and sects.

The generality of this generation esteem peace as their great good; and they covet and desire it upon any terms; but the Lord saith, *They shall not have peace*: they have left the way of peace, and he will trouble them. The cloud is fast, fast gathering, which will fall down as the irruption and inundation of a flood, and over-

overflow the land: happy are they who are fled into their city of refuge.

Before the publication of this Indulgence, sundry Presbyterian ministers, who had been more lurking formerly, began to travel through the country, and officiate in houses, and that in somewhat of a public manner. But Mr. *Samuel Arnot* preaching upon a Sabbath, in the day-light, about a mile from *Glasgow*, a considerable company of people being within and without doors, a party of soldiers went out of the town, and scattered the meeting, apprehending near to an hundred men and women, stripping them of their cloaths, and taking their money from them, and laying them in prison, who afterwards were sent to *Edinburgh*, and, as I am informed are all liberate, save one man, who would not call *Bothwell bridge* rebellion. But now the ministers are all generally preaching, and some who had been hearing the Curates are falling to again; but I hear of little freedom amongst them ament the sins of the time: some of them who had professed clearness against the paying the cess, begin now to tolerate it; saying, that the narrative of the act falls, seeing the term is expired, though the cess be continued, and so it is not sinful: others say, there is no scandal in paying it, because they alledge it to be an epidemical fault, if they make it a fault, (O such horrid juggling with God.) I know none of them but who preach in houses; and I see not but they must be interpreted to officiate under the cover and colour of this churlish liberty; for, beside what compliance is with it, I hear not of a conscionable and practical testimony given against it. They do generally  
shew



shew themselves more than formerly to be of the contrary part, and set against this poor witnessing and suffering handful; they fail not to cry out against us, they charge us with false and gross transgressions; they press people every way to discourage and discountenance us; they carry as if their great design were to crush and ruin us; they spare no pains in preaching, converse, and writing, to effectuate this: and hereby they make many violent upon their way, but some are questioning, and likely to come freely off from them; the course they take is ready to let none halt between them and us: and none more brisk and headstrong than Mr. *Gab. Semple*, Mr. *W. Eschine*, Mr. *Robert Langlands*, particularly Mr. *Samuel Arnot*, who by sundry means discovers no small byassedness, credulity, and impertinence, to say no worse. I fear ere all be done, that it come to the putting forth of the hand with some of the parties; but if it were once at this, I hope our trial would not be much prolonged, whatever might be our extremity and perplexity for a time. Since I knew any thing of the corruptness of their way, I thought they were men of a strange spirit; but now I think more strange than ever. O to live near God that we may endure the storm. Mr. *Flint* and Mr. *Russel* are parted; the number of their followers is not increasing. I have been often informed of Mr. *Ross's* preaching one time with a curate. But my great discouragement is from ourselves; though there be one part that is straight and stedfast in the matters of God, yet there is another part that is inclined to laxness and instability: they will not leave us, and we have not as yet sufficient enough ground to re-

fuse their concurrence; but they are as weights upon our hands, and are always to be drawn, because they will not follow. I think some will yet scour off, for, alas! we are not all right in heart with God.

As for Mr. *David Houston* he carries very straight: I think him both learned and zealous; he seems to have much of the spirit of our worthy professors; for he much opposes the passing from any part of our testimony, yea, and sticks close to every form and order whereunto we have attained; asserting, pertinently, that if we follow not even the method wherein God hath countenanced us, and keep not by every orderly form, we cannot but be jostled out of the matter. He hath authority with him; which some way dashes these who oppose themselves; he discovers the mystery of the working of the spirit of Antichrist more fully and clearly than ever I have heard it.

As for Mr. *Kerstrand*, I know nothing of his carriage here, but that it is both humble and straight. I am informed, by some very zealous, that in conference both with ministers and professors of the contrary part, he hath spoken pertinently; yea, I have been witness to somewhat of it: I have heard him condemn the business of the association wherein we condemn it, but he much denies his being embodied with them: he takes upon him very much toil and travel to serve the societies in the corner where he wanders, and to further and attend the work of the gospel amongst them: And to speak freely, according to my conceptions, I am afraid of him in nothing so much as in the business of Mr. *Boyd*.

There

There are sundry societies in *Ireland* come out from the defections of the time, who are keeping correspondence with us; I am desired to visit them, and I purpose, God willing, to do it. When Mr. *David Houston* was there in the end of the spring, he was very free, and considerable numbers attended his preaching. I suppose ere this time he hath admitted some elders in *Galloway* or *Nithisdale*, and I am to set about it the week following. But a part of my business this while hath been, to travel thro' some places of the country where I had not been heretofore, and I hope not without some fruit. When I was last at *Edinburgh*, a considerable number of choice friends were banished to *Barbadoes*. Mrs. *Binning* is gone to *Ireland*.

I am glad of your travels through other churches; your difficulties have been many, yet the Lord hath been with you. I am affrighted and astonished with the abounding of iniquity amongst them: The Lord hath a controversy with all flesh, and he will plead it. Let us look through the whole world, they are but very few whom we can see or say, that they are for him.

As to the letters of information that are to be sent abroad, I shall endeavour that it be done, and to send you some sermons; but I have so much upon my hand, that I cannot get all done. I will be for some weeks that I will scarcely get one night's rest, or be two days in one place; and where I am, there I am so taken up; either with preaching, examination, or conference, that I almost can get no other thing done. I would gladly hear if you have seen the *Vindication*, and what are your thoughts of it; and if you and Mr. *Alexander Shields* have met, and how

how you have accorded: I am hopeful, if you did not mistake one another, there would be little or no dissention between you. As to your coming to *Scotland*, I can say no other thing now, than I said in my former.

Now, the Lord be with you; I forget you not, I seldom go to God but you go with me: and I have some confidence that I need not desire you to remember him, who is,

*Honourable and dear Sir,*

*Yours, as formerly,*

JAMES RENWICK.

---

## L E T T E R LII.

*From the Rev. Mr. James Renwick, to the  
honourable Mr. Robert Hamilton.*

*Honourable Sir,*

**S**ince my last I have travelled through many damps and deeps, and seen many discoveries of many things: the Lord by all dispensations, saying, that he will have malice and mistakes, right and wrong, righteousness and unrighteousness, brought to light. O noble contrivance! O noble way! What shall the upshot of all the losses, sufferings, and contendings, and difficulties of the remnant be, but the clearing the cause to all beholders, so that he who runs may read the righteousness of it? Shall not truth be made thereby more precious and known? The Lord will have a people to reap  
the



the sweet fruit of that we are put to this day. Let us then be content to lay name, credit, enjoyments, life, and all, under his feet, that he may stand thereupon, to advance the glory of his own name, and to bring about the advancement of his kingdom.

As to what friends have written to you, I hope, you will not be troubled thereat, but take it in good part, for it hath flow'd in real respect to the cause, and love and tenderness towards you in the most part; whatever you were prevail'd to cede unto, through your own confusion, simplicity, and inadvertency, by the overpowering of a furious byass'd party, at *Bothwel*; I would advise your honour to this anent it; to write to the remnant the way, and any reality thereof, expressing your own sense thereof; together with your willingness to make acknowledgment thereof, according to the degree of the offence, in the true church of *Scotland*. This, I think, would be most for the glory of God, the vindication of his cause, your own honour, and the endearing of the remnant unto you. Also you must write your innocency of what other things are laid to your charge, with what probation there can be had, with this bearer; and if we had these, we could stop the mouths of slanderers. Likewise, you must not be offended that *Robert* is not sent unto you, for the meeting did it not out of any dissatisfaction with him, or with your desiring him, but as a mean to wipe away that malice-like aspersion, that we are all lead by you; and that by the mouth of more witnesses words may be more confirmed. Also, I hope, you will find the young man both distinct and honest anent matters; and I doubt nothing, but you will

be well pleased with him. Moreover, friends are most desirous to know how it is with *Thomas*; and if he be found, in some measure, qualified, as to zeal, piety and parts, they would gladly have all means used for the honestest ordination; and I must join my desire with theirs; for there is as much work to be had in *Scotland*, notwithstanding of all the persecution, as would hold ten ministers busy: (O blessed be the name of the Lord) And if I had some with me, to help to plenish the country, and to act more judicially and authoritatively, through the Lord's assistance, the cruelty of the enemy and the malice and underminings of other parties, would not be able to mar the work in our hands. And as to foreign churches, I would offer your honour my humble advice, that, considering the bad information that they have got from these that have past as sufferers, you would with patience wait on them, for a little time will give them a clearer insight of our matters: I think no wonder, though the various confusions of *Scotland* jumble them, anent the uptaking of *Scotland's* cause: and give not over to deal with such as are not possess'd with prejudice and malice; and for ordination for *Thomas*, if no other thing stood in the way of it, I could be clear, that ye sought it from the purest amongst the reformed; though they cannot win the length of approving all the circumstances of our cause, providing they be faithful against the sins of their own place, and not, with prejudice at us, sided with the backsliders in the church of *Scotland*: For there is a great difference between joining with ministers of foreign churches, and ministers of our own church; for the former, (as I have often told to these that

objected against my ordination) comes under a general consideration as Protestants, but the latter, under a far more special consideration, as may be clear from the supposed example; The reformed ministers abroad, who keep up a testimony against the sins of their own place, and side not themselves against us, I could lawfully join with them, though they cry not out against the steps of our defection, because that is not the matter of their present testimony; yet if any of them were coming to *Scotland*, and offering themselves ministers to us of one organical church, we could not accept of them, unless they would keep up our present testimony against all the sins of our place.

As for what past betwixt these ministers and us, I can inform your honour no more fully than our friend's letter doth. And as to the present state of the country, *Clydesdale* continueth firm as it was; *Nithsdale* is as one man upon their former ground, together with *Anandale*; some in *Kyle* are gone off, but many continue; many in *Carrick* are jumbled, some, for the time, are quite off, and some few continue; the few that are in *Livingston* and *Cairn* are put all in a reel, the Lord knoweth how they will settle. Since our last meeting with these ministers, I made a progress through *Galloway*, and found never such an open door for preaching the gospel, the people coming far better out than they did before; and we got eight field-meetings kept there without any disturbance, and six in *Nithsdale*, many coming out who were not wont to come, and none in any of these places staying away that came out formerly. Mr. *W. Boyd* hath made his escape out of *Dunnotter*, and is clear in our con-

troversies against these ministers; *Robert Goodwin* hath made his escape likewise, and continues also clear in our matters. *George Hill's* family hath all been sick: And Mrs. *B.* hath been long sick in prison; but this is but the ordinary calamity of the country; for I never heard of such a general sickness in *Scotland*.

As for choosing of elders, according to your desire, we have some honest old men, members of our societies, who were elders in our settled state; and we are resolving to set about the choosing of more, with some deacons: But our various confusions and debates have much retarded this and other things hitherto.

In what I have here written, I intreat your honour that I may not be mistaken; for the Lord knoweth, I am the same both anent the cause and toward you that ever I was; all that byassed folk can say, doth neither lessen my confidence in, nor estimation of you: and what I have said of *Thomas*, understand me so, that I would most gladly have him for a help, but I would either want him ere he should be a hinderance; but because I judge him not to be of a dangerous spirit, I suspect him less than many others; also I think it is more simplicity of nature than want of honesty that is with him. Also, you would speak with this bearer anent setting forward to the work, for he hath past his course at the college, and I think, hath the cause honestly stated in his heart, tho' he hath but small means for enduing him with gifts; yet he wants not a spirit for contending for the honest side. And as for ordination abroad, I would have all means essayed before we took another course; for we cannot defend our doing any thing of that nature, before all other



her lawful ways essayed do fail us, while we are in such a case. I thought fit also to inform you, that there is a general desire among friends that you should come home a visit, and return again, through the apprehension that they have of your doing a great good at this time; but since our debates were brought to some close, I cannot be so anxious for it as I was.

Now, dear Sir, take heed to yourself, there are many looking out for your halting, many nets are spread against you, both at home and abroad; but exercise yourself in this, to keep a conscience void of offence both toward God and man, and the Lord shall bring forth your righteousness as the noon-tide of the day. Remember me kindly to your worthy dear sister, to *Thomas*, and all the family. Pray for him who is,

*Ever as formerly,*

JAMES RENWICK.

## L E T T E R LIII.

*From the Rev. Mr. James Renwick, to the honourable Ladies* \_\_\_\_\_

*Much honoured Ladies,*

*Aug. 13. 1687.*

**T**HE zeal which I desire to have for the advancement of Christ's kingdom, the love which I bear to your souls, and my sense of the obligations which I stand under unto you in particular, have moved me to take upon me to salute you with this line. There is not a rational

creature, that doth not propone unto itself some chief good, the obtaining and enjoying whereof is the great intent and end of all its actions. Who will shew us any good? But, the woful evil among men is, their setting up to themselves some naughty, vain, and petty nothing, and despising that wherein their real and chief happiness doth only ly, *rejecting the counsel of God against themselves*: this mistake is deplorable, for man is an infinite loser by it; it is desperate, for he refuseth to be instructed. Hence is so many different prevailing natural inclinations and predominating lusts as there are among the children of *Adam*; so many different chief goods; *There be gods many, and lords many*. I am sad, to think upon the folly and madness of the poor creature, that thus doth forsake its own mercy; but let the world choose and follow what they please, *to us there is but one Lord*.

I am hopeful, much honoured Ladies, that ye are turning your backs upon created and carnal delights, and setting your faces toward Christ, seeking after union and communion with him. It is my soul's earnest desire, that it should be so; and if the comfortless and distracting vanities of a present perishing world shall wheedle and bewitch you, that ye study not the wisdom of God, it shall bring great grief and sorrow of heart unto me. I say, I am carried betwixt hope and fear; I hope, the Lord will work a good work in you; I hope it will be, for I would have it to be, and there are some appearances of it: And I fear that the pleasant and easy yoke of Christ be looked upon as irksome and wearisome by you, when I consider your temptations, and the (seemingly) promising beginnings, and fair blos-

soms

soms that I have seen in many, which have fallen away without bringing forth mature fruit. Do not take my freedom in ill part, neither be offended with it, for it cometh from affection, and my ardent desire that ye should not neglect the great salvation. Religion is a great mystery, and a far other thing than even the professing world taketh it to be. There are many hinderances in the way of flying to Christ, and closing with him. The natural blindness that is in man, whereby he neither sees his sin and danger, nor his Saviour, is a great hinderance, *Rev. iii. 17, 18.* His natural unwillingness and flat aversion to the way of salvation laid down in the covenant, and held forth in the gospel, *John v. 40.* His hard hearted unbelief, whereby he giveth no assent to the righteousness of Scripture precept and doctrine, and justice of scripture threatening; nor consent to scripture promises, making fiducial application of them, *John v. 38. Heb. xi. 6.* His whorish addictedness to his lusts, idols, and carnal entanglements, whereby he doth not quit his profanity, nor leave the honour, applause, profit and pleasure of this world, *Psal. xlv. 10, 11. Song iii. 11. Chap. iv. 8.* His mistaking the government of Christ, counting it hard, melancholic and unpleasant, *Matth. xi. 28, 29, 30.* His judging religion but a fancy, and a politic invention to amaze and amuse the minds of men, *Matth. xxii. 5.* His conceiving a facility in religion, thinking there needeth not be so much ado about it, and that he can do all that is needful, when he pleaseth, *Matth. viii. 19. John vi. 44.* His postponing the business of life eternal from time to time, leaving that last in doing, which

which ought to be first done, resolving to amend ere he end; whereby his vain heart deceives him, and Satan juttles him out of all time, *Luke ix. 61.* His peevish and foolish impatience, whereby he doth not forsake a present imaginary good, for a future real happiness. A man may think it a good thing to enjoy everlasting life; but because that is an hereafter happiness, and lieth now only in promise, he cannot wait for it and take it as his portion, but grasps at what is present, though it be neither contenting nor constant, *Psal. iv. 6. 2 Tim. iv. 10.* I say, all these are great hinderances; see that ye get over these, and all other obstructions, and lay hold upon Christ. O that I could bewail the lamentable condition of man, who is held in so many chains, from this work of great concern and eternal moment!

O, much honoured Ladies, consider the indispensable and absolute need ye have of a Saviour; consider the awful commands, full promises, free offers, hearty invitations, and serious requests given forth in the word, all crying aloud with one voice unto you, to match with the Lord of glory: Consider the assurance that his own testimony hath given you, of dwelling with him throughout eternity, in his heavenly mansions, where ye shall see him as he is, have a full sense of his love, and a perfect love to him again, and ever drink of the rivers of pleasure that flow at his right hand, if ye shall embrace him upon his own terms. Consider the peremptory certification of everlasting destruction, of dwelling with continual burnings, and lying under the burden of his wrath; a curse running always out upon you in the overflowing flood, if ye shall neglect



to make your peace with him, and reject his salvation. I say, consider those things, *and give all diligence to make your calling and election sure*; and see well that ye be not deceived, for there are many mistakes, and a great mystery in that business. Many think themselves to be something when they are nothing, and so deceive themselves, and come short of the grace of God: instead of founding upon the immoveable rock of ages, they build upon the sand of their own attainments. For folk may go a great length, and yet be void of true saving grace; they may have a great speculative knowledge of the matters of God and mystery of salvation, and strong gifts, *1 Cor. xiii. 2*. They may abstain from many pollutions, and the gross evils that others are given unto, *Luke xviii. 11, 12, 13, 14*. They may externally perform many duties, as reading, prayer, and be very much in these, *Luke xviii. 11, 12, 13, 14*. They may have a very great sorrow for sin, not because of the dishonour done to God, but the hurt to themselves; not because they are polluted, but because they are destroyed by it, *Matth. xxvii. 3. Heb. xii. 17*. They may have a desire after grace, which yet is not for grace's sake, but for heaven's sake, *Matth. xxv. 8*. They may have an historical faith, and give an assent of the mind to all that is revealed in the word, yea, to the spiritual meaning of the law, *Mark xii. 32, 33, 34*. They may have big hopes, and that in the mercy of God, which nevertheless is but presumption; for they forget that he is just, and neglect to lay hold upon Christ for satisfaction of his justice; whereas, he is merciful to none out of Christ, *Job viii. 13, 14*. They may have the common

ope-

operations of the Spirit, and a taste of the heavenly gift, and the powers of the world to come, Heb. vi. 4, 5, 6. They may be convinced that it is good to close with Christ, and comfort themselves as if they had done it; whereas they are still in their natural state, Hos. viii. 2, 3. They may suffer many things materially for the cause of God, and toil much in following ordinances, undergoing the same out of respect for their own credit, 1 Cor. xiii. 3. I say, people may, and many do arrive at all these and such like attainments, and notwithstanding remain in the gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity. It may make us all tremble to think what a length folk may go, and yet never have gone out of themselves; and passed through the steps of effectual calling. Many will say to him in that day, *We have eaten and drunken in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets; have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name cast out devils, and in thy name done many wonderful works?* whom he will chase away from his presence, with that awful sentence, *DEPART YE*; professing unto them that he never knew them.

Let this alarm you to make sure work in this great concern, and not deceive yourselves with a counterfeit, instead of a reality; with a flash instead of conversion, and a delusion instead of Christ. But get ye a sight of your sinful and miserable state, a sense and feeling thereof, putting you in a perplexity, and discouraging you from resting in it; a conviction of your inability to help yourselves, and of your unworthiness that God should help you out of it; and look unto Christ, as your alone Saviour, receiving him wholly in his threefold office, of King, Priest, and

nd Prophet, welcoming him, and taking up his  
 cross, against the world, the devil, and the flesh,  
 and resting upon him alone for salvation; and  
 when the business will be done, and all will be  
 done; and then you may defy devils and men,  
 or plucking you out of his hand.

And if ye have thus closed the bargain with him,  
 then ye will find in you a war declared and main-  
 tained against all sin, *Rom. vii. 15. Ezek. xviii. 21.*  
*John iii. 9.* A respect to all the command-  
 ments of the Lord, *Ezek. xviii. 21.* A liking of  
 the way of happiness, as well as happiness itself,  
*John iii. 14, 15.* An high esteem of justification  
 and sanctification, *Psal. xxxii. 2.* A prizing of  
 Christ, and a longing to be with him, *Phil. i.*  
 3. And an admirable change wrought in you;  
 new judgment, new will, new conscience, new  
 memory, new affections: In a word, all the fa-  
 culties of the soul will be new, in regard of their  
 qualifications; and all the members of the body,  
 in regard of their use, *2 Cor. v. 17.* Now, if  
 ye have attained to a saving interest in Christ, ye  
 may find these, and the like marks and evi-  
 dences of it.

O halt not in this great matter, rest not in un-  
 certainty, and satisfy not yourselves with a may-  
 be: But *examine yourselves, whether ye be in the*  
*faith; prove your own selves; know ye not your*  
*own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, ex-*  
*cept ye be reprobates?* In setting your faces to-  
 ward Zion, ye may expect that Satan will raise  
 all his storms against you; but fear him not, for  
 the grace of God is sufficient for you. Give  
 yourselves wholly to the Lord, to serve him, and  
 love his name, to choose and follow the things  
 that please him; your greatest honour lieth in  
 this,

this, your greatest duty, your greatest profit, and your greatest pleasure. Count the cost of religion; God is a liberal dealer, deal not niggardly with him, prig not with him about your estates; Who is in heaven like unto him? and who in the earth is to be desired like him? Lay down to him your names, your enjoyments, your lives, and your all at his feet; for he is only worthy to have the disposal of them; and the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed. Think not much to quit the vain and carnal delights of the world; they cannot satisfy your senses, and much less your souls: The earth is round, and the heart of man three-nooked; therefore this cannot be filled by that: And though ye could find content in them, yet how vain were it, because unconstant? and how un-solid, because uncertain?

Regard not mens reproach, for so reproached they our Lord and the prophets; yea, there can be no contempt or calumny cast upon you, for the gospel's sake, but what hath been cast upon the faithful in all ages: Remember *Moses, who esteemed the reproach of Christ, greater riches than the treasures of Egypt: and go ye forth without the camp bearing his reproach.* Christ's new name will more than enough compensate the world's nick-name. Advance resolutely in the way of godliness; your guide is faithful, your victory certain, your reward sure, and your triumph everlasting: Stumble not, because religion is mocked at; for it is not the worse that man thinketh so little of it: count it not a fancy, because men desert it; but *taste and see that God is good.* Follow no man further than



than he follows Christ; divide not from the head, to unite with any professed members: walk not with them who renounce their dependence upon Christ; or who are carrying on a course of defection, pressing a relinquishing of the present testimony, and casting reproaches upon the way of God. Keep yourselves from the pollutions of this time, and partake not with other men in their sins; but study to have a good conscience, and a good conscience will be a peaceable conscience, and a peaceable conscience will be a fat feast. Shun as much as ye can the company of carnal and vain persons: ye will not get this wholly evited, but ye may avoid unnecessary converse, frequency and familiarity with them: We are obliged to carry ourselves with courtesy, humanity and pity towards all, but not with friendliness and familiarity: ye know, evil company and communication corrupteth good manners. O! what shall I say? Watch always, be much in secret prayer, self-examination, spiritual meditation: Read the written word of God; seek to have your minds understanding it, your hearts affecting it, and your consciences and actions guided by it: Get his Spirit to dwell in you, by directing you into all truth, reproving you for sin, and bringing every thought in obedience to Christ, and leading you into supplication. Lay aside every weight, and run the race that is set before you with cheerfulness and alacrity; despise every opposition and obstruction in the way, and keep your eyes still upon the prize, having a respect to the recompence of reward.

Now, *The very God of peace sanctify you wholly, and, I pray God, your whole spirit, and soul*

*and body, be preserved blameless, unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. I am,*

*Much honoured Ladies,*

*Your assured and obliged friend*

*and servant in the Lord,*

JAMES RENWICK.

## L E T T E R L I V .

*From the Rev. Mr. James Renwick, to the honourable Mr. Robert Hamilton.*

*Hon. and dear Sir,*

*Nov. 5. 1687.*

**O**UR troubles are growing, and enemies are stretching forth their hands violently to persecute; and they want not instigations from our false brethren; so we are made the contempt of the proud, and the scorn of them that are at ease. Our sufferings were always rightly stated, but never so cleanly as now; and why should we not endure these trials? for they shall work for truth's victory, and Christ's glory. O let all the suffering remnant keep clean hands, for therein shall be their strength; and wait with patience, for he will not tarry, who cometh to plead his own cause, to lay claim to his own interest, that is basely and deceitfully abandoned, and betrayed into the hands of man, to give a fair decision. These whose souls are vexed with the now abounding abominations, shall have a *Zoar* to fly unto, when the fire of God shall fall down

down upon our *Sodom*: I am certain the Lord will have a sanctuary for his people. We must once be brought to that extremity, wherein there can be no longer subsistence without present help; but God will not leave his people there. O this liberty hath let Satan loose, and brought the truths of God, and the faithful, into great bondage: but God will loose his judgments, and pour them out upon this woeful generation, that will not see, till they be made to feel. There is now strange thirsting after my blood, but that moves me not; though they had it, they would not be satisfied, for nothing will quench them till they get their own blood to drink.

As to Mr. *Boyd*, he came to our last general correspondence, and desired, that seeing he knew there was something wherefore we were dissatisfied with him, as also he was with us, we might commune freely with him upon the same. So, first, we shewed our dissatisfaction with his taking licence without our knowledge, which was contrary to his own engagement, at least declared purpose and resolution. Next, we took his paper, which he left in our hands when he went abroad, wherein, amongst other things, he asserted, his withdrawing out of the land, was no way to separate or disjoin from us, and signified his dislike of countenancing these ministers, against whom we had valid exceptions. When we asked, How could his declaring, that he neither was joined, nor would join with us, nor any other party, consist with the former; and from the latter, we desired to know, if he judged the accepting of that liberty, as they call it, a sufficient ground of discountenancing ministers? His answer to the first of these, did no

way help him, nor satisfy us. His answer to the last was, If the question was concerning such ministers as might sit in assemblies with the addressers, and go out to places of the country at their direction and preach, he would not forbid people to hear them, whatever he would do himself. So, after some debating against his mind in this, I shewed the meeting, that I neither could nor would determine matters of such extent and importance without my brethren, who by providence were not present; yet, in the mean time, I would keep at a distance, and not concur with him in the public work. And they concluded that they would not call him, nor hear him elicately; yet they would not discourage and discountenance him so far as not to hear him, in case of necessity, as if they should be providentially cast with him into one family, and he going about exercise, or the like. Moreover, he himself was not desirous to incorporate with us, what he may do after, I know not. There were also other particulars wherewith we were dissatisfied, but the foresaid were the most material, and also included sundry of the other, and much time was spent in reasoning about them.

I have seen the account which you gave to your sister Mrs. J. of E. B. H. her affair, you would not be too much pressed with it; the Lord is taking all pains to wean you more and more from the world, and win you more and more to himself: Remember *Joseph* in the dungeon; God hath vindicated, and will yet more vindicate you. Friends are very well, and desirous to have you at home; and I shall endeavour to manage that business sufficiently, and as  
 may



may be most for the advantage of the cause.

Now, the Lord be your guide, and heap the blessings of the everlasting covenant upon your head. Pray that the Lord may spare his people, that he may purge his house, and pray for him, who is,

*Honourable and dear Sir,*

*Yours as formerly,*

JAMES RENWICK.

## L E T T E R LV.

*From the Rev. Mr. James Renwick, to the honourable and well deserving gentleman Mr. Robert Hamilton.*

*Hon. and dear Sir,*

*Dec. 29. 1687.*

**T**Ho' I know not how this shall be transmitted to your hands, yet I judge it my duty to write a brief account of some things at present amongst us. Mr. *Boyd* came to our last general correspondence, professing his agreement with our testimony, and his willingness to join with us: and when we came to speak about the duty of teaching people the necessity of abstracting themselves from the accepters of the present toleration, he granted that it is lawful to teach it, but the expediency of it he did not see: however he had endeavoured to discover the sin of the toleration's being accepted: thus he stood at this time. And when we were reasoning with him, he said, ere he were the instrument of a breach amongst us, that he would

leave *Scotland*. But it was no small perplexity to us, to know how to carry anent him; it was thought that the refusing either to call or hear him would cause a very great animosity and breach, and the ground of it was not valid enough. So, they came at length to conclude, (with some averſeness in the most part) that until the time of our next meeting, these who had not clearness to call and hear him should not be offended with these that might do it; and these again, that might do it should not be offended with these who had no clearness for it: Howbeit, they were not for entirely incorporating with him, and giving him a joint solemn call. And as I declined to preach with him; so I denied my consent to the foresaid conclusion, and was put in a perplexity, not knowing what to do, seeing many sad inconveniences to follow, if I had opposed their determination; so with a full heart I forebore: but afterwards I opened my heart to Mr. *Boyd* himself. I heard that *K.* was of my judgment in this matter.

As for Mr. *David Houston*, he went long ago into *Ireland*, and is not yet returned, whereby we have suffered no small loss. I am certain, some strange thing hath happened him: the report is, that he hath been sore sick: and I hear there are many in *Ireland* turning Dissenters. *Kerſland* hath taken from his factors about sixteen hundred merks of his own rents. For what was communed anent yourself and Mr. *Thomas Douglas*, your letter from the meeting will inform you. We have written a testimony of about five or six sheets of paper, witnessing against this toleration, the accepting of it, addressing for it, and hearing of the acceptors: Testifying also for

for the obligation of our covenants; and shewing  
the necessary duty of field-preaching, in the pre-  
sent circumstances of this church.

I have been at *Peebles* this week, and thro'  
the Lord's providence wonderfully escaped; our  
intended meeting near to the town, about nine  
of the clock at night, in the time of our gather-  
ing, being by a strange providence discovered:  
it is a place I had not been in before, and we  
had no armed men; there are four taken and  
imprisoned. Sir, I hear, *Stansfield* is murdered  
by his own family, his eldest son had a chief  
hand in it.

Now, honourable and comfortable Sir, I have  
no more at the time to inform you of, but I  
have much to write if time would allow me. My  
fears were never greater anent the interest of  
Christ in thir lands, there is such an inclinable-  
ness in people to defection. But I believe, he  
will not want some to own his controverted  
truths. The next time I write to you, I purpose  
to write also to *Lewarden* friends. The Lord  
be with you. I am,

*Right honourable and dear Sir,*

*Your sympathising friend*

*and servant in the Lord,*

JAMES RENWICK.

LETTER

## L E T T E R LVI.

*From the Rev. Mr. James Renwick, to some persons under sentence of banishment.*

*Beloved Friends;*

1687.

**I**T is both my duty and desire to sympathize with all who are suffering for the precious name of Christ, especially with you who are called to partake so deeply of the afflictions of the children of *Zion*. Ye are now to be banished out of your native land, but your enemies could not have appointed that for you, unless the Lord had from all eternity ordained it. His infinite love and wisdom hath consulted and measured out your lot; and as this should make you despise the instruments of your afflictions, so it may help you to stoop, and chearfully submit unto the providence of God, *who is of one mind, and who can turn him?* Yea, considering the preciousness of the cause for which ye are persecuted, ye may rejoice that you are counted worthy to suffer such things: for it is no less than the gospel of Christ, and his great prerogatives, as he is King of his own church, which he hath purchased with his own blood; and as he is supreme Governor and Sovereign of the whole world. O is not this a precious cause? are not these great heads of suffering? If every one of you had a thousand worlds of enjoyments, and a thousand lives, they would be all too little to signify your love to Christ, and your respect to so honourable a cause. You cannot glorify your Lord so much on earth, as by being faithful to the word of your testimony, and suffering



suffering for him now, when men are declaredly topping with him about his supremacy both in his kingdom of grace and power. O my friends, regard not what you may meet with in this present world, but be careful to have matters standing right between God and you: see that ye attain to a saving interest in Christ, for if that be not secured, your duties will not be acceptable, your sufferings will not be acceptable; and whatever ye may endure here for a profession, ye may lay your account with lying under his curse and wrath, and the immediate strokes of his severe vengeance, to all eternity. O make Christ your own, and then ye may defy devils and men, to come between you and your happy state: give yourselves wholly to his disposal, for he is gracious and faithful, and will order every thing for his own glory and your good; study to maintain his cause whole, and wherever your lot may be, keep up the testimony of the church of *Scotland*; quite none of your sworn and received principles, whatever way these may insinuate upon you, who are engaged and persisting in a course of defection; make no tampering or bargaining with any, where it will infer a condemning of the cause of your sufferings, and justifying of the iniquitous sentence that men have past upon you: keep all steadfast and unite together in the truths of God; and beware of defection, which breedeth division; fall not away from any of the words of Christ's patience; but shun all unnecessary questions, needless strifes, and vain janglings; live at peace amongst yourselves, so far as holiness may sustain no prejudice by it, and this will be both pleasant and profitable for you. Now, O beloved, what shall I say unto you, I have no  
time

time to enlarge. Do not say because of your banishment, Is there any sorrow like unto your sorrow? for I am persuaded, that these whom ye leave behind you have a greater sorrow; I do not say, that any should flee out of *Scotland*, or leave it without a necessary and sufficient call: yet that is coming upon the inhabitants, which will make the ears of them that hear thereof to tingle: The consumption determined shall pass through, and the Lord will quiet his spirit in our destruction; for his *soul shall be avenged on such a nation as this*: And who knoweth, but your banishment may be for the preservation and hiding of (at least) some of you, until the indignation overpass. But when the time of gathering cometh, the Lord will bring again his banished, *he will bring them from all places whether they have been driven; He will say to the east, give up, and to the west, keep not back*. Fear not a long sea voyage; for *they that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in the great waters, these see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep*: Yea, though the deep should be your grave, or though ye should die in a strange land, yet your death of that kind shall be a testimony, and cry for vengeance upon persecutors; and shall be an outlet of all your misery, and inlet of your everlasting glory. But if the Lord shall meet you with providential mercies, whether ye are carried, and give you any tolerable ease, safety, or sustenance; then, I say, as ye would not have your blessings cursed, ye would not lose the badge of Christians and sufferers, sit not down upon these things, content not yourselves with these things, and forget not the case of the remnant whom ye leave behind you.

Now,

Now, I commend you all to the grace of God, hoping not to forget you in my weak addresses to the throne of him who is the hearer of prayers; and hoping to be remembered by you in like sort. I am,

*Beloved friends,*

*Your sympathizing friend*

*and servant in the Lord,*

JAMES RENWICK.

## L E T T E R LVII.

*From the Rev. Mr. James Renwick, to Mr. Alexander Shields, preacher of the gospel.*

*Dear Brother,*

*Jan. 12. 1688.*

I Long to hear much how you are; the third night after I parted with you, I had a forefit of sickness, but it lasted not, and through the goodness of God, I have been in ordinary health since; however, it occasioned a disappointment of a meeting for examination. And I came forward to *Peebles*, where our meeting in the time of gathering was discovered by a wonderful providence, namely, as I am informed, the pursuing of some for theft, when people were observed to croud out of the town; which made the clerk to enquire what they were, and whither they were going; the report whereof coming unto me, being lodged in a most suspected house, I went forth, and passed on towards the place of meeting, until I came within speaking and hearing

ing of the clerk and some with him, who were without all the town challenging people, and being in no capacity to resist, I turned again into the town, where there was some little uproar, and went forth of it another way, where I waited a considerable space for my horse, which was at length got unto me, with some difficulty; and finding that the meeting could not be kept, I came away; but there were four persons taken. And since I came to this place, I have lodged with *Thomas* and *John*, and lest I should trouble mine own spirit, I have not desired any to keep silent anent my being here, nor reprov'd any for coming into my quarters, whatever the hazard might be; but left that to the providence of God, and people to their own discretion, and I find it not the worse way.

As for the books, they are come safe in boxes to *Wooler*. I have inserted in the papers which you left, what you desired to be transcribed out of *Durham* upon the *Revelation*; but I thought, I could not fitly add what concerneth *Kerstrand*, because I know not distinctly the manner of it, and to express it suitable to the matter of fact. But I have written to the Lady, desiring that she may give to Mr. *Had.* and Mr. *Lin.* a plain and full account of it; and I have written also to them, that they may insert it, and shown distinctly the place where it is to be added. And I thought this the fittest way, because people might possibly carp, if they were not acquainted with what concerneth them so near; and again, it will prevent any cavil about misrepresentation of that matter of fact. As for the testimony, the publishing of it is longer retarded than I expected, because *Michael* was not in health for writing; but



but I shall be careful about it. I have added what was to be transcribed out of *Durham* upon scandal, and did oversee the writing of the most difficult places, and taken out some of the biggots, because the recurring too oft upon such epithets makes them unfavoury. I have not got any of the letters sent abroad, but I am using diligence. There are few news here: They are to proceed against Sir *James Stansfield's* family for the murder. Mr. *Hardie* is still in prison, but it is thought, he will be liberate; he refuseth to tell the council what he had preached, but put them to prove what they could against him; whereupon they called some of his hearers, but they said, they were either sleeping, or at a great distance, and could not hear; so they were not the nearer their purpose. There are orders given forth for a day of thanksgiving, for the conception of the queen, and (as is reported) to pray that it may be a man-child. I am detained in this place some few days beyond my purpose, through the want of a guide; but I am now about to remove.

Now, being in great haste, I must desist. Your direction, encouragement, strengthening, comfort, health, and protection is prayed for by him, who is,

*Your brother and servant,*

JAMES RENWICK.

S

LETTER

## L E T T E R LVIII.

*From Mr. J. Renwick, to the prisoners in the  
Cannongate Tolbooth.*

*·Dearly Beloved in our Lord, and much honour-  
ed sufferers for his name.*

**I** Hear that men have passed sentence of banishment against you, but I hope, what man can do is no surprizal to you, ye having counted all cost that ye may be put to: Howbeit, as no created power can banish you from your God, or your God from you; so I hope, what men have now done against you, shall, by God's blessing, be a means to chase you nearer unto your rest. Yea, moreover ye do not know but that it is to hide you from the present calamity, which the Lord is immediately to bring on this land; I say, immediately, for he is hastening his work; ay, he is working fast, one step of his now, cannot stay upon another, for he is coming post unto us, and now he must come, for our mother is in her pangs, and now she must either get help and be delivered, or else she will die in travel; but die she will not, tho' she be in hard labour, for the greatness of her pain will only tend to make her delivery the more joyful. O joyful! a joyful delivery, and to make it joyful, our Lord must have a singular feast at it; he will give whole bouks good cheap; yea, he will have such a feast in *Scotland*, that proclamation shall go forth from the one end of heaven to the other, inviting all the fowls of the heavens, and the beasts of the earth to come unto the Lord's feast; a feast of the carcasses of the inhabitants of *Scotland*, great and small. Neither  
bitants



their wit nor their might will deliver them in that day. O happy is the man or the woman that is removed from hearing the very report of what is immediately coming on this land. Yea, the earth shall be made to tremble, ears to tingle, hearts to melt, bowels to sound, and knees to smite one upon another, at the report of Scotland's judgments. They shall in that day be thought to have sped well, who have win away out of the gate of these things. Yet I cannot look upon this, but I must cast a view upon what is beyond it; Mercies, mercies, mercies are swimming toward the Lord's people; O they are strange mercies, and he will make them singular people who will be privileged with them.

Now, as for your parts, remember, *the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof*; wherever ye may be cast, study always to be in your duty, and let the Lord be *your portion in the land of the living*. And that he may make up all your wants in himself, shall be the prayer of him, who is

*Your real and constant sympathizer,  
in all your sufferings for Christ,*

JAMES RENWICK.

## L E T T E R LIX.

*From the Rev. Mr. James Renwick, to all and singly the prisoners for the name of Christ, in the tolbooths of Edinburgh, Glasgow, and elsewhere in Scotland.*

*Much respected and beloved in the Lord,*

**T**HE most holy and wise God hath seen it fit, to place his people, in this our day, in very strange circumstances; they having both

the subtilty and cruelty of stated enemies, and also of pretended declining friends to grapple with; yea, I think, there was never a generation who had such snares strowed in their way, yea, so many stumbling-blocks laid before them as we have. And is not this to be seen, that enemies to God and his truths have much more prevailed, by their hidden snares, their subtile plots against the work and people of God, vailed and masked over with a pretence of favour, than by their cruel outrages, virulent and violent persecutions, screwed up to the highest pitch of their bounded power? the consideration whereof, (together with a desire to respect the advantage of the public work of God, and the welfare of the souls of people, and that we may be wise at the last, [\**considering*] we have been made to know by sad experiences the sin and danger of [*accepting*] their pretended favours, and to be mindful of the many bonds and obligations that ly upon us from the Lord, and to discharge my duty and exoner my conscience as in his sight) hath moved me to presume to write to you, my dear friends in bonds for Christ, my poor advice anent your duty under your present trials and sufferings, especially in reference to that late indemnity of the date of *February 26th, 1685.* given out by the duke of *York*, under the name of King *James VII.* I think, all pretended favours coming from the hands of such enemies, may justly be suspected by us, considering how great skaith and damage that heretofore the work  
and

\* The words in this Letter put in the *Italic* character, enclosed thus [ ] are supplied by the Printer, as there was a blank in the manuscript where they are placed.



and people of God have endured thereby; as witness by that indulgence before and after *Bothwel*. I hope, in the Lord's goodness, that this present snare shall not have such prevalency. Howbeit, that ye (whose soul's welfare I tender very much, and in whose trials and sufferings I desire to be a burden-bearer and co-partener) may be guarded the more against it, in all friendliness and humility, I call you to consider these few, among many other evils in the foresaid indemnity. As (1.) That these who accept of that indemnity do most directly homologate the pretended authority of *James Duke of York*, which is far contrary to our covenants, whereby we are sworn, in our stations, and to the utmost of our power to extirpate such; and do say, that it was lawful, just and legal, to proclaim him king of *Scotland, &c.* whereupon that indemnity is granted. (2.) These who accept of that indemnity do take with the name of wicked and seditious subjects and rebels, which the enemies in their proclamation put upon them; yea, they call themselves transgressors, for an indemnity or pardon is only extended toward such; and these who accept of it do palpably acknowledge a crime. (3.) These who accept of that indemnity do most grossly comply with the granters of it, who require that fugitives, in sign (mark it) of their acceptance of the same, do either take the Oath of Allegiance, or else find caution to transport themselves out of the three dominions of *Scotland, England, and Ireland*, and never to return again without licence, under pain of death. Now, seeing these enemies require such gross compliance, in sign and token of the acceptance of that indemnity, what must they hold the acceptance of itself to

be? There are only two things, which they propose to the acceptors thereof to make choice of, and these are, *1st*, The oath of allegiance; but of this I shall not speak, judging that none, who have not surrendered altogether their consciences, and renounced their covenants, will swear allegiance to such enemies, especially to Papists, who are discerned by acts of Parliament, to be punished as idolaters, as enemies to the true religion, and all Christian government; and whom we are, with uplifted hands to the most high God, many times sworn to extirpate; which is inconsistent with any allegiance. The *2d.* is, They must find caution to transport themselves (as said is) out of these three dominions, and not to return without licence, under the pain of death. This may prove ensnaring to some; but it should not, neither will it, if they consider what it implies: For they cannot make that choice, without acknowledging, and taking with such gross transgressions and malversations as maketh them justly to forfeit all right of subjects in these three kingdoms. O! I hope, no true sons of the church of *Scotland* will so renounce their interest in *Scotland's* cause, covenants and contentings. Yea moreover, they cannot make such a choice, unless they engage to these enemies, for their peaceable behaviour; which is to be understood, as in their sense, a renouncing of duty, and a complying with their impositions, in that time, whatsoever, betwixt the publication of the foresaid indemnity, and the 20th of *May*, which is the time appointed for their transportation. (4.) These who accept of that indemnity, do greatly transgress and sin against these who are excepted out of it, such as  
 ministers,

ministers, heritors, &c. For thereby they expose the foresaids, to be the butt of the adversary's malice and fury, and do deny to be any more sufferers with them for the interest of Christ. (5.) These who accept of this indemnity, do comply with the purposes of the enemies in general [*and particular*] which are to ruin the work and people of God, by breaking and [*dividing them, and*] cheating some of them out of their consciences; as we are to consider [*them as following*] the same purposes in their granting of pretended favours, and in [*their grievous*] persecutions and bloodshed; so we are to suspect and dread their favours [*as the height of*] cruelty, yea more, because veiled and masked over with [*fair pretences;*] like unto these who should make a bed to repose themselves in, and lay therein a naked knife or dagger with the point upward; As *Obad. v. 7. They that eat thy bread have laid a wound under thee*; whereupon, he is declared to be of no understanding, because he yielded himself to [*them, and was brought*] over by the subtilty of his confederates, and *these that were at peace with him.* (6.) Those who accept of that indemnity, do help foreward that purpose of enemies, in particular, in granting of it; which is, that they may get the better course taken with the more faithful, who trouble their kingdom most, and such as they are most mad against: For, as they say in their proclamation, they grant the said indemnity, before they determine their pleasure concerning such, which, say they, they hope to attain in a very short time. But as the hope of hypocrites, so the hope of enemies perisheth; for *Zion is a burdensome stone, Zech. xii. 3.* and their backs shall be broken with lifting at it. (7.)

These

These who accept of that indemnity do palpably break their covenant to the most high God; for there we are sworn not to be divided and broken off from our blessed union, either directly or indirectly by terror or persuasion. Now; that indemnity doth manifestly break off these who are excepted out of it; and these included, who do take it, from either acting in, or suffering for their duty together. (8.) These who accept of that indemnity do bind up their hands from acting any more for God, or against his enemies: for as in accepting of it, they take with a transgression; so, upon the matter, they engage not to transgress again; yea, do not the conditions of that pardon hold out very formally so much? And is not here a most direct breach of covenant, yea, a receding from the sum thereof? (9.) It would be considered that that indemnity is no indemnity, but (under that name) a subtile and masked traducing of people to a compliance; for it is granted upon such and such conditions, and that in sign and token of acceptance thereof. O then! is not that granter a liberal churl?

Now, dear friends, as to this purpose, I hope, I need say no more unto you, having spoken these things for your confirmation; judging that ye are clear of them already: Let enemies paint over their seeming favours as they will, yet considering the hand that reacheth them, we may justly dread them, and suspect them. *Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?* Can any drink clean water out of a corrupt fountain? Shall Zion ever expect any thing but a poisonous herb out of *Babylon's* garden? Or will ever an enemy do a favour? What hold shall we lay on Papists, whose principles lead them neither to give faith



to, nor keep faith with hereticks, as they term us? If ye would keep near God, keep far from enemies both within and without, and make it your work to be acquaint with the exercise of real religion: Ye have a noble opportunity for this study; for the Lord hath blocked you up from many worldly cares and outward disturbances; and why hath he done this? but that he may get you taken up only with himself? I have heard it of prisoners, that God made himself much more known to them in bonds, than ever at liberty; and I hope, that it is so with not a few of you. O the wisdom of God! who should make enemies instruments of so much good to his people. O take him for you all, who is a non-such portion! In the supposed enjoyment of all created things, there are still wants; but in the enjoyment of himself there is nothing wanting; yea, more than a soul can desire, and than all created capacities are able to comprehend, is to be found in him, for he is all in all. He is that [treasure] of which enemies cannot rob you, though they be permitted to come [and bereave you of life,] and all created comforts; and is not this a part of his excellency. [O then] make him your choice, and according to his promise, *he will go through fire and water with you;* he will be with you in a prison, in torture, in bonds, in banishment, and in death; and is not his presence enough; yea, all your trials *shall work together for your good,* (as he hath said) and therefore rejoice, not only in them, but because of them; and in all your seekings, seek to have his image more and more renewed in you. O employ the power and efficacy of his grace for carrying on in you a progress in holiness;

ness; for the more of this ye attain to, the more of his special manifestations ye shall enjoy, for it is his own image that the Lord delighteth to smile and breath upon, and to converse with. O holiness! is it not many ways preferable to happiness? albeit man's nature doth more affect happiness than holiness, because he desires more that which is more pleasant, than that which is more excellent; yet without holiness there can be no happiness; for what is it that maketh heaven to be heaven, but because there is there the full enjoyment of God, and perfect immunity and freedom from sin?

And as for the work and people of God, tho' I leave you to the Lord's free Spirit, for his exercising you always suitably anent their present case, yet there are these things, which I think ye should be much in wrestling for with God on their behalf; That he may give grace to his people to guide rightly their present case, for it is very hard to be guided, in respect of the many mercies and judgments that are in their cup; also they are now, as it were, at some push and extremity, the work being (if I may express it so) between the losing and the winning; but it is in his hand, with whom nothing can miscarry, let us leave it there, and be about our duty: That he may give direction to his people; for extreme difficulties put people to the greatest puzzle to know what to do; also a wrong step now will do very much skaith; but his name is Counsellor: And that he may give them grace to persevere and endure to the end; for I think we may expect the sharpest of our trials to be yet to come; but his grace is sufficient: O! as they will be sharp, pray that they may be short, for the elect's sake, as the Lord hath said. And

And as to your own imprisonment, O my dear friends, wait upon the Lord for your outgate; ye know not what he may do: he can make prison-houses hiding-places. As I believe there is mercy in your lot, so there may be more than either ye or others can see: believe the best may be, and yet prepare for the worst; put ye a blank in the Lord's hand, and resolve upon the worst that men can do unto you, for that is the safest, and it shall not fare the worse with you, even as to the outward. And withall, I say, do not misbelieve, for God who hath hitherto restrained enemies, can bind them yet up from executing of their purposes against you.

Now, the multitude of business, and the shortness of time, forcing me to be but brief, which, I hope, your charity will cover with the mantle of a favourable construction: I shall detain you no further; but unto the Lord's grace I leave you, praying that ye may be kept faithful in this hour of temptation, that ye may be helped always to make a right choice in every condition; that ye may be so enabled to war against the world, the devil, and the flesh, as ye may not put a stain upon the honour of that holy name by which ye are called; and that ye may be still fed with the fatness of that land afar off, until ye come to the complete and full enjoyment [*of him.*] And, begging the help of your prayers, I am,

*Dear Friends,*

*Your assured sympathising friend*

*in your tribulation, and*

*your servant in our Lord Christ,*

JAMES RENWICK.

## L E T T E R L X.

*From the Rev. Mr. James Renwick, to ———.*

*Dear Friend in the Lord, Feb. 6. 1688.*

I Have no cause of complaining of my lot, there is a great necessity for it, and the Lord hath seen it for his glory, and he maketh me joyful in it. But there is one thing that doth a little trouble me, and yet when I look upon it again, I think there is not much cause of trouble. The matter is this: When I was apprehended and searched, there was found upon me a little memorandum, containing the names of some persons, to whom I had lent, and from whom I had borrowed some books: as also, a direction of letters to some doctors of divinity, or ministers, abroad. Upon this I was interrogate in the tolbooth, by a committee, who said, they had orders to torture me if I was not ingenuous. So as to the direction to the doctors, or ministers, abroad, which were full in the memorandum, I told, that there was a purpose of writing letters to them, but none were written: and being asked about the scope and design of the letters, I told that it was to represent our sufferings, and to procure their sympathy. It was asked, with whom I kept correspondence abroad? I told, with Mr. *Robert Hamilton*, which, I thought, could do no injury. And as to the names of other persons, which were written short, I judged there was no hazard in explaining their names, who were in the same hazard already: so I told,  
that



That *A. S.* was *Alexander Shields*. And being asked, if he was in *Scotland*? I thinking that his public preaching would not let him be hid, said, I supposed he was; but told no definite place. That *M. S.* was *Michael Shields*; but told no place of abode: That *Ja. Wil.* and *Ar. Wil.* was *James* and *Archibald Wilson's*; and being asked about the place of their abode, I answered, only in *Clydesdale*: That *C. A.* was *Colin Alison*; but spoke of no place of abode: That *Peter R.* was *Peter Raining*; for I thought he was without their reach: and being asked about his occupation and abode, I told, he trafficked within the border of *England*. *Peter Aird's* name was written full, and being asked particularly about him, I told, he was a man of the country of *New-mills, Galston, or Evandale*, I knew not whither. *James Costoun's* name was thus full, and being asked of his abode, I told, he lived in the *Newtown* of *Galloway*, or thereabout: you know the man, and this was true of him, where-ever he is now: That *M.* was my mother, but spoke of no place of abode. I was most pressed to tell who *M. M.* at *Gl.* was, with whom a hat was left; and I answered, that I was not free to bring any other person into trouble, whatever they might do with me. They said that the business could not bring any into trouble, for they did not now proceed against folk for such matters; and that their design was only to save me from torture, which they could not do, unless that I would be ingenuous about that name. I answered, that I would in no ways explain the name, unless they would not trouble the person. They said, they would endeavour to prevent all trouble of that kind. Therefore,

I thinking that the person's name was already among enemies in the place, and supposing there were some others of that name; and also conceiving, that trouble upon that account could hardly be expected; they guessing that *Gl.* was *Glasgow*, I told the advocate alone, that *M. M.* was *Mrs. Millar*. Her name was not set down in write by their clerk as the rest were, and he hath no witnesses upon it; so I think it not probable that she can incur any injury, for I was not more particular.

Now, I shall say no more as to this, but only advise persons in my circumstances, either not to write such memorandums, or not to keep them upon them, which I did inadvertently and inconsiderately. You may communicate this to whom you think fit, especially to the persons concerned; but see that you take along with you all the circumstances. I studied to save myself from lying, to preserve them from trouble, and to evite the threatened torture. I was pressed much to tell my haunts and abodes these several years by-past; and I told them I sometimes resorted to *John Lookup's* house, where the officers came upon me, but further I would give them no notice: so I passed.

Now, if there be any thing in this that may be offensive to friends, I seek their forgiveness for it; for if I had apprehended any sin in all this, or that any person would thereby incur injury, I would then, and now also, rather undergo all the threatened torture.

The keepers of the tolbooth have frequently told me of marrying the herd in the *Leeps*, and some persons in *Pentland*. And *Alexander Weir*, who is with the provost, told me of baptising a child

child to one — Scot's husband, but I endeavoured to boast them out of it. As for my pocket-book, which contained only the sum of my two last sermons at *Braid's Craigs*, with the time and place: I owned such doctrine.

I have no further to write at the time, for I resolve to write some after this, which I would have more public than this. I desire that none may be troubled upon my behalf, but rather rejoice with him, who, with hope and joy, is waiting for his marriage, and coronation hour. I am,

*Your friend and servant in the Lord,*

JAMES RENWICK.

L E T T E R LXI.

*The Rev. Mr. James Renwick's last Letter to the right honourable Mr. Robert Hamilton.*

*Right hon. and dear Sir,*

*Feb. 17. 1688.*

**T**His being my last day upon earth, I thought it my duty to send you this my last salutation. The Lord hath been wonderfully gracious to me since I came to prison, he hath assured me of his salvation, helped me to give a testimony for him, and own before his enemies all that I have taught, and strengthened me to resist and repell many temptations and assaults, O! praise to his name.

Now, as to my testimony, which I left in your hands, when I entered into the work of the

ministry, I do still adhere unto the matter of it; but I think the manner of expression is in some things too tart, and it containeth sundry mens names, some whereof are now in eternity also it is not so pertinent to our present affairs for the state of our controversies is altered therefore I judge it may be destroyed, for I have testimony sufficient left behind me in my written sermons, and in my letters. But if this trouble you, and if you desire to keep it for yourself and your own use, you would keep this letter with it, and not publish it further abroad: yet you may make use of any part of the matter of it, that may conduce to the clearing of any controversy. And as for the direction of it unto you, if I had lived, and been qualified for writing a book, and if it had been dedicated to any man, you would have been the man: For I have loved you, and I have peace before God in that, and I bless his name that I have been acquainted with you.

Remember me to all that are friends to you, particularly to the Ladies at *Lewarden*, to whom I would have written, if I had not been kept close in prison, and pen, ink, and paper kept from me. But I must break off. I go to your God and my God. Death to me is as a bed to the weary. Now, be not anxious, the Lord will maintain his cause, and own his people; he will shew his glory yet in *Scotland*. Farewel beloved and comfortable Sir,

*Sic subscribitur,*

JAMES RENWICK.





*The following LETTERS were written by different Persons, during the persecuting Period; several of which are printed from the original Manuscripts.*

## L E T T E R L X I I .

*Mr. John Livingston's letter to his parish of Ancrum, being his farewell before his banishment from Britain and Ireland, upon his refusing the oath of supremacy.*

*To the flock of Jesus Christ at Ancrum, light, life, and love, and the consolations of the Holy Ghost be multiplied.*

*Leith, April 13. 1663.*

*Wellbeloved in the Lord,*

**T**HAT which your sins, even your sins and mine, hath been a long time procuring, and which has been often threatened, is now come, even a separation; how long it may continue is in the Lord's hand, but it will be our part to search out and mourn for these sins, that have drawn down such a stroke. It is not needful to look much to instruments, I have from my heart forgiven them all, and wish you to do the like, and to pray for them, that it be not laid to their charge. But let us look to him without

whose doings there is no evil in the city; for, *he hath torn, and he will heal; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up: Let us neither despise his chastening, nor faint when we are rebuked of him.* It may be we shall not suddenly find out every controversy he has against us; but if there be upright dealing in such things as are obvious, and an impartial endeavour of discovering what is hid, he will reveal even that unto us: neither is there a greater hinderer of repentance, than a secure desperate questioning whether he will accept or not. Jesus Christ has been and will be in all ages, *a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence,* to those that stumble at the word, and refuse to receive his rich offers; but to others a *foundation and corner stone, elect and precious, and he that believeth in him shall not be confounded.* We have reason to believe, that whatever he does is only best: God saw all that he had made, and behold it was very good; that word will hold good to the end of world. For my part, I have reason to bless his name, I have great peace in the matter of my suffering: I need not repent. Ye know my testimony of the things in controversy: Jesus Christ is a King, and he alone hath power to appoint the officers and government of his church. 'Tis a fearful thing to violate God's oath, and to fall into the living God's hand. It could not well be expected, there having been so fair and general professions through the land, but that the Lord would put men to it; and it is like the trial will come to every man's private door, that when every one have, according to their inclination, acted their part, and he seems to stand by, he

may come at the last and act his part, and vindicate his glory and truth.

I have often shewed you that it is the greatest difficulty under heaven to believe there is a God, and a life after this; and for my own part, I have often told you, I could never make it a chief part of my work to insist upon the particular debates of the time, as being assured, that if one do drink in the knowledge and love of the main foundations of the Christian religion, and have the work of God's Spirit upon his heart, to make him walk with God, and make conscience of his ways, such a one, except he be giddy with self-conceit, shall not readily mistake God's quarrel to join either with an atheistical profane party, or with an atheistical phanatic party; but *the secret of the Lord will be with them that fear him, he will shew them his covenant.* And I have thought it not far from a sure argument, that what course is not approven of God, generally all the godly, and all the profane turning penitent, scunner at it, and it may be cannot well tell why; and generally all the profane, at the first sight, and all that had a profession of piety, when they turn loose, embrace it, and it may be cannot tell why. There may be both diversity of judgments, and sometimes sharp debates among them that are going to heaven; but certainly one spirit guides the seed of the woman, and another spirit guides the seed of the serpent: and blessed are they that know their Master's will and doth it; *blessed are they that endure to the end.* And both you and I have reason to bless the Lord, that however I be the unworthiest of all that ever spake in his name, yet my labour a-  
mongst

amongst you hath not been in vain altogether; but some have given evidence of a real work of the Spirit of God upon their heart and life, of which some are already in glory, and others wrestling thro' an ill world: and, I trust, some that has not given great evidence yet, may have that seed of God in their heart, which may in due time bud forth, at least at their death. But, ah! what may be said of them in whom there is an ill spirit of drunkenness, of greed and falsehood, a spirit of licentiousness and wilful ignorance, and no zeal of prayer, for all the means of salvation that have been stirring amongst us, who possibly will be glad now that they get loose reins to run to all wickedness; they may be carried on to open apostacy and persecution. These, and all of you, I request, in the bowels of Jesus Christ, yea; I obtest and charge you, in the name and authority of him that shall judge the quick and the dead, that ye turn speedily to the Lord, and make conscience of praying morning and evening, and read, or cause to be read to you, some of his word, where you will find all things necessary for faith and conversation. 'Tis true, snares and temptations are many and strong from Satan, from the world, from the mind and heart within; but faith in God, and diligent seeking of him shall overcome them all. Should not the care of your immortal souls go beyond the love of this life, or any thing in this world? O that ye would taste and see the goodness of the Lord, and take an essay of the sincere serving of God for a while, and prove if he will not open the windows of heaven, and pour out a blessing. Let me obtain this of you as a recompence of all the labour I have had among  
you,



you, and as an allaying of my sufferings I am put to, that, after you read this, you will set some time apart, alone, or in your families, as you have convenience, to think on these directions, that have been formerly given you from the word of God; and deal you earnestly with him, that ye may remember them, and look them over, and engage your hearts to him, that in his strength ye will walk in his ways. And if any shall stubbornly neglect such a wholesome counsel, that comes from an earnest desire of your salvation, I will be forced to bear witness against you in the day of the Lord, that light was holden forth to you; but I desire to hope better things of you. If the Lord see it good we may see the day wherein we may meet again, and bless his name solemnly, that although he was angry, yet *his anger is turned away*; but, if not, the good-will of the Lord be done. I think, I may say, I could have been well content, although it had been with many discouragements, to have gone and served you all, as I could, in the gospel of Jesus Christ; but the prerogative royal of Jesus Christ, and the peace of a man's conscience, are not to be violated upon any consideration; neither could there be a blessing expected when ought is done against these.

I was desirous, and have used means, that I might have come and seen you, and, at least in a private way, bidden you farewell ere I had left the country; but wise providence has otherwise ordered it: However, I carry your names alongst in my book, yea, I shall carry them on my heart whithersoever I go, and begs your mutual prayers for me, that I may be kept  
fruitful,

fruitful, and faithful, and blameless, even to the end; and that, if it be his will, I may be restored to you. Mean time, love and help one another; have a care to breed your children to know the Lord, and to keep themselves from the pollutions of an ill world. I commend to you above all books (except the blessed Bible, the word of God) the Confession of Faith, and Larger Catechism: Be grounding yourselves and one another against the abomination of Popery, in case it should prove the trial of the time. Let a care be had of the poor and sick; there is as much left as will suffice for meat and money a year and more. I cannot insist in the several particulars possibly wherein ye would take advice: the word is a lamp, and the Spirit of Christ will guide you in all truth. The light that comes after unfeigned humiliation, self-denial, earnest prayer, and searching of the Scriptures, is a sure light.

I know that my word and write are of small value, yet I could not forbear, but in few words salute you ere I went. And now, farewell, dearly beloved and longed for: *The Lord of all grace, who hath called us into his eternal glory by Jesus Christ, after ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish and strengthen you: To him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.*

*By your loving servant and pastor,*

JOHN LIVINGSTON.

LETTER

## L E T T E R LXIII.

*From the Rev. Mr. John Brown, to the much respected and worthy Mrs. Jean Ker, daughter to the Laird of Kerland, now a prisoner for Christ within the castle of Dumbarton.*

*Utrecht, Sept. 24. 1670.*

*Worthy and dear Mistress,*

**H**AVING this occasion to salute your dear father, now a prisoner for Christ, and not knowing when I should have occasion to write again, I thought I was called of God to write this line to you, and therein to exhort you in the Lord to rejoice in your lot; which love, free love, and everlasting free love, hath measured out to you. All your tossings, and the time when your tossings should begin, and the manner of your tossings, and the occasion of your tossings, all was wisely decreed from everlasting; yea, all was covenanted from eternity betwixt the Father and the Son. (O blessed bargain! the solid and comfortable stay to all poor tossed souls.) Means and ends were both covenanted and determined; for, *whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren*, Rom. viii. 29. Now then, it was a decreed thing, that as the Captain of our salvation was made perfect through sufferings, so, through much tribulation should we also enter into the kingdom of heaven. Head and members must wear one livery; and this is our crown, and our glory, that we are put to follow his footsteps,

steps, and to be conformed to his image. May not this satisfy us, that *neither tribulation, nor distress, nor persecution, nor famine, nor nakedness, nor peril, nor sword, nor death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord!*

Dear Mistress, the Lord hath seen it meet to trust you with tossings in your young days, that you may learn betimes to be acquainted with Christ's school; and to know that *we have no continuing city here, and that you may seek one to come, and look out for that city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.* And now, the solitary walls of that rocky hill is as near to this city above, to this new *Jerusalem*, which cometh down from heaven, as any place in the world; as was the soil of your nativity. And those barren walls cry, O Mistress Jean, Look up above where is your Father's house, that pleasant soil; your elder Brother is there, your husband is before you: There, there, is your rest; there shall you have satisfaction; and the consolation which we cannot yield; nay, nor the most pleasant, fertile, and desirable spot in all the world. Dear Mistress, it shall be no grief of heart to you one day, that you was forced for Christ's sake, to dwell on that barren and dry rock of *Dumbarton*: No, it shall increase your joy so much the more. O Mistress, mind your love, your only husband, to whom you have given yourself; forget him not, for he doth not, he will not forget you: you are engraven upon the palms of his hands. You are



are written up with your mother *Zion* there; you are sharing with her, therefore rejoice in your lot. Though you mourn now, you shall rejoice when God shall put a song in her mouth. We should wait and believe; and though the fig-tree blossom not, we should rejoice. Oh! if we would sing on luck's head; and indeed we have good ground, for all was well concluded in the parliament of heaven; and all the powers and parliaments on earth cannot change or alter one article of this grand parliament. Mistress, hold fast your grip of him, or rather put your poor weak hand in his, that he may hold your grips of him fast and sure. The time is coming, when time shall be no more; no more tossings, and no more temptations; no more mourning, but an everlasting song of praise to God, and to him who sitteth upon the throne, even the Lamb, world without end. Since we can do no more now, let us join our *Amen* to all the songs of praises, which the blessed choir of angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect, are singing this day, and will never give it over. You have reason to bless God, who hitherto hath letten you see your own nakedness and misery, and hath hidden pride from your eyes. O be humble still, and walk under the sense of a body of death; for the puffing up of some (of whom I had expected better things) makes me fear what the issue shall be. Some of these persons are already Anabaptists and Antinomians, and are fast drinking in the notions of the Familists, and other phantastic persons, whose carriage, in a great part, became at length scandalous. My soul is feared for them: The Lord prevent them with his mercy. Dear Mistress, keep humble, and

keep near Christ, then you shall be happy. Good words, and fair speeches will not be enough. Let our hearts be right with him; and not think that all is gold which glisters. His grace be with you.

*Dear Mistress,*

*Yours in the Lord Jesus Christ,*

JOHN BROWN.

---

## L E T T E R LXIV.

*From the Rev. Mr. John Brown to Mrs. Jean Ker, daughter to the Laird of Kerland.*

*Worthy and dear Mistress,*

*Aug. 9. 1677.*

**M**Y long silence as to writing, hath not been through forgetfulness. I may confidently say, I neither do, nor can forget you; and, which is to you infinitely more, the Father of mercies neither doth, nor will forget you: O how happy is it to be interested in him, to have a share of his cross, to be following him through adversity, and to be owning him and his despised cause. It may be, it is somewhat bitter at present; but afterward, O what joy and consolation will it yield to a soul going into eternity, to remember, and reflect upon the tossings and hardships he hath endured, and been put to suffer for the sake of Jesus, and his glorious truth and interest, and there see the special love of God, calling him or her out to serve him, and to endure the displeasure of men for his sake. I hope,  
you

you find, Dear Mistress, the unseen incomes of joy, refreshing your soul, in the midst of all your other hardships, that make you say, you would not change lots with the best: the four cross is made sweeter than all the honied rest, wealth, pleasure and ease would be, that others delight themselves with, and sit down upon as their portion. Up your heart, my dearly beloved, the Lord is coming. He hath seen all that young *Jean Ker* hath been made to suffer for his sake; all is fresh in his remembrance; and all *Jean Ker's* tears, tossings, groans, sighs, and sore hearts, &c. are written up in his book of remembrance. You will think all little enough one day: and when you see, with a full sight, his glorious face, you will say, O is this he for whom I suffered disgrace, harrassings, disaccommodations and other evils? had I known what an one he was and is, I would have been willing, and accounted it my glory, to have suffered ten thousand times more than I did. O mistress, how joyful will your heart be, when he shall come to the door of heaven, and welcome you into glory, and with his soft hand wipe all your tears away, and put on *beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garments of praise for the spirit of heaviness*; and put the new song, the song of *Moses*, and of the redeemed, in your mouth? Can you now imagine, how your heart will leap then for joy! Take courage then, believe and hope. He is true, and will not deny himself; his word is tried; his promises are sure. Let us give him glory by faith, and in patience possess our souls; for not one word that ever he spoke shall fail. Let all your work be to get your heart wrought up more and more to love

him, and to wonder at his dispensations of love toward you. Give him glory that ever he put that honour upon your father's family, to stand by the banner of Christ, when many that seemed something of old, have forsaken him, and have embraced this present world. Fear not, a delivery will come; but I am afraid, the dawning of that day shall be terrible: The righteous God must be avenged on an adulterous generation. But, in the mean time, he will be an hiding place to his own. His grace be with you now and evermore. I remain,

*Yours in the Lord,*

JOHN BROWN.

---

## L E T T E R LXV.

*From the Rev. Mr. John King, unto the prisoners in the back of the Gray-friars church-yard. • 1679.*

*My dearly beloved in the Lord, and highly honoured prisoners for Christ,*

I Have my love chearfully remembered to you all, who am also your fellow-sufferer and companion in tribulation, for the same honourable cause. Dear friends, I would not have you think it strange concerning the fiery trial, as though some strange thing happened unto you, and to the remnant in *Scotland*, by this present dispensation; for the like has fallen out, when the people of God has got a call from the Lord,  
and



and yet have fallen before the enemy, as ye may find in *Judges xx. chap.* and ye may read at length what follows; therefore I am sure, it is the sins of the people of the Lord, which has provoked the Lord to let his people fall before his enemies, and yet have no respect to the enemy; for, no doubt, they are a people devoted to destruction, except they repent. Ye see in *Jer. xii. 4, 7.* he has been provoked to do this to his people, even to give the dearly beloved of his soul into the hand of their enemies, and with no respect to these whom they are given up to, as ye will find it in the 14. verse, *Thus saith the Lord against all mine evil neighbours, that touch the inheritance, which I caused my people Israel to inherit, Behold, I will pluck them out of their land, and pluck out the house of Judah from among them.* This is the thing, we may see the Lord's anger not turned away from the remnant in *Scotland*, but his hand is stretched out still, that has caused him deliver up his strength into captivity, and his glory into the enemies hands. And I am sure, my dear friends, you are Christ's glory in *Scotland*, so many young men jeoparding their lives in the high places of the fields for Christ, whom he has given into the hands of the enemy; and I hope that the Lord will arise yet, as a strong man after wine refreshed, and smite his enemies upon their hinder parts; and therefore, my dear friends, seeing ye are Christ's glory, it is your glory to suffer for his name's sake, and it should be your rejoicing that ye are counted worthy to suffer for the sake of Christ; and therefore be of good cheer, my dear friends, for Christ is greatly concerned with you, for he has a fellow-feeling with you in all your troubles,

and Christ is suffering more in his glory than all your sufferings; and therefore be encouraged, dear friends, seeing Christ is suffering with you, *Heb. iv. 15. who cannot but be touched with your infirmities. John xv. 20. If they have persecuted me, they will persecute you: if they have kept my sayings, they will keep yours also. Zech. ii. 8. He that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of his eye.* But that may be your complaint, which was the church's, *Isa. xlix. 14. But Zion said, The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me;* but yet the Lord answers in the 15 ver. *Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb; yea, she may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands, thy walls are continually before me.* Therefore it is your part to act faith upon the promises, although your case and the church of Scotland's seem very dismal like; for if ye presently look through the cloud unto Christ, and take a look of Christ's sufferings, what he suffered for your sakes, and for the sake of the elect, and that the saints before now have suffered; for Christ has told his people, that *through many tribulations they must enter the kingdom; and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution,* 2 Tim. iii. 12. These that will be Christ's disciples must *deny themselves, and take up their cross, and follow him,* Mark viii. 34. Indeed, dear friends, it is sad to you, to endure what you are put to, so many of you together, what by the scorching heat of the sun, and what by rain, there is no doubt your visage is marred; but yet, I would have you taking this for your encouragement, in *Isa. lii. 14. As many were astonished*

astonied at him, his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men; and therefore, dear friends, be encouraged, 2 Tim. ii. 12. *If ye suffer with him, ye shall also reign with him.* Luke xxii. 28. 29. *If ye continue with him in his tentations, he has promised to you the kingdom and honour, and your momentary affliction is not worthy to be compared to the glory that is to be revealed;* and so do not fret nor repine under your troubles, 1 Pet. iv. 14. *For the spirit of glory, and of God shall rest upon you, if ye suffer chearfully; and bless God that ever he choosed the like of you to be witnesses for him; and ye may all cry out with David, What am I, and what is my father's house, that thou hast brought me hither to suffer for him, for had it not been free love that prevented you, ye might have been among these that have been lifting up a banner against the Son of God; which some, alas! whom we would not have expected, have joined in this combination against Christ, for which I wish them repentance, or else they shall smart for it. The Lord has honoured you before many of the professors of Scotland, that were as much concerned, and personally sworn and engaged to stand to the defence of that interest. But alas! I think, this is one of the greatest controversies the Lord hath with Scotland, that is, not adhering to our Covenants; the League and Covenant, and National Covenant are cast behind the back of the generation; not only by the malignant party who have perjured themselves, but also by a great part of the ministers and professors of Scotland, in not adhering to the ends of these covenants, but have connived and complied with adversaries,*

ries, and strengthened their hands against their poor brethen, that are now bearing the burden, and in the heat of the day, and they are standing aloof at their scorn, counting it their wisdom to stand at a distance: and the Lord has been witnessing, dear friends, by your essay to set Christ upon his throne again in *Scotland*, and restoring the ancient liberties of our church from under the bondage of tyrannizing Prelacy, that the land has been groaning under these eighteen years by-gone; a yoke that neither we nor our fathers were able to bear, and which has been contended against at the hazard of lives, yea, many lives have gone in that quarrel; and this appearance of yours doth not only witness against the open and avowed enemies, but also against all those that have not joined with you that were in a capacity, that is, professed friends; and he has taken you, O poor things in the world, to confound the rich; and foolish things to confound the wise; and young things to confound the old; and things that seemed not to be, to confound the things that were. Although the Lord hath not favoured you with victory, yet it tends to the praise of the Lord's rich grace in you, and ye are the Lord's witnesses this day in *Scotland*, witnessing against the defection of your brethren, and against all the avowed enemies of Christ's crown and kingdom in these nations. And as to you that are old men, highly honoured of the Lord, your gray hairs are a crown of glory; like *Zabulon* and *Naphtali* ye have jeopard'd your lives upon the high places of the field, for your master's honourable cause; and although, *Joseph* like, the archers are shooting sore at you, yet your bow shall abide in strength,



Strength, and ere it be long ye shall be promoted to a greater kingdom than *Pharaoh's*, ye shall reign with the Lord Christ through all the ages of eternity; and no doubt the Lord will be forth-coming to your posterity: but I wish from my heart speedy repentance to these your brethren, that it may be, counted it their wisdom, that they have not joined with you in the defence of so honourable a cause. I am sure, that their wisdom is foolishness with God, and I cannot tell how they cannot tell how they can be free of that curse that is mentioned in *Judges v. 23.* *Curse ye Meroz, said the angel of the Lord, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof, because they came not out to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty.* They may think to enjoy their liberty and their estates, but it is like, if it be so, it shall be at a dear rate. But as for you, my dear friends, that have jeoparded your all for Christ, lives and liberties, relations and possessions, you have Christ's promise, you shall have a hundred fold in this life, and life everlasting in that which is to come. Ye have the word of a king for this who cannot err, who is the true and faithful witness; and therefore it is your part to act faith upon the promises. Whatsoever present straits you and your families may be reduced to, the Lord will be forth-coming to you and yours. Therefore, dear friends, beware of any sinful way to relieve you or yours. Although you may have temptations by your friends, for that may be some of your trials, as it was *Job's*, by his own friends and his own wife; yet resist the temptation come from what airth it will, and tell them that they speak foolishly: for we doubt Satan will seek

seek to winnow you as wheat in a sieve, for he likes to fish in drumley waters; and ye know, what blasphemies and reproaches it will occasion against God, and against his ways, as it is already, and how wounding it is to you that are godly, to hear enemies mouths opened; and ye may judge what sorrow it will be to the godly in *Scotland* if ye miscarry, and how more and more it will open the mouths of the adversaries: and therefore, dear friends, seeing it is like to be the lot of the people of God either to sin or suffer; it is your part rather to suffer, and to choose with *Moses*, *rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season*; for ye see what the cloud of witnesses suffered, *Heb. xi. Tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection.* Some have had trials, as yours, of cruel mockings, some, of bonds and imprisonments; some were stoned, some were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword; they wandered about in sheep-skins and goat-skins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented; of whom the world was not worthy: Yea, they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. Chap. xii. 2. Looking unto *Jesus* the author and finisher of their faith; who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the majesty on high; Considering him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be weary and faint in your minds. Look into all the scriptures, and there ye will see what has been the lot of the saints that are all singing hallelujah at the Father's right hand this day: and if ye follow them with faith and patience,

ence, it shall be your lot ere long, as it is the lot of some of your honourable and renowned brethren; therefore I would not have you to be discouraged, for the Lord can make the day's breaking and scattering of his people tend to the furthering of the gospel, and the Lord has said it, *Rom. viii. 28.* that *all things shall work together for good to them that love him, and to these that are called according to his purpose.* Although this seems very improbable to sense and reason, yet the Lord's word cannot lie; and it has been an old saying among the worthies, that the blood of the saints is the seed of the church, which has been made out in all days; also we have the experience of it in our own day; for since the break of *Pentland*, since the honourable worthies suffered, some in the fields, and some on scaffolds, that was the beginning of a great rise of the gospel in *Scotland*, which many of you are the seals of, and all of you that are young men, which are witnesses to that same cause: Therefore be of good cheer, for the Lord can make you conquerors by your sufferings; therefore although it hath given a dash to the faith of the people of God in *Scotland*, yet there is hope, seeing the Lord hath taken a sacrifice off some of your hands. But I would that ye and all the professors in *Scotland* were searching and trying our ways, and turning again unto the Lord. Doubtleis there is an *Achan* in the camp of our *Israel*, so that we could not stand before our enemies; but *Ephraim* like when the day of battle came, they were faint-hearted, and turned back, *Psal. lxxviii.* because they were not faithful, nor stedfast in God's covenant. And we shall say no more but commit you to the great  
Shep-

Shepherd of the flock, that brought again our Lord from the dead, that he may watch over you, and judge his people, and repent him for his servants, when he sees their power is gone, and there is none shut up or left. *Rejoice, O ye nations, with his people, for he will avenge the blood of his servants, and will render vengeance to his adversaries, and will be merciful to his land, and to his people.*

*Yours, to power,*

Sic subscribitur,

JOHN KING.

## L E T T E R LXVI.

*From the Rev. Mr. Donald Cargil, to the Lady Earlston, younger.*

*Madam,*

*Feb. 22. 1680.*

I Shall not pass the expressions of your affection to me:—I am truly sorry, that there is nothing in me that can either requit the kindness, or answer the expectations of any. And I am truly refreshed to hear of your frame, and your courage and stedfastness in that way, which is God's. And I am persuaded, the further you stand off from them, and the more zealously you detest their doings, it is still the better. Fear not, your forfeiture shall not be long, and your *de novo damus* shall be from heaven, more sure, and more blessed, if you take it not from earth; and your rent of one year listed by another, (which



(which to me yet is doubted) shall not enrich the receiver, and shall bear interest unto you. He is not only putting me on petitions for higher and greater things than these private, but also himself is making me to crave of himself, in behalf of these that are afflicted, the hundred-fold in this life, and it shall be sure to them, or to their heirs. However, for the present, make sure, and bring your comfort not only mainly, but only from the other; for, as this is your season to seek, so you shall find it his season graciously to give; for, I think, he would never have suffered you to come to this strait for him, if he had not purposed to gratify you with his exceeding great reward: and I am persuaded if it be sought by all, nothing will hinder the performance; no, not our own personal sins, if they be rightly acknowledged.——

As for Mr. *Richard Cameron*, I never heard any thing from him, in the Lord's truth, but I am both ready and willing to confirm it. But woes me that I have not more worth and authority for that cause: but truth itself, if it be rightly pleaded, will have authority upon consciences. My respects being remembered to your nearest friends, and all other friends that are right in his cause,

*Madam,*

*Your servant in our Lord,*

DONALD CARGIL.

## L E T T E R L X V I I .

*From the Rev. Mr. Donald Cargil, to his well-beloved friends Alexander Gordon of Earlston, Mr. Ardoch, and Mr. M'Millan in Arrendarroch.*

*Dearly Beloved, Gilkie, April 14. 1680.*

**I** Have purposed, according to your desire, to visit you, but have been hitherto hindered. The cause of my present return, after I was come mid-way, our brother will shew you, and, I hope, will satisfy you; and if the Lord give opportunity, I shall yet fulfil my purpose. What I purposed to have imparted to ———, who was gone before I came, I have imparted it to him, who will communicate it to you; so that I need not write of them further. Only leave your own things for a little, till ye receive them from God in a better way; for not only is the seeking but the receiving of favours from men, stated in such opposition to God, as not without a snare to the soul: and if it begets a just jealousy in God, to have any conversation with those with whom he hath such enmity, and seeing providence hath closed the door of doing for yourselves in these things, lay ye them aside also; and what comfort ye have within yourselves, what work ye shall give yourselves too; and what interest ye shall espouse: but let all things be little to you in respect of this, to have the land brought about to be the Lord's, and to have the Lord reigning in it. Be frequent in prayer and humiliation, for I will assure you, ye will

will find those duties to be more easy and sweet in performance, more hopeful in their expectation, and more prevalent as to their effects, than before they have been. But never think yourselves right till ye have repented of what is past, and have intended to reformation in all things. And let the desires and designs of your hearts be such, that, in a manner, he cannot but both avouch you, and prosper them; and sever yourselves from the sins, interests, and courses of this present generation; otherways these who have been chastised by themselves, may be again chastised with them in their judgments, which shall be both dreadful and near. But haste you out of the city, for that hinders, and seek to be united to God, and to one another in truth and love; and this cannot be without the pouring out of the Spirit, which must be obtained by prayer; and beware of patching up with men, for they have their own cards to play, and their own way to go, which are not only diverse from, but directly opposite to God's; and if I mistake not, God's intention this time is clearly to sever us, that he may shew us kindness by ourselves (and till that be, we shall never have him as we would) and employ us as we desire to be employed: and fear not, for the fewer, we shall not be the less strong; and forget not to shut yourselves up in a covenant with him, that if we must die in the common lot, we may die with repentance, and such purposes in our heart, and leave a model to them that come after, of the temple we minded to build to him, that these may go on according to that pattern, and do well.

As for our brother, ye both ought, and I know.

know ye will receive him gladly, and encourage him in all things, for he doth the work of the Lord; and ye shall find the Lord hath provided better for you than if I had come. The Lord establish you in every good work. *Amen.*

*Yours, in true affection,*

DONALD CARGIL.

*P. S.* There is one thing I have forgotten; Seek not to them that have been joined with us in some things, if they have owned that interest, or sided with these courses of defection: nor though they seek to you, accept of them not, till they seriously resent, and utterly renounce these things.

## L E T T E R LXVIII.

*From the Rev. Mr. Richard Cameron, to Mr. Alexander Gordon of Earlston.*

*Right Honourable,*

*March 22. 1680.*

**I** Was this day within five miles of *Nith*, in order to meet with your Honour; but one is come to me from other friends, who has made me turn my head to another airth: the business is of moment, of which you may after this (if the Lord will) be informed. But if you be to write to *Holland* (as I doubt not but both you and your lady will) I am to send a brother of mine thither; his voyage is not to be delayed, and therefore you will not delay to have one in once  
this



this week to *Edinburgh*: I mean I will be content, if business will permit, and counsel sought from the Lord, that yourself were there; for we are to have considerable things in hand; but if you cannot win, I'll make all the haste I can to see you and friends with you. I intreat you to signify this to our friends in *Dalray, Kels,* and *Glencairn*: I hope the Lord has some work for them yet, though I were gone, which will not be while my Master has work for me. O to be ready to be bound, yea, and to die. I dare not sit this call, whatever be the hazard. The Lord will carry on his work maugre all opposition: *The daughter of Zion shall yet arise and thresh, &c. Micah iv. 13.*

I have several encouraging things to impart to you when there is an opportunity of once meeting afforded. I hope to meet in heaven with not a few out of the house of *Earlston* and *Ard's* one family. O how refreshing will it be to see in that day severals who lived in the *Glenkens*, together with some from *Balmagie* and *Corsemichal*.

The Lord be with you all. I doubt not but you mind me in your prayers. My respect to both your ladies, sisters, &c. not forgetting the young laird, as sure as any I know, and my own *Mrs. Ann*: Referring other things till meeting, Sir, I bid you farewell.

RICHARD CAMERON.

## L E T T E R L X I X .

*From the Rev. Mr Richard Cameron, to Mr.  
Alexander Gordon of Earlston.*

*Right Honourable,*

*May 22. 1680.*

I Hope you'll have me excused for not writing to you on *Thursday* last, for I was then perplexed for Mr. *Donald's* not coming, and had no time, but I met with him since: he is not to come to this country at this time. However, if you know nothing to obstruct our appointment on *Friday* next, I am willing, in the Lord's strength, to keep it, and before that, if health and other things will permit you. I desire to meet with your Honour upon *Wednesday's* night, or *Thursday's* night at farthest. You may appoint the place, and I shall endeavour to wait upon you. If you be not able, you will write to me with the bearer, that he may be again at me once upon *Wednesday*.

We must go on in the strength of the Lord, whatever be the difficulties and discouragements in our way: Our Lord's ends are well worth the pursuing, he is coming, *his reward is with him, and his work, to wit, of judgment, is before him.* Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, what he hath prepared for them that wait for him; yea, blessed are the eyes who shall see what he will do for the remnant that are in this land, and for his church throughout the earth. Happy are they whom he is now chastening, that he may hid them from the day of evil: A large share of present sufferings is well worth the having;

ing; for the consolations of such shall much more abound: the Lord will make our hearts glad, according to the days wherein he afflicted us, and makes us to see evil. It is the better we cannot easily win out of our afflictions.

The blessing of the Lord be upon your lady and children, whom I salute in the Lord; as also your sister, and other friends, both young and old, particularly *David Gordon*, whom I look upon to be flourishing and full of sap in old age, which is rare in this day. Referring other things till meeting. Farewell.

If you can let us meet on *Wednesday's* night, I would be content to be at your house if convenient; but the Lord will do all well.

RICHARD CAMERON.

---

## L E T T E R LXX.

*From the Rev. Mr. Richard Cameron, to the Lady Earlston, younger.*

*Madam,*

I Once intended to have been at *Earlston* the last week, but was detained by the unseasonableness of the weather, and the present discomposure of the country, with the alarm of the soldiers being come to *Dumfries*, because the country will be unsettled, until they see what course is taken by the adversaries; and also because Mr. *Donald* has not come. I have now resolved to go to a place in *Clydesdale*, if the Lord will, from which I may conveniently ride into  
*Edin.*

*Edinburgh*, in order to meeting with friends, and after that to return with all the speed I can to *Galloway*, that I may see your Ladyship, or at least tryst with the Laird. My Master laid ties on me to the *Glenkens*, and some other two parishes in *Galloway*, that I was not looking for. I am bound, while I live, to remember with thanksgiving the Lord's condescendence and kindness to me in *Earlston*, where I am sure we had some good days, not to be forgotten. I am more and more refreshed with my thoughts of the Laird, and of what God hath done and is doing to him. I am hopeful that the Lord shall carry him and you through your tribulations, which may be great for a little time. And now you may be sure that your steps shall be more observed than any forfeited family in *Galloway*: therefore I hope you will not be high-minded, but fear; happy is the man that feareth the Lord always: You should also *trust in him at all times, for in the Lord Jehovah there is everlasting strength*: There is enough in him for bearing your charges. You have now a notable opportunity of giving proof of your love to our sweetest Lord Jesus, who hath done so much for us. Praise, praise, to him that hath pitched upon you to witness for him, and that he is still keeping possession of that family of which you are now a mother,—and that the honour thereof is screwed up to so high a pitch in your time; and that this laird, who seems to be far inferior to the three that have gone before him, should in some respects be honoured even above his uncle and grandfather, whose names are, and will be favoury to the generations to come: This is the Lord's doing; his ways and thoughts



are not as our ways and thoughts. I desire to remember your son and daughter, &c. I intreat that your Ladyship and sister may remember me: ye know what need there is for praying for one another.—The Lord be with you all.

*Madam, Farewell;*

RICHARD CAMERON.

---

## L E T T E R LXXI.

*From the Rev. Mr. Alexander Pedan, to some Friends.*

*Dear Friends,*

I Long to hear how you spend your time, and how the grace of God groweth in your hearts. I know you and some other of the people of God, by reason of the present trial, have got up a fashion of complaining on Christ; but I defy you all to say any ill of him, except you wrong him: speak as ye can, and spare not; only I request you, let your expressions of Christ be suitable to your experiences of him; and if ye think Christ's house to be bare and ill provided, and harder than ye looked for, I assure you Christ's mind is only to diet you, and not to hunger you: Our Steward knows well when to spare, and when to spend: Christ knows whether heaping or straiking agrees best with our narrow vessels, for both are alike to him; sparing will never en-  
rich

rich him, and spending will never impoverish him: he thinks it ill won which is holden off his people. Grace and glory comes out of Christ's lucky hand: our gifts are but feckless gifts; his fulness is most straitened when it wants a vent: 'tis sweet and easy to Christ when he is holden busy in dividing the fulness of his Father's house to his poor friends: he desires not to keep mercy over night; every new day brings new mercies to the people of God. Christ is the best mercy that ever the people of God yoked with: if ye please the wares, and what of his grace makes for you, he and you will fort about the price; he will sell good cheap that ye may speer for his shop again, and draw all the sale to himself. I counsel to go no further than Christ: and now when it seems to be come to your door, either to sin or suffer, I counsel you to lay your account for suffering; for an outgate coming from any other airth will be prejudicial to your souls interest. For your encouragement, remember he sends none a warfare upon their own expences: and blessed be the man who gives Christ all his money; for ye will be forced to block with him at last, when ye have no hand-money, and thou hast no heart to suffer; and so it is best for you to keep in with your old acquaintance, for new acquaintance with strange lords is a ready way to make a wound in grace's side, that will not heal in haste; yea, your eyes may close before your wounds dry up; for grace is a tender piece, and is very easily distempered in the backslidings of our times; and if the wheels of it be once broken with sin, all the moyen in the world will not make them go about again, until they be once through Christ's Lands.

I hope I have said more upon the subject than needed; for I have seen the marks of tenderness deeply drawn upon your carriages: but the temper of our declining and backsliding times invites you to double your diligence in seeking God; for I think God has a mind to search *Jerusalem* with lighted candles, and to go thro' the whole house to visit all your chambers, and there shall not be one pin within all your gates, but God shall know whether it be crooked or even. He will never rest till he be at the bottom of mens hearts: he has turned out some folks hearts already, and flitted others; it seems he has a mind to make the inside the outside. There was but a weak wind in former trials, and therefore much chaff was sheltered and hid amongst corn; but God now has raised a strong wind, and yet Christ's own cannot be driven away; he will not lose one hair of his peoples heads, he knows them all by head-mark: O! if our hearts and love were blazing after him, we would rather choose to die believing, than to sin by compliance.

I defy the world to steal a lamb out of Christ's fold unmixed. What is wanting on the last day of judgment. Christ must make them all up. That storm will not be long, when the people of God have the worst of it; when the wind is both on their face and on their back, a great fire in God's furnace will soon divide the gold from the dross. God's mill hath been grinding fast, and it will not stand for want of water. If the people of God would but hold out of the gate, and give enemies a redd field, that God may be full of his enemies flesh: why, may he not give enemies a stroke over his peoples heads?

God

God is giving his saints a little trial, somewhat sharper than ordinary, that they may come out of the furnace like a refined lump, that they may run and be ready at tuck of drum. It is honourable to serve and be a footman in Christ's company. The weakest of God's people to run at Christ's foot from morn to even, he will not tyre, to gang and ride time about; he will take his friends on behind him, when they begin to weary, and dow not hold foot, Christ will wait on. O how sweet will it be to see Christ marching up in a full body, and all the trumpets sounding the triumph of the Lamb's victory, when the sword shall be red with the blood of enemies; when all the Heathen shall be rounding amongst themselves, that he hath done great things for them. Verily I fear the followers of the Lamb shall be forced to tread upon the dead bodies of the wicked ere all be done: the whole land shall have enough to do to shool them in the earth, ere all the play be play'd. Christ will kill faster with his own hand, than all the hands of the kingdom shall be able to bury. Many shall be buried unstreight; and moals shall be the winding sheet of many that look life-like the day. The blood of God's foes shall preach strange things to his people, and we shall rejoice with trembling. They that will not serve God, to themselves be it said. The day is near, when *BLOOD* shall be the sign of Christ's soldiers; and, *NO QUARTERS* shall be their word; *DEATH* and *DESTRUCTION* shall be written with broad letters on our Lord's standard. A look of him shall be a dead stroke to any that runs in his gate. It is best for you to keep within the shadow of God's wings, to  
cast



cast Christ's cloak over your heads, until you hear him say, *The brunt of the battle is over, and the shower is slacked.* And I am confident the fairest way to cheap the way, is to speal out of God's gate, and keep within the doors until the violence of the storm be gone, and begin to ebb, which is not full tide as yet. Christ deals tenderly with young plants, and waters them oft, least they go back. Be painful, and lose not life for the seeking.

I recommend this to you, to be read as an extract of God's love, that in crosses, and out of crosses, ye may rejoice.

ALEXANDER PEDAN.

L E T T E R LXXII.

*From Messrs. James Renwick, William Boyd, and John Flint, to their friends in Scotland.*

*Groningen, February 24. 1683.*

*Dearlly Beloved in our Lord Jesus Christ,*

**I**T is a great part of our duty to be mindful of you, to be keeping up a sympathizing frame of spirit with you, and to be wrestling with the Lord upon the behalf of his broken down work, and precious truths, which are set at nought and trampled upon: But, O! we fail in all duties, and come short in this also. Yet we may be persuaded, if we shall forget you, the Lord will forget us; and if we take ease to ourselves in this day of *Jacob's* trouble, the Lord will lead us forth with the workers of iniquity, when he shall cause peace to rest upon his *Israel.* O! our dear  
 Y friends,

friends, let us join all hand in hand together, and wrestle with the Lord; who knows but he may come and leave a blessing behind him; let us cry unto him, and refuse to be comforted, until he come and comfort our mother that is cast out in the wilderness. Are not all the Lord's dispensations calling for this at all our hands, to return unto the Lord our God, for we have fallen by our iniquity: *For Ashur shall not save us, we will not ride upon horses;* for in the Lord the fatherless findeth mercy. If it were so with us, would not the Lord heal our backslidings, he would love us freely, and his anger would be turned away. O! may not our souls rejoice to think upon the many, the noble, the strange ways, that the Lord hath taken to purge away our dross, and to make us a people zealous of good works; and upon the other hand, should we not be ashamed at ourselves, because the Lord's dealing with us hath had so little effect, for we have not yet learned the language of the rod and him who hath appointed it. O! he is taking all ways with us, to cause us take himself, and himself only for our all. Why hath he brought us so low, but that we may be made high, to see our strength only to be in himself, and that his hand may be only seen in raising us up? Why doth he suffer us to be brought into so many difficulties, but that he may manifest and magnify himself in taking us out of them, and carrying us through them? and also to try our patience, whether we will bear his indignation because we have sinned against him. And we think, there is nothing will help us so well to patience, as a full sight of the wrongs that we have done to the work of a holy God; we would then be  
made

made to say, we are *afflicted less than our iniquities deserve*. We would be then put to desire no deliverance from the yoke of our oppression, without a deliverance from the yoke of our transgressions. And why hath the Lord brought us to such a pass both as to our spiritual and natural food, being deprived of the one as to the public ordinances, and brought to great straits as to the other; but that he, for both, may be only depended upon: he will have his people's eyes, this day, to be upon nothing but himself for all that they need. O noble contrivance! O noble mean that the Lord makes use of to get himself made great to his people. Is it not enough to us that he lives and reigns? Are we not rich enough, who have him to go unto? O! let us remember that the Lord hath said, *When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst; I the Lord will bear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them. I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water. That they may see, and know, and consider, and understand together, that the hand of the Lord hath done this, and the holy One of Israel hath created it.* This is the thing the Lord will do unto you, and he will have himself only to be seen in it. Your children shall have this to say unto their children, The Lord brought our fathers into the wilderness, that he might shew them his wondrous and mighty works there: He made them to wander from mountain to mountain, in the peril of their lives, that he might teach them to seek rest only in himself, who is that true rest, who is the mighty rock in a weary land; and that they might betake themselves only to

him, who is life itself. He made them to travel in the wilderness without leaders and teachers, that he who teacheth as never man taught, might teach them, yea, be their only teacher, who is *the true Shepherd*, who makes his own sheep to hear his voice: He discovered unto them the treachery of hirelings, that thereby his care of his own sheep might be made manifest: He led them through a valley of salt pits, that his skill in leading them might appear: Yea, he suffered rocks to be upon all hands, that his own might have himself only to glory in for guiding him by these: He brought them into all extremities, that he might have opportunity to do them good, and that they might be made to see himself only therein. O dear friends, as the children of *Israel* had many of the Lord's wonders to tell, in leading their fathers out of *Egypt* through the wilderness; so shall your children have many of his wonders to tell in leading you through such wildernesses; but the carcasses of the murmurers must first fall and dung the land.

O therefore trust in God; it must be by faith that ye must overcome; through faith ye shall quench the violence of fire; out of weakness ye shall be made strong; ye are compassed about with a great cloud of witnesses, who have all obtained a good report through faith; they had *trial of cruel mockings, they were stoned, sawn asunder, tempted, and slain with the edge of the sword; they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth: Yea, they were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection.* Therefore, lay aside every weight, and run with patience



ence the race that is set before you, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of your faith, who is touched with the feeling of all your infirmities. Therefore go boldly unto the throne of his grace, that ye may find grace to help in the time of need. And seeing ye have a great high-priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the son of God, hold fast your profession. O be zealous for him, who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, and despised the shame. And he says unto you, I will never leave you nor forsake you; so that ye may boldly say, *The Lord is our helper, and we will not fear what man can do unto us.* As trouble from the world abounds, let your love to God and your zeal for him increase; that will be a good mark of true zeal. O be zealous, be zealous; there is a generation rising up, who will wish to have been living in our days, that they might have given a proof of their zeal for God. And for ourselves, we wot not well what to say; but we must be otherwise framed and disposed, ere the Lord make any use of us: The case of this day is extraordinary, and whom the Lord will make use of in any piece of work, he will also give more than an ordinary frame; he will have them humbled, he will have them self denied, he will have them filled with zeal, he will have them to be lions in his cause. O pray, O pray, that the Lord would work his own work, make use of whom he will to be instruments; and dear friends, pray for us, who desire to be

*Your companions in tribulation,  
and servants in the Lord,*

JAMES RENWICK,

WILL. BOYD, JO. FLINT.

## L E T T E R LXXIII.

*From the Rev. Mr. William Brackel, minister of the gospel in Holland, To the strict persecuted party of the Presbyterians in the Church of Scotland. 1682. \**

*To our Fathers and Brethren that are under the persecution, in the Church of Scotland.*

**A**Lthough I do not esteem my gifts so great as to write to you who are so eminently taught of the Holy Spirit; yet I cannot keep silent from shewing you, that my soul is knit to yours, which sometimes uses to be a comfort to the afflicted, to wit, to have some to bear burdens with them.

Whether I shall weep for sadness, or rejoice for gladness, is to me a great doubt. If I gave way to affection, grief would prevail; but when I consult with reason, joy abounds; because I heartily embrace the cause of this, although joined with the cause of the other; and I would not wish the cause of that taken away, with any disadvantage to this.

My heart is not a little wounded with sympathy, when I call to mind the sad things you are meeting with; when I consider how you are deprived of all the good things and means of life, that you are put to lodge day and night in the open air, without any shelter from the sun's heat, rain or cold, (how do you live? surely God feeds you

\* This Letter was written originally in *Latin*, and faithfully translated by one who desires to be a friend, *Feb. 19. 1683.*

you from heaven) when you embrace the bare rock for a bed, having the heavens, or it may be the cold snow for a covering; when I consider what it is to see the little ones (it may be) weeping for hunger and cold, and cannot get wherewith to warm them; when I consider what it is to be always surrounded with deadly foes, and to hear sometimes of the husband, sometimes of the father or mother, wife, son or daughter to be taken to execution, and all the day to be as lambs allotted to the slaughter; what brother? what Christian? yea, what unby-assed man can think on these things but with excess of grief?

But, upon the other hand, when I consider the heavenly abounding blessings, the great abundance of the Spirit, and spiritual joy, the deniedness to all worldly things, the ardent love to God and your neighbour, the cheerful martyrdom for the name of Jesus, the holiness of life, &c. which God your father has in a more abundant manner bestowed on you than any church in the world in these times. When I call to mind, that God is preserving you as a remnant of anciently a most flourishing church, and calling you as the first fruits, yea, I say, the first fruits of a church shortly; yea, I say, shortly to be raised up: When I see our Lord and Master Jesus Christ, the only head of his church, glorified in your miraculous preservation, and encompassing you as with a wall of fire round about, calling you either living or dying, and setting you forth, and preferring you to all, either godly or ungodly, who are lurking in quiet here and there, for to give a testimony for himself. I say, when I seriously ponder these things, how can I be sad?

what

what shall I say, - but glory be to the Lord? what shall I do, but most willingly approve of his most holy and wise government of his household, who follows you with a greater and more infinite and eternal love and good-will than I can express: should I seem to repine by wishing a change, and so disapproving of his dispensations? nay, the most holy and merciful God does all things well.

But what shall I say unto you, my dear brethren? I approve of your careful and mutual correspondence with one another, and all the churches; I approve of your strict discipline, both as to the private life of every member, and also as to your separation from these swelling-in-pride Bishops and their adherents. And likewise I approve of your separation from these who have accepted the indulgence from the civil magistrate, and so have acknowledged a foreign and extraneous power in the church, and introduced it into the church against the sole government of our only King Jesus Christ, which hath proven the destruction of the church, and the greatest hinderance to its restoration. I approve also of your separation from the frighted and searing, though otherwise pious men, and these who are inclining to the indulged side, loving a short bodily ease, though with a check of conscience; who deprive themselves of all that open boldness they ought to have, and entrap themselves in inextricable snares, not considering how great hurt they do to the church. O how much rather is it to be choiced to die a noble and Christ-glorifying death, and to obtain the crown of martyrdom, or to endure all sorts of injuries and oppressions in the desarts and mountains, *than to enjoy*



*enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness.*

Go on therefore, dear brethren, as ye have begun; *Come out from among them, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; Then shall I receive you, and be to you a father, and ye shall be unto me as sons and daughters, saith the Lord of hosts.* Let not the devil and his instruments and followers fright you, who is come unto you full of great wrath, because he knows his time is but short, for the God of peace shall bruise him under your feet.

Let not the cruelty nor subtilty of enemies, nor hunger, nor cold, nor the prison, nor a gallows, nor the sword, fear you: *none of these things can separate you from the love of God. Yea, your light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for you a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.* Let always that saying of our Saviour's be in your mind, *He that takes not up his cross and follows me, is not worthy of me. He that finds his life shall lose it, but he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.* Neither let your peace entice you to comply with those, who, altho' they be godly men, yet they live only for themselves, and not for the good of the church; nay rather for its hurt. O how pleasant and noble a thing is it to lay the foundation of a more pure church, to make a way by which King Jesus shall enter to restore his church in Scotland. O! how profitable will it be to after generations to have you for a good example to follow? and that they can say of you, so and so did our forefathers, such and such things suffered they in such and such a case; they behaved themselves so and so. O what excess of joy shall they have, who (after the persecu-  
tions

tions are over) shall see the people of God in peace glorifying him. How shall they then be confounded who are sitting silent, frightened, and deserting the cause and people of God? How shall they then come trembling and confessing their faults to you? and these who are now persecuting you, how shall they blush and be ashamed? Let me speak to you in the words of *Isaiah*, *Hear ye the word of the Lord, ye that tremble at his word, your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my name's sake, said, Let the Lord be glorified; but he shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed.* Then says the Psalmist, *The righteous shall rejoice when he seeth vengeance: he shall wash his feet in the blood of the wicked.* So that a man shall say, *verily there is a reward for the righteous, verily there is a God to judge in the earth.* Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompence tribulation to them that trouble you; but to you who are troubled rest.

Therefore, my brethren, watch, stand fast in the faith, quit yourselves like men, be strong, and God will strengthen your soul. All ye that hope in him, be ye stable, unmoved, always abounding in the work of the Lord. *Hold fast that you have, let no man take your crown. Be ye faithful unto the death, and God shall give you a crown of life. For the rod of the wicked shall not rest always upon the lot of the righteous.*

Farewel, Reverend Fathers, dear brothers and sisters; the Lord enlighten you with the light of his countenance, and grant you to taste of his all-sufficiency, and strengthen you in the faith, that ye may always behold these things that are invisible, and live by them; and that he may fill you with the spirit of joy and gladness,

ness, and that he may cherish you in the hope of the life to come, and sanctify you more and more, that ye may do all things in his sight, in faith, as the sons of God through Christ Jesus, in love, in fear, in obedience, with cheerfulness, wisdom, patience and constancy.

The Lord be your sun and shield, and rock of habitation, yea, all in all to you, both in time and throughout all eternity. — — shall shew you our mind in the rest. Be mindful of me in your prayers, that the Almighty may give me a greater measure of his Spirit, for comfort, holiness and faithfulness in my work, and fitness to go about it. The Lord be with you. I greet you with the right hand of fellowship.

WILLIAM BRACKEL.

---

## L E T T E R LXXIV.

*From the Rev. Mr. William Brackel, to the fathers and brethren who are in Scotland under the persecution.*

*February 9th 1683.*

*Most loving fathers and brethren in Christ Jesus our glorious King,*

**I**T is not only come to my ears that ye wrote and sent to me a letter of answer, but also a copy of it is come to my hand; but where itself sticks, or by whom intercepted I know not.

It rejoiced my soul greatly to know your affairs both by the foresaid copy, and also by your letters

letters sent to us; especially the miraculous divine protection of you makes me both greatly to admire and rejoice; who being courageous and busied in your convention, by taking a care of your church affairs, did see the cruel enemies even threatening death, seeking you, even compassing about the house, stricken with a certain *Sodomish* blindness, that they could not enter.

How admirable are the works of God! how unsearchable is his deep goodness! truly we find that he hath favour and mercy towards his saints, and perpetual care towards the elect; truly he is a firey wall about *Jerusalem*, and his angels compass about those that fear him, and delivers them. He that sits under the covert of the Most High shall lodge under the shadow of him that is omnipotent. Let praise and glory be sung to our Lord, by all who hear these things, both angels and men. It is needful that this experience of the most efficacious presence of God should strengthen your confidence; that he who delivered you out of the mouth of the bear and lion, shall also in the time to come deliver you from all dangers that shall fall in your lot, to the glory of his waited-for divine defence. But if God should suffer this or that man, or even many, to fall into the hands of enemies, or rather, that he himself should give them; by this ye shall be taught experience, that that has not fallen out, because of the defect of divine protection; but that God has called them out, name by name for a testimony of himself; yea, although they should seem to die in the eyes of enemies, and their end to be an ignominious affliction, yet they, I say, go away in peace, and are crowned with a joyful crown and immortality. Neither  
are



are the martyrs of the church of *Scotland* killed, that it may be extirpate, but that it may be builded; for the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church: the church was founded by blood, and it grew by blood: the more cruelly *Pharaoh* oppressed the people of God, the more fertile they were multiplied. We are very desirous of the coming of the Lord; saying, we wish *that salvation may come out of Zion; when the Lord shall turn again the captivity of his people, Jacob shall be glad, and Israel shall rejoice.* But let no man cast down his heart, because God is only trying your patience; he is also making our way plain, and a way to himself, to his greater glory in all lands. Would *Israel* have been more happy if he had been delivered out of less oppression in *Egypt*? Was not his deliverance the more glorious the heavier the persecution was? Wait therefore for the salvation of the Lord: how great shall his goodnes be, which *he hath laid up for them that fear him*, which he hath prepared for those that betake themselves to him, before the sons of men. Shew yourselves men in the time of distress. Let him that is weak in strength, leaning upon his Head, say, I am a man of excellent valour. He that hath God near unto him (as is made known to you by many, both public and private experiences) from no man would fear either threatenings, swords, or ropes. Learned men, great men, albeit godly, of great name, err in this matter, but God hath chosen these that were fools in the world, as wise; those that were weak, as strong; the ignoble, and those of no esteem, that he might bring to disgrace those who are in honour. In the mean time, let unanimity,

love, fervency of mind, gladness in justification, remain among you; and out of these, holiness, and a perpetual intercourse of the soul with God. This one thing I exhort you, that every one may teach another; the fathers, mothers, aged and more learned, may teach the little ones, and others who are more ignorant of the way of the Lord, the fundamentals of religion; least the church should perish through lack of knowledge, or least any should waver in the true faith.

The three students chosen by you to the pastoral office are busy at their studies; the fourth we are waiting for: By God's grace we hope you shall see them the next year, and hear them preaching.

Since the time that I have known your estate, I have judged it necessary that certain men, endued with the Holy Ghost, piety, authority, and years, should be chosen to the pastoral office, and should be sent unto us, for the space of one or two months, that they might be instructed in the method of forming of preachings, and some other things. Next that they should be examined in a lawful way by some pastor in an ecclesiastic convention, (let not little knowledge deter any man) and in the name of the Lord sent unto his vineyard, and be confirmed in that office by the imposition of hands; and so return to you in such a state of the church. I care not much for the knowledge of tongues, and literal instruction, although in itself and other circumstances, I think much of it; for not by the defect of learning, but of the Spirit and piety, is the church of *Scotland* brought into so miserable a condition; and I think it is not to be restored

by learning, but by the Spirit and piety. I propose thir things to you, that you may seriously consider that thing of so great moment; and that ye may either do or reject that, as ye shall think fit. The Lord be a sun and shield unto you. And, I am,

*Your lover, and promoted minister,*

WILLIAM BRACKEL.

## L E T T E R LXXV.

*From the Rev. Mr. Alexander Shields, to the Prisoners for Christ in Donnottar Castle; concerning the Boundaries of Christian Fellowship; especially with whom it is lawful to join in divine Worship, and from whom it is duty to withdraw.*

*Edin. June 1685.*

*Wellbeloved and honoured in the Lord,*

**G**OD is love, and he that dwelleth in God, dwelleth in love; and he that dwelleth in love delighteth in union, the native fruit and effect of it: That union that hath most of God and love in it, and hath a tendency to lead to, and keep near God; that union, that hath love for its cement, and Christ for its centre, and truth for its foundation: Therefore it follows, that the closer a people cleave to Christ and his truths, the more inclinable they will be to union, the sooner they will obtain it, and the surer they keep it; that is both the best means

and the trueſt meaſures I can conceive, either for attaining or entertaining union, in a divided and declining day, as this our day of blaſphemy, trouble, and rebuke is. It hath always been found, that departing from God hath been both the father, the foſterer, and the fomentor of diviſion; as our wretched defections have been the unhappy cauſe of all our woeful diſtractions among profeſſors in this age: Therefore, except the cauſe be removed by ſome jointneſs in turning unto the Lord, and an unanimous acknowledging and diſowning of theſe, the effects can never ceaſe. All other healing methods of forgetting or forgiving, or forbearing to reſent things diſhonourable to Chriſt, or deſtructive to his cauſe, are but ill-tempered plaſters, covering the wound ſlightly; not curing remedies, to take away the malignity of the hurt. This is always deſirable, as abſolutely neceſſary for the well-being of a church, eſpecially while in the furnace of affliction; then, if ever, it may be expected; then, if ever, it ought to be ſtudied. The union of enemies ought to be an upſtirring motive to it, and the ſenſe of our own preſſures ſhould make us leave nothing uneffayed to accompliſh it; eſpecially there is nothing more ſuitable than for priſoners to exhort and ſtir up one another to this, after the example of the Apoſtle, *Eph. iv. 1, 2, 3.* It is one way of walking worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called, to endeavour to *keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.* But, as this is an unity of the Spirit's working and influencing, ſo it muſt be of the Spirit's ordering and directing; and not according to the dictates of man's reaſon or prudence, to the prejudice of



of truth. O if the Spirit of God, in mercy to us, would exert his power and gracious conduct, in discovering and determining all of us to submit to the means and measure thereof, laid down in his word! O if there were a joining in praying for, and pursuing after this! then all our disjoinings would be soon jointed together.

Now, the greatest matter or our divisions is about joining in worship; for our defections have been so disorderly, that the most tender have thought they fall under that command of withdrawing from *disorderly walkers*: and this is the question we would enquire a little into.

I would not have you to expect a decision of it from me, with any tolerable accuracy; for the question itself is so *difficult*, the stating of it so *intricate*, the cases so *various*, and my unacquaintedness with circumstances, and insufficiency for solving doubts so *palpable*; that, were it not that I would do all things to testify my respect to you, and contribute my poor mite for your help and instruction, I should not have dared to meddle with it: And all that I can do is, to propose some generals to your consideration, and offer some distinctions to clear the state of the question, not imposing upon you, but only telling you my judgment.

I think then there may be considered several sorts of JOINING in worship.

*First*, There is a *joining* which we call *Catholic*, amongst Christians, considered as such; and there is a *joining* which, for distinctions sake, we call *ecclesiastic*, among the members of the organical church, considered as church members. The *first* is founded upon the *communion of saints*, obliging all the members of the same mystical

body, to join in all things that may evidence that union: And this is capable of several *sub-distinctions*; as,

1. There may be a joining more *general* with all Christians, holding the same fundamentals, being of the same one body, under the conduct of the same one spirit, maintaining the same one hope of their calling, confessing the same one Lord, professing the same one faith, and partaking of the same one baptism, *Eph* iv. 3—6. Holy devout men out of every nation under heaven, may be capable of joint acts of worship with edification; whether they be *Parthians*, or *Medes*, or *Elamites*, *Acts* ii. 5. 9. &c. *Of a truth* it is, *that God is no respecter of persons;—he that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him*, *Acts* x. 34. 35. And forasmuch as God is pleased to give any, of whatsoever nation, the like gift as he has given to us; we must not withstand God, by accounting of any unclean, or separating from them, as unclean; as *Peter* expounds his vision, *Acts* xi. 9. 17. And so, wherever providence casts our lot, we may join even in worship with all, in whom we find the same spirit of faith, though their cause and the word of their testimony be not the same way stated as ours is: and so we might join in worship with any that we find serious among the *Abyssines*, if we were in *Ethiopia*, whose testimony is stated against *Gentilism*; or, if we were in *Armenia*, and some other places, as the *Lesser Asia*, we might join in worship with Christians there, whose testimony is stated against *Turkism*, and that abomination of *Mahomet*, suppose they were qualified, as is above mentioned.

2. There may be a joining more *special* with  
all

all Protestants, concerted in one common opposition to all the enemies of truth, and owning and designing the advancement of reformation; though their respective oppositions, contendings, and wrestlings be not the same way stated, nor against the same enemies, and the testimonies be not the same, for one and the same truth that ours is; and even though their sentiments about other things, extraneous to their testimony, be not the same: Providing always they hold by the truth, and nothing but the truth, and nothing contrary to any of the reformed churches testimonies. Hence, as we may pray for, so we may pray with, *all that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, and all that in every place call upon his name, who is our Lord and theirs both*, 1 Cor. i. 2. With all that hold the same head Christ, and own the same allegiance to him, and dependence upon him; and are *not carried about with every wind of doctrine; but speaking the truth in love, do grow up into him in all things; from whom the whole body fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body, to the edifying of itself in love*, Eph. iv. 14, 15, 16. With all who seek and maintain the pure doctrine of the common salvation, and do earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints; though their contentions be not about the same particulars with us, *Jude*, ver. 3. With all that *hold fast the form of sound words, in faith and love, which is in Christ Jesus; tho' the form in every part and respect be not the same*, 2 Tim. i. 13, supposing it is not contradictory; for that rule must be observed, in 1 Tim. vi. 3. *If any man teach*

*teach otherways, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine that is according to godliness; ye must carry towards him, as he is there described by withdrawing from him: And yet if we find Protestants sound in the main, and faithful to their own peculiar testimony, even though they differ in some things from us (and, may be, in such things as were not so tolerable in those of our own church, owning the same testimony with ourselves) yet that is not sufficient to fix a disjoining from them upon: For, saith the Apostle, If in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall even reveal that unto you; nevertheless whereunto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule; Phil. iii. 15, 16. And so, every church and party hath their peculiar word of Christ's patience to suffer and wrestle for; so we may join in worship with any of them, qualified as above said; without further scruple or inquiry, if they hold not some corruptions inconsistent with their own testimony: As if we were in *France*, we might join with Protestants there, contending against Popery, though they do not contend with us against Prelacy: if we were in *Holland*, we might join with the reformed there, witnessing against Socinian and Arminian errors, though they do not witness with us against *Erastianism*: If in *Hungary* and *Germany*, we might join with Calvinists there, wrestling against the Lutheran divisions, though they do not wrestle against those defections that are amongst us: If in *England*, we might join with Dissenters there, testifying against conformity with liturgical worship, and the impositions, snares and sins they have among them, though they*



they do not testify against our *compliances*, or *indulgences*, or *test*, &c. or our other *oaths* and *bonds*; and even with *Independents* we might join occasionally, for that difference is not the matter of our present testimony. And this leads me to another sub-distinction, *viz.*

3. There may be a joining more *particularly* with all our covenanted brethren, all our fellow-confederates in the same Solemn League, owning the same Covenant, and prosecuting the same ends thereof, though there be difference of judgment about the circumstantiated duties of it; and inequality as to the attainment of the ends of it; and a disconformity in some points of practice, that are extraneous to them, and not the matter of our present testimony; yet if there be an unanimous concurrence for the establishment of the things covenanted, and for the extirpation of the things abjured, we may join in worship with them upon occasion, and in every thing that may strengthen and stablish them in that covenant; see *Isa. ii. 3. Jer. l. 4, 5.* Especially I speak of fellow covenanters of several churches and nations in league together, and not of the members of one church, I am not come to that yet: As if we were in *England*, or *Ireland*, many things might be allowed among our brethren, both ministers and professors there, which cannot be so amongst ourselves in our own land, without scandal: for the constitution of the nations governments is different, and the duties that the same covenant obliges to, with a reference to these respective governments are different, and they never attained to that pitch of reformation that we arrived at; and therefore there may be many things;

in their practice not consentaneous with ours, and yet we may join with them. There is not the same reason for our joining with the like among ourselves; they may take an indulgence, for freedom to their meetings, on far other terms than we can do; for it is not derived from the same supremacy, nor pretended to be given by virtue of the same; though I think theirs was not right neither; yet there was not the same sufficiency of a foundation to withdraw from it, as there was from ours: and theirs did not belong to our testimony. They might acknowledge and plead for the freedom of their parliaments; it were scandalous to do so for ours, which are so corrupted, that they require *perjury*, as the necessary qualification of their members: They may own and acknowledge a magistracy without these terms, that the constitution of our government, and the obligation of our covenants, to us make indispensable; and so they may have several transactions with their rulers, that we cannot admit of with ours: they may take the oath of allegiance in *England*, as it is there conceived, and yet I think we may admit of a catholic joining in acts of worship with them. Not that I think these things are not faults; but I judge, they are not such things as may oblige us to break off from this that I call catholic Christian joining with them in worship.

*Secondly*, There is a joining which we call *ecclesiastical*, among the members of one church, or formed society of professing believers, not only concerted together in the same cause, and may be, engaged in the same covenant, for promoting and prosecuting the same covenanted reformation; but also owning an unanimous  
 subjection

subjection to the same reformed doctrine, worship, discipline and government, enjoying the same pure ordinances of Christ, dispensed according to his own institution, by his own appointed officers and ministers, approved and chosen, or submitted unto, by all the fellow-members of that society or church: and this is a nearer joining, and requires more strict conditions, and more certain qualifications than the other. Yet this also may be considered in several cases: As,

1<sup>st</sup>. There may be an ecclesiastical joining in a church constituted, and in a beautiful order, and in a settled condition, with all the fellow-members of that church, of a sound faith, and blameless profession; and holding forth the word of life, with all that own the common principles, follow the common duties, prosecute the common interest, seek the common peace, oppose the common enemies of that church, even though there be some corruptions in it that we cannot help, some infirmities that we must bemoan, and yet bear with what we cannot help; we cannot have so pure a church, but it will have a spot in it: It is only the completement of the love of Christ, when he shall present it a glorious church, that can make it without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing. All the churches that *Paul* wrote to, had faults, errors and corruptions taxed in them; and yet he enjoins the receiving one another, bearing with infirmities, bearing one another's burdens, forbearing one another, and calls for love, peace and concord. The churches of *Asia* had several corruptions in them, and steps of defection charged upon them, in our Lord's epistles to them; as entertaining them that held  
the

the doctrine of *Balaam*, and the *Nicolaitans*, and suffering *Jezebel* to seduce; lukewarmness, indifferency, &c. and yet there was no disjoining amongst them upon these accounts, no *schism* fixed thereon. There was, no doubt, among the faithful, a conscientious withdrawing from them that held these doctrines, and maintained such practices; for no pretence of prudence, or peace and concord, can ever dispense with the obligation of that: this shall be at all times, and in all cases. But there was not a disjoining from that church, that was deficient in their discipline against, and correction of these doctrines and practices, for that would have been *schism*: For I take the true notion of *schism* to be not every debate, dissention, or contention about truths, that's *division*, not *schism*; nor every falling away into error, that's *apostacy*, not *schism*; nor every withdrawing from the communion of the church, upon grounds true or false, that may be *separation*, not *schism*: but I take *schism* to be a factious and disorderly disjoining and breaking off from a constitute church, into which persons were formerly joined; and taking separate courses at their own hand, without any respect to the peace, or order of the church; or the methods laid down by Christ, to take away that which scandalized; or to their own sphere or capacity in which they are, that is *schism*. I cannot find it but once exprest in our translation, that is, 1 *Cor.* xii. 25. where the way to cure and prevent it, gives us some understanding of the nature of it, to wit, *That the members should have the same care one for another*; and where, without any regard to this, we *turn aside by the flocks of Christ's companions*, and leave the shepherds and the flocks,



flocks, and will feed by ourselves, *Cant. i. 7, 8.* we commit schism, a great sin; but it is many times charged on practices which will not bear it, and in seasons when it cannot readily be committed; for, in the broken state of a church, keeping ourselves free of defections, though in a separate way, withdrawing from persons which we were never joined with, in a time when the church hath no order to rectify or remove offences, and Christ's method cannot be obtained, that can be no schism; but when the church is rightly constitute, as the causes of disjoining and withdrawing from congregations, or persons, may be orderly removed; so the cases wherein it may be allowed, and the methods of it, may be more easily stated; Christ's common rule doth sufficiently order all things in that case, *Matth. xviii. 15—20.* I stay the longer upon this, to obviate the cavils of some, against conscientious withdrawers from, and witnesses against defections, whom they call, upon that account, *Schismatics* and *Separatists*, because they break off from them at their own hand, and will not join with persons guilty of defection or scandals; and yet the case is not determined by a church judicatory. I grant indeed, from what is said, it will follow, that if our church were *constitute as formerly*, if we should disjoin from worship with the Indulged, or Countenancers of Prelacy, or Banders, or Testers, or Alledgers, &c. we might incur a censure somewhat like that; but it cannot be so now, when that method cannot be followed; yet we are obliged to follow it as much as we can, and that is by doing the equivalent. Such as, it is manifest, would incur the sentence of excommuni-

A a cation,

cation, after admonition rejected, we may withdraw our communion from them; such as would be liable to a suspension, we may withhold our hearing and joining with them; such as would be severely rebuked, we may show some discountenance, to testify our dislike of their ways; not taking upon us to inflict these things as censures, for we have no power, but only signifying our sense of the moral obligation and equity of these censures, whether they be inflicted or not. But before I leave this I would add a subordinate distinction of this joining, in a twofold case.

1. When a constitute church is advancing, and growing up gradually unto a reformation, there may be a joining with many things, that otherwise we ought not to countenance: we may then wave and forbear some debates about things not so material, nor the matter of the present testimony; contending about which might retard and hinder the intended reformation. Hereupon we find that the apostles and elders, in the first general assembly at *Jerusalem*, condescended to some things, to please the *Jews*, laying upon the *Gentiles* some things (only ceremonial burdens) as *abstaining from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled*, Acts xv. 19. 29. which decrees were afterward retracted, and were of no force: In this case the Apostle's rule is to be observed. 1 Cor. ix. 19—24. and all things are to be done by way of condescendency, consistent with duty and edification, to avoid offence to the church of God, 1 Cor. x. 32, 33. Then special regard is to be had to these excellent gospel-commands, of *having peace with one another*, Mark ix. 50. 1 Thess.

v. 13. *By love serving one another, without biting and devouring one another, Gal. v. 13. 15. With all lowliness, and meekness, and long-suffering, forbearing one another in love, Eph. iv. 2. Bearing one another's burdens, Gal. vi. 2. and many others.* And so we find that our fathers suffered many things, that are not so tolerable; as hearing of Episcopal men; bearing long with lay-patronages; voluntary submitting to the magistrates unjust sentence of confinement, &c. all which are exploded and expelled out of the societies of the faithful.

2. When the same constitute church is declining and falling backward from a degree of reformation attained, tho' there may be joining with the same church (as was formerly proved from the instance of some of the *Asian* churches) yet there must not be a joining in these defections, nor with those that promote them; but an earnest contending, and a zealous witnessing and wrestling against the first motions of them; and a contending for the faith once delivered to the saints, *Jude 3.* Then we must with all diligence and faithfulness, *hold fast what we have attained, Rev. ii. 25. chap. iii. 11.* Then we must *strengthen the things that remain and are ready to die, v. 2. and stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and not to be entangled with any yoke of bondage, Gal. v. 1.* These same decrees of the apostles, of abstaining from meats offered to idols, were afterwards declared indifferent, *1 Cor. viii. and x. chap.* and afterward both that, and other indifferent observances, were condemned, as in the case of *Peter's* doing the same, *Gal. ii. 11.* It was allowable that *Timothy* should be circumcised; but

this would have been sinful to do it to *Tiūs*. No, *Paul* would not subject to that for an hour, nor condescend to the quitting the least hair-breadth of truth, or Christian liberty, to pleasure them, whom yet he had pleased before, *Gal.* ii. 3. 5. no, the case was now altered.

2dly. There may be a joining in a church broken and born down, and persecuted; then union is most desirable and necessary. The sheep should run together when the wolves are ravening amongst them: Christ's doves should flock together to their rocks, when the storm is most boisterous; then a gathering together, though as *a nation not desired* with one consent *before the decree bring forth*, and the day pass as the chaff; and a seeking the Lord, and a seeking with *one consent*; and a seeking *meeckness* as well as *righteousness*, that it may be they be hid together: And it is very suitable, that the furnace should make the gold run together in a lump, even though some dross be inseparable from it. Then an union in the Lord, and a joining, as far as it can consist with truth and duty, is a thing earnestly to be endeavoured, and, I hope, intensely desired by all, who are sensible of the present *breach* and woful *desertion*, and wretched *division* of the church of *Scotland*. But in this case, as this joining is most desirable, so it is most difficult; and the due measures thereof hardest to be determined, and the true methods thereof most warily to be fixed; for certain it is that it must not be unlimited and unrestricted, nor promiscuously to be sought and kept with all, with whom formerly in the church's constitute and settled condition we joined, and with whom we *took sweet counsel together, and went into the house*



*house of God in company.* We would indeed join with all that will declare themselves for our Lord, in this day of the heathen's raging, and the people's tumultuating against him; and his interests; with all the faithful friends of Christ, in a joint opposition against all his enemies; with all the lovers of Zion, that *take pleasure in the stones, and favour the dust thereof*; with all that own and espouse our Lord's quarrel, and every part of it, which the enemy opposeth: In a word, with all that keep their ground and go forward, but will not go back one step from the attained-unto reformation. But we must not join with all, nor say, *A confederacy* with all that say it, out of fear, or a preposterous desire of peace, with prejudice to truth and duty; even though we should be *for signs and wonders in Israel*, Isa. viii. 12. 18. For that were a combination against the Lord, rather than an union in the Lord: Nay, we must rather prefer to embark our lot with the little flock, that follows Christ, and refuses to hear the voice of strangers, and the few names that have kept cleanest garments, than the multitude of those, who leave the right way; even though reputed wiser and more prudent, and continuing still eminent in piety: We would love peace, but we must love the truth first, and best, *Zech. viii. 19.* As I said, in a declining time, even while the church continues constitute, we must not give such a latitude to our joining with persons and things, as formerly we might, when reformation was upon the ascendant; so much more in a broken state ought it to be restricted yet more; for neither are we to join with all whom, for the preservation of the church's order, we might join with them:

for now that is not, nor can that same method and order of suspending our withdrawing from persons or things, until the church's jurisdiction decide it, be observed; for then it would follow, that nothing, or no person, should be withdrawn from at all; for the church now hath no juridical power. In this case, then the question may be twofold:

(1.) What ministers we may join with?

(2.) What professors we may join with?

(1.) For the first, we need not insist on it; for neither do ye stand in need to be informed of that, nor is it the present question that ye are inquisitive about; nor, alas! are ye in a capacity to hear any, nor (which requires a more weighty *alas!*) are there many to be heard by any that long after Christ's pure ordinances: but yet, by the way, because it falls in here, I shall hint a short word of my thoughts on that too.

I judge then they may come under a twofold consideration. Either as they are ministers of a national church, devoted to the service of that consociation of churches in one nation, united under one kind of government, and subject to the constitutions of that collective church; for so, next to this their relation to the church universal visible, they are to be considered, as having a primary relation unto, and a dependence upon, and incorporation with that church, as the object of their ministry: Or, they may be considered, as the particular pastors of a congregational church, ordained for and chosen by the members of that particular congregation. This last, as to the exercise of it, may be hindered by mens violence, though the relation itself can never be taken away, but by them that gave it,

and

and consented unto it ; so that we ought to have a particular tenderness of respect to them, who were our pastors by and according to Christ's appointment; when we cannot enjoy their fixed ministry; and we should be loather to discountenance them than any : and if we could do it either in conscience or safety, if he will abide with us, we ought to adhere to him ; but so, as not to confine him, or monopolize the gospel to ourselves, with prejudice of the public good of the national church. Yet I think every parish, as it is called, that had a faithful minister, who continues so still, should maintain and entertain him, as much as they can, without wronging others. But suppose a minister could have a fixed station amongst a people, even in this disturbed state of the church, and turned either insufficient or scandalous, or unfaithful, and so deserved a suspension, I conceive the people have power from Christ, when a presbytery cannot be had, to do the equivalent of it. But now, when this is not practicable, we must look upon all our ministers under the first consideration, and carry towards them, by joining with them, or withdrawing from them, as the faithful, or else as the unfaithful ministers of the church of *Scotland*, according as they carry towards the common cause for which they are consecrated, and the common testimony for the word of Christ's patience, which they are called to bear. And hence, because they are our own ministers by the nearest ties, that we can have in this disordered time ; therefore, being faithful, we owe to them all the duties that we can discharge to them in this national capacity, which we could owe to them in a congregational, if we were in that capacity ;

as to *know them that labour* amongst us, and *admonish* us, and to *esteem them very highly for their work's sake*, 1 Theſſ. v. 12. 13. and to *obey them that have rule over us*, and submit ourſelves; *ſeeing they watch for our ſouls, as they that muſt give an account; that they may do it with joy, and not with grief; for that is unprofitable for us*, Heb. xiii. 17. And it follows alſo, becauſe they are our own, therefore, being unfaithful, we ſhould take the greater faithful freedom to tell them when they offend us, and diſcountenance them, when they deſerve it, more than is incumbent upon us, or pertinent for us to do with others; we would not take upon us to judge them, but we would have a judgment of our own duty, how to carry towards them: and this cannot be offenſive to conſcientious miniſters, who, as they ſhould be, are more tender of their Maſter's honour, than of their own perſonal credit: and I judge, there are none ſuch in *Scotland* this day, whom the zeal of their God, and of his houſe is eating up, and on whom the reproaches of them that reproached him are fallen, and who are conſcientiouſly tender alſo of the church's peace, conſiſtent with truth; but they are ſo conſcious of their own ſhort-comings, faintings and failings, in the duty of this day, that they will be content. the beſt of them to be reproved, by the pooreſt plowman in the nation, that hath the cauſe of God rightly ſtated in his heart; and will take it as oil to his head. And I am ſure, if more of this goſpel ſpirit were amongst us, our difficulties and diviſions might ſoon be overcome: but alas! it is not ſo; and therefore many poor mourners are in the miſt what to do, and with whom to join.



I would only propose in the general, who I think we should have a care of joining with: It is difficult to determine particulars, and I think it a great defect, that hitherto (notwithstanding of the heat of this debate, and the hurt of our darkness about it; yet) this question hath not been determined about *hearing* and *not hearing*; we would be tender of ministers, and think it dangerous, upon light grounds, to break or deny a minister's commission; it cannot be every difference of judgment, or personal failing of infirmity, or some discovered hypocrisy, self-seeking, or emulation, that may be a sufficient ground of our withdrawing from a minister; some may *reach Christ out of envy and strife, of contention, not sincerely; notwithstanding every way, whether in pretence or in truth, Christ is preached*, and herein we ought to rejoice; if he be preached by them that have a call to it, *Phil. i. 15,—18.* Yet upon several grounds we may warrantably withdraw, and refuse to join with many.

1. As *first*, we cannot join with such as Christ's ambassadors, who never had a commission from him in his orderly appointed way, but either took it up at their own hand, or else from them that have none themselves to give; as the Prebendary curates, ordained by the bishops; these are such as run, and are not sent, *Jer. xxiii. 21, 22.* and *how shall they preach, except they be sent?* *Rom. x. 15.* these are strangers, that the sheep should not hear, *John x. 15, &c.*

2. We cannot join with such, as it may be, had a commission, but they have wholly subjected it to the disposal of strange lords; either to lay it aside, or to take a new one from them: as such old Presbyterians as conformed to Prelacy; and

and such as submitted by the act of *Glasgow*, to their deposition, and never avouched publicly their ministerial exercise since; but privately would preach now and then: and such likewise who have consented to the giving a bond not to exercise their ministry for such a time, upon the council's order; these are light and treacherous persons, polluting the sanctuary, who have done, and suffered violence to be done to the law of their master, *Zeph. iii. 4.*

3. We cannot join with such, who pretend to keep their old commission, but they have changed the holding of it, and taken a new grant of it from the usurper of their Master's prerogatives, with such instructions as are dishonourable to him, and destructive to his kingdom's liberties; which, though they did not keep, nor possibly did not mind to keep them, yet they did not disown and reject them with a testimony: these have become servants of men, and have not kept their Master's command *without spot, unrebukable, until his appearing*; such are the indulged, and their brethren, the connived at clergy, who tacitely, though not so expressly did officiate by virtue of the same new grant. I could never find a solid argument against hearing of the euratees, which did not as forcibly militate against the indulged.

4. We cannot join with such as have perverted their commission, or corrupted it, either by preaching false doctrine, or making false application of true doctrine; condemning the generation of the righteous, perverting people from the right ways of the Lord, condemning duty, and approving sin, and leading into snares, and defending and pleading for defection. We must  
*cease*

*cease to hear the instruction that causeth to err from the words of knowledge, Prov. xix. 27. And such leaders cause the people to err, and they that are led of them are destroyed, Isa. ix. 16. Such are many of our time-serving daubers with untempered mortar, Ezek xxii. 28.*

5. We cannot join with such as thereupon *cause divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrine which we have learned*; either by maintaining the causes of these divisions, or casting fuel on that fire, by reproaching the faithful; or by good words and fair speeches deceiving the hearts of the simple, *Rom. xvi. 17, 18.*

6. We cannot join with such as have forfeited their commission, either by gross scandals and disorderly walking, either in their personal or ministerial capacity; or by lying by, and doing nothing in such a day, wherein there is so much to do, not lifting up their voice like a trumpet, &c. but are sinfully silent, as to the sins and snares of the time; *have not discovered our iniquities, but have seen for us false burdens, and causes of banishment, Lam. ii. 14.* We see the sentence and censure of such *Levites* from the Lord, *Ezek. xlv. 9,—15.* These would deserve the censure of the church, if ever they recovered their orderly jurisdiction; but all that Christians can do in recognition of that, is to withdraw from them; there is no other remedy without approving of their sin: but I do not think this should be done hastily at first, but in the gospel method, after admonition, and telling them to take heed to their ministry, again and again repeated, and rejected; and then it must needs follow, ay and while the offence be taken away by some acknowledgment or amendment.

The

The *second* inquiry is more of your concernment, What professors may be joined with in such a day? And alas, that there should be such occasion given for that question by the scandalous stumblings of many, and jumbings of others; but it is a day wherein the joining that is desired cannot be in and upon the same centre Christ and so cannot be stedfast; a day wherein he that is for a sanctuary to some, is a stone of stumbling and rock of offence to others; and so there cannot be a good agreement among such, and *many*, even the greatest part, *have stumbled, and are fallen and broken, and snared, and taken*, Isa. viii. 14. 15. and this makes it a day of trouble, and of treading down, and perplexity in the valley of vision, *Isa. xxii. 5*. This makes it difficult to determine; and this difficulty is so much the greater misery, that there are so few that retain any profession; and yet among these few there cannot be a joining in the Lord, without jars and janglings: this is sad, and ought to be mourned over, and all endeavours ought to be used to have it removed: we would desire to study tenderness, to strengthen that much decayed brotherly love, so much commended, and strictly commanded in the gospel; it is the new commandment of our Lord, in the New Testament, whereby we shall be known to be his disciples, *John xiii. 34, 35*. *The followers of God, as dear children, should walk in love, as Christ also loved them, Eph. v. 1, 2*. It is the desire of my soul to be at that *conflict*, that the apostle had, for all the professors in Scotland, *that their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, Col. ii. 1, 2*. But as for



you brethren, as touching brotherly love, I  
 hope, ye need not that I should write unto you;  
 for yourselves are taught of God to love one ano-  
 ther, 1 Thess. iv. 9. Division is always a great  
 mischief; but never so miserable, as in a declin-  
 ing destroying time, and a desolating day as this  
 . See how much the holy apostle is concern-  
 ed about it, and what account the Spirit of God  
 takes of it, 1 Cor. i. 10. iii. 3. xi. 18, 33. And  
 here would be less division, if love to Christ  
 and the brethren were in vigour; and I am con-  
 fident, that where it is sincere, differences in  
 judgment will not alienate mutual affection, nor  
 any different practice. or fault which the mantle  
 of love can cover, will be a sufficient ground of  
 disjoining amongst friends to the cause of Christ.  
 We would fain join with all that are faithful to  
 the interest of Christ, as in their understanding  
 it is stated, that are foreward in expressing their  
 love to Christ, that are faithful in a gospel conver-  
 sation, that will join with us in a free and full  
 confession, forsaking and mourning over the ini-  
 quities of the time; even though they and we  
 cannot say the same thing in every respect; yet  
 if we can agree in the matter of the present  
 testimony, and word of Christ's patience, in this  
 hour of temptation, we desire to join with them,  
 as far as may be. But it is undeniable, that we  
 cannot join with all that have a profession, or a  
 name; for *some do walk, of whom we may say,*  
*and tell it with weeping, that they are enemies to*  
*the cross of Christ,* both to the doctrine, and  
 matter, and reproaches, and bearing of the cross  
 of Christ; many so disorderly in their walk, that  
 both for the honour of the gospel, for our own  
 peace, and for their edification and conviction

we must withdraw both from their way and from their worship; many so whorish in their going from the Lord, and so treacherous in their departings from his right way to the conveniences of the time, that we must not join with them in their sacrifices, because displeasing the Lord, *their offerings are as the bread of moulders; all that eat thereof shall be polluted, for the bread for their soul shall not come into the bosom of the Lord;* and should not, by our confession *Hos. ix. 4.* And so much the rather we should note them, and be cautious in our joining with them, because they are brethren; if they were looked upon only as Christians in a common relation we could allow many of them a catholic joining; if they were only respected under the notion of Protestants, we could allow many of them a general joining; if only as our covenanted confederates or Presbyterians, we could allow them more particular joining: but being brethren of the same national church, we must take a more narrow and particular cognizance of their carriage to us, and of ours to them. We grant, if the church were in its established strength and order, we needed not be so pinched, nor so precise in our withdrawals in Christian fellowship; for then congregational, or presbyterial, or provincial discipline, would, by their censures, preclude all such scruplings, by putting a note upon such, in an orderly way: but now, all that is left us to do in the case, is to testify our disapproving their enormities, by our withdrawing from, and non-communion with them. But here also, several cases are to be distinguished.

*First,* There may be an occasional joining with professors, whom providence may cast in our

pany, or us into theirs; and in this, I think need not be so critic, but we may very cordially join with such, who in their discourses and writings favour the things of God, and the concerns of his kingdom; with all who seem to have the image of Christ stamped on them, with all who seem to be fellow-heirs of the grace of life, with all who in the judgment of charity cannot be charged or suspected to be scandalous, or dividers, or patrons of defection: For, as on the one hand, Christians (though unknown to one another) yet have a secret sense and feeling of others their fellow-partakers of the like precious faith, and the same divine nature; as they that have the mason-word are said to know brethren of the trade by their common signs; so they have a common inclination of love one to another, and a constant liking of that message we heard from the beginning, that we should love one another, 1 *John* iii. 11. And this is the property of love, that it is not suspicious, love beareth not itself unseemly, thinketh no evil, it beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things, 1 *Cor.* xiii. 5. 7. Therefore we ought not to withdraw from our brethren, whom we discover to be such, before we discover them also to be false brethren, or such as we cannot join with; except in discoursing of the courses of the times, they evidence themselves to be guilty of such things, as we cannot join with.

*Secondly,* There may a fixed, stated joining with professing brethren in societies and fellowships, formed and appointed for prayer and conference, which is the best model we can have now, instead of, and in imitation of our old

broken congregations; and most necessary to be kept up, as being often blessed seminaries of religion, nurseries of zeal, and of the life of godliness; blessed often with the presence and countenance of God, and not wanting his institution as well as approbation. It was the approved practice of the fearers of the Lord under the Old Testament, to *speak often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard it: and a book of remembrance was written before him for them; the shall be mine, saith he, in the day that I make up my jewels.* If any be spared in a day of destruction it shall be they, *Mal. iii. 16, 17.* This was in their private societies. So we find in the New Testament, both the places where they were and their work they were employed about; that was one of them at *Philippi*, where *Paul* went out by the *river side, where prayer was wont to be made*, where some women resorted, *Acts xvi. 13.* And some also that were not baptized, among whom was *Lydia*; and therefore I think, some ignorant creatures that desire to be instructed, should be admitted to your Christian fellowships to hear, where conveniency will allow, though not to be employed. So I think, such private societies as these are intimated, when we read of a church in such a family or household, as in *Rom. xvi.* The church in *Priscilla* and *Aquila's* house; them which are of *Aristobulus's* household; these of the household of *Narcissus*, and the like; they were only families; these cannot be called churches, nor were they congregations; having their own elected elders and ministers; there could not be so many of them in the church of *Rome* at that time; therefore they must have been only Christian fellowships.

Their



Their work was, to comfort themselves together, and edify one another, and warn the unruly, confirm the feeble-minded, and support the weak; to consider one another, and to provoke one another to love, and to good works, and exhort one another. For this cause, they were *not to forsake the assembling themselves together, as the manner of some was*, Heb. x. 25. And it is to be remarked, that it is reckoned a wilful sinning, the danger of which is there held forth, to forsake such meetings. But there is not such question made about their institution as their constitution, or who they are that may be admitted members of such societies? and who ought not to be admitted? It is difficult to prescribe particular rules in this matter; only in the general, I think it undeniable, that there must not be a promiscuous admission of all that may desire it, nor of all that might be continued members of a particular congregation; for persons may be admitted to that who are ignorant, or children; here that were very unsuitable, for there is a great difference betwixt the two. They differ in the terms of the entry, as we may perceive; for either if they be children of church members, or persons of a blameless walk, they may be admitted there: this requires more qualifications: they differ in the order of exclusion; there they have the advantage of an authoritative decision, and potestative sentence; here only can be a brotherly and charitative discountenancing, and note of non-communication: they differ in the nature and ends of their constitutions; the one is for gathering and converting of souls to the grace of the gospel by the ordinances, dispensed by officers, as well as for edifying; the other,

only for confirming, comforting, admonishing, exhorting professing believers, and praying together for their mutual help in the duties of Christianity; so that it is supposed, that they are qualified Christians, at least visibly called and professing saints, that are to join together in such a society; and therefore, as they ought to be persons of unstained profession, and unrebukable integrity, and some experience in the way of God, who are by turns to be employed as the mouth of the rest in prayer or conference; though it be not requisite that they give a distinct account of their being in a state of grace, or evidence much knowledge, yet the more of that the better, and the more comfortable, at least they ought to give discoveries of their seriousness, in minding religion as their business; so there must be some kind of trial and knowledge of the persons prerequisite: and albeit it be not necessary, and is not attainable, that the persons be all of one mind in every thing, yet there must be an agreement in the chief controversies of the time, and the matters of the present testimony, and in the things that that community have stated their witnessing and suffering upon; otherwise they cannot avoid debates in their conference, and jars and justlings in their prayers, and so can have no comfortable communion together, which is very inconvenient; and therefore, there may be somewhat like articles condescended upon; but these should be as few and general as may be, to avoid the censure and scandal of singularity or separation. I shall therefore give a hint what I think ought not to debar persons from our societies, and what

what ought, and may be sufficient grounds of non-admission, or exclusion.

1. I conceive, that ignorance in matters of fact, or of duty in some things, through want of information, should not debar a man; or that which follows upon the former, a scrupling or doubting to approve or condemn some things, that they had no opportunity to be instructed in before, need not hinder a joining; for so we find *Aquila* and *Priscilla* took unto them *Apollos*, knowing only the baptism of *John*, and expounded to him the way of God more perfectly, *Acts* xviii. 26.

2. Difference of judgment ought not to hinder joining, if it be either in things indifferent or not material, nor not the present word of patience and matter of testimony; for in these things; if we account ourselves stronger and more knowing, we ought to *receive him that is weak, but not to doubtful disputations*, *Rom.* xiv. 1. Nor, that which follows upon the former, every difference in practice according to light and the judgment of conscience; in things that are not formally disorderly, though we could not allow it in ourselves, ought not to demur us in our joining with the man, that did it with regard to the Lord, *Rom.* xiv. 6. &c. *Judge nothing before the time, until the Lsrd come, who will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and manifest the counsels of the hearts; and then shall every man have praise of God*, *1 Cor.* iv. 5. See also *Phil.* iii. 15, 16. a passage much to be pondered.

3. *Weakness* or *infirmities* ought not to hinder our joining: *We then that are strong ought to bear with the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves*, *Rom.* xv. 1. This weak-

ness

ness may be considered as threefold: (1.) *Natural weakness*, as infirmity of parts, of knowledge, or courage, &c. These are infirmities and very disadvantageous to those that labour under them: but we must *bear one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ*, Gal. vi. 2. (2.) *Spiritual weakness*, as of the grace of faith or love, zeal or patience; when we perceive some evidences of hypocrisy, or unbelief, or security, or coldness, or some risings of passion &c. we must not cast at them for such things; but bear with them, and forbear, with all lowliness and meekness, *Eph. iv. 2.* (3.) *Moral weakness*, that is, sins of infirmity: I call sins of infirmity, either sins of ignorance, or personal escapes not allowed, or such as the person hath been hurried into by a surprising temptation, out of fear, or in desertion, &c. which we durst not do, nor would he have done, if he had been himself. though we ought to reprove our brother for these things, and not suffer sin upon him; yet we must not disjoin from him, but receive him for all that; *Receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God*, Rom. xv. 7. Now, ye know Christ received us with many faults; so likewise if a man be overtaken in a fault, we which are spiritual should restore such a one in the spirit of meekness, considering ourselves, lest we also be tempted, Gal. vi. 1. These, and the like, are not sufficient grounds of demurring, or refusing to join with our professing brethren. But,

Secondly, I think these following are sufficient.

1. *Heresy, or dangerous errors*, ought to debar men from our fellowship, and us from theirs, *Titus iii. 10.* *A man that is an heretic, after the first and second admonition, reject:* which com-

mand



mand must have place, even when ordinary jurisdiction, and orderly procedure of church discipline cannot be had; for the reason subjoined cleareth it, *Knowing that he that is such, is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself*: And therefore, where the error is such, that the person owning it is subverted, and it is of a subverting nature, and others like to be in danger of the leaven of it, he is condemned of himself, there is no need of our suspending, of our withdrawing from him, till he be legally condemned. I do not think that this is to be restricted to these errors that are called *fundamental*, overturning the doctrine of salvation; but to be extended even to those that are contradictory to our common Confession of all orthodox truths, as received by all of our communion; either by maintaining errors condemned thereby, or condemning truths maintained thereby: We mean, if such errors be owned by such as were, or are, looked upon as our brethren; for otherwise we may allow them a catholic or occasional communion.

2. *Apostacy*, or falling from the truth formerly professed by our brother, and now stated by us as the matter of our witness and testimony; that as *John* defines it, and prescribes our carriage in that case, *Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, and whosoever such shall come unto you, and brings not this doctrine, receive him not into your houses, neither bid him God speed: for he that biddeth him God speed, is partaker of his evil deeds*, 2 John 9, 10, 11. This is no breach of brotherly love; for *this is love, that we walk after his commandments; and this is the commandment, that as ye heard from*  
*the*

*the beginning, ye should walk in it, verses 5th and 6th of that epistle.*

3. Such as do not, in their own judgment and practice, fall from the truth, yet *maintain, defend, and patronize defection*, and strengthen it, and harden them that are engaged in it; so that none doth return from his wickedness; such must not be joined with: which was the *horrible thing* the Lord saw in the prophets of *Jerusalem*, Jer. xxiii. 14. It is also horrible in professors. Some will not actually join in building the wall themselves, but they will *daub it with untempered mortar*, and by their countenance and concurrence strengthen the builders, *Ezek. xiii. 10. &c.* A *WO* is there pronounced against such as *sew pillows under arm-holes, and make kerchiefs upon the head of every stature*; and upon such as *make the heart of the righteous sad, whom the Lord hath not made sad*; and *strengthen the hands of the wicked*, v. 18—22. We should have a care to avoid that *wo*, which we cannot do, if we be partakers with them, *Eph. v. 7.* We make ourselves partakers with them, when we countenance them: we must have a care of such leaven in our societies; for *a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump*: so we must not be unequally yoked in our joinings in fellowship. *What fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness?—light with darkness?—Christ with Belial? Wherefore come ye out from among them, and be ye separate, and touch not the unclean thing, &c.* 2 Cor. vi. 14. to the end. The place is not only meant of affinity in marriage, but of Christian church-fellowship; and is spoken of such as did not make conscience of separating from idolatry and uncleanness altogether, but thought that they  
might

might join with both. The Apostle calls that an *unequal yoking*. If then we must separate from all these things that are unsuitable to Christian communion, then we must leave these that will not separate, but will maintain their own, or others way of lax compliances, which do provoke God to separate from them. I do not say, that we must separate from all, that have not the same clearness of separating from every thing that we separate from; for that may proceed, either from ignorance, or want of information, or difference of judgment, or weakness; which, I was shewing before, could not be sufficient to found a withdrawing upon: but I speak now of obstinate defenders of palpable defections; I judge these are not to be joined with.

4. More especially and undeniably, such as are *guilty of defections* in their *practice*, unruly and disorderly in their way, walking contrary to the received rule, and in a way inconsistent with the present testimony of the godly, are not to be joined with; especially if they have the repute, and come under the notion of brethren: for so much may the Apostle's dissuasive bear in the general, when he wrote unto the *Corinthians*, in an epistle, *Not to keep company with fornicators, covetous, extortioners*; not so much with others in the world (for, if common converse must be denied with these, then must we go out of the world) as especially, if any that is called a brother be such, with such an one, no not to eat, nor communicate with him in any Christian fellowship, *1 Cor. v. 9, 10, 11*. Much more must we avoid them, if they be deniers, or deserters of the cause and truths of Christ: if compliers with wicked courses and snares of the time; if

conformers with the gayse of this world, in opposing our testimony, the argument will hold good *a fortiori*: You have the Apostle's indispensable command, *in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition he hath received of us*: And, *if any man obey not the word, (especially if it be the word of Christ's patience) note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed; yet to account him, not as an enemy, but to admonish him as a brother, 2 Theff. iii. 6, 14, 15.*

5. I think also, somewhat of that enjoined order of Christ's must not be baulked, and wholly laid aside, even when the church cannot have its exercise of jurisdiction and legal censure, in the case of a brother's personal trespass, or offence, or scandal, even in lesser matters, if he be obstinate and contumacious, after many repeated admonitions; then, when we cannot get a church to tell it to, we may put a note upon him (at least when we cannot pass a sentence) that he may be ashamed; that is, by withdrawing from him, and not to admit him to join, as before, in our fellowships. I doubt not but our Lord did leave something of this order to be observed in all times, even when in his wisdom he did foresee, that his people might be in such a condition, as that they could not have a church-judicatory; and this he seems to insinuate, when he allows something of this power and promise also, to two or three met together in his name, *Matth. iii. 15—20*. There is certainly much need of caution here, to beware of prejudice or presumption, or precipitancy: but as far as can consist with our own peace of conscience, or



our brother's edification, all place would be given to bearing with, and forbearing, and forgiving all trespasses against ourselves; as *Peter's* question, How often he must forgive his brother, and our Lord's parable in explaining the answer to that question, makes apparent, *Matth. xviii. 21.* to the close. But this should not hinder that these and other scandalous offences, though not simply very hainous in themselves, attended with obstinacy, should be thus noted, as I have said.

*Lastly*, I find the Apostle gives direction, and by way of earnest intreaty, to *mark them that cause divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them*, *Rom. xvi. 17.* If, therefore, any of our brethren will needs take dividing courses from, and contrary to that which we have learned to be truth and duty, and which we have stated as the matter of our present witnessing and suffering, and will oppose our way, and will maintain and propagate his own, and go to proselyte us into his way, by involving us into debates, not for information, but for division; I can see no other way, but to refuse to join with him, as the mark we should put upon him.

Possibly some other grounds of warrantable withdrawing you may think upon; but none other occur to me at present: these in the general to me are clear, and may be to many more than will subscribe to particulars, when condescended upon, as the grounds of our disowning and withdrawing from our professing brethren in *Scotland*. But to give my thoughts of these also, I shall distinguish betwixt a *voluntary* and a *forced* joining.

*First*, There may be a *voluntary* joining in and with fixed societies, in admitting others, and accepting of admittance of ourselves into the fellowship of all that love and adhere to the Lord's righteous cause, as it is stated this day against his enemies; with all that own, and wrestle and witness and suffer for the covenanted work of reformation from Popery, Prelacy, and Erastianism in *Scotland*; with all that are serious in mourning over all the evidences and effects of the Lord's anger against us, and are impartial in searching into all the procuring causes of it: though perhaps, we may find out more steps and degrees of both, than they find. Finally, With all that are willing to concur with us, and embark their lot with the persecuted remnant, in the prosecution of the duties of the day: and from others we must withdraw. But who these are, and how to rank them, you, who are more experimentally acquainted with cases incident, know better than I; so that I need not insist to specify particulars. Only I think, that, upon the former general grounds,

1. All that conform and submit to Prelacy, by hearing curates, &c. are to be noted, and fellowship to be refused with them: that being an error long since exploded and abjured by the church of *Scotland*, and engaged against by Covenant; all who decline, or disown that Covenant, ought to be withdrawn from.

2. All Sectarians, who do not own our covenanted reformation, nor the government of our church, by presbyteries, synods, and general assemblies, ought not to be owned, nor adjoined with in our societies.

3. Such as do actually countenance, or con-

cur to the upholding of the wretched Indulgence, the bane of our church, by hearing the indulged, or pleading for, or taking the patrociny of their woeful, Christ-dishonouring, and church-rending defections; for which they deserve to be noted, as the *betrayers of the rights of the church of Scotland*, by all who do concert with that cause, and testimony thereof: these are not to be joined with.

4. Such as practically and intentionally contradict and condemn the present stated testimony of the suffering and witnessing remnant, owned of God, sealed by their blood, and for which others suffer great afflictions; either by virulent and viperous reproaching, slandering and calumniating them; or by renouncing and abjuring (especially before the enemy) their declarations, apologies and vindications of themselves, and the truths they adhere to: Such as disown their avowed opposition to the tyranny of the times, and their rejecting the present tyrant's usurpations, and their necessitate endeavours to defend themselves from, or to avenge themselves on their murderers, or to bring them to condign punishment, as the Lord shall give them a call, opportunity, and capacity; such, I say, are to be withdrawn from, as being not only offenders but condemners of the generation of the righteous; and consenters to, and justifiers of the effusion of their blood. Therefore, I think, that the takers of the late Oath of Abjuration, do deserve this kind of *note*: I say, these that did it practically before the enemies; for, I do not think, that all that cannot own that Declaration, there abjured, are forthwith for that to be separated from; for they may have

scruples out of ignorance, or misconstruction against some things in the *form*, or some *expressions* of it; yet will not condemn the matter of it *absolutely*, nor any part of it practically before the enemy. Some again may quarrel at the unreasonableness of it; others, through misinformation, may have condemned it practically but not intentionally; conceiving that that *Apologetical Declaration* did assert the lawfulness of murder, and assassination. These are not to be withdrawn from, meerly because they have done so; if so be, after better information and admonition, they do not obstinately defend their own deed, and condemn the said *Declaration* intentionally.

5. All such compliers, as do not only own the authority of the present party now in power, but transact and bargain with them, by subscribing their oaths, tenders, bonds, and impositions whatsoever: As, for instance, the takers of that detestable *Test*, the *Bond of Peace, Regulation, Conformity*, &c. the subscribers of their *oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy*; such as engaged never to rise in arms against the present government upon no pretence whatsoever; and all strengtheners of the present opposition of Christ's kingdom, by paying cess or the like, are to be withdrawn from.

6. All such as are apprehended in any scandal, or offensive practice, dishonourable to the profession, such as drunkenness, or lyeing, &c. are to be separated from.

*Secondly*, There is a *forced joining*, in a forced society; that is in your case, that are by the unjust violence of men shut up in a prison, in one room with locked doors, wherein ye cannot,



nor must not omit public worship; in which case, now having enlarged so much in the general, I need not insist; your own discretion will direct you to apply particulars; for it will not admit of any matter of doubt, or question, but that ye may join with all from whom ye would not withdraw in your voluntary stated societies; and if it may consist with truth and duty, or your present testimony and state of your suffering, you would rather take in more, for your own peace and comfortable converse, for holding up the worship of God without discord, for avoiding the odious censures and malicious observations of your common enemies, who are glad and greedy to see and espy your breaches. But you must prefer duty and truth to all conveniences and advantages whatsoever, and hold fast your testimony, and what you have learned of Christ, let who will be offended. Only there would be some difference allowed in your carriage to these who desire to be admitted, and those who desire to admit you to their communion. The first require more tenderness and condescendency; the other, more caution and peremptoriness. I mean, when you are the greater number in a room; when you are to give proposals to these that would join with you, and if they will not acquiesce, yet, I think, ye cannot hinder them from the privilege of public worship amongst themselves at convenient turns, if they demand it; for that were altogether unbrotherly, and favouring too much of supremacy. But if you be the lesser number there, and cannot join with them, then I think, you should plead for your privilege of keeping up public worship among yourselves; and as ye would hear theirs without join-

ing, yet in an inoffensive posture, and a place separate by yourselves: so they cannot deny, and you cannot well refuse, to take either one day and they another, or rather one time of the day of your own choosing, and let them take the rest for going about their duty; for this is not joining with them by turns, but a separate fellowship of your own, taking your own turns, and pleading your own privilege, whereby you may have the advantage of letting them hear your public regrete, and bemoanings of their offensive courses and disorders, for which ye cannot join with them; whereby also much contention and irritation may be prevented, and mutual affection convincingly entertained, notwithstanding of differences; which, that it may obtain with the blessing of the Lord, shall be the prayer of

*Your wellwisher,*

*and companion in tribulation,*

ALEX. SHIELDS.

*N. B. Mr. Alexander Shields, wrote this Letter during the time he was prisoner in Edinburgh.*

## L E T T E R LXXVI.

*From Mr. Alexander Shields, Preacher of the Gospel, to the Ladies Van. Her. and E. T. V. in Lewarden in Friesland. October 1687.*

*Much honoured and dearly beloved in our Lord Jesus Christ,*

**G**Race, mercy, and peace be with you, from God our Father, and from our Lord Jesus

us Christ, in whom, and through whose grace, you have been called to a participation of his heavenly blessing and unsearchable riches; so out of his abundance, you have been helped to give such experiments of love to him, in compassion to his afflicted members, that ye have won the blessings of them that are ready to perish, and have caused the widow's heart to sing for joy, in laying many obligations on the poor wounded and wasted remnant of Christ's persecuted witnesses in *Scotland*, to make joyful and thankful remembrance of you in their prayers and praises on your behalf; with whom, and in whose name, I take the boldness, though I cannot have the happiness to see you at this time, which is my regret, to consort and concur in returning blessings to our God, and congratulations to you, for the graces bestowed on you, and fruits thereof brought forth by you.

1. That the Lord hath been pleased to enlighten you with the knowledge of his truth as it is in Jesus; and given you to understand by experience, the excellency of the knowledge of Christ, infinitely preferable to all time's things and fancied excellencies, which are but loss and dung besides it; though the world's worms, whose eyes the god of this world hath blinded, and bewitched with the charms of evanishing vanities, cannot and will not behold the vanity thereof, yet to believers, Christ is the only pearl of price; and to lose all to win him, is thought the greatest gain. It is matter of joy, to the sufferers of *Scotland* chiefly, that their beloved matchless One is in such esteem with you, and his great salvation meets with  
welcome

welcome entertainment among you, which is little regarded by the most part of men.

2. That not only you lay religion to heart, and make it your choice and exercise, which is the main business; but the cause of Christ, which is so universally stumbled at and forsaken, is to you the great interest, for whom ye would have a throne set up in the church, that there his royal scepter may bear sway, as well as in your hearts; and a reformation may be advanced from remaining corruptions, according to the kingly standard of his law and revealed will; the defect whereof is to you a burden, as it is to all the faithful subjects of our exalted Prince, who will not be content to have his favour and fellowship for themselves only (though that be their heaven here to have it, and their hell to want it) but they must have this for their design, to desire to bring him to *their mother's house, and to the chambers of her that conceived them.*

3. It is the joy of all the lovers of Christ, to hear, that not only the cause is seated in your hearts, but avowed and defended in your profession; being not ashamed even of the reproaches of Christ, whom not only you love with such fervency of zeal, that you will not seek him by night on your bed only, but rise and profess it, in going about the city, in the streets and in the broad ways, and make serious enquiry for him, whom your soul loveth, even though the watchmen should smite you, and the keepers of the wall should take away your veil, because you cannot, you must not want him: for whose indignities, done to him, and the injuries done to his church, you are



not only secretly discontented, but openly declare your dissatisfaction, in a professed discountenancing of them.

4. It is their rejoicing, that your name is not only favourable among the serious professors of Christ, but enrolled among the faithful confessors and witnesses of Jesus Christ, contending for the truths, and espousing his side of the controversy in their testimony for reformation, against the relics of mens inventions, against the *Cocceian* novations, and against the *Eraastian* encroachments and usurpations, under which the *Netherlands* are labouring as a woman in her pains. Wherein, though you have few to concert it with you, or to assist you in it, yet, because the cause is Christ's, it shall overcome, and you in it and by it.

5. All your Lord's weeping friends rejoice to hear, that though ye have yet been preserved from the fiery trial, yet you are not at ease in *Zion*, but are ambitious to be marked among the mourners, *that sigh and cry for the abominations done in Jerusalem*. Ye lament after the Lord, and for the dishonour done to his Majesty, both by his declared enemies and professing people; and all the causes and effects of his holy indignation, gone forth against them this day through the churches; and that for this end to stir up and encourage one another to this work, you keep fellowship together, as becomes the fearers of the Lord in such a day, to speak often one to another, which the Lord will hearken to, and note it up in his book of remembrance, for your behalf, in the day when he maketh up his jewels.

6. The poor afflicted remnant in *Scotland* are  
much

much encouraged to know that ye sympathize with their case, and are concerned in the cause, when they stand so much in need of it, and can find so little either at home or abroad. But, *their soul is exceedingly filled with the scorn of them that are at ease, and with the contempt of the proud*: And were it not that they have some feelings of your High-priest's sympathy supporting them under all their burdens, they would sink under the same, in the sight, and without the pity of all spectators.

7. It is in a special manner refreshing to them that all the calumnies and reproaches wherewith they are industriously and invidiously laden, both by enemies and professed friends, to make them and their cause odious, get not such credulous entertainment with you, as to make you stand far off from their sore, for the misinformation of traducers, from which, we have confidence in our Lord, that at length he will bring forth the righteousness as the light, and their judgment at the noon-day, when he will arise and plead the cause that is his own.

8. They are bound to return all thankful acknowledgment of obliged gratitude; and I desire for myself, and have their allowance, and desire in their name (which is all the recompence they can make) to give unfeigned thanks for your tender sympathy, affectionate kindness, Christian charity, and loving liberality, so long continued, so largely extended, and so frequently renewed towards Christ's persecuted little flock of confessors and witnesses in *Scotland*, and particularly towards their dear and much respected friends, who are the more endeared to them that for their sakes they have suffered so much

reproach and rage; namely Mr. *Robert Hamilton* and others, with that poor afflicted family, of whom ye have taken such courteous care and inspection; for which, as I hope, so long as there is a seed of that suffering remnant in *Scotland* to prosecute the testimony, your kindness shall never be forgotten; so he, for whose sake, and upon whose account ye show it, shall remember this your labour of love, in the day when he shall make inquiry what good or hurt hath been done to his little ones, to repay it as done to himself; and then I am confident ye shall not have cause to repent of your kindness to them, to whom all sorts have been so cruel; and I persuade myself, your continuance in giving them your countenance and the encouragement of your favour, notwithstanding all reproaches and attempts to prejudice you against them, will yield you sweet peace in the end, and that you shall never have reason to be ashamed of it. That poor handful in *Scotland* are indeed a very suitable object of your pity, and not unworthy your patrociny, maintenance and protection, their case being now very sadly circumstantiate, by reason of the opposition they meet with from all hands; the rage of enemies, incensed by their contempt of their ensnaring favours, and the envy of them that are at ease, because they continue still in their contendings against the antichristian party; from which the other are laid by, and lulled asleep by this bewitching toleration, and laden with the reproach of both. Yet they are encouraged in the goodness of their Captain, and justness of their cause, to sustain all conflicts, seeing their testimony is honourably stated for the covenanted reformation of the church of *Scotland*, where-

-of

of what is left unruined, is now designed to be totally razed, by this gap opened by this liberty to introduce Popery and establish tyranny: particularly it hath been their honour to witness and suffer for the prerogatives of Christ's kingly glory, both as he is a king in the church, and hath the sole sovereignty over his own mystical body, to appoint his ordinances, institute his officers, make laws binding the conscience, and establish the doctrine, worship, discipline and government that he, as only law giver, will have observed in his church, without either addition, diminution, or alteration, which prerogative hath been encroached upon and usurped by Prelacy, by the Erastian supremacy, and now by the open attempts to bring in Popery; against all which they have wrestled and witnessed, by following their pure gospel ordinances, by their declarations, by their suffering of great oppositions, bonds, banishments and blood, and for which they have been killed all day long, and counted as sheep for the slaughter. And they have been called likewise to contend for the prerogatives of his kingly glory, as he is a king of the world, whose incommunicable property it is to be absolute, in subordination to which he hath ordained and restricted magistracy for his glory and the good of mankind, which prerogative hath been invaded by tyranny and absolute power, arrogated over all law, conscience, reason, religion, and liberty of the people, against which they have been called to witness; maintaining their testimony against the leviathan of illimited and absolute tyranny, and declining and refusing to own it as the authority of God's appointment, when, upon pain of death this was imposed upon their



their consciences; for which they have been traduced by enemies, and reproached by many professors, as seditious despisers of government, or at least sufferers for phantastic points, wherein religion is little or nothing concerned. But, though this be the great device of the dragon, this day, to destroy religion and the single sincere professors thereof, covertly under another notion; yet, as wisdom is, and will be justified of her children, so it is their peace and confidence before God and man, that they suffer for the cause of Christ, the concern of all churches, and the interest of all mankind, and for nothing which is not consonant to, founded upon, and confirmed by the testimonies of the church of *Scotland* in all her periods, and have been aiming at a witness and testimony against all defections and declinings from the attained reformation of that church, without being silent at any; as now they find themselves obliged to testify against this abominable toleration, and the acceptance thereof, and addressing for the same; and keeping up their meetings in the fields, though interdicted and discharged, under pain of death both to preachers and hearers, looking upon it as a case of confession to witness against that present confederacy with *Babylon's* cruel mercies, to enjoy her ordinances there, where her favours extend not, and where they are interdicted or discharged by the same wicked acts that allow a toleration to all that will not oppose her; wherein, though they are exposed to all the rage and reproach that men can invent against them, yet they expect the Lord's countenance and concurrence, and that he will be the more kind that men are so cruel; and do hope for the continu-

ation of your sympathy, and are confident that their long intermissions of their corresponding in returning due acknowledgment for all your favours, will not interrupt either your kindness or their gratitude.

And now, much honoured and dear friends, must conclude with a regret and confession, instead of an apology for my omission, in not seeing you, and writing to you before this time. I have nothing to say for myself, but that I am grieved for my unhappiness, that I have not been in capacity to discharge the business I have been called to here, nor to have liberty to enjoy myself, nor time to obtain the comfort of your communion, and chiefly, that I have been so long detained from the public work of my function to which I have impatient longing to be restored, and therefore having this opportunity, I am necessitated to return homeward, and leave the work I have been waiting upon, and taken up with incessantly, night and day, since I came to this country, unperfected and not absolved, but left to be printed and lying at the press, not being able to defray the charges: But what is done already, I thought it my duty to communicate unto you, and therefore have sent you some vindications of the poor persecuted remnant, representing their contests with, and clearing them of the reproaches cast upon them by their professing antagonists; there is another larger treatise representing all the succession of testimonies of our church, and stating the present testimony with deduction of heads of sufferings sustained thereupon, and vindication of all the heads thereof which is now interrupted at the press, but when ever it can be set forward and finished, can  
 sha

all be taken to convey it to your hands. Now, begging your excuse, and entreating your prayers, I rest

*Your real, though unworthy and  
unacquainted friend and servant,  
in the Lord Jesus,*

ALEX. SHIELDS.

---

## L E T T E R LXXVII.

*From the honourable Mr. Robert Hamilton\*, to  
some Friends in Scotland.*

*Lewarden, May 24. 1683.*

*Right honourable and dear Brethren,*

**T**Hough, as the Lord knows, I have been often made to desire and resolve upon a cottage in the wilderness, yet it has seemed good in his eyes, to have me otherways employed, and kept up, not only at home, but in all places of my pilgrimage, as a beacon on the top of a mountain, and a witness for his precious and honourable cause, interest and people, against all his and their enemies, whether country-men or strangers: and, however, my real insufficiency and great emptiness did often terri-

D d 2

fy

\* It was thought proper to insert this letter of Mr. Hamilton's in this collection, as it is not amongst those of his, published some time ago, in a pamphlet called *The Christian's Conduct, &c.*

fy and affright me, at first sight, to venture up on so great and so hot encounters, as I have been trysted with; yet he, in his great love and infinite condescendency, spared no pains (as forsooth, I had been somewhat, and could have done something for him) once to allure me, and next, as it were, to get my consent to the service. And when he did let me find (O wonder of wonders!) in some measure what he would do for his own name's sake, in abundantly furnishing, wonderfully leading on, and honourably bringing me off; that, O praise to his glorious name! he made it often, not only astonishing to myself, but admirable to onlookers, and the greatest of my enemies: for once having entered and got me to a cheerful submission, and rejoicing in his will and way, I may say, I had often no more ado, but to *stand still, and see his salvation*: and though he used his own way in correcting my untowardness and misbelief, yet, O my friends! in such a way, that the world could never discern it. O what am I, such a lump of sin, that ever was counted worthy to be so dealt with, and chastised with such sweet, sugared, and honourable rods; no less than the golden rod wherewith our lovely Lord, heir of the inheritance, was stricken with. Courage, my honourable brethren, your chafings, wanderings, fightings, and contendings for matchless, O matchless Him! cannot but be infinitely more glorious than all the painted, crowned vanities of the world: O they bear their reward with them, that the world knows not of; and no wonder, when dealt out by such a lovely hand, and in the sight of such a noble General, who deals out to every man his post, and his blows,



blows, and furnishes accordingly; and is most concerned himself in the battle, and in the carriage of his own, that they may be all honourable, and receive the crown, and the noble preparations of eternal glory with himself thro' eternity, which he has laid up and purchased with his own blood. O continue, continue to the end; and he and you shall once judge the tyrants, and the furious bulls of *Bashan* here below; keep by him, and ye shall get the victory, yea, and be more than conquerors.

Now, my Christian friends, having this so noble occasion; I could not but give you some small account, as to the Lord's leading, in and through this great and last piece of service, not knowing but it may be the last edition of service to you and the land that ever I shall be honoured to perform; as also, hoping it might be for your encouraging and strengthening, and a mean to endear you to the bearer. And, I hope, through the grace of God, the great Master of the assemblies, his embassage and master-like furniture, shall be more than able to commend him unto you all. And I have been made to think, if he might be the first stone of our new building, and indeed to some in this place, his first sermon was to them, as the laying the foundation of the second temple, *weeping and rejoicing*. But however it be, I hope the Lord shall get great glory by it, and yet more and more approve, as he hath hitherto done in a wonderful way. But,

As to the Lord's preparing and leading me on to this work, it was thus: He hath been pleased sometimes (praise, O praise to his name!) to condescend to me a poor worm, to let me

see something of his stately goings and managements in this day, as his working out of his most noble and most intricate pieces of service, through poor despised means and seckless instruments, and that both of the ministers and others; as also, his most glorious victories obtained of the enemies, when seemingly they were most conquering; as also, making many as prophets in and for his house, giving warning of the trials that were to come, and partly as come, and of the defections, with great blessings on them that should faithfully stand out; indeed, *Balaam*-like, the most of them, and now, all of them in the enemies camp, are stating themselves as head of the rebels, and chief in the rebellion against these, who through the blessing of the Lord, took with the warning, and are to this day standing faithfully to their post; as also, his making the greatest of our enemies (even when our *Eliases* were taken away) on their death-beds, confirming to the remnant, in being their own heralds, denouncing the righteous judgments of God against themselves and their posterity; and in all, vindicating the poor wrestling remnant, whom they in their health delighted to butcher, and breathing out their last, foretelling the glorious days that should be yet in *Scotland*, with the raising that buried-like cause again; as also, his righteous judgment, and holy justice, in taking the discipline of his own house out of the hands of the perfidious shepherds, who, at their best, in a terrible manner misemployed it. O what stately goings, doing more, as to the discovery of jugglers, mockers, and hypocrites, than the wit of man could have done in a generation; and it is observable, that in a special way

way it reaches these who looked upon themselves, and would have others to do so, as above all reproofs and censures; so that if any poor thing out of a holy zeal and tenderness, had not ventured to reprove a minister, it was as lese-majesty, and no more peace for them. O then the righteousness of God! let us fall in love with it, and his infinite love in managing of that which was so grievously mismanaged; and in so wealing out our rods, that he that runs may read our sin in our judgment; for how has he stirred up one within ourselves, blasphemously cloathing himself with that supremacy, to drive out and punish (and he shall yet punish in another way than ever) for that horrid supremacy that did rage in our best times amongst professors, and especially ministers, and this day doth as fast cleave to them and the generation as ever. O glorious! O stately goings! who notwithstanding that he hides himself, yet abundantly shews that he is God and King of *Jacob*, tho' *riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the fole of an ass*, yet king of *Zion*, and master of rejoicing to all the daughters thereof. O noble ground of rejoicing, when he gives out the order, and tunes the instrument for that effect, when it neither can nor will misgive. And O! unspeakable love and tenderness! in keeping up hitherto a remnant, witnessing and contending as nobly and valiantly this day as ever; having it to declare before the world, that they have hitherto lacked nothing: and no wonder, I cannot but think, that in a special way the credit of our Lord, so to speak, is engaged for that land, and for you, who have so eminently ventured soul and body in his hand.

Now,

Now, thus as to his preparing of me; next as to his leading of me.

When our worthy friend Mr. *Renwick* came last over, I was very inquisitive (being for a long time greatly weighted with that business) to know of two things from him. *1st.* How it was betwixt him and the Lord, as to his state and interest. *2dly.* As to his inward encouragement and call from the Lord as to his undertaking in that great work of the ministry. To both which I had very great satisfaction from him: as also, of his lively uptakings of the Lord's way with his church and people in this day, all which were engaging to me. After his parting with me, and going to *Groningen*, I was made to hear, as it were continually in my ears, *By whom shall Jacob arise, for he is very small?* Wherewith I was for a time greatly weighted, till it pleased the Lord, after the same manner, to give me that other word, as I thought, an answer of the former; *Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord.* And by this the Lord, as it were, anew again, let me see his glorious and stately dealings, after the same manner as formerly, *viz.* his going by that which the world calls *great parts*, learning, policy, and worldly wisdom, and the idols of this generation; and not only so, but has had them, and to this day has them, all mustered against him; and O the noble foils they have gotten already, and that by the world's fools, from babes and sucklings trained up in Christ's school. While I lay again wonderfully led in, and wondering in these things, I received a line from our friend Mr. *Renwick*, with a short account of a notable piece of soul exercise he was in at that present, which



was after this manner. “ (To the praise of his  
 “ free grace I must speak it) when he helps me  
 “ either to pray or meditate he is not want-  
 “ ing; but in other things I do not find him.  
 “ However, I think this may be the cause of it,  
 “ I cannot win to use and keep them in their  
 “ own places: but there are some things good  
 “ in themselves, and good when made right use  
 “ of; but to me they are as *Saul's* armour to  
 “ *David*, I can put them on, but I cannot walk  
 “ with them; and I cannot say but I could put  
 “ them on, unless I should lie of the Lord, who,  
 “ (blessed be his name) hath given me in some  
 “ measure, a disposition\*.”

After the reading over of his letter, I found  
 my heart greatly tyed to him, and was brought  
 into a pleasant frame and calmness of spirit. But  
 again, in two or three days, I was brought into  
 great perplexities for the case of the church in  
 general, and more especially for my mother-  
 church; but I thought I found always my former  
 resolution sounding within me, and that with great  
 power, yet not so as perfectly to calm me; till  
 some days after Mr. *Renwick* wrote another letter  
 to my sister concerning his soul's case, which I  
 also, as the Lord helped me, returned my  
 thoughts of. And the evening after, going out  
 to walk, I was strongly overpowered with the  
 impression that Mr. *Renwick* was presently to be  
 ordained, and that I must lay out myself there-  
 in; and as I thought, won to great certainty,  
 that whatever difficulties should be in the way,  
 they should be removed; for he himself should  
 concern himself in it. While thus, I went to our  
 worthy

\* See Letter XI. page 31.

worthy friend Mr. *Brackel*, and laid out the whole case to him; who no sooner heard of it, but was as one out of himself, with the great satisfaction and joy he had in it, which helped to my strengthening. Whereupon we resolved to write presently to Mr. *Renwick* anent it, and that without the least thoughts or relation to the other two; and having but small time, we wrote but in short to him; which letter you may see from himself, as it came to his hands: he shewed it to the other two; who, on what grounds I know not, resolved to concern themselves alike in the affair as if the letter had been written to all of them. And after some days, Mr. *Renwick* sent us a very satisfying and refreshing letter, for our encouragement to move further in it; as also, the other two pretending the same clearness, wrote to me thereanent, which indeed was both surprizing and weighty to me, on many accounts; for the Lord, from my very first hearing of them named, led me in a quite contrary way as to them than to the other; and I think I am not, and alas for it, disappointed of any of them, turn as they will.

Now, as to the difficulties I had to wrestle with, and our Lord's noble managing of his own cause, and poor worms concerned in it, it was thus; 1<sup>st</sup>. Our friend Mr. *Brackel* had not only a great inclination, but told me, after the receiving of the letters, that he was fully determined, that they should all of them be ordained at *Embsen*; which I durst not consent to; for the main man intended to have the management of it was *Cocceian* in his judgment, though he seemingly pretended otherwise, however I could not get him off that. A *second* reason, as I told him, of my  
being.

being against it, was that since the Lord had moved *Groningen* to own us, and to shew kindness to us in our low estate, we could not pass by them, without first giving them the offer. However, nothing could prevail, and we were like to lose our friend in it; as also, others of my friends at *Lewarden*, who would not condescend to let me go from them. Yet I durst not yield, neither durst I stay, but as I had done formerly, venture myself on my sweet, rich, and lovely, and O kind Lord's hand, who never failed me; yea, was ay better than his promise; when they saw I was coming away, Mr. *Brackel* promised to follow me within some days, and gave me a letter to one of the ministers, (which was all the recommendation I had from men) desiring me to deliver it to one of the ministers at *Groningen*, providing he was any thing acquainted by friends at *Groningen* of my design of coming there; and finding them all strangers to it, I resolved as to my recommendation, to cast myself on the Lord, and not to deliver my letter until Mr. *Brackel* came himself, thinking it might be a mean to engage him the more for us. When he came, I told him my resolutions as to *Emdden* were the same as formerly, and that I was rather confirmed than altered, having got further notice from one of the professors in the place, that *Emdden* was not so pure in some things, especially as to the magistrate's usurpation, as *Groningen*; and withal begging he might propose it to the ministers in *Groningen*, which he did; who told him, that it might be done well, and with great secrecy by the professors of the college, which satisfied our friend greatly; who alone laid down the whole way of it with them, who, after his acquainting

me of it, departed out of the town, leaving me to manage what he had proposed and concluded.

But, before I go farther, I shall give a short account of Mr. *Flint* and Mr. *Boyd*: So soon as I came to the town, I examined all of them severally, but really I could find no satisfaction in any of them, save in our friend. Mr. *Flint*, I found him floating and unstable: as for Mr. *Boyd*, Mr. *Flint* informed me and the rest very sadly of him, both of his untenderness in his walk, and unacquaintedness in our case; that he was not only ignorant of much of it, but taken up, for the most part, with the arguments of the adversaries, a defending against his brethren; though indeed I did meet with no great disappointment, yet on many accounts it was trying, and many were our fears, as to acquainting him with our resolutions, in not letting him pass at the time. However, when we wan to be positive in it, and stated upon such noble grounds, as not daring to lay his house with such stones, &c. the Lord removed that difficulty wonderfully, and made Mr. *Boyd* not only seemingly willing to omit, but also, confirmed others as to their duty in what they had done. Now, I say, this being done, and our worthy friend Mr. *Brackel* out of town, I went to the chief professor, and conferring of our business with him, I found it could not be done without the concurrence of another brother-professor of his, who was professed *Cocceian*; and using freedom with him, to tell him my scruples; he answered me, that the other was but to examine, and not to lay on hands: I asked, if it could be done without him; who said, no: then I told him positively, that we could not admit of it in such a way; his being present,



present, viz. a *Cocceian*, was essential to the ordination. So parting with them, with this resolution, to write to Mr. *Brackel* what was next to be done, and acquaint him with the case; so writing to him; he could see no hazard in that way: However, if I could not grant it, there was a necessity yet to resolve upon *Embden*: and there was a strange providence in his letter; for in the end of it, to make me come over my former scruple, he tells me, that he could assure me, unless I had a full testimony from the whole professors of *Groningen* to the ministers of *Embden* for the students, they could not be owned there. This was a mean to clear me the more, that *Embden* was not the place that the Lord seemed to be then calling us unto, since we could no more accept of the *Cocceian*'s recommendation than ordination, as it was then circumstantiated. So that matters again seemed worse than ever, being likely to have both *Embden* and the whole professors, and others our friends, against us. But our kind Lord was then at hand, who had determined otherwise; that when I went again to Mr. *Johannes a Mark*, the honest professor, and to one of the ministers, and told them our case, and the weightiness of it, and that there was no other thing before our eyes in it, but the glory of God, and durst do no other way than what we had told. So begging they would lay it to heart, and take it upon them to prevail with the classis, that they would take it in hand, which, to the great admiration of some of us, they undertook most willingly. However the professor called for their testimonies, (for they were to have his also to the classis) and which was observable, all was missing save Mr. *Rennwick*'s,

which was to the fore by a special providence having got it in my hand but some few days before. When the professor did see it, he was willing to take it off our hand, but one of the ministers being then present, told, it would never pass before the classis; so I told them, that it could not be expected, considering the tassel case of our church, that it could be in such dress and order as otherwise were to be desired and the professor owned me, and backed me in it. So that both said, since it was so, they thought my testimony, with Mr. *Brackel's*, to the classis ay until another was procured, were sufficient which I could not refuse, and it was of the Lord in a special way. However, there lay a trial to me in it, which was very great, *viz.* to have a special hand in Mr. *Flint's* passing, the testimony being laid so to my door; and considering how the Lord had led me, and I thought, by all dispensations, was even leading me by him; as also, from what I was discovering in him, it was to me a fore strait; for he, on the other hand was pressing it violently. Whereupon, I went to him, and spake in private to him, anent the business, with great tenderness, signifying the weightiness thereof; as also, how the Lord seemed every way to discountenance his passing; for, as to myself, I told him, I could give him no encouragement to it; but on the contrary, from the first time that I had seen him and Mr. *Boyd*, I was made to tremble at their coming over upon such a design. As also, that the letter that Mr. *Brackel* and I wrote to Mr. *Renwick* was no ways designed for him: and also of the missing of his testimonial. However, I told him, if he had the Lord's call to it, as he wrote

wrote to me, these all might be but as trials and  
ours in his way. However I again begged him,  
as he loved his own soul, that he would not ven-  
ure on such a weighty work rashly. Notwith-  
standing of all, he said he would go foreward;  
so I, not without great heaviness of mind, was  
forced to countenance him; and so going first to  
the professor for his testimony, I wrote next for  
our worthy Mr. *Brackel's*, which he presently,  
and most chearfully sent me; after these were  
read, and the day of the classis come, being de-  
ivered to them, they were sustained valid; and  
after Mr. *Flint* had a little harangue before  
them, they were sent out a little, and the classis  
taking our cause into consideration, after, first  
one of the ministers rising up, and laying it  
openly out, and then another, all of them, with  
tears, cried out, It is the Lord's cause, and cost  
what it would, if all the kings of the earth were  
against it, they would go on in it. And, which  
is observable, one of them asking, How it came  
to be passed by the professors, and took not ordi-  
nation from them? another of themselves rose  
up, and from that took occasion to lay out the  
government and discipline of our church; and  
that it was inconsistent with our noble order to  
take such a course, and that we were much to  
be encouraged for it. Another that was a de-  
putee of the general synod, desired to be excused,  
for he feared he could not attend, it being at  
such a distance where he lived from the place;  
the rest of his brethren, with tears in their eyes,  
stood up, and requested that no cost, pains nor  
charges might be looked unto in such a noble  
cause; whereupon he confessed that it was so. It  
being also the custom of that place, that every

one that passed must pay twenty *guilders* for the public use of the church; the brethren jointly declared that they would be at all the charge themselves. O dear friends, praise him! praise him! who has been so mindful of us in our low estate. And after all this, calling them in a gain, they received them in a most friendly way as never hitherto had been; their injunction our friend himself will show you. But, which is also remarkable, that Mr. *Flint* in his harangue gave an open testimony against all the forms and enormities in their church. O wonderful guiding and leading of the Lord!

Now, after all these wondrous ways of the Lord with us, it might have been expected that we should have been more knit to one another, more serious, tender, and zealous than ever. However, on the contrary, Mr. *Flint* strikes in with his old antagonist, he had informed so against, and states himself most bitterly against our friend Mr. *Renwick*, to the great grief of friends, and stumbling of strangers who were witnesses to it. When it came to my ears, however heavy his carriage was to me, especially considering the circumstances, yet I thought it was not without the singular providence of God, who had permitted him to kythe and discover himself before he came a greater length: as also I thought I had now fair grounds to stop his going on any further in that so great a work; so I sent for our worthy friend G. H. (who has been greatly encouraging to me since he came over, and a great help to me) and for Mr. *Flint*, and in all tenderness to lay it to him what an extraordinary work he was about, and how extraordinary his call to the land was, and the way of his now desiguing to return; and that



hat in all, I thought it required more than an ordinary case, frame and walk, of which I could see no evidences in him. While I was to go on in my discourse, he interrupted me, falling out in great bitterness, declaring he would no more meddle in it; and that he was positive, that upon no account he would go on in the work, nor go home with our friend Mr. *Renwick*; giving these for his three unreasonable reasons; 1. He said, he was sure he would never agree with him. 2. Because, he said, He (*viz.* Mr. *Renwick*) did read too little. 3. Because of his spirit of supremacy he shewed in *Scotland*. I asked him, why he could not agree with him? He could give no reason. As to the second, I asked him, if he did not read, I desired to know how he spent his time? If in prayer, or meditating, or any other way? He answered, he durst not but think he was much in that exercise. To which I answered, these were the studies in this day most accomplishing for every work, and especially the work in hand. And for his last, he could also give no ground for it. After I had got this from his own mouth, I thought we were fairly loosed from doing any more with him, and then we sent for Mr. *Renwick*, who came; and we gave him, before Mr. *Flint*, a relation of what had passed; who would have passed from some things that he asserted, yet adhering to his non-passing at that time, but to stay a longer time, and another occasion: so having prayed, I again begged him to lay things to heart; how the Lord was provoked; and pressed, that whether he staid or went, they might be as one heart. However, when he went home, he signified to all, his resolutions to stay, and bought books at a strange rate, and set him-

self to learn the *Dutch*, and went, without ad-  
vertising any of us, to the *Dutch* kirk on the  
Lord's day, and was present at all their forms  
without the least resentment; all sad tokens  
And as before he had joined hand in hand with  
Mr. *Boyd* against Mr. *Renwick*, now again his  
passion turned into its old channel against Mr.  
*Boyd*, which is wrath-like.

Now, dear Brethren, I stand astonished, and  
wonder how we are now again put to it, for he  
had received the professor's testimony, with Mr.  
*Brackel's*; as also his being before, and harangu-  
ing before the classis: so that it threatened no  
less than a sad blow to all the beginnings and af-  
ter expectations in that place; as also to the  
cause and whole remnant at home; as also to  
put a stop to our friend's passing. This cost sore  
fighting and wrestling, though indeed Mr. *Flint*  
and Mr. *Boyd* were no more concerned in it than  
no such thing had been; but on the contrary,  
evidenced tokens of their satisfaction with all; as  
also, in their expecting a stop as to our friend's  
passing. At last I wrote to Mr. *Brackel*, adver-  
tising him that we thought Mr. *Flint* could not  
pass: and with his answer I was yet more dis-  
couraged than ever, pressing me by all arguments,  
that he should pass; and if he did not, how pre-  
judicial it would be to the cause, and such like.  
Now, (which made our case heavier) we durst  
not vent ourselves so freely to strangers as we  
would, fearing the consequences that might fol-  
low. However, travelling in thir difficulties un-  
til time would suffer of no more delay, the time  
of ordination being at hand, we resolved to go  
to the preses of the classis, and give him notice  
that Mr. *Flint* could not pass. When he first  
heard

heard of it he was greatly discouraged, and had this word which was observable; " Sir, he said, " if ye had told me of it but a day sooner, I " could have stopped it, and gotten a delay un- " til Mr. *Flint* was ready, and fully recovered." (for he himself pretended a distemper of body) I told him, I hoped, he would let it be no hinderance to our friend's passing: He objected again, If that Mr. *Flint* was but able to sit on a chair before the classis, it would be sufficient, and he might stay after in the land until he were recovered. At last, I did let somewhat fall of his other distempers that we feared were raging in him; which, when he perceived, he seemed presently satisfied, and undertook most Christianly the management of the business, and that Mr. *Renwick* should be ordained. O wonderful love and condescendency! and noble Governor, who can ply, and doth ply the hearts of all as he will! Then I went to another of the ministers, who had all along been a great agent in the business, and told him Mr. *Flint* was resolved not to pass. He enquired a reason; I told him, he pretended his sickness; he told me, that could be none, for he and all the ministers and professors of the town saw him daily on the streets, and but one day before in the public college. (Now the ordination was to be the next day) Seeing it was so, I told him the whole account of him, which when he heard, he was so far from being offended, that he adhered to all, and approved of our tenderness; yet he said, it would greatly reflect upon us, our cause, and the whole remnant at home; and pressed, that if it were possible, he might offer himself to the ordination, and then we needed not let him go home  
until

until we found him accomplished. This again began to work new stirs upon us; yet after some time laying it before the Lord, he was pleased to let us see that it was but a temptation, and that upon no account were we to offer him a sacrifice of that we could not take to ourselves. After this, all our fears and scruples were removed, and we fully determined to lay it all on the Lord, and the management of events and consequents on himself. So immediately going to Mr. *Flint*, I desired to know his mind; which, he said, was the same, not to pass, or go home. After some speaking to him, I desired he might go to the preses himself, and make his own excuse, but not to pretend that which was not, *viz.* his sickness; which he did, and the preses accepted of it well. O my friends, who is to mean, that has such a God for their God! so condescending, so loving, so mighty, and so powerful, that he can do in heaven and earth what he will. There is yet one remarkable trial, and honourable outgate that we had, *viz.* before the ordination; the minister had told me that it was impossible, and could not pass, without subscribing three things; the one was, their catechisms; the other two our friend will give you an account of: I desired to see their confession, and we find that there is in it mention of the forms, and enormities of their church, which we plainly told them we disowned, and were engaged in our solemn vows to the contrary. This was again like to stop all. However, I went to others of them, and gave them an account of our Confession and Catechisms, and that we could subscribe none but these, which, at last, they condescended unto; a practice never



ver before heard of in these lands. O praise and wonder! and wonder and praise! for his yet minding of us in our low estate, and concerning himself in us before strangers. I also desired of them to have liberty, with our friend *G. H.* and my brother *Mr. Gordon*, to have access, to be witnesses to the on-laying of the hands of the classis, or presbytery, which likewise they granted, though not used in that place.

Now the day of ordination being come, *Mr. Renwick*, with my brother *Mr. Gordon*, and *G. H.* came into my chamber, but none of the rest; after prayer we went out to the church, where the classis was to hold; and walking together in an outer room there, as we had been desired, until our friend was called in, which they did in a most honourable way, not only by the ordinary servant, but by one of the brethren ministers. After he was in, we returned, and spending some time together in prayer, we again returned, and about two in the afternoon, (the examination lasting from ten to two) one of the oldest of the ministers was sent out (as they had promised) to call us in, to be witnesses to the on-laying of the hands: when we came in, the whole of the ministers saluted us most kindly, affectionately and friendly; after some exhortations, they proposed to him the subscription, which they jointly declared to be nothing else than the subscribing of our own confession. After their reading it over again and again, *Mr. James* started a scruple in it, which, through the Lord's blessing, was both seasonable, and made acceptable to all, and then he subscribed it. Then with prayer they went about the laying on of the hands, in a most solemn, and a most tender way;  
and

and the whole time our friend was upon his knees, the most of the whole meeting were joining with the tears in their eyes. After, he was desired by the preses to take the brethren by the hand, which they all gave him in a most affectionate way; and after he had done, he (our friend I mean) had a most serious, grave and taking discourse to the whole classis, and so was dismissed. When going out of the room, the preses called me, and desired that Mr. *Renwick* and I might dine with the classis; which we promised; and coming in amongst them, they were as brethren at a strait, every one of them how to express their kindness to us. The preses desired me to sit on his right hand at the head of the table; and after a little sitting, he declared to me the great satisfaction the whole brethren had had in Mr. *Renwick*, that they thought, the whole time he was before them he was so filled with the Spirit, that his face did shine; and that he had never seen such evident tokens of the Lord's being with them, as in this affair all alongst, and so blessed and praised the Lord for what he had seen. Then he desired a relation might be given to the brethren of our cause; which I did, both of our sufferings and wrestlings; who were all so affected, that ye would have thought, they were both weeping and rejoicing; grieving for our case, as they said; and rejoicing that the Lord had honoured us in such a noble piece of service; promising to mind us both in public and private; and also offered themselves anew again for the same service, whatever might be the hazard. Then the preses told them, that the magistrate was usurping as much upon them, and there was as great yielding amongst them as in  
our

our land; and if they followed not our practice, the church would be ruined, and they and their posterity rooted out. There was also another minister who declared, he had been twenty years a minister in that place, but had never seen nor found so much of the Lord's Spirit, accompanying a work, as that; and declared, he would die and live with us. O tune up your harps, and sing praises unto him, whose mercy endureth for ever, and has had yet compassion on us in our low estate

Now, my honourable Brethren, here ye have a short account, yet not the hundred-fold of what the Lord hath done for us in this affair; the bearer, with our dear and honoured friend in the Lord, will give you a fuller account of matters than I was able in the time to do, (*viz.* G. H. But now, when we thought the battle was fought, and the storm over, it begun afresh again upon us from another airth, representing itself as terrible as any of the former; though, blessed be his name, through his rich blessing, we were never once suffered to be cast down at the thoughts of it! and O again admire and wonder! The morning after the ordination, as I was lying in my bed, I received a letter from Mr. *Brackel*, wherein he gives me an account of a letter from *Holland* to stop the ordination, for he was to receive a lybel against us all, subscribed by the church of *Rotterdam*, Mr. *Br.* Mr. *Hog* younger, and Mr. *Thomas Langlands*, accusing us of many terrible things, and lent me three or four of the prime of them, which I have sent with our friend; and withal desiring me, so soon as it came to my hands, to show his letters to me to the classis, and either to vindicate ourselves before them

them, or otherways to stop Mr. *Renwick* and Mr. *Flint's* ordination; (for then he had no known Mr. *Flint's* determination and ours) and upon that pretence of Mr. *Flint's* sickness, the letter was sent by an express to me for its greater haste, and might have come three days sooner to my hand than it did, but the Lord in a wonderful way stopped it, but what way we could never yet learn. O wonderful Counsellor, for if it had come but a day sooner, by all probability it had stopped our friend's passing, for there had been a necessity for my shewing it to the classis; and they could have done no other at least, than to have taken it to consideration, and to have delayed the diet for that time: but O his wisdom! infinite wisdom and power! After I got it, I went to the professors, and ministers, and others of the godly, and gave them a full account of all, and of all my letters, who were nothing troubled, but justified us in all our dealings against these ministers, and promised to own us in all, and give us an account of any informations that should come against us; for Mr. *Brackel's* letters told us, they were presently to write to *Groningen* against us, and cause print their accusations against us. So the Lord was still gracious unto us, in keeping us in continual exercise, that our dependance might be the more on himself: for when he had wrought for us and broken the snare, we were made to fear Mr. *Brackel* and friends in *Friesland*; for in his letters, they had promised to have their libel ready against us at *Amsterdam*, against such a day as they named; and Mr. *Brackel*, without acquainting any but one or two, casts himself to be at *Amsterdam* the same day, but when he came, the  
libel



libel was not ready, but they would have been at telling it by word of mouth to him, but he refused to hear them unless in write; and indeed he was wonderfully helped to own the Lord's cause, and poor *Scotland's* cause. When he left them, they promised to have the information and libel against us at him within four or five days: But now the time is long over, and there is no word of it! And so he returned to us all, to the wonder of all, and the joy of many, more our friend, and *Scotland's* friend than ever. And he told me a strange passage, That the day before he went to their meeting, he was walking in his own yard, and there he saw a little small bird hotly pursued by a great hawk, and, after many tossings and turnings, the bird, at last, flies to him for shelter, and he relieved it, which was born in upon him at the time, as a lively emblem of ours and the church's case. O praise to him! when we had win to good hopes of that storm's being broken, we must yet again enter into another, threatening as terrible as the other. That same day, in the evening, that I received Mr. *Brackel's* letter with the apostate ministers libel, arrives *James Russel*, *Patrick Grant*, and *David Robertson*, with full assurance to stop the ordination; but, through the Lord's goodness, they came also a day too late, and were disappointed, I think, every way; as to that affair I refer you wholly to the bearer. They are still staying here, I fear their design be not good; and I think, in that place they shall have none of our two, Mr. *Flinn* and Mr. *Boyd*, much against them. O Lord, give wisdom, and come yet and be seen. O honourable

friends, hath he not been gloriously seen in the business! —

Now, what can I say unto you, our engagements are great, let our thankfulness be answerable; get you the gospel, O the precious gospel again amongst you; hold it up by prayer amongst you; be more in tenderness, humility, watchfulness, crying, and wrestling than ever; for he is a holy and jealous God. O be much for him downright and upright for him, cost what it will he is more than able to bear your charges, on whose shoulders the government is laid. And my poor advice would be, That with all haste you would write to *London*, discharging Mr. *Nisbet* to come here, for his base sitting of time and such special calls. As also to send for the two that are here; for now we are keeping fire in our own bosoms, and, if the Lord prevent it not, putting weapons in mad-mens hands. And also, to seek the Lord's mind in ordaining of some ministers, and that among yourselves. My own judgment has been, that providing you can find such qualified with holiness, tenderness, examples, as *Paul* says of the believers, in word, in conversation, in spirit, in faith and purity; and such as *Acts* i. 21. which accompanied you in your tribulations, and have been witnesses to your contendings and wrestlings, and given proof of their constancy and faithfulness. And indeed that is the way, I think, that would bring in most glory to our Lord, and which would be much like our case, and my soul would most ply with every way; for I am far from the mind that the Lord will make much use of learning for the building of his house again. It is, and has been so-much boasted of amongst us, so trusted to,

and

and improven against our Lord, that, I think, for a time, he will put a mark of ignominy upon it, and train up at his own school. O my brethren, it is *Scotland* that must make fit for ministers, else here it will never be. — I think, ye should send over three of the most eminent among you, with the first occasion, in room of these ye are to call home, that our cause may be kept up in that college, and some to witness against *James Russel*, and the others, who have seated there, or any that may oppose us. As also, letters of thanks should be written to that college, and to the classis; as also, an approbation of what they have done. As also, a joint declaration against the church of *Rotterdam*, first, for setting down to the Lord's table a promiscuous multitude, men of blood, that have been at *Pentland* and *Bothwel* against the Lord; men banded, cessed, and what not: as also, debaring from it such as were faithful, as worthy *Rathillet*, &c. *Item*, for receiving in amongst them *Mr. Fleming*, who is rather *Charles Stuart's* minister than Christ's. As also, their cruel dealing and handling of their countrymen that came there, who are faithful in their day, threatening to starve them out of their consciences, notwithstanding of the large supply, they have from the magistrates of that place, for the effect of the poor. *Item*, Their taking into their sessions, as members thereof, men void of both principles and tenderness, and their not exercising the discipline of our church, nor preaching faithfully against the sins of our time. As also, their licensing all to preach amongst them, however notorious for their open defection, and avowed rebellion against Christ; such as have devoured the

stock at home, and seek to pursue those in a strange land who have escaped out of their claws. As also, their open and practically discovering themselves this day against our mother church, &c.

My advice would be also, that your testimony would relate of a declaration, that you would set out also, laying out the rebellion of ministers all alongst it, and how they have now forsaken Christ and the poor remnant; so that if ye had the occasion, ye durst not further own them; and lay it out to the churches, that providing any of them come by them, that they or none others be owned without they have a testimony and approbation from the suffering church of *Scotland*. As also, letters of thanks would be sent to Mr. *Brackel*, for his kindness and faithfulness in the cause of God, and to the sufferers here.

I can say no more, my dear and honourable Brethren, but what I omit, I hope the bearers will supply it. — Let me hear more frequently from you all, for your letters are very refreshing to me; though many times I be, but little in case to write unto you, yet I desire that you may find my practical kindness, and not mistake my silence.

Now, *The blessing of him that dwelt in the bush be with you all.*

*Your sympathizing brother,*

*and real servant,*

ROBERT HAMILTON.

LETTER



## L E T T E R LXXVIII.

The following Letters by Mr. *Michael Shields* were mostly wrote at the direction of the General Meeting.

*From Mr. Michael Shields, to some Friends.*

*Dear Friends,*

*July 5. 1683.*

**H**AVING the occasion of the bearer, I thought I could not omit, but write a line to you; insignificant as it is, counting myself obliged to do it, and more many ways. It is our duty to be sympathizing with, bearing burden, and minding one another; but as I am short in all duties, so in this also. Distance of place, or separation one of us from another, or being in diverse nations, should not be a cause of our forgetting one another; especially in this day when so many have forgotten God their Maker, their vows to him, and his people, with whom they were once embarked. O let us not do so, but be minding and praying with and for one another, and provoking and stirring up one another to love, and to good works. And now when I have put pen to paper, what can I say? I am unfit for any thing; little I can say either for counsel or encouragement: but this I say, Look unto and depend upon him who is all-sufficient for both; yea, for all things ye want or can want. He is the foundation and well-spring of grace, glory,

and happiness. Delight yourselves in him, and ye shall have the desire of your souls.

Dear Friends, since it hath pleased the Lord to determine your hearts to fall in love with him, and in token thereof to meet together in Christian fellowship for prayer, and other duties incumbent for you in your station: and not only so, but to join with, and cast in your lot among the poor suffering, tossed, reproached, condemned, and dispersed remnant of the church of *Scotland*, who is this day like a lily among thorns, and a silly chased bird among vultures and ravens: As you have begun, so hold on: endurers to the end only get the crown. O labour (if such an one as I may desire) to keep up your meetings; forget not the assembling of yourselves together; let not that stately tower that we have yet left in our *Zion* (of the many strong bulwarks, comely ramparts, and high hedges that once we had in and about her) fall down; lest it prove crushing and piercing. Seek him where he hath promised to be found; rest not till ye find him; refuse to be comforted till he return and be gracious, and be pacified towards the remnant of his heritage. *Let your light so shine* (ye dwell in a dark place) *before men, that they seeing your good works may glorify God*; and that they may have no ground to blame your good conversation in Christ. Labour to be living witnesses for Christ and his precious truths, and against the enemies and their abominations in the place you live in: and your sympathy with your afflicted brethren in *Scotland*, let it continue. It is a duty much commanded and commended by God in his word; and fellow-feeling with the suffering members of Christ,

Christ, is a mark that we are members of that same body whereof he is the head. Let us not be lying at ease in a day of *Jacob's* trouble, eating, drinking, and making merry, lest we be guilty of the woe pronounced against such, and be led forth with the workers of iniquity, when peace shall be upon his *Israel*. When trouble from the world abounds, let our love to him, and zeal for him, increase; and the more our Lord Jesus is persecuted by the wicked of this generation, and his image in his members hated, let us love him the more, and be known to the world that we do so, although persecution never so great follow; and labour to get his image more renewed in your souls. This is a day wherein we have a fair opportunity to give a proof of our love and loyalty to King Christ, who is wronged; wounded, slighted, despised and contemned, and spitted upon by the wicked of this generation; yea, and many of the wounds and wrongs he gets is in the house of his friends. O let us lay hold upon such opportunities; for many have longed for the like, and have not obtained. It sets us well, and is well our common, to fear, love and obey him, who loved us when we could not love ourselves, nor no eye pity us. O wonderful condescendency. O let us labour to get our eyes and ears to affect our hearts, that we may be suitably affected, and deeply wounded and concerned with the many wounds precious Christ hath gotten, his glory, truths, cause, covenant and people have gotten and are getting this day. Let us resent and testify against these wrongs, lest we be found guilty. We ought to contend and suffer for hairs, hoofs, and pins of precious truth.

O noble privilege, and high dignity, to be honoured to suffer for the least of them, if any of them may be so called.

Dear Friends, let us rejoice in tribulation and persecution for his sake; let us rejoice in being robbed, spoiled, and nothing left us; let us rejoice in being put to wander, though it were in mountains, dens, and caves of the earth; (we have a cloud of witnesses that have gone before us) let us rejoice in cruel mockings, reproaches from enemies and pretended friends; yea, in being put to cruel tortures and deaths; none of all these things shall harm us, if we be followers of that which is good; yea, in all these things we shall be more than conquerors, *through him that loved us, and washed us in his blood.* Here is enough though we be under persecution all our days, it sets us to be silent, and not to quarrel with his doings, for he is the governor of heaven and earth, he can do us no wrong. O for submissive spirits, Let us *bear his indignation patiently, because we have sinned against him:* and to be learning the language of the rod, and him who hath appointed it. The dispensations that fall out in our day are very strange, deep, and mysterious: he is bringing to pass *his act, his strange act.* He is by them making himself to be known to be God, whose ways are equal, although many a time to us they seem crooked, when we measure them by the crooked rule of our own making. He is taking many ways to make himself great and high in his peoples eyes and estimation, by taking instruments (and these great ones) and means out of the way. I think this is one language that thir dispensations



sations have, *Be still, and know that I am God, &c.* It sets us better to be sitting silent, and wondering and adoring at infinite sovereignty in his way of working, than to quarrel and cry out, *Why is it thus?* And another language is, *Look unto me all ye ends of the earth, and be ye saved;* let us look to him only for salvation, both from inward and outward enemies, and no longer to hills and mountains. Let us *stand still and see the salvation of the Lord*, who hath a holy hand in suffering us to be brought into so great difficulties, as it were the Red-sea before us, rocks on every hand, and the *Egyptians* behind, that he alone may be seen exalted and glorified in delivering us out of them. A look from himself can divide the Red-sea, and make his people to walk on dry land, and make the chariot-wheels of our enemies to drive heavily.

Dear Friends, there is one thing I am somewhat pressed in conscience to tell you of, and that is, since you have joined with the suffering remnant in *Scotland*, and adhered to the controverted truths our dying martyrs have laid down their lives for, and our living witnesses are contending for, and in particular, that in protesting against the unfaithfulness and sinful silence in ministers, by their withdrawing from them, it were your wisdom to be even-down in this, and to take good heed whom ye hear, least, if rash in this, ye be found to contradict what they have done; especially now when we have given them a call, which if they embrace, it is well, if not we, must stand still and not go to them, least we loose our ground, but they must return to us. Do not mistake me, as if I were desiring to cast at the gospel, or ministers: No; Lord for-

forbid; the Lord is my witness, that is not my desire: it is only to have you to cease to hear the instruction that causeth to err from the words of knowledge, and to wait till we get the gospel, which we have sinned away, back again, faithfully preached by faithful ministers, that I design. It is my soul's desire, if my heart deceive me not, to long to hear the gospel, and to see faithful ministers; (O what is more desireable than to hear Christ speaking to us in the calm voice of the gospel again, who hath been long speaking to us in the loud voice of his judgments and threatenings) and to long to see that day when the reproach of being against ministry and magistracy shall be rolled away from his people; and when both shall be duely and rightly administred according to his word. Dear Friends, let us mourn and weep for our former slighting of the sweet gospel, and wrestle with him night and day, that he would return and visit us with the offers of his gospel, and let yet *the voice of the turtle be heard in our land, the time of the singing of the birds, and the spring time come.* O let us long and thirst for such sweet and desirable days.

I draw to a close with this: These three of you whom the Lord hath honoured with a prison, and to bear his cross, have the forestart of the rest. I wish heartily grace, mercy, and peace, be their allowance, and the consolations of his Spirit make their prisons sweet to them; and that he may keep them in the hour of temptation, and help them to endure to the end: and it is the duty of all the rest of you to be preparing for suffering.

I earnestly desire ye would do me the favour  
as to write to me. I remain,

*Your servant at command in the Lord,*

MICHAEL SHIELDS.

---

L E T T E R LXXIX.

*From Mr. Michael Shields, to ———.*

*Rev. and worthy Sir,*

*August 1. 1683.*

**W**E desire to bless the Lord on your behalf,  
that he hath made choice of you to be  
an instrument to appear for your Master's wrong-  
ed cause in this persecuted church, which, thro'  
the good hand of God, hath proven an ef-  
fectual mean for the raising up of Christ's fallen  
banner in this backslidden land, wherein there is  
none to appear valiantly for him, according to  
the command of God, and our solemn vows and  
engagements; but, upon the other hand, are  
homologating with the enemy, and have turned  
violent reproachers and persecutors of the poor  
afflicted, persecuted, suffering remnant, and that  
both of the living and the dead, to the stumbling,  
weakening, and turning back of many who were  
beginning to look after the Lord, and had put  
their hand to the plough, in witnessing and tes-  
tifying against the abominations of our day and  
time, which clearly doth appear from these their  
most odious and ridiculous calumnies, which the  
letter sent to us by our faithful delegate, is a  
new certification of.

Sir,

Sir, we shall, as in the sight of an holy God declare the truth in every point of these accusations ye received from these ministers of *Rotterdam* against us.

1. As for our casting off and rejecting of *Charles Stewart*, and all them they call magistrates ruling under him, we own it; and desire to mourn for our being so long in doing of it: the reasons of our doing thereof, we hope ye are sufficiently informed by our worthy and faithful delegate sent to you. But as to setting up of magistrates among ourselves, there is no truth in it. And as to that of our killing all that will not adhere to us, and are not of our opinion, we declare to be false and calumnious, and a thing detested by us.

2. As to the second accusation, that we are not pure in religion: Alas! we are not as we ought to be in that. But as to the putting any questions to these whom we admit to fellowships, we declare we put none but such as we have from divine precept, and former engagements to God, and to one another.

3. As for the third accusation, we think not strange that they calumniate us as a faction, and not as a church; for these ministers and people whom they hold to be the church, did reproach our most noble suffering ministers and martyrs as erroneous, and of a Jesuitical principle; as witnesses, *Mr. Kid*, *Mr. King*, *Mr. Cameron*, and *Mr. Cargil*, who, in our declining age, were the only witnesses, as ministers, for the true church of our Lord Jesus Christ, and against the incroachments made thereupon

As to the second part of the third accusation, that the silent ministers say, that they are the  
most



most pure church, and that they have pastors and presbyteries: It is true they sit in presbytery and condemn the innocent, by justifying the lawfulness of taking the Bond and the late Indulgence, upon which head, amongst many others, our worthies have suffered, testifying against it; and several of them hear the tested curates themselves, and advise others to do so; and the generality of them refuse either to preach or administer the sacraments: as witness, when any comes to them, with a testificate, for the benefit of baptism, they refuse, and desire and advise them to go to the tested curates. And this is a part of the parity of their church.

4. As to the fourth accusation, that the students are not of unblameable life. In answer to that, these three who are sent to you, to be educated in order to the ministry, as to their life and conversation while they were with us they walked blamelessly, so far as could be discerned by us.

Worthy Sir, to conclude, not desiring to be tedious, we, the poor suffering remnant in the church of *Scotland*, give you hearty thanks for your faithful pains and diligence ament the ordination of *Mr. James Renwick*; and are glad and rejoice to hear of your, and your worthy brother's satisfaction with him; and take it for a token for good, that the Lord will visit and gather together again his poor scattered sheep in our land. And also, that our and your God shall recompence your labour of love and pains, and diligence, severntold in your bosom.

*Sic subscribitur,*

MICHAEL SHIELDS.

## L E T T E R LXXX.

*From the Anti-popish, Anti-prelatic, Anti-erastian true Presbyterian church of Scotland, To those that desire to join with the cause of God, at Dublin in Ireland.*

October 3. 1683.

*Dear Friends and covenanted Brethren,*

**T**HE Lord brought us to a high pitch of a glorious and blessed reformation, in the several steps thereof, from Popery, Prelacy, and Erastian supremacy; and took us into covenant with himself, to serve him after the due order, and to maintain his interest with our lives and liberties, as we should answer to him at the great day. Whereby our land was made the glory of the nations, and our church terrible to her enemies, *as an army with banners, holiness to the Lord being the badge; so that we may say, our vine which the Lord brought out of Egypt, did fill the land, and the hills were covered with the shadow of it, and the boughs thereof were like the goodly cedars.* But alas! there are crept in amongst us little foxes to spoil the tender grapes; malignant men disaffected to the cause and people of God, who got footing in judicatories and armies, who ought to have been purged out, that their places might be filled up with men of known integrity, according to the word of God, *Exod. xviii. 21. 2 Sam. xxiii. 3.* Yet that duty was not only hindered and condemned by a prevailing company of carnal hearts; but also, public resolutions were fallen upon to bring in known

known malignants, enemies to God and godliness, into places of power and trust: and commissioners authorized to close a treaty with this man *Charles Stuart*, king of malignants, and to give him the crown, upon his subscribing such demands as were sent to him, after so many discoveries of his malice against God, and of his still persisting in the same, and notwithstanding they knew him not to be hearty, but juggling in what he condescended to; who no sooner got footing, but used all means to ruin the work of God. And in their first parliament took, as it were, the royal diadem off King Christ's head, (O horrid blasphemy!) and set it upon their king, whereby they made him an idol in his person; who, by virtue of that sacrilegious robbing of the Son of God, commanded our ministers to leave their flocks, over which the principal and good Shepherd had set them, which they almost all did, as if they had been hirelings, and suffered the wolf to catch and scatter the sheep; so that we may say, Our pleasant things were not taken from us, but we gave them away with our own hands. We betrayed the interest of Christ, and gave enemies all their asking, and made the Lord's pleasant portion a desolate wilderness. Yet the Lord, because he had compassion on his people, and on his dwelling-place, stirred up some to go to the high places of the fields, and jeopard their lives unto the death, in proclaiming the truths of God; whereby there were great inroads made upon Satan's territories, who finding himself at a loss and disadvantage, spewed out sinful snares amongst us, to ruin the work of God, and to break us, viz. indulgences and indemnities, whereby Christ's crown was established upon a

man's head, which some men, loving worldly ease more than truth, embracing, they betrayed the cause of God, and yielded the day to the dragon and his angels; others who had not the offer, yet gaping after it, struck in with them, to strengthen the devil's side; and many who professed to be against such courses themselves, yet tendered more the credit of discreditable men than the honour of God; and instead of using means for their reclaiming, strengthened their hands in their perverse ways, and sided with them against those whom the Lord raised up to be faithful and free, and (weakly, though not designedly I hope, for we desire to be charitable to them) wrought together to gain the end of the common adversary; who, as they gained ground, increased the persecution; which now hath discovered the thoughts and hidden hypocrisy of many hearts. Yet in all this, (blessed be the holy and wise Lord) he had still a remnant who kepted their ground, and through his assistance, wrestled for him, by faithful preaching of his will, appearances, testimonies, declarations, and sufferings; so that there is not one step of all our public defection, but that he hath honoured and helped a party to witness against, and to seal their testimonies with their blood, both ministers and people of divers qualities.

And now, we desire nothing but, the Lord assisting, to follow the good old way, and to stand upon the ground whereunto the Lord, by our worthy reformers, brought us, and for which we have been wrestling and contending: we say, we are seeking nothing but to take the Lord's part against his enemies, to stand under *Michael's* banner to fight against the dragon, and to have

our



our banished King Christ brought back again; and in order to this, studying to shake our hands clean of the causes of his displeasure at us, which keeps him so long away, and to set about the duties of Christianity with mourning, humiliation, fasting, and prayer.

Therefore, being all engaged in one common cause, and bound in covenant together, and having some knowledge of your case, and also of your desire to know and follow duty; we thought it expedient to write unto you, ye having been, to the grief of our souls, led aside by the cruel and subtle dealing of adversaries, and the treachery and unfaithfulness of these who gave themselves out for your leaders; desiring, as brethren, that ye would lay to heart the sad case our church is redacted unto by reason of our sin against the Lord: and consider what is called for at your hands, if either you desire to see his return again to *Britain* and *Ireland*, or to transmit his truths to the succeeding generation, as to the shaking yourselves clean of the abominations of the times, and also withdrawing yourselves from these backslidden ministers altogether unfaithful to our wronged Lord and Master: for as to your meeting-houses, not knowing what underhand dealing hath been with the wicked powers of the time, neither thinking the case to be formally the same with our hell-hatched indulgences in *Scotland*; yet the effects are much one. For,

1. The embracing of these meeting-houses was a dividing of themselves from their more righteous brethren and their sufferings; exposing them to be the only butt of the adversaries malice, and to shift for themselves contrary to our

engagements, whereby we were to take one common lot with the common cause.

2. It was an embracing of a snare, whereby they were drawn into, not only, a supine and loathsome formality and neutrality in the Lord's cause, but into unfaithfulness in the highest degree, palliating the sins, and covering the abominations of the tyrannical powers, least they, having the arm of flesh upon their side, should cast down their meeting-houses, and cast out themselves; and in no measure discovering the duty of the day to people, so that they are ignorant of what these cruel adversaries have done against our blessed Lord, and of their own sin in strengthening their hands in their working wickedness, and upholding that fabric of rebellion against the heavens. Oh! what shall we say, sin and duty hath been both hid, and the souls of the people not cared for, neither the standing of the interest of Jesus Christ which they have palpably betrayed; and have most actively given their consent to the enemies taking and keeping the houses of God in possession. And,

3. They have quit their meeting houses at the command and threatenng of men; for albeit their entry was hurtful to the cause, and the exercise of their ministry nothing but a felling of truth, and a buying of sinful liberty to themselves; yet that does not warrant another step of declining duty, in explicitly and more fully delivering up the privileges of Jesus Christ; yea, one pendule of his crown should not be yielded, though it should cost us all our lives: and we may cry out, *Let it not be heard in Gath, nor published in the streets of Ashkelon,* that the Covenanters in *Britain and Ireland* should

should be standing with their heads upon their necks in that day when King Christ's crown was taken from him.

O beloved Friends and covenanted Brethren, go on in your duty, and follow no men, but them who will follow the Lord Jesus Christ; consider truth as naked, abstracting from all persons, and resolve firmly in Jehovah's strength to stand to it alone, albeit none should stand with you; and never take carnal reasons and arguments to plead yourselves out of your duty, but consider ay the case, whether it be duty or not, in all its circumstances; and if found to be so, then up and do it upon the greatest of hazards; and think not to walk so as the abused laws of man shall not reach you, for if they do not, the law of God will; for they are now confronted one against another, and the cry is gone forth from the Lord to all that will side themselves with him, to take his part against a cruel and a treacherous generation. *Say not a confederacy unto them, neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid. But sanctify the Lord of hosts himself, and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread; and he shall be for a sanctuary unto you, Isa. viii. 12, 13, 14. Wherefore come out from them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and be a father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty, 2 Cor. vi. 17, 18. O come out from among them, that ye be not partakers of their sins, and that ye receive not of their plagues: for their sins hath reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered their iniquities, Rev. xviii. 4, 5. O make haste, and get in under the shadow of the Lord's wings, and give up with every false and wicked*

wicked way, that now ye may be hid from the fiery indignation; for he is coming to shake terribly the earth, and to punish the inhabitants thereof for their iniquities. There is a sword bathed in heaven to come down upon Idumea, and upon the people of his curse; and spare whom he will, he will not spare ministers, yea Presbyterian ministers, for they have betrayed the interest of Jesus Christ; yea, not only consented unto, but concurred with enemies spoiling him of his princely robes, and of the power he hath in his own house: They have made sad the hearts of the righteous, whom the Lord hath not made sad, and strengthened the hands of the wicked, that he should not return from his wicked way, by promising him life, and have seduced the people, by seeing visions of peace for them in their sinful backsliding courses, when there was no peace from the Lord.

O dearly Beloved in our blessed Lord, follow none further than they follow Christ; and cease to hear the instruction which causeth to err from the words of knowledge; and *mark and avoid them who cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, for they that are such, serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own bellies, and by good words and fair speeches, deceive the hearts of the simple.*

We shall trouble you no further at the time, but heartily and fully approving of the carriage of your hearty friend and wellwisher in the Lord, Mr. James Renwick, among you, (who is for us a faithful minister of Jesus Christ) in not joining with these men-ministers with you, and in declining them as to the seeking and accepting their call to preach, or giving them satisfaction



as to his ordination; yet, as often he said unto yourselves, we hold ourselves obliged in duty to satisfy you who have been his hearers; therefore we have sent unto you a true transcript of the testificate of his ordination in *Latin*, and the *English* version thereof, with some other papers for your clearing and information in the Lord's cause; thanking you heartily for the great kindness, he reports, that ye shewed unto him, taking it as if it had been done to all of us: And desiring that ye, shaking yourselves clean of the abominations of the time, may embody yourselves in Christian fellowships and societies, with all tenderness and brokenness of heart, crying mightily to the Lord, that he would return and be reconciled unto the remnant of his heritage, and reclaim his captivate declarative glory out of the hands of the proud enemy; and we shall keep a correspondence with you, and help you with any whom the Lord sends forth unto us, cloathed with his commission, to proclaim the glad tidings of salvation. The Lord, the Lord God, the covenanted God of *Britain* and *Ireland*, be with you.

LETTER

## L E T T E R LXXXI.

*From the Anti-popish, Anti-prelatick, Anti-erastian, true Presbyterian, but poor and persecuted Church of Scotland, to the right honourable, truly gracious, and really sympathizing Brethren and Sisters in Friesland, and more especially in the city of Lewarden.*

*October 28. 1683.*

**T**HE Lord did vouchsafe such gracious and glorious privileges upon us, that he brought us unto a high pitch of reformation, and many engagements to be for him, beyond many (yea, we may say to the praise of his free grace, and with reflection upon our heinous ingratitude, beyond any) lands: but he hath been many ways provoked by us to lay us low as at this day, which indeed we must confess we have deserved, yea, and more at his hand; but we desire to take all in love from him, who chasteneth and loves, and loves in chastisement; and in seeking by this hot and fiery furnace to get a remnant purified for himself, amongst whom he may take delight to dwell. And now when the furnace is still growing hotter and hotter, should not we look beyond the outside of dispensations, into the Lords glorious purposes and intentions; who, the more hot he makes the furnace, minds to produce the more pure metal thereby? Also when we think upon (of which we are sure ye are not without the apprehensions) the sad and deplorable case of all national and other churches,

by

by reason of unfaithfulness to the Lord, little esteem of his precious truths, want of zeal for his glory, and not following him fully as he ought to be; we are indeed persuaded, that where he hath thoughts of love, and purposes of kindness, thither he will come, and sit as a refiner's fire to purge and refine. But, O! ever blessed be his holy and exalted name, he who is able to raise children unto *Abraham* out of the stones, will not want a testimony for himself, and a company of living witnesses: and we may say, to the praise of his glorious free grace, and gracious condescendency to our once glorious, but now bleeding and wounded, yet wrestling and contending mother church, that in our land he hath had this; we say, a company, a party whom he still honoured, and is yet honouring and helping to burst out with declarations, protestations, testimonies, resistances, and that unto blood, against all the heinous indignities done to him, whom he hath not left helpless nor comfortless. And among our other refreshings from himself, this is one, and not a small one, that he hath stirred you, our right honourable and dearly beloved brethren and sisters, to wrestle so diligently, and to contend so faithfully, zealously, and valiantly for our church; and to bear burden, and really to sympathize with us in our afflictions, trials and tribulations, evidenced by your sincere love, and great kindness unto, and singular sympathy with our right honourable friend *Mr. Robert Hamilton*, who hath been much dignified and owned of the Lord, in his many engagements, appearances, contendings, and sufferings at home, for the Lord's cause, and our cause; and in his ma-

ny wrestlings abroad, which ye are not ignorant of, having given many evidences of his care, diligence, faithfulness, and zeal for the Lord: And also evidenced by your great love and sympathy with our right honourable friend *Earlston*, and his persecuted and cast-out family, who is the branch of an old standing house for the Lord; he himself honoured to be greatly active for his cause, and now called to be immediately under the enemies lash upon that account. And, moreover, evidenced by the great charges ye have been at in helping our distressed and cast-out families, in collecting so liberally for the same; for which we desire to bless the Lord and to thank you, praying earnestly that he himself may reward you, who will not forget your labour of love and compassion of us in our bonds. O! what shall we say, we are all members of one body, subject to one glorious head, our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath purchased us to himself: and this is manifested by you in deed. Therefore let us go on in evidencing the strict conjunction of us his members, that when one suffers, all suffer with it; and when one rejoiceth, all rejoice with it. And also making to appear our love to our lovely and blessed Lord, by following him fully; labouring not to be put off our ground by the violent and boisterous winds of persecution which we are tossed with, and which ye may expect to be liable unto. O! have we not a noble and glorious Captain to follow, who hath suffered more for us than we can do for him, *delivering himself for our offences, and rising again for our justification*. O! it is highly desirable to be like him yea, such a high desire, that lost worm ma  
durl



durst not have attempted it, if the Lord himself had not, out of his infinite and free love, condescended both to provide the means, and call us unto it: and as it is highly desirable to be like him in every thing, so also in his suffering, (*who was made perfect through suffering*) not being divided from him in his patience. O! shall we not look beyond what is in time, and in this howling but short wilderness, unto what he hath provided for, and promised unto those who overcome? who hath said, *They shall walk with him in white.*

Now, right honourable Friends, we cannot express the love we owe unto you; but we may say, we have our hearts unite unto you, as we do not doubt but yours are also unto us, though we be not in the capacity to manifest the same, as you have done many ways: but we desire to be often and much at a throne of grace for you, begging that ye will be so for us, in our contentings and extreme sufferings. So remains,

*Your hearty wellwishing, really endeared, and  
very much obliged brethren, sisters and  
servants in our ever blessed Lord,*

Subscribed in our name, and by our direction,  
by the clerk of our general meeting,

MIC. SHIELDS.

## L E T T E R LXXXII.

*Ecclesia Scoticana Classi Groninganae salutem.*

Nov. 28. 1683.

*Reverendissimi Domini vigilantissimi Pastores,*

THE Lord having now, to our great joy and encouragement, restored unto us our beloved friend and minister Mr. *James Renwick*, and brought him through many imminent dangers; (for which we desire to rejoice in him, praising his holy name) who hath given us such an ample and savory account of your real concern- edness with our Master's cause, and affection to and sympathy with us in *Scotland*, that we must burst out in expressing our sensibleness of, and joy in the same, by writing unto you: again and again blessing the Lord, and thanking you for the singular mercy which we enjoy, by your confirming of our foresaid beloved friend Mr. *James Renwick* in the work of the ministry (for which he was sent over unto you by us) whereof the Lord gives special evidences of his own appro- bation, being singularly with him in that great and weighty work, to our great refreshing and encouragement: and also testifying and confirm- ing the truth of that faithful Mr. *William Brackel* minister at *Lewarden*, witnessed in his friend- ly testimony of our students before your presby- tery, viz. That the testificates and calls sub- scribed by us unto them, particularly to the foresaid Mr. *James Renwick*, were delivered in- to the hand of the right honourable the laird of *Earlston*.

*Earlston.* We acknowledge ourselves many ways your debtors, both in spirituals and temporals; and are very sensible of your care of the church of God, evidenced so many ways unto us in our low case and condition, now when the enemies of our Lord in this land have casten down the Lord's house to the ground, and laid his pleasant portion desolate, and casten many of us out of our houses, being violently persecute, and that unto death, with all the subtilty and cruelty which the powers of hell and earth can devise. O! the fury and wickedness of enemies is come to a great height, and the malice of backsliders is swelled to a great measure, not only Christianity but humanity being altogether given up by the most part of the nation; so that all things speak forth the cup of the *Amorite* and *Edomite* to be near full, and that the Lord is even at the doors with a great deluge of his wrath, to be let loose upon the generation. But in the midst of all our distresses and difficulties (O! blessed be the name of the Lord) we have no reason to complain, for he speaks comfortably to us in this wilderness; he is a present help to us in the time of our need, and puts songs in our mouths in the midst of this hot fire; and is wonderfully seen in hiding, preserving and encouraging us; it being no small refreshment unto us, that he hath put into your hearts to stand still and to hear our complaints, and to become companions with us in our tribulations; for which we desire to praise the Lord, and to pray unto him, that he who is not unrighteous to forget your labour of love may reward you, for putting to your hands to strengthen and help a wrestling and bleeding church; and that

he may make you ever faithful in his vineyard, following your labours with his rich blessing, to the glory of his great name, and the advancement of his kingdom in the earth, and in the souls of his people. O! mind the distressed and afflicted, bleeding case of the once glorious church of *Scotland*, as we desire to mind you, both in public and in private. We remain,

*Your assured friends and obliged servants  
to our full power in the Lord,*

Subscribed in our name by the clerk of our general meeting,  
MIC. SHIELDS.

---

## L E T T E R LXXXIII.

*To all and sundry true Protestant Churches to whom  
thir presents may come.*

Nov. 28. 1683.

**W**E do not in the least doubt, but in some measure it is known unto you, how that our antient and reformed church of *Scotland* did sometime gloriously flourish with the great and bright splendour of the true religion, so that her light was visible to all adjacent churches: but now, deservedly for our sinning against the Lord, we have occasioned his vineyard in our land to be overspread and trodden down with foxes, and devoured with the wild beasts of the field; we being under various and sad exigences, great persecutions and reproaches, which also we may be persuaded are come unto your ears. The  
weighty



weighty consideration whereof (together with the great hope we have of your concernedness with us in our low and desolate case, whereunto, as to the external face of our church, we are redacted; yet dignified and helped, though weakly, but willingly to *contend for the faith once delivered to the saints*, and for the privileges of the church of God) moved us to send and commissionate the right honourable Mr. *Robert Hamilton*, unto all you who are wellwishers unto the commonwealth of *Israel*, and that upon many deliberate and weighty grounds; knowing that our cause and case is sadly misrepresented unto you by the subtile dealings of our adversaries and backslidders, who are sinfully active, but most vigilant in giving misinformation, and false relations of what we act and do; as if our principles and proceedings were contrary to the written word of God, the supreme judge of all controversies, and true Protestantism. Whereas, we jointly and unanimously declare, that we neither maintain nor hold any thing contrary to the scriptures of truth, our ancient laws ecclesiastic and civil, and our noble work of reformation; but desire (yea, and have been helped through the Lord's grace) to square our actions and proceedings according thereunto, for which we this day, and for more than the space of twenty years, are, and have been suffering afflictions, persecutions, outcastings, banishments, imprisonments, and reproaches, yea, and death itself.

We therefore, the true Protestant, Anti-papish, Anti-prelatick, Anti-erastian, and persecuted Presbyterian church of *Scotland*, do concredit this our commissioner, giving him our

full power, consent and assent, faithfully and truly to inform all true Protestant and reformed churches, kingdoms and commonwealths, unto which he shall or may come, of our present case, principles, former and later proceedings: and that we are only, through God's grace, labouring to keep ourselves still clean in the way of the Lord, as it hath been walked in by our predecessors, (of truly worthy memory) in their carrying on of our noble and glorious work of reformation, in the several steps thereof, from Popery, Prelacy, and Erastian supremacy; and it is upon these heads that our sufferings have been and are stated. And for the more clear and full knowledge thereof, we recommend you to the information of this our right honourable and faithful commissioner, as being seen in all our affairs, and of one judgment, and under the same sufferings with us; and also, while he was in our own land, highly dignified and countenanced of the Lord in his many contendings and wrestlings, engagements, rencounters and appearances against the common adversary, contendings and wrestlings against defection and backsliding courses, and great and many sufferings for truth.

So we humbly intreat and desire that whatever information ye have gotten, or may get, from any hand whatever, either enemies or backsliders, particularly ministers who have forsaken the Lord, and deserted us, of us, our principles and proceedings, contrary to the word of God, our Covenants and engagements unto him, may not be credited nor believed by you, they being only false aspersions and calumnies, through malice, cast upon us, yea, nor contrary to the information of this  
our

our right honourable trustee, and faithful commissioner, whom and whose information we humbly, but earnestly, desire and request all churches, kingdoms, and commonwealths, whether he may come, to receive and entertain him, as ye would not reject the suits and petitions of the once glorious, but now afflicted, tossed, wounded, and bleeding, yet wrestling church of *Scotland*; and in receiving of him, it shall be as done to all of us. Therefore all ye-lovers of *Zion*, do not slight, but ponder deeply, the sad case, we, as a share of the protestant interest, are redacted unto, holding up the same in your prayers to the Lord: for God calls all to sympathize together, and to consider, that the plottings, consultations, machievments, and actings of adversaries, are intended against the whole; and when one member suffers, all ought to suffer with it. And we, for our parts, (which is all the remuneration that, at the time, we can give) shall not cease to pray for your flourishing in spirituals and temporals.

Subscribed in our name, and by our direction,  
by the clerk of our general meeting,

MIC. SHIELDS.

L E T T E R

## L E T T E R LXXXIV.

*The contending and wrestling suffering and distressed reformed church of Scotland, to the true reformed church at Embden.*

*July 31. 1684.*

*Right Revd. and dearly Beloved in the Lord,*

**O**UR long delaying to testify our acknowledgment of your kindly sympathy and friendly commiseration of us in our distressed, bleeding and perplexed case, may make you apprehend that we are forgetful of the great benefits which we received from your hands, and ungrateful towards yourselves: but we earnestly intreat, that no such thoughts may be entertained; for though our transmissions of letters to you hath hitherto, by reason of some providential exigences, been obstructed, yet the sense of the duty of thankfulness, which we owe unto you is, and we hope will be, always upon our spirits. Albeit we be in such a poor case, as we are not able, though most willing, to manifest the same by remunerating you any manner of way, according to your kindness shown, and liberality extended towards us; but we know in what ye did, therein ye had your eye upon duty, and not upon reward. And your charitable frame of spirit which was evidenced to us by your bounty, and declared by our right honourable commissioner, was more encouraging and refreshing to us than all wordly things could be: for we look upon the founding of bowels among Christians as a great token of good to the universal church,  
which



which (as we a poor part thereof are in a deplorable case) is in a very dangerous condition; the rage of enemies being insatiable, not bended against us as men, but as Christians, yea as Protestants; and the more they prevail against us, the more courage they take to enter into universal plots and conspiracies against the whole reformed churches. Therefore let us account the suffering of one member as intended against all; and so let us take heed to ourselves and to our common gospel interest; for the plots of Satan and his instruments are no more deep than universal. Let it be our study to be led in the way of truth and holiness, which is always the way of pleasantness, and to stand up as one man against Antichrist, and whatever men of antichristian and malignant spirits would intrude upon the kingdom of our Lord. Let us beware of affronting our noble Captain by yielding to his enemies one foot of ground, for the cause is his, and therefore it is worth the contending for. It is so honourable and precious as nothing is too costly to bestow upon it. And if the Lord were not letting us see that this cause, which we a poor broken and distressed church are contending and suffering for, were his own cause, and that the heads of our sufferings are his crown, and the pendicles thereof, were it not so, we would soon yield and give it over; for these men who are the rod of the Lord's anger against us have their spirits set on edge by the fire of hell; their fury is so firey, their rage so cruel, and their snares so subtile, that our case hath none so like it, as was the condition of the godly in the *Netherlands*, in the time of the *Spanish* inquisition. But we cannot get time to look upon our miseries and dangers, being

being forced to turn our contemplation another way, to wit, to behold the wonderful works of the Lord in his doing for us in this our low condition, by stirring up the spirits of you, and of some, to sympathize with us, by bearing up our spirits under this firey trial, you drawing out his breasts of consolation in such measure amongst us that are the burden-bearers in the heat of this our day that many are made to cry out, Their work is easy, their lines are fallen to them in pleasant places; and by wonderful delivering us out of the claws of this roaring adversary, and plucking us a prey out of their teeth, when sense reason, and probability said the contrary; so that from his power and faithfulness, meeting with many inexpressible proofs of the same, we desire to believe, that because of the glory of his great name, he will do great things for us, yea work wonders; for indeed no less can raise up his born-down, yea ruined work in *Scotland*. But though the church's disease at this time be desperate, yet we dare not look upon it as incurable, seeing Jesus Christ the faithful physician (who meddles only with desperate diseases, that his skilfulness may the more appear) is engaged to look upon it, and to help it. *He will heal her backslidings, and will love her freely; and will turn away his anger from her, yea, and will be as the dew unto her, so that she shall grow as the lily, and cast forth her roots as Lebanon. Her branches shall spread, her beauty shall be as the olive tree, and her smell as Lebanon.* We desire to wait for that longed-for day, and for the time when judgment shall return again to righteousness, and when men shall discern between the righteous and the wicked.

So, Right Reverend, much Honoured, and dearly Beloved, make many errands to the throne of grace for us, praying earnestly and frequently that the Lord, who is the great master-builder of his own work, may work, and accomplish his work amongst us, and perfect the same over the belly of all opposition; and that we may be strengthened with patience to endure to the end, standing out resolutely against our outward and inward enemies, and no ways staining the honour of the glorious Captain of our salvation.

Now, the Lord God of hosts be with you, and fortify your spirits against all the machinations of Satan, making you all good soldiers, cloathed with his armour of proof, that ye may endure to the end, and enjoy the crown which he hath laid up for all that fear him. We shall detain you no further at the time, humbly desiring (if possible) to be dignified with a line from your hands, which shall be most refreshing and reviving unto

*Your most obliged and endeared friends, and obedient servants in all Christian duty,*

Subscribed in our name, and by our direction,  
by the clerk of the general meeting.

MIC. SHIELDS.

L E T T E R

## L E T T E R LXXXV.

*From the contending and suffering reformed church of Scotland, to their Right Honourable and trusty Delegate Mr. Robert Hamilton.*

July 31. 1684.

*Right Hon. and dearly Beloved in the Lord,*

**I**T is like our correspondence together, by reason of the distance of place, your intended travels, and the difficulty of transmitting letters, may be for a season interrupted. However, as we are bound in duty, we shall endeavour, through the Lord's gracious assistance, to keep up a mindfulness of you, and that work wherein the Lord hath employed you for us, always praying the Lord may direct you wisely to manage his cause against all his opposites; (as in a great measure he hath done heretofore) may make you a brazen wall and an iron pillar in his house; may bless your labours and travels; and that, when his holy will is, he (preserving you in your work) may restore you unto us, loaded with the spoils of Antichrist, trophies of the kirk of Christ, and the longed for fruits of your painful labours.

O right honourable and trusty Commissioner, go on in your work, fear not man, the cause is the Lord's, and he will gloriously own it. What shall we say to his praise and to your encouragement, but we are meeting with many proofs of his power and faithfulness even when our furnace is hottest; we may say, he is still delivering us, either by preventing trials, or  
sup-



supporting under trials; he, as it were, lays the bridle upon the mane of adversaries, and yet lets it be seen that in some measure they cannot get us reached. O how glorious is he in wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth; he is laying pledges into our hands that he will do great things for us, whereof we shall be glad, and which he shall proclaim among the heathen. We are persuaded he is posting upon his way to appear for his broken and buried work; he will come at an unexpected time, and in an unexpected manner, and happy shall they be whom he will find at their work, and who are not sleeping with the generality of this generation: But sure we are, there are sad days abiding such as are dealing with a slack hand this day, and who refuse to answer his call now, when he is many ways presenting himself to his people, and testifying his willingness to return again to them. O we do not doubt but he will return, and that suddenly; and he hath great mercies abiding these that are waiting for him; but judgments, judgments, judgments we are sure shall usher them in. Let us prepare to wade through judgment towards his mercies; and O noble way that he takes, for we cannot be otherwise prepared for mercies.

How shall we open up our hearts, or unfold our thoughts unto you? the Lord he is God and the captain of our salvation, a cleared sight whereof would obscure all the difficulties that are in the way, and carry the eye over both the long, weary, slimy, and thorny wilderness, and the proud swellings of Jordan, beholding and contemplating the good and promised land. We hope, the Lord hath taught you better than to

regard opposition in your way of serving and following him, for the more sad your ways be, the more glorious shall be your victory; you will misken yourself when, instead of a crown of thorns, you get an immortal crown of glory put upon your heads, and a cloathing of white raiment, always beholding him who is the wonder and praise of the family of that higher house.

But now, we commit you to the Lord for directing, comforting and supporting grace, praying that he may be with you in your intended travels, and make your pains tend to the up-raising of his work; and for what he hath done by you, we desire to bless him, putting a prize upon all his mercies, especially upon that inestimable benefit of his gospel, which is as reviving from the dead. Let us, if possible, hear from you ere you depart from the place where you now are, and let us know wherein it lies in our power to be encouraging and strengthening unto you. So again we leave you upon the good hand of your God and our God, hoping that we need not desire you in prayer to be mindful of us, who are,

*Your Honour's obliged and endeared friends,  
brethren, and servants in the Lord,*

Subscribed in our name and by our direction,  
by the clerk of our general meeting,

MICHAEL SHIELDS.

LETTE

## L E T T E R LXXXVI.

*From the contending, wrestling, suffering and distressed reformed church of Scotland, to the true Protestant and reformed church at Groningen, particularly the ministers thereof.*

July 31. 1684.

*Right Reverend and dearly Beloved,*

**T**HE sweet experience which we have had of your receiving, and faithfulness in weighing, our former addresses, with the circumstances wherein we stand, hath given us abundant encouragement to catch hold of this present opportunity of the unfolding somewhat of our sorrows, which your love and our necessity invites and calls, yea commands us, to represent to your sympathy and compassion; however, we are confident we may commit much to the faithfulness of our right honourable Delegate, to lay open unto you our sad and deplorable condition. And we are assured that the love ye bear to the common cause of all Christians will not suffer you to shut your eyes from the bleeding and lamentable condition of the poor distressed church of *Scotland*. Should we not therefore seek to ease our burdened hearts, by pouring them out into your bosoms? for if we should neglect this, we would seem ungrateful towards you, who have given so large and ample evidences of your readiness to do for us and suffer with us.

Assuredly, if ever a poor church was battered at by Satan and his instruments, we are that church; if ever a poor people were beset round with

right and left hand opposites, we are that people! if ever a poor remnant were the objects of Antichrist's cruelty, and apostatical malice, we are that remnant; for the Lord hath called forth and strengthened an enemy against us, *the rod of his anger, and the staff of his indignation*, a generation of men whose spirits are set on edge by the fury of hell, under whose exasperate cruelties we sigh and mourn, they drawing their furrows upon your backs: many of us are daily led as lambs to the slaughter; yea, and at the hour of our death not permitted to commend the free grace of God in Christ, to speak to the loveliness and desirableness of the cross, to exhort others to steadfastness in the cause, nor to proclaim that the lines are fallen to us in pleasant places: some are shut up in prison houses, laid in irons, and so barbarously kept that these who they are most strictly tied unto, either by the bonds of nature or Christianity, can have no access unto them: others are sent away to foreign Plantations to be sold as slaves: and all of us, we may say, put to wander with our lives in our hands, and to eat our bread in the peril of our lives, many of our residences being in the wild mountains, dens and caves of the earth, the enraged adversary still searching and pursuing after us, and many still permitted to fall into their hands. But O! we need not express unto you the inveterate and deadly malice of this malignant, prophane, and antichristian faction; for what true Protestants know it not, that the rage of stated enemies against the church of Christ is insatiable. However, the Lord is our witness, that our grief and trouble is not so much because of the dangers we are in, and of the misery which



we are liable to; but that which mostly affects our hearts, is the danger which we behold the whole Protestant reformed churches are in at this juncture, through the universal conspiracies and combinations amongst avowed enemies to religion, their strength, by appearance, still increasing. If our God will lay our bodies as the street under our feet, and pour out our blood as dust before their fury, his holy and wise will be done; for if our blood would be a mean to recover or preserve the rest of the true churches of Christ from antichristian tyranny, we are willing to offer it up for the service; but we know their fury is insatiable, and will not die with us, they being armed against us, not as men, but as Christians; yet what shall we say, we dare not quarrel nor repine at our low case, but we ought rather to rejoice in it, seeing that it makes for the manifestation of the Lord's attributes towards us; for we may say, he gets new occasion to make his power manifest, taking hold of our extremity as his opportunity; so that we may say, we are troubled on every side, yet not destroyed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed. For we are not made so much to mourn because of the length that enemies are permitted to proceed against us, as we are made to wonder, that they get not more of their purposes accomplished, for day and night they weary themselves in pursuing after the guiltless; many times we are delivered out of their hands as a prey plucked out of their teeth, and this we esteem much, not as it is our deliverance, but as it manifests the Lord's power and faithfulness towards us, and encourages us to believe that he

shall do great things for us: Wherefore, our mouths shall be filled with laughter, our tongue with singing, and we shall be made to proclaim among the heathen, *The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad*; Yea, we are always delivered, for we account it a blessed and happy deliverance, that (though some faint, yet) many are kept faithful unto the death, choosing rather to quite with their heads than any of the precious truths of Christ, they singing in the hot furnace, and crying out that their lines are fallen to them in pleasant places.

Now, Right Reverend and dearly Beloved in our Lord, we have the more encouragment to lay out our case every way unto you, that your brotherly sympathy and labours of love hath been manifest to us all, and throughout the world, by your kindly acceptance of our right honourable and faithful Delegate's informations, your respecting and crediting him whom we owe so much respect and credit unto: By your affectionate kindness unto, and ordaining of Mr. *James Renwick*, who is for us a faithful minister of Jesus Christ, which hath furnished us no small encouragement and refreshment in this day of our distress; the Lord giving evidences that he is his messenger. And also, by your hitherto friendly entertaining of such as have been sent from us unto your colleges. Withal, earnestly, though humbly, begging and intreating, that (if there be any possibility of it) ye would condescend upon some way, for the future maintaining of some of our youths at your colleges; for we may say, as we are not able to maintain them abroad, so our schools and colleges at home are so corrupt and enmaring, that none who will not run with them

them into the same excess of error and riot, can or dare meddle with the same. However, we seriously desire that none from this land be owned or acknowledged by you, who have not our testimony, or the recommendation of our Delegate. And as to these, who, without our knowledge or counsel, have already crept in amongst you with their errors and calumnies, tending to the weakening of the Protestant interest; we hope we need not again warn you, judging that snare to be already broken. So, in a deeper sense of our case, and with greater confidence of your sympathy (having had many proofs of the same) than we can express, we make this humble address unto you, in the bowels of Christ, earnestly imploring your most fervent prayers for us to the Lord, who is the hearer of prayer, that he who hides his face from us, may yet return again and lift up the light of his countenance upon us, may reclaim his captivate declarative glory, and subdue and scatter the enemies thereof.

Now, the Lord prosper you, and preserve us, that we may all as one man, stand up against Antichrist and all his limbs, and whatever is contrary to sound doctrine and the power of godliness, that so the work of these latter ages may be carried on, to the honour of God and the church's joy, through Jesus Christ. So, we remain,

*Your obliged friends, and*

*humble servants in the Lord,*

Subscribed in our name, and by our direction,  
by the clerk of our general meeting,

MICHAEL SHIELDS.

## L E T T E R LXXXVII.

*To some Friends in Newcastle.*

Jan. 8. 1635.

*Dearly beloved Brethren in the Lord,*

WE have heard from *John Scot*, whom we conceive to have had commission from you for that same effect, the difficulty and trials in your present case, which are in no small measure affecting to us. But, O! be not discouraged, but rather rejoice, that the Lord will not give unto you ease, which is very undesirable now when *Zion* is in trouble; neither think your fiery trials strange, for it is but the same in measure with what happens unto your brethren: And though no affliction for the present be joyous but grievous to flesh and blood, yet we cannot but look upon the greatest tribulation, when the work of God is so low, to be the greater testimony of his love.

However, as to our mind and advice anent your present strait, we judge it,

1<sup>st</sup>, Matter of great concernedness, both to you and us, that some of you should be redacted to that intricate extremity, that your sin and suffering is upon the one hand, and the suffering of our nearest and dearest relations upon the other, which we know assuredly, will be more bitter to you than any thing that can be brought upon yourselves in following your duty. But,

2<sup>dly</sup>, Ye, as we hope, not having consented actively or passively, by silence or concurrence, to your relations their purchasing your liberty,

by



by a bond to present you again before the sessions. We judge it cannot be your duty to be either active or passive in presenting yourselves, but that ye ought to make out of the way, seeing ye know assuredly that ye will be apprehended. (1.) It would infer your consenting to what your relations have done, in tampering with the adversary. (2.) It would infer your having a hand in your latter sufferings, which surely is both a sin in the sight of God, and very disquieting to the conscience; for though we ought cheerfully to embrace suffering when the Lord sends it in our way, yet we ought first to have no hand in it ourselves, no not by omitting our duty in using what lawful means may prevent the same: When we are *persecuted in one city*, we are commanded to *fly to another*. Let all of you that are at liberty use all lawful means to keep yourselves so; for if you shall cast yourselves into the trial, ye know not what snares the Lord may subject you unto, as your punishment, whereof ye may be made to repent out of time.

But, dear Brethren, let not your present trials damp or confuse you, for if the Lord had not seen such a case for his glory and your good, he had not brought you unto it. Seek not the carving out of your own lot, but put it in the Lord's hand, and subscribe your consent unto what he sees meet to do unto you; study to walk before him in the way of duty, in paths approved by him and wellpleasing to him; and there, and there only, ye shall enjoy the comfortable light of his pleasant countenance, wherewith he beholdeth the upright: seek the upmaking of all your wants in himself, who hath promised

to take you up, *though father and mother should both forsake you.*

Now, if ye incline thereunto, and see it fit to come into *Scotland*, and take part and lot with us, know assuredly, that ye shall be most acceptable; and though we can promise you nothing but persecution, yet ye shall have our countenance, and all the encouragement that we can bestow upon you: and we hope that ye shall not think your lot hard. So, leaving you upon the Lord, for the light of direction and consolation, we remain,

*Your affectionate brethren, sympathizing friends,  
and servants in the Lord,*

Subscribed in our name, and by our direction,  
by the clerk of our general meeting,

MIC. SHIELDS.

## L E T T E R LXXXVIII.

*From the suffering and wrestling remnant of the church of Scotland, to the right honourable the laird of Earlston, prisoner for the cause of Christ.*

*Much honoured Sir,*

*Jan. 8. 1685.*

**Y**OUR letter, directed to the right reverend Mr. *James Renwick*, was very refreshing and encouraging to us all; yea, we may say, a little reviving to our spirits in our bondage, having not heard from yourself, nor particularly of your case, for a considerable time before,

fore, which, together with the many troubles we have been and are trysted with, hath occasioned our not writing unto you: and although you have not heard from us after this manner, yet you have not been forgotten by us. But we were and are desirous to know your case, and to keep up that due sympathy and fellow-feeling with you, in your bonds for precious Christ, which we ought. However, we desire to bless the Lord upon your account, who hath brought you, for the manifesting the riches of his free grace, through so many and so various trials and temptations, from within and without, from malicious enemies and flattering pretended friends; yea, hath brought you again from the gates of death, and sides of the grave, gaping ready to devour you, thereby disapointing the fears of his people, and expectations of his enemies, which you ought to look upon as testimonies of his love and fatherly chastisements, that before you be unpurged and turn dross in the furnace, he will take great pains upon you, and take you from one fire to another, till ye be a vessel fitted for his service; and when enemies think to add sorrow to your affliction, in making you like an owl in the desert, or a pelican in the wilderness, by shutting you up in close prison, far from the converie of your friends and relations; that then and there he should visit you with his loving kindness, and fill your soul with a sense of his love, and make you sing in the midst of these hot fires, (O wonderful love, and matchless condescendency!) and to say that heart-ravishing and soul-comforting word, mentioned in your letter, *My Lord*; and not only so, but to give you such a lively

lively and savoury impression upon your spirit of his public work, and noble cause in this day, when it is worn off the spirits of many, who seemingly had it once; and, alas! too much off many of our own. All which, we say, as it is ground of encouragement, and matter of praise to us before the Lord; so you ought, in a special manner, to praise and magnify him for the same, and to make the experiences of his former loving kindness to your soul, as motives to believe, and helps to confide in him for the future; that he, who hath brought you thro' the depths before, remains faithful and cannot change, can and will bring you through the like again; yea, though he should see it fit in his holy wisdom to make you wade through waters deep and broad, and to make you go through fires more large and hot; yet, O faint not, trust in him who hath done so great things to you and for you: Remember Christ, your Head and Captain, is above the waters; he waded thro' deeper waters, and ran through hotter fires, (and all for the redemption of poor lost sinners) than you or any of his people can do: Remember him, *who endured such contradiction of sinners, and for sinners; who being tempted, knows how to succour these that are so.* Labour to put a blank in his hand, that you may not quarrel with him, whatever lot he may tryft you with. O his presence will make any lot desirable, for it supplies all wants, and makes the creature to rejoyce, when robbed and spoiled of all other things; it makes afflictions light, and trials easy; it makes a prison a palace, and the threatenings of men to be despised; yea, it will make

the



the soul sing and rejoice, when going thro' the valley and shadow of death.

Much honoured Sir, what shall we say more for your encouragement, but this, Go on, go on, in your suffering for precious Christ; the cause you are suffering for is Christ's own cause, and he will own it in his own due time, and own all who own it sincerely: He lives and reigns, and will reign; *The crown shall flourish on his head, and all his enemies be cloathed with shame.* And although enemies in this land will not have Christ to reign over them, having robbed him of his crown and royal prerogatives; and sense and reason would say, he would never reign in this land, yet faith, which sees clearly in the darkest night, will see him sitting on his throne, reigning and ruling in and amongst his people, and over his enemies; coming cloathed with the garments of vengeance, and cloak of zeal against them, and with the garments of salvation and mercy to his people. O happy soul that will be found in his way, and about their work when he comes, to whom his coming will only be sweet. What shall we say more to his commendation? He is good and does good, his cross is easy, and his burden is light. He hath done and is doing great things for us and to us; he hath been and is at great pains with us to purge us from our dross, and make us a holy and cleanly people for himself. He hath given us the gospel, and it seems he is countenancing the same, and increasing the followers thereof. And O he seems to be about to do some great work in this land, *to bring to pass his act, his strange act.*

Much honoured Sir, you make mention in

K k

your

your letter of your resolution to write at more length to us, when the opportunity serves. That opportunity is longed for by us; for your last was so refreshful, that we earnestly desire to hear from you again. — So, leaving you up on the God of *Jacob*, for his direction, assistance and consolation in time, and the enjoyment of himself throughout eternity; begging that while in the body, you will not be unmindful of us, who are not forgetful of you. We are,

*Your Honour's assured and sympathizing friends,  
brethren and servants in the Lord,*

Subscribed in our name, and by our direction,  
by the clerk of our general meeting,

MIC. SHIELDS.

## L E T T E R LXXXIX.

To Mr. David Houston *minister of the gospel in  
Ireland.*

At ——— the 23d. of Sept. 1686.

*Right reverend Sir,*

W HEN we consider the necessity of a standing gospel ministry, for the conversion of souls, the confirmation of the converted, and the discovery of the sins and duties of the time, and the great loss that his poor afflicted and wrestling church hath suffered, in being deprived in a great measure, for some years, of the faithful and free preaching of the gospel; we look upon it as a great duty incumbent up-

us, to lay out ourselves, in our places and stations, to the utmost of our power, to recover such a sad and lamentable loss, and that our land may enjoy the inestimable benefit of a pure, powerful and plentiful gospel: Wherefore, we hearing of your zealous inclinations and affections to this poor suffering church, did send over me to confer with you, whose information anent you hath been satisfying to us; whereupon we have jointly resolved to send over the bearer thereof, to confer further with you, and to convey you unto us, according to your resolution; that so we may meet together, which we desire that it may, through the Lord's goodness, tend both to your and our satisfaction.

Now, reverend Sir, we hope that you will take this to your consideration, and not look lightly upon the case of our land; for though it be low, and so our need of help the greater, yet we may say, that through many places of Scotland, there is now among people more longing and earnest desire after the faithful and pure preaching of the gospel than formerly we have observed. But we shall not insist upon this. And as for reports anent yourself, (which we thought not fit to insert here, and whereof you would do well to clear yourself of) we refer you to the information of the bearer, until that you and we meet together, if the Lord please to order it so in his holy providence. Thus, desiring to intreat the Lord, that he may conduct you safely unto us; and that our meeting together may be blessed with a right and full understanding of one another, and joint concurring together, for the advancement of his public work; and earnestly begging the help of

your prayers, we commend you to the grace that is in Christ Jesus, your master, and we are,

*Reverend Sir,*

*Your endeared friends and*

*servants in the Lord,*

Subscribed in our name, and by our direction, by the clerk of our general meeting,

MIC. SHIELDS.

## L E T T E R X C.

*To Friends in Ireland.*

*March 2. 1687.*

*Loving Friends, and dearly beloved in our Lord Jesus Christ,*

WE received your kind and christian letter, very refreshful and acceptable to us; not only because coming from such who have obtained like precious faith with us, through the righteousness of God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ, and whom we respect as our brethren, under the same indissolvable bond of our holy Covenants, engaged to concert the same common cause, and testimony for the precious interests of our princely Master; with whom we have desired a more close and intimate correspondence than hitherto we have obtained; and coming from such, at such a time, when we were groaning under that bitter grievance, among many others, of being deprived of, and se-



sequestered from that desirable and much desired comfort of communion with our brethren in other churches, which we could not enjoy as we desired, because of the universal decay of love, zeal and sympathy, every where too visibly decreasing, and because of the many odious and envious obloquies we and our cause have been persued with, which yet we find hath not got so credulous entertainment with you, as to block up your hearts, and bind up your hands from shewing such tender affection toward us as ye discover in your letter: but also, because of the manner of its conveyance, by a hand very welcome to us, wherein you demonstrate no small care and concern to be informed of our case and cause, in that you spare no pains to purchase the understanding of it. . And chiefly your letter was very grateful to us, because of the matter of it; relishing so much of a gospel spirit of sympathy with us, in our conflicts of sufferings and contendings for truth and duty, and of a favourable sense of our worthies witnessings for the regalities of our royal Master, which they sealed with their bonds and blood; and of heart affecting grief, condoling the misery of our unhappy divisions, and of love to us, prompting you to such a serious sollicitousness to be informed of our integrity to the sworn truths, and of our way in the Lord, the better to stop the calumnies of adversaries; and of zeal for the common cause in expressing your desire, to keep up harmony with us in pursuance of the ends of the Covenants, and acts of venerable assemblies, and that the mouths of liars may be stopped. The fragrantcy of which graces that your letter did favour of, did very much endear it to us, and

incites us to some earnest diligence (as our uncertain wanderings would allow) to endeavour a speedy return. But, in confidence of your kind construction, we must apologize with regret, that neither our condition for the time will admit, nor our capacity furnish us with so speedy and satisfactory an answer to send you as we desire; and therefore must entreat your favour, both for our shortness in the abrupt abridgment of our answer, and for our longsomness in sending in.

It would be tedious both for you and for us, to give a full deduction of the manifold tracts and steps, travels and traversings, turnings and windings, ups and downs we have had in our conflicts and contendings, with open enemies and professed friends, with cruelty and craft, with rage and reproach, with censures and calumnies, with persecutors of hand and persecutors of tongue, with defection and division, with the extremes of left hand declensions and right hand extravagancies, in our continued (and yet, through mercy, uninterrupted) course of our weak wrestlings against the corruptions of the times, and the indignities done to our Lord Jesus Christ, and his crown prerogatives. We must refer the more ample account of these, to our *Informatory Vindication* we propose to emit; and also to send to you, as soon as the times difficulties will permit us: only at the time to answer your desire in some measure, that you may be informed about these reports of our animosities fallen out among ourselves; and how it comes, and why it is, that now in our land, *Judah* should fight against *Judah*, even at *Jerusalem*, which causes your spirits to faint to hear the various

rious reports of it; we would, in some short hints, and open hearted ingenuity, give you to understand something of the causes and effects, rise and result of these animosities, and what our carriage hath been under these dissentions, and of our present abstraction, amidst these distractions, whence it sprang, and where it stands with us.

Though we be most unworthy of the honour, and very incapable and insufficient for the work of prosecuting a testimony for the covenanted reformation of this once renowned church; yet it hath ever been, and still is our ambition and endeavour to aim at it, and insist in the footsteps of the most zealous and faithful promoters of it that have gone before us, and to advance in it as they left it, without any abandoning or foregoing any part of it, or altering, (further than that progress, or rather application to our present case, the times have called us to make) so that however we be reproached with new principles or practices, which we have forged and fostered to maintain our new way, as many even of our backsliding brethren do call our present testimony, yet we can truly say, we know of none that we have espoused, either contrary to the venerable church constitutions, in our best and purest times, or contradictory to what our ministers preached before these divisions began, or to what we ourselves professed when united with them, who now brand us with the odious characters of changlings, and schismatics, which we will not now stand to refute by recriminations, but can easily vindicate ourselves from it, by a naked deduction of the controversy, as managed by us since the first rise of it.

Our testimony hath been in some measure continued and propagated ever since the fatal catastrophe of overturning the work of reformation, by the reintroduction of tyranny, supremacy, and Prelacy, since which time, we have always designed and desired to adhere to, and embark with such ministers and professors, as did from time to time zealously withstand and witness against all the several successive gradations of this national revolt from the Lord, and were incorporate with the body of them that did bear and follow the Lord's standard, in the work of field-preaching before *Bothwel*; with whom we had sweet and soul-satisfying communion; while their *feet were beautiful upon the mountains, bringing glad tidings, publishing salvation, and proclaiming, as heralds, that Zion's King reigned*; while they jeoparded their lives in the high-places of the fields with us, in the work of the Lord, in negotiating a treaty of reconciliation between the Lord and us; shewing forth all the counsel of God to us, and all the causes of his contendings with us, and pressing us to all the duties of the day, necessary for keeping up the testimony, and bringing our King back again to the land, whom our provocations had banished: for which end they inculcated upon us, our covenant engagements, to keep and contend for the word of the church of *Scotland's* patience, to wrestle against all the encroachments made upon our *Master's kingdom*, and to weep over all the indignities done unto his name, by this apostate and malignant party, revolted from, and rebelling against him, and to stand at the farthest from all countenancing of, or complying with them, or strengthening their hands by

bearing



hearing of the curates, or answering their courts, or transacting with them any manner of way, in taking their ensnaring bonds or oaths, (whereof we had many then imposed, of the same nature with these forged since, though now more universally accepted) or in paying their iniquitous exactions, for maintaining them in their wickedness, professedly imposed and required for that end; yea, when many of our much honoured watchmen spared not to set their trumpet to their mouth, and cry against all the defections of their brethren impartially, particularly against all that church-rending and ruining defection of the acceptance of that indulgence, the bastard brat of the blasphemous supremacy, then our souls were refreshed in going alongst with them; but when self credit and interest did ingage some to take the patrociny of that step of defection, and preposterous prudence and respect to peace, with prejudice of truth, did prompt others to palliate and daub it, we adhered to these that faithfully continued to contend against it; who, for their so doing, were much contemned and condemned; and some of them in sundry presbyteries were censured and rebuked; yet did we not break off communion with these who then were labouring to quench our zeal, and cool our fervour against that Christ-dishonouring sin, though at that time we were much discountenanced by them, but endeavoured to go on with the testimony, both against the defection, and the tyrant's usurpation upon Christ's crown, thereby explicitly exauktorated, from which it had its rise; and accordingly the testimony at *Rutherglen* was emitted *May 29. 1679.* against the declaration  
con-

condemning our Covenants, the act for keeping that anniversary day for the setting up the Usurper, and against other wicked acts made against the interest of Christ in the land, which were then publickly burnt, which is now condemned by many that then approved and applauded it. After which, when, in prosecution of the same testimony, the Lord favoured us with a notable victory at *Drumclog*, that expedition of *Bothwel* following thereupon was broken, by a holy provoked God, for our sins, by occasion of our divisions and confusions, fomented by the opposers of our testimony, wherein we were unite, before some ministers and others favouring the indulgence, did contend for inserting the interest of the usurping indulger in the state of the quarrel, and opposed the inserting of the indulgence, as it was obtruded and accepted, among the causes of humiliation, that we then pleaded for as a necessary duty that appearance called for: whereupon followed that lamentable overthrow, wherein much precious blood was shed, and many of our dear brethren were led in triumph captives by the insulting enemy; some of them sealed that testimony we then contended for with their blood; others of them refusing the insnar- ing indemnity (condemning that and all other appearances as sin) and the Bond of Peace then rendered, as the test of that compliance, were banished: and in their voyage murdered, by being shut up under hatchets, when the ship was lost. Many came off by taking that bond, being tempted by the persuasions of some ministers, and the silence of others, who refused to give their advice. At which time a number of

our ministers formed themselves into an assembly, wherein they voted for a new indulgence, with the Cautionary Bond, in some respects more derogatory to Christ's prerogative, and the gospel's liberty, than the former: and from that time, such as had not the benefit of the indulgence, in homologation of that imposition, did confine their preaching within doors, or near houses, that that shadow of obedience, might be a sconce for their protection. Then did our perplexities begin, that did much astonish us, and brought us to our wits end; yet did not our hunger after the ordinances abate, but we adhered to the few ministers we had, that would concur and venture in the work of the gospel. And when Mr. *Richard Cameron* used all diligence and patience in inviting and inciting others of his brethren, then lurking, to a concurrence, he could not obtain it; yet with the concurrence he had, and our adherence, he went on with the testimony, both against enemies usurpations, and the shameful and sinful yieldings of his brethren thereunto. And accordingly, considering the wickedness, usurpations, and tyranny of the late tyrant, then raging as a roaring lion, and ranging bear over the poor people, imposing upon their consciences, robbing, spoiling, and pillaging their possessions, hunting and cruelly handling, imprisoning, torturing, butchering, and murdering, their bodies, for conscience of duty; affronting and defying the most high God, in heaven-daring wickedness; inverting, perverting, and diverting, the ordinance of magistracy; and destroying all laws and liberties, all securities of mankind, and overturning the whole work of reformation,

breaking

breaking and burning the covenant with God, and compact with the people, and arrogating to himself a blasphemous supremacy over the church of Christ: he did, with the concurrence and adherence aforesaid, publish a Declaration at *Sanquhar*, *June 22. 1680.* disowning and disclaiming the tyrant; and in some expectation of a further capacity, did declare a war against him, and all that took his part. But, instead of that obliged concurrence which ministers ought to have given to this testimony so stated, this action and the owners thereof were generally condemned by them: and being so deserted and abandoned of them, in the holy providence of God, we lost that worthy standard-bearer, and many other worthies, at *Airsmoss*; where many died valiantly fighting for that testimony, others were taken and barbarously butchered, hanged, and quartered, sealing the same with heroick courage, and the countenance of the Lord signally shining upon them, who yet, by the opposers of our testimony, though professed friends to the cause, were condemned as dying foolishly, upon insufficient grounds. Then had we none to concur with us but worthy *Mr. Donald Cargil*, of whom the land and we were not worthy; and therefore shortly after this, the Lord deprived us of him likewise, and gave him the crown of martyrdom, in owning the same testimony. That was a day of our perplexity and treading down in our valley of vision. Then the word of the Lord was precious, and there was no open vision; the standard was fallen, and there was none to take it up, of all the ministers that were then in the land; tho' they had many reiterated calls from several corners,  
yet



yet none would come forth to preach publicly, but sitting and fighting or shifting our calls, did either lurk in the land, or went abroad and deserted their work. Whence, being left in that darkness, many went astray to the right and left hand. On the one hand *John Gib* and his accomplices discovered their wild extravagances, to the reproach of the way of God. On the other hand, many deserted our testimony, and made defection unto the time's compliances: and generally all were jumbled into such confusions, that scarcely could one understand the language of another, or know who concurred in the testimony: But in that extremity, the Lord made some instrumental to gather us together in a general correspondence; where this method was fallen upon, which we have hitherto kept up, of meeting together from all the societies of our embodied community, to understand one another's minds about the duties or sins of the times, and to encourage one another, and to do all things jointly, by mutual advice and common consent, in prosecution of the common testimony, which we call our General Meeting; which proved in some measure encouraging to us. For immediately, upon the first commencement hereof, though when we were few in number and destitute of pastors, another declaration was published at *Lanerk*, *January 12. 1682.* confirming the former, and further testifying against the reception of the duke of *York*, and admitting him to preside in parliament, and against the test, &c. which declaration did set us more alone, and made us more the butt of enemies malice, and of our brethren's contempt than any thing formerly; for from thenceforth, many did more

declaredly oppose us, and informed against us both at home and abroad; laying heavy things, which we knew not, to our charge, without either trying the truth of them, or taking pains to admonish us of them. Wherefore, in the next general meeting, we fell to deliberate how our case might be represented, and our cause vindicated to strangers; and we resolved to send some abroad to make it known, that we adhered to all the principles of the true Presbyterian church of *Scotland*, in its doctrine, worship, discipline and government; after which, by special providence, a door being opened for the instruction of some students at a college in the *Netherlands*, we sent some young men thither to study; and in process of time received back Mr. *James Renwick* an ordained minister, who hath hitherto laboured among us in the work of the gospel, not without a seal of his ministry through the Lord's blessing; however it be opposed and despised of men. After which, the fury and violence of enemies was let loose upon us, as well as the scourge of tongues, to the effusion of much of the precious blood of our brethren, and the bondage and banishment of others; and wicked acts were given out for all to apprehend us wherever we could be found, and to raise the hue and cry after us, inhibiting all to reset or correspond any manner of way with us, under the severest penalties, which brought us to great straits, and even to desperate extremity, without any probable hope of relief, by reason of the enemy's vigilancy, the country's readiness to obey, (being already much wasted with oppression, and fearing greater devastations) and the wicked malice of many intelligencers and informers, whence we were necessitated

seditated to put forth another declaration, affixed  
 on several market crosses and church doors,  
*November* — 1684. confirming and explaining  
 the former, and vindicating us and our testimo-  
 ny from some odious aspersions, to the intent to  
 deter and scar the country from giving intelli-  
 gence of us: which, though it did screw up  
 our trial to a greater height than ever, (the  
 enemies bloody cut-throats having a commission  
 to murder us where ever they met with us) and  
 though it proved a snare to many, while an oath  
 abjuring the same was generally pressed through  
 the country, in very smooth and subtle terms,  
 which coozened many; yet it deterred many  
 from their former diligence in informing against  
 us, and also drew out some to join with us, even  
 some who had taken that oath of abjuration;  
 when they had discovered the guilt of it in their  
 wounded consciences. However, we cannot re-  
 count the number of our dear brethren that we lost  
 in this deluge of blood that was shed at this time  
 by soldiers, and some gentlemen, that made it  
 their work to kill us where ever we could be  
 found, without either trial or sentence, or time  
 to prepare for death, or respect to age or sex;  
 even women, some of a very young, some of an  
 old age being drowned in their fury. But in the  
 mean time of the height of this rage, the Lord  
 did remove the tyrant *Charles II.* which did put  
 some stop to it. Thereafter, when his brother  
*James* duke of *York* was proclaimed, and a par-  
 liament convocated for establishing him in his  
 usurpation, we resolved upon a testimony against  
 the same; and so emitted another declaration at  
*Sanquhar, May 28. 1685.* not only protesting a-  
 gainst the foresaid usurpation, contrary to our

covenanted reformation and laws of the country; but giving our testimony against all kind of Papistry in general and particular heads, as is expressed in our National Covenants. This was done in the mean time of the earl of *Argyle's* expedition, with which we were much pressed to concur, and many embodied with us were drawn away with the importunity of some ministers and others of that association; yet we could not join with them, nor espouse their declaration as the state of our quarrel, because it was not concerted according to the ancient plea of the *Scottish* Covenanters, against both right and left hand opposites, in defence of our reformation, expressly according to our Covenants, National and Solemn League; because no mention is made of our covenants, nor of Presbyterian government, which was of purpose left the Sectarians should be irritate; because it opened a door for a confederacy with Sectarians and malignants; of which malignants they had some among them guilty of shedding our blood at *Airsmoss*. After the defeat of this expedition, in answer to the desire of some ministers, who came over with *Argyle*, we had a conference with them, *July 22. 1685.* in which, instead of allaying differences, the proposals that were made for union did heighten our breaches, both with them and among ourselves, as did appear by the consequents; herein though they offered accommodations, yet in conference to bring it about, they mentioned and did not disown that which bred alienation, to wit, a previous information they had sent to strangers, accusing us of heavy things, that we had not only cast off all magistrates in *Scotland*, but had constitute

among



among ourselves all kinds of magistrates, and were for cutting off all as open enemies, who did not acknowledge our imaginary government; that our societies were only an erroneous faction, and have no power of calling pastors, &c. which information, so full of calumnies, though they did extenuate, alledging that the copy of it which we produced was forged, yet they confessed some such information was written, and went on to prosecute, in effect, the same crimination; and said, they excerpted all out of our public papers: and further challenged us, for falsely accusing them in our protestation against the *Scottish* congregation at *Rotterdam*; where they with others were promiscuously charged with sundry things *in cumulo*, which they were not guilty of. We confessed it was an oversight conjointly to accumulate these charges without distinction; but taking them separately, we offered to make out every thing there charged upon the names inserted. And further, in inveighing against Mr. *Renwick's* ordination, they accused the church of *Holland* of *Frastrianism*, and many other corruptions: To which he only replied, that he had received his ordination from the Presbytery of *Groningen*, and they being foreigners, and not chargeable either with our defections, or any declining from the testimony of their own church, but advancing, and groaning under some corruptions from which they were never reformed, would come under another consideration than ministers of our own church defending a course of defection; howbeit, as he protested in the face of their presbytery, when he received ordination, against all things he knew among them dissonant to the work

of reformation of the church of *Scotland*; so he told his purpose to inform that venerable presbytery how they were represented in *Scotland*; and if they could not clear themselves, at least, of some of the grossest of these things, he would be willing to acknowledge before such as were competent, that he had offended in meddling with them. The accommodation which they offered, was upon terms, which we thought, destructive to our testimony, to lay aside all debates, and let bygones pass, and go on in the public work; which we did not think was the way to heal our sore: But we offered, if differences and exceptions could be removed in a right and honest way, we would be most willing to join with them; which exceptions were given in, in these particulars following, *viz.* Their leaving the country and deserting the publick work, when it was so necessary to concur in the testimony, but condemning it in *Sanguhar* and *Lanerk* Declarations, even as to the matter of them; and not condemning the paying of the locality imposed for maintaining soldiers against the work and people of God; their countenancing the compliers of the time, while in the land, and when abroad; joining with the *Scottish* congregation at *Rotterdam*, and hearing the indulged preach there; then, informing against us, and aspersing us with slanders, such as these in the forementioned information; and then, concurring in the earl of *Argyle's* association, against which we had so many things to object, as above hinted, Which exceptions (though among the least we have against many other ministers, with whom we have no clearness to join in our now circumstances, yet) we thought sufficient to demur upon;

upon; when, after many fruitless janglings, we could receive no satisfaction about them, nor a public testimony satisfiably stated, wherein we might both agree and concur; so the conference broke up. And thereafter we were more untenderly dealt with by them; and also deserted by many embodied with us in fellowship, who from that time left off coming to our general meetings, and to take separate ways, without respect to our former consented agreements; and also did hear, receive, and spread abroad some false reports given forth against us, without premonishing us about the same; and drew many off from our societies by such means. With some of which we had a conference, *January 28. 1686.* who said they had a verbal commission from some societies in *Carrick, &c.* the effect whereof (whatever was the intent of their coming) tended to a further breach, though we were not conscious to ourselves of any untender dealing with them. For first, we did endeavour to remove all supposed grounds upon which they might stumble into alienation from us, by clearing our minds about all these things the ministers laid to our charge: then several questions of weight about our present differences were propounded to the meeting, about a letter of accusation spread against us, which they did not positively disclaim; and about *Argyle's* declaration, which they would own or disown, accordingly as it was diversely interpreted; about the exceptions given in against the ministers, which they alledged were not valid; and finally, we asked the foresaid persons, whether or not they were clear to join with us in general and particular fellowships, now when they had heard us speak our minds so freely? this they refused to answer,

answer, putting the question back, Whether or not we would join with them? and generally in all these questions they declined freedom and plainness, and seemed averse from satisfying us, and to be rather for contending, than a free communing for union; chiefly they stickled about a general conclusion previously agreed to and resolved upon among us, That nothing relative to the public, and concerning the whole of us, should be done without the consent, or at least the knowledge of the whole; which conclusion, though formerly they agreed to, yet now they called an imposition; alledging that hereby they might not hear a faithful minister when occasion offered; though we told them, we did not take that conclusion in an absolute sense, as a restriction simply necessary, for all times, all places, all persons, things and cases; and in necessary duties, if the rest shall sinfully deny their concurrence, they proponing it, may lawfully without breach of the conclusion, do it for themselves; but in points doubtful and controverted, it is necessary for advising and deliberating, as a hedge against precipitancy and rashness, useful for preservation of union, excluding confusion, curbing petulant spirits, and for the right management of affairs. In fine, for the result of this conference, when we were urged as above, whether we would join with them as formerly, by way of retortion to our proposals of the same to them; we told them, we could not answer in name of our societies, having no direction from them for that effect; and that for our own parts, we would not refuse accidental or occasional communion with them as brethren and Christians; but in the present circumstances,

we



we could not be clear to concur with them as formerly, in carrying on the public work harmoniously, and habitually, until our exceptions were removed; which were, their breaking that conclusion of brotherhood formerly condescended to, in their calling ministers against whom we had exceptions unremoved, without acquainting us therewith; in their drawing together in arms without our knowledge, and contrary to what was concluded by themselves with our and their friends: their siding with other persons in points of disagreement against us. Whereupon, they broke away abruptly; and their carriage since hath been very disengaging, and discovered a great deal of alienation from us, by their labouring many ways to represent us unto the world to make us odious, in their informations given in to ministers against us, and by their protesting against and hindering Mr. *James Renwick* to enter their borders, yea, refusing to communicate with him so much as in family-worship, albeit it was sometime far otherwise, when they agreed with us in their testimony against Papists, malignants, Sectaries, and backsliders. But now we must bear many obloquies from them and others, waiting in dependance on the Lord's vindication, who will bring forth our righteousness, or rather the righteousness of his own cause by us maintained, as the light, and our judgment as the noon day; and in the meantime, carry ourselves abstractly, and let them be saying, we must always be aiming at doing.

Now, dear Brethren, we have thus far, with all unfeigned freedom, unbowed before you the naked account of our contendings, in short hints, without all prevarication, or taking advantage

vantage of your unacquaintedness to represent our cause better than it is. We shall now shut up our letter with a brief declaration of our testimony, which we now stand and suffer for, and of our principles that we own and disown.

We do therefore testify our holding and adhering to the written word of God, as the only rule of faith and manners, and all the received principles of this reformed church, founded thereupon, and consonant thereunto; as, our Confession of Faith, Catechisms Larger and Shorter, Covenants National and Solemn League, Acknowledgment of Sins, and Engagement to Duties, the Causes of God's Wrath, &c. We adhere unto the doctrine, worship, discipline and government of this reformed church, as we are covenanted to maintain; and to all the acts and proceedings of our general assemblies for promoting the reformation. We own and adhere unto all the faithful testimonies of the church, or of any of its faithful members or officers, former, old or later, particular or more general: against the public resolutions, *Cromwell's* usurpation, and toleration of sects and heresies in his time, before the overturning, and since; against Prelacy, supremacy, or the compliances and defections of ministers and professors; particularly, we own the *Rutherglen*, *Sanguibar*, and *Lanerk* Declarations, and the late Apologetical Declaration against intelligencers and informers. We own all the duties professed and profecuted by the faithful, for the removal and defence of these testimonies; as, preaching in the fields, and defending the same by arms, and appearing in a declared war against the public enemies of this kirk and kingdom,

at *Pentland, Drumclog, Bothwel, and Airsmoss;* and all suffering upon the account of these, or any part of non-conformity, with the God-provoking courses of the time.

We disown and obtest whatsoever, in doctrine, worship, discipline and government, is against, beyond, or beside the written word of God; all damnable heresy, as, Quakerism, Popery, Libertinism, Antinomianism, Arminianism, Socinianism, and all other, under whatsoever designation; together with the wild extravagancies of *John Gib:* as also, all kind of idolatry, superstition and profaneness; all sects upon the right hand, as, Anabaptism, Independency, Millenarianism, and all other sects and schisms, and divisive courses: and on the left hand, we disown and detest Prelacy and Erastianism, and whatsoever else is contrary to sound doctrine and the power of godliness; and all countenancing of or complying with Prelacy, supremacy, or tyranny, or any usurpation upon church or state, made by this malignant enemy; all hearing of curates or indulged, or paying either of them stipends, enacted by iniquious laws, setting them up: all answering to the courts of persecutors, taking any of their oaths, as, the Declaration, Test, the oath of Abjuration, or any other oaths of supremacy or allegiance; subscribing any of their bonds, as, the Bond of Peace, Bond of Regulation, the Bond of Appearance, or any other of that nature; paying any of their wicked impositions, as, militia-money, cess, locality, or fines, or any thing that may strengthen the hands of such evil doers. As also, we discountenance all the steps of defection, declining from, or contradictory to our fore-

fore-mentioned testimony; and disown all association and confederacies with malignants or sectaries.

But, more particularly, because our principles are most suspected upon the ordinances of magistracy and ministry, therefore we shall plainly unbosom our hearts about these also.

We profess then concerning magistracy, That as it is not founded subjectively upon grace, so it is a holy divine institution, for the good of human society, the encouragement of virtue, and curbing of vice, competent unto, and honourable among both Christians and Heathens; and for such magistrates as being rightful and lawfully constitute over us, do act as the ministers of God, in a due line of subordination to God, in the defence of our covenanted reformation, and the subjects liberties, we will own, embrace, obey, and defend them, to the utmost of our power. In church matters we allow the magistrate a power over the outward things of the church, but not over the inward things, as doctrine, worship, discipline, and government. We allow him the custody of both the tables of the law, and a power to punish corporally all offenders, even church officers, against the same; not under the consideration of a scandal but of a crime: We allow him a power of ordering things for the wellbeing of the church; and in some cases of convocating synods, *pro re nata*, besides their ordinary meetings, and being present there, but not to precede in their debates; and of adding their civil sanction to synodical results. but no power to restrain them in the power Christ hath given them: we allow him a cumulative power, to assist, strengthen, and ratify, what  
church



church officers do, by virtue of their office; but not a privative power to detract any way from the churches authority: we allow him an imperative power to command church officers to do their duties, but not an elective power, either to do himself what is incumbent to church officers, or to depute others to do in his name, or by any ministerial power received from him. Finally, we grant this to be the full extent of the magistrate's supremacy in church affairs, to order whatever is commanded by the God of heaven, that it be diligently done for the house of the God of heaven; and what further he may usurp, we disown and detest. But in things civil, though we do not say that every tyrannical act doth make a tyrant, yet we hold, that habitual, obstinate, and declared opposition to, and overturning of religion, laws and liberties, and making void all contracts with the subjects, intercepting and interdicting all redress, by supplications or otherways, doth sufficiently invalidate his right and relation of magistracy, and warrant subjects, especially in covenanted lands, to revolt from under and disown allegiance to such a power: yet they may not lawfully arrogate to themselves that authority which the tyrant hath forfeited, or act judicially, either in civil or criminal courts; only they may do that which is necessary, for securing themselves, liberty, and religion. But for the late tyrant, as we did disown and do detest the memory of his first erection, and unhappy restauration, after, by many evidences, he was known to be an enemy to God and the country; of his nefarious wickedness in ejecting the ministers of Christ from their charges, and introducing ab-

jured Prelacy; his atrocious arrogance in rescinding all acts for the work of reformation; his unparalleled perfidy and perjury, in-breaking, making void, and burning the Covenants; his heaven-daring usurpation, in arrogating to himself that blasphemous supremacy; his audacious and treacherous exerting of that usurped power in giving indulgences to outed ministers, to divide and destroy the church; his tyranny over the consciences of poor people, pressing them to conformity with the times abominations, and imposing upon them conscience-debauching oaths; his tyranny over the whole land, in levying militia and other forces, for carrying on his wicked designs, of advancing himself to arbitrary absoluteness, and imposing wicked exactions for their maintainance, professedly required for suppressing religion and liberty; his cruelty over the bodies of Christians, in chasing, and killing upon the fields, many without sentence, and bloody butchering, hanging, heading, mangling, dismembering alive, quartering upon scaffolds, imprisoning, laying in irons, torturing by boots, thumbkins, fire-matches, cutting pieces out of the ears of others, banishing and selling as slaves old and young men and women in great numbers; oppressing many others in their estates, forfeiting, robbing, spoiling, pillaging their goods, casting them out of their habitations, interdicting any to reset them, under the pain of being treated after the same manner: So for the continued and habitual trade of these, and many other acts of tyranny, we did disown, and do yet adhere to our revolt from under the yoke of his tyranny. And for the same reasons, we disown the usurpation of *James Duke of York,*

York, succeeding and insisting in the same footsteps of tyranny, treachery and cruelty, and labouring to bring these lands in subjection again to the yoke of Antichrist, being a professed Papist, and therefore by many laws of the land, incapable of bearing any rule. And here we stand as to the point of magistracy.

Concerning the ministry, we own the lawfulness and the necessity of that ordinance, against Quakers, and all its other opposers; and hold it our duty to obey and encourage all true and faithful pastors, and highly to honour them in love, for their work's sake. And we hold it unlawful for any man, though never so well qualified, to take upon him the work of the ministry without licence and ordination, by laying on of the hands of the presbytery, or any competent number of these, to whom Christ hath committed the power of the keys. And we hold, that power of church government and discipline, and every part of the ministerial function, does not appertain to pope, prelate, magistrate, nor multitude of believers, but only to the officers of Christ's appointment, as the subject and receptacle of all such power. We therefore profess our sincere respect unto, and will own, invite and embrace all such ministers as are cloathed with Christ's commission, in his orderly and appointed way; all such as are cloathed with righteousness and salvation, confirming and adorning their doctrine by their practice; all such as are sound, spiritual, and orthodox in the doctrine, holding forth the word of life in incorruptness, gravity, sincerity, sound speech, that cannot be condemned, and are faithful in the discharge of their commission, *crying aloud,*

and not sparing, shewing Jacob his sins, and Israel his transgressions; constant and instant in their work, in season and out of season, reprov-  
ing, rebuking, exhorting with all long-suffering  
and patience, making full proof of their ministry.  
Yea further, we profess, we will withdraw from  
no ministers, upon such insufficient grounds as  
their infirmities, their different judgment or  
practice in things that are either indifferent, or  
not material, or not contradictory to the testi-  
mony of the church of *Scotland*; their ignorance  
of the state of our testimony, having no occa-  
sion to be informed thereof, which hath made  
them heretofore stand back from concurrence  
with us; and even their real scandals, not attend-  
ed with obstinacy, but confessed and forsaken.  
But, we judge we have sufficient ground to with-  
draw from all who cannot instruct their being  
cloathed with Christ's call, in his orderly way;  
as the curates, &c. from all who have subjected  
their ministry to the disposal of strange lords,  
and taken a new holding from and upon a new  
architectonic and usurped power in the exercise  
thereof, by accepting a new grant, licence, and  
warrant from the usurper of their Master's crown;  
as the indulged, &c. From all such who pervert  
and corrupt their ministry, by preaching and  
maintaining errors, either in doctrine, worship,  
discipline or government, contrary to the Scrip-  
tures and our Confessions, and principles of our  
covenanted reformation, and contradictory to  
our present testimony founded thereupon, and  
agreeable thereunto; from all ministers guilty  
of gross compliances with the public enemies  
of this covenanted and reformed church, who  
have broken the covenant, destroyed the refor-  
mation,



mation, usurped the prerogatives of Christ, and are still, and by all means, seeking the extirpation of all the owners of the cause of God; from such ministers who take the defence and patrociny of these courses, and palliate and plaister them, strengthening the hands, and hardening the hearts of these who are engaged in them, so that none doth turn from these wicked things; from such ministers as are unfaithful in the exercise of their ministerial function, or in a smooth, general, flattering way, applying, or rather misapplying, their doctrine to the times; from such as are sinfully silent, in deserting their duty, and lying by from the public work of preaching the gospel, when the peoples urgent necessity and pressing call doth make it indispensable, when people are destitute of public warning, in the times when snares are most abounding, and the poor flock in the greatest hazard to be turned aside; from such as are schismatical and pragmatrical dividers of the church, and wideners of the breaches thereof, already broken and divided, sowing discords among brethren, and promoting their contentions: Finally, from all such as are scandalous and disorderly, either in their ministerial or personal walk; from all ministers that deserve these characters, we think, we have sufficient grounds, from scripture and acts of assemblies, to withdraw our communion. And therefore, as we hold ourselves bound in conscience and duty, with all due respect to the ministry, and love to their persons, to bear witness and testimony against the defections of the generality of the ministers of the church of *Scotland*, since the overturning of our reformation, and intro-

duction of Prelacy; their fainting, and not giving a testimony for the church's liberties, against its destroyers, at their first introduction; their leaving their charges at their command; their deficiency in not giving a testimony when the covenant was broken and burnt, nor when the supremacy was established; their general lying by from their work, the poor people thereby wanting warning; some accepting of the indulgence, others not witnessing against it, but pleading for it, as no defection, or for union with the indulged; their meeting in presbyteries for the rebuking and censuring the more faithful, who did witness against that sin; their laying bonds on some young men, not to speak of it; their pleading for the Tyrant's interest at *Bothwel*; their accepting of the Cautionary Bond, to observe his orders in preaching after *Bothwel*; their persuading to, or not dissuading from taking many ensnaring bonds and oaths, imposed upon prisoners and others; their leaving the work of preaching the gospel in the fields, when they were mostly called to the duty, in a time of abounding snares from the right and left hand, and reproaching and condemning others, who did jeopard and loose their lives in that work; their complying with the enemies, in bonding with their courts, (some to that length, as to come under obligations to forbear the exercise of their ministry) and hearing of their curates; their joining with such confederacies and associations, that did open a door for the introduction of malignants and sectaries, contrary to our covenant engagements; and the like steps of defection, which we desire to mourn for: So, for these, and the like defections, we  
 must

must withdraw from, and discountenance many of our ministers, whom otherwise we love and honour. And seeing in these times of distemp'ring confusions, we are now deprived of the remedy of these settled judicatories, whereunto we might recur in the case, and yet are bound in our capacities to witness against these defections, whereby the wrath of our God is so much kindled against the land; therefore, we judge it lawful, reasonable, and necessary, in this declining and disordered state of the church, to leave that part of the church which hath gone astray into such defections, whether ministers or professors, as to a joint concurrence in carrying on the public work (and let them return to us, but we not to them) and to adhere to the other part of the church, ministers and professors, though fewer and weaker, who are standing steadfastly to the defence of reformation, witnessing against the declinings, until the defections of the backsliding party be confessed and forsaken; wherein we altogether deny we can be charged with positive separation from the church of *Scotland*; yea, nor negative separation, if it be considered actively: We only acknowledge a separation negative, passively considered, in our being left alone in the time of our greatest straits, and forsaken by the rest; endeavouring, the mean while, with many failings and much weakness, to retain and maintain the covenanted work of reformation, in all its parts, as it was attained unto in our best and purest times; and choosing rather to stand still and walk alone, than to go along with others in declining and offensive courses.

Now, having also given you, in all well-meaning

ing plainness, this declaration of our testimony, we shall not trouble you further, but conclude with a humble desire, That, as ye would weigh what we have said in the ballance of truth and charity, so you would acquaint us with your sentiments of the same, and deal freely in admonishing us, wherein you think we err, or go beyond, or come short of our duty. Your correspondence should be very acceptable and comfortable unto us: so, recommending you to the grace and mercy of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, we rest,

*Your affectionate friends and brethren in the Lord,*

Subscribed in our name, and by our direction,  
by the clerk of our general meeting,

MIC. SHIELDS.

## L E T T E R XCI.

*To the honourable Mr. Robert Hamilton.*

*Hon. and dear Sir,*

*July 6. 1687.*

**Y**OU may know from manifold experiences, that *through much tribulation we must enter into the kingdom of God:* The way to the heavenly Canaan lieth through a waste and howling wilderness; our pilgrimage is through a valley of tears, and over mountains of difficulties: but as we have a good and comfortable guide, so he can bring meat out of the eater, and sweet out of the strong, and make the stony rocks give water to us; yea, he can make our bitter waters sweet unto us, and in abundance of sorrow give superabundance of joy. We doubt not but you have  
often



often found this, which helps and animates you, in obedience to the will of God, to undergo so many perplexities and discouragements.

We received your letters. In that which shows your purpose of travelling through other churches, we observe the various and singular troubles which you did meet with at *Lewarden*; your conflicts in that place have been sharp and multiplied; and we reckon it our part to be burden-bearers with you, though we be far short of this, as of all other duties. But we hope, you have both peace and joy in your lot, considering the precious and honourable cause for which you are redacted unto it. And we are greatly refreshed with the report of the tenderness, zeal and steadfastness of these few worthy friends at *Lewarden*, who have been encouraging to you, and took a share with you of all your afflictions. In the letter which gives a relation of your travels through some other churches, as we see your care to lay out unto them our pristine reformation and present sufferings; so also, to show us in what state affairs are amongst them; whereby we judge ourselves greatly obliged unto you, for that might be greatly to our advantage if we could improve it. Oh! we understand that hateful profanity, detestable carnality, vile superstition, deplorable defection, loathsome lukewarmness and infatuated security, are much abounding in these churches. The generality, both at home and abroad, seem to have conspired together to let go piety, and to cleave to policy: When policy is kept as piety's servant, it helps to secure it; but when it is advanced as master, it does much to undo it; the rule of scripture-simplicity and car-

carnal wisdom are squared very unlike to other. O what can we expect but a desolation upon many lands! Christ hath a great conquest to make in the earth, and there must be a strange shaking and overturning of kingdoms, that his kingdom may get place, as *Hag. ii. 6, 7.*; in such a case we should be careful to hold fast that which we have, *Rev. iii. 2.*; we have a great word of testimony delivered to us, which (we are hopeful) shall yet empty thrones and pulpits; O how worthy is it, of all that we can witness and suffer for it! and how unworthy are we of it, if we shall desert it? in such a case we should study to be wholly and only for the Lord God of hosts. The profanity, carnality and indifferency of the generality should provoke us to holiness, spirituality and zeal; but alas! in the midst of all this, we have our deep share of the spiritual plagues that are abounding in this day; it is not with us as sometimes it hath been. O Lord pour out thy spirit upon us. In such a case we should be mourning for all the abominations committed in the earth, especially in the churches: O happy shall they be who shall be found marked among the mourners in *Zion*, for they shall be spared, *Ezek. ix. 6.* O where is love to God? where is zeal for his concerns? where is tenderness now to be found? when there is so little holy indignation, so little sorrow and mourning for the magnitude and multitude of the transgressions of this generation. In such a case, we should be laying our own things amongst our feet, and preparing to meet our God, who is *coming out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity*, *Amos iv. 12.* *Isa. xxvi. 21.*

The information which you give us of the sad  
over-

overthrow, yea almost extirpation, of the ancient and famous *Waldenses* in the valley of *Piedmont*, is very grieving and affrighting to us. O what may other churches expect, when such things are done unto them! O that all churches would take warning from their sad and lamentable cost, of the sin and danger of compounding with, or trusting enemies, whose offers are snares, and who know not to keep oath or promise either to God or man. We bless the Lord for any kindly acceptance you got in any place of your travels: We desire, that in our name, you may thank these (whether in *Geneva* or *Switzerland*) who have received your information, or shewed you kindness. And when you write; signify unto them that we purpose (according to your desire) to keep up a correspondence with them, and to send them letters and informations; but apologize for the delay, considering our scattered condition, and the weighty affairs at present, among our hands, which we cannot defer.

We have few particulars to inform you of at the time; the adversaries are restrained from that measure of outrage whereunto once they were given up; they change their methods, but they do not change their natures: the eyes of many are like to fail, with waiting for a liberty and free toleration, such as is given to *England*, and we hear that the enemies are divided about it; they may be divided about the means, but they are united in the end and design. Many ministers who formerly were lying by from their work, are now bestirring themselves more about it, and frequently preaching; but they do generally declare (or rather discover) themselves  
more

more fully than before, by loading us with false imputations, and by pressing people in their letters and sermons, not only, not to concur with us in our present testimony; but to flee from us. Yet the more that they are of this strain, they gain not the more ground. We may say, by the good hand of the Lord, our number is rather encreasing than decreasing: we are doing our endeavour to have elders elected and admitted amongst us.

Now, worthy and dear Sir, we hope we need not put you in mind to study all necessary freedom and tenderness toward them of foreign churches, and patiently to wait upon any of them so long as there may be hope; by your frequent conversing amongst them, you will know better what may be for their advantage and the advancement of the kingdom of Christ, than we can tell you. The Lord be your leader and guide, the eyes of many are upon you. O study that every word and action may be so expressed and done, as you may not be ashamed to avow it, if it were before the whole generation of mankind, whatever be their different humours, persuasions and inclinations; and also, as you may have peace in it before God. There lieth much advantage to the cause in our expressing ourselves in such a form of sound words as may pertinently signify the matter, faithfully declare our minds, and not favour of prejudice, pride or passion, or in their own nature tend to irritate these who do oppose themselves. We would seek the good of every soul; and though as to many we miss our end, yet we should carry so towards them as may leave a conviction upon their consciences, that it was their good we were seeking: whatever  
others



others are in their way, we are the same by nature, and we should pity them, lament over them, and yet hate the garments spotted with the flesh, and carefully keep ourselves from partaking of their sins. Now we do heartily and jointly commend you to the all-sufficiency and faithfulness of your God, not ceasing to pray for you; and that any work you have been, or may be instrumental to begin abroad, may be carried on by the good hand of the Lord. We are,

*Honourable and dear Sir,  
Your sympathizing friends,  
and obliged servants in the Lord,*

Subscribed in our name, and by our desire, by  
the clerk of the general correspondence,

MICHAEL SHIELDS.

## L E T T E R X C I I .

*To Friends in Ireland.*

*Dear Brethren, Sanquhar, Jan. 24. 1689.*

**Y**OUR letter directed to our ministers was read to us, which affords matter both of joy and sorrow. Albeit we cannot but rejoice to see such ardent desires, as your letter demonstrates to be among you, to have the gospel faithfully preached, and the sacraments administered, by such ministers against whom we had no exception: Yet we ought to lament, with a sad lamentation, that in covenanted *Ireland* there are such defections from approved, received, and

sworn to principles, and compliances with stated avowed enemies to truth and godliness, as gives you solid ground of withdrawing from ministers guilty of the same, whom, notwithstanding, ye, and we, and all, should reverence, respect and love. It is also grievous to us, when we consider not only your sad want of the faithfully preached gospel, from these against whom ye have no ground of exception; but likewise, that the same from hence cannot be so fully supplied as yourselves and we both could desire; for tho' some other of our ministers intend shortly (if the Lord will) to give you a visit, yet, at this time, their absence from this land cannot be thought convenient. And we desire, as well as expect, that, upon their not coming, ye may put a more favourable construction, than to think the same proceeds from forgetfulness of you, or unconcernedness with you, seeing, as we have, though in weakness, so now we desire to have a brotherly affection to, and sympathy with you in all your trials for the cause of Christ. However, the Rev. Mr. *David Houston* is coming over to you, whose labours in the gospel among you we heartily pray may be crowned with success, to the glory of free grace. We hear it is reported with you, he and we should be separated one from another, which here we declare to be false. As formerly, so now, we much esteem him, though many (who had their tongues bended like their bows for lies, but they were not valiant for the truth upon the earth) have been at no small pains to load his name with reproaches and base calumnies; which, as they are grievous to us to hear, so we have endeavoured to search out the the truth of them; but after trial, (excepting  
some

some sharp and too vehement expressions concerning the indulged party, which we wish and hope he will forbear) do find that the same hath chiefly flowed from prejudice in some, and ignorance in others; and all we shall say of them who have so done, shall be cordial wishes, that they may see the evil of it, and do so no more.

Dear friends, we hope it is needless to make apologies for our slackness in writing to you, seeing some of your number may know our share in the times confusions hath not been least, which proved oftentimes diverting from so necessary a duty. Though these few months bypast hath been a time of many confusions, great reelings, and strange overturnings, yet it hath been very fertile in bringing forth wonders; which as they are the Lord's doings, and should be marvelous in our eyes, so, at the time, though they be much admired and sought out by all the Lord's loyal lovers, and fearers of his great and dreadful name; yet, in after generations, they shall be more wondered at, to the praise of him who brought them to pass; when it shall be said, at such a time the Lord did great things for *Britain*, which it looked not for, yea for *Scotland* in particular, which it had little ground to expect; and that which makes it the more remarkable and worthy of observation is, the Lord's right hand that doth valiantly is so eminently seen in it, and the hand of men of high and low degree so little, so that none can say, their sword or their bow hath done it; to him alone who is the Lord of hosts belongs the glory; we may sing and say, *He hath triumphed gloriously, the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea: he hath poured contempt upon princes, and led kings away*

*spoiled: the wicked are snared in the work of their hands; and he hath brought to nought the counsel of the heathen, he hath broken the yoke of the oppressor, and made the oppressed to go free: Yea, what shall we say, he hath brought down in a great measure, the throne of iniquity in Britain and Ireland, under which his people hath been long groaning, and hath given a great dash to Popish idolatry. But though great and unexpected mercies call for great thankfulness, and much pains taken upon a people, should have more than ordinary fruitfulness following the same: Yet we cannot say our thankfulness is answerable to the mercies received, nor the fruit correspondent to the pains taken upon us. It might have been expected that mercies should have melted our hearts in kindly sorrow for sin, even after we had not been humbled under judgments, which for a long time had been lying upon us; yet alas! we are not so humbled, mourning, repenting and praying a people as we should be; and until we be such, it is presumption for us to expect that his anger will be turned away, but his hand will be stretched out still; so that we may fear we provoke the holy Lord to change his dispensations from manifestations of loving kindness, to declarations of holy anger and indignation, and to stop the current of mercy which hath been for a time running, and in place thereof, that wrath, judgment and desolation shall run through this gospel-despising and mercy-contemning land. O pray for us, that we may be helped greatly to improve present mercies, and be preparing for future judgments.*

Now, dear Brethren, as ye have begun, so hold on, in professing and contending for the



covenanted work of reformation, which both ye and we are bound in our covenants to the most high God, to defend and maintain. Let not the threatenings of men fear you, or their flatteries entice you to abandon so noble a cause; remember that only these who endure to the end get the crown. Let pins, hairs and hooves of Christ's truths be precious unto you, although the generality of mankind despise them; the more they are contemned, they should be the dearer to us. Beware, upon the one hand, of defection, and upon the other, of running into unwarrantable extremes and extravagancies. Let not security seize upon you, under the present favourable dispensation, as thinking *Zion's* warfare is accomplished, the enemies fallen, and the church delivered; if any think so, they are but dreaming: they are happy who are preparing for sad and evil days, which at the time are likely to be near the door; for the report of these bloody cut-throat Papists, the wild *Irishes*, their being in arms are come to our ears, which is, at least, should be very wounding and afflicting to us. As your fathers and ours have experienced their barbarous cruelty and hellish rage formerly, and all *Europe* heard of the same; so, for former sins that land again may feel a little of the stroke of their bloody and devouring swords: Yet tho' this should be, let not the forethoughts thereof prove hand weakening and heart-fainting, but rather alarming and upstirring to you, to enter into your chambers and shut the doors about you, and *hide yourselves; as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast.* O fear not though the earth be removed, and the mountains cast into the midst of the sea, for God is a

*refuge, a present help in the time of trouble.* What though these wild and wicked creatures rage and roar, yet mind that they are bounded by him who set bounds to the sea, and said, *Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further, and here shall thy proud waves be stayed.* What though the floods lift up their waves, yet remember the Lord on high is mightier than the noise of many waters, yea than the mighty waves of the sea. Labour to have faith and patience in exercise, for this is a time that calls for it. Thus recommending you to the Lord, and heartily wishing his grace to be with you. We remain,

*Your wellwishing and sympathizing friends  
and brethren in Christ,*

Subscribed in our name, and at our desire, by  
the clerk of our general meeting,

MICHAEL SHIELDS.

---

## L E T T E R X C I I I .

*To the honourable Mr. Robert Hamilton.*

*Crawfoord-John, February 14. 1689.*

*Right honourable Sir,*

**W**E shall not much apologize for our long forbearance to write to you, but rather take with a fault in the same: However, as we may say, it is not the want of affection to you which hath hindered; so, since the last time we wrote, many reelings and confusions hath occurred, and our share thereof hath not been the least

least, which oftentimes proved diverting from so necessary a duty. We acknowledge indeed, we are many ways obliged to you, and among other things, for laying out yourself so much for procuring the ordination of Mr. *Thomas Lining* at *Embsden*, now preaching the gospel among us, we hope, with success, to the praise of the riches of free grace. But as oft times we are remiss in giving significations of our thanks to them who well deserve the same, especially to you; and when given, they are insignificant: so we hope, though you want this from us, it will not demur you from laying out yourself further in your station for propagating the testimony of Christ, nor make you repent of what you have done already, for which you will not want a reward.

Knowing you will be desirous to know how matters have gone here these few months bygone, we shall briefly relate only some of the most memorable passages which hath come to pass in and about this wonderful Revolution, especially these things wherein we are more nearly concerned: To give a full and particular account of all the reelings and overturnings which have been brought about this little while bygone, would so far exceed the bounds of a letter, that it might fill a volume. However, by what is here given, you may see much of the Lord's mercies towards this poor land, in his stately steps of providence. Many, wonderful and strange are the revolutions, these few months have produced, whereat we stand astonished, and adore the Lord's holy and infinite sovereignty in his way of working in and among the children of men; the Lord hath put a new song in  
our

our mouth, but alas we cannot sing it. He hath in a way very wonderful, disappointed the fears of his people, and hopes of his enemies, when they were ready to spring their mines, and accomplish their long intended and wicked enterprizes; behold, on a sudden their designs are crushed, and themselves taken in the pit which they were digging for others, and they were ensnared in the work of their own hands.

In *September* last, some soldiers got secret orders to go through the five western shires, and take from the people all their arms; which was obeyed: whereby the country being disarmed, were unfit to defend themselves against the assaults of bloody Papists: but since, they are generally provided better than before. About this time, there were courts of inquisition to be kept in the west, and some of them began, wherein some professing lairds were to have a hand, in order to the finding out of those who had a hand in rescuing *Mr. Houston*, and about going to field-meetings; which if they had gone on would have tended much to our bondage. But the news of the coming of the *Dutch* put a stop to this threatened storm; whereby, and by the soldiers going to *England*; we got a little respite. In this juncture, when nothing but wars was expected, we thought it duty to deliberate upon what was called for at our hands. Whereupon, after serious deliberation and consideration, we resolved not to ly by, but to act against the common enemy, yet in a distinct body from others, with whom we could not associate. But when nothing was looked for but wars and confusions, behold, in a way very strange, all turned to rumours of peace. The Lord, who is terrible to  
the



the kings of the earth, and cuts off the spirits of princes, made the tyrant to tumble off his throne and run for it, and his army to desert him; whereby an eminent testimony was given against that absolute power arrogate by that poor mortal man. Likewise there was a testimony given against, and a dash unto Popery, yea more than had been for several years before: many monuments of idolatry were destroyed, and severals of them burnt in public places, in doing whereof severals of our number were active: the heads, hands and quarters of our martyrs were taken down and buried, and prisoners for truth set at liberty. When this was going on, there was a report spread through the country, of the *Irishes* being at *Kirkcudbright*, and raising fire and sword, which proved so alarming, that in a few days many hundreds were in arms in the west, especially many of our number appeared: But the report proving false, most part of us dismissed. However a part of us stood together some days in arms, and coming to *Douglas*, emitted a declaration (which is here sent) for their own vindication, and to make the intention of their appearance known to the world. After this, many of the curates were put from the kirks; so that at this time, there are few of them preaching in the west. These things, as they were strange, surprizing and astonishing, and much of the Lord's power, wisdom, mercy and faithfulness to be seen and observed in them; so they call aloud for great fruitfulness and thankfulness at our hands. But alas, our short-coming in this may make us afraid, that we provoke the Lord to change his way of dealing with us, and to  
manifest

manifest his anger against us, as he hath of late shown his mercy towards us.

There is one thing, worthy Sir, which oftentimes we know not to determine about, which is, concerning your home-coming; when we consider how desirable your company would be to many here, and also your own desire to come home, we would gladly comply with it. But again, when we call to mind your usefulness abroad, wherein the Lord hath helped and honoured you above others to lay out yourself for the advantage and comfort of his followers; and not knowing what larger door of access may be opened for you to be useful there, we dare not be positive in our desire to you to come home: so we leave it wholly to yourself to be determined as the Lord shall direct you; heartily wishing that wherever you are the Lord may be with you, leading and guiding, protecting and preserving, comforting and encouraging you. We earnestly desire you would refresh us with a line, giving us an account of the Lord's care of, and kindness to you these months past. We remain

*Your affectionate friends and wellwishers,*

Subscribed in the name, and at the desire of  
our general meeting, by

MICHAEL SHIELDS.

F I N I S.

# SUBSCRIBERS NAMES.

## *Edinburgh*

**T**He rev. Mr. James Hall  
 minister of the gospel  
 Charles Brown druggist  
 Boswel Ross stud. of philosophy  
 John Arnot ditto  
 John Hall ditto  
 John Mosman ditto  
 James Liddle stud. in medicine  
 John Hutcheson ditto  
 Robert M' Michael student  
 James M' Cliesh bookbinder  
 Robert Currie merchant  
 William Taylor printer  
 Ebenezer Currie ditto  
 Robert Miln flax dresser  
 Michael Naismith mason  
 Moses Lóthian staymaker  
 William Walker writer  
 James Paterson taylor  
 William Foord clerk  
 David Waldie staymaker  
 Alex. Stewart mer Cannongate  
 Robt. Will merchant there  
 Ja. Wauchop turner Calton  
 Geo. Cromar gardner Moul-  
 treeshill  
 Robert Morison Coachwright  
 of Pleasance  
 Ja. Bishop weaver, Cansey-side  
*Duddingston*  
 James Farningston mason  
 James Young ditto  
 William Yorkston ditto  
*Libberton parish*  
 Christian Salmon  
 David Aitkin farmer  
*Laswade parish*  
 The Rev. Mr. John M' Millan  
 min. of the gospel Pentland  
 Charles Umpherston wright  
 Anabell Umpherston  
 William M' Niel wright  
 James Melrose taylor  
 George Johnston ditto  
 Walter Johnston collier  
 William Lietch ditto

Thomas Hall namer  
 William Innes wright  
 John Allen tenant

## *Dalkeith*

Francis Eliot weaver  
*Collington parish*  
 John Christy mason  
 John Mather ditto  
 John Clarkston ditto  
 Alexander Fleming wright  
 William Gibson quarrier  
 Rob. Thomson herd Kirkton  
 Archibald Keddie tenant Tem-  
 ple parish  
 Ja. Grieve tenant Rinskinhope  
 Rob. Armstrong herd Bowhope  
 Miss Annie Laurie, kerwell  
 Geo. Sommerville wright, Len-  
 ton, 12 copies

## *Calder parish*

John Kirkland wright Garcoth.

## *Fife shire*

Ja. Balmain shoemaker, King-  
 horn 12 cop.  
 William Forgan weaver, in  
 Dunnykeir  
 Alexander Anderson ditto  
 John Wallace ditto  
 David Littlejohn, Shaws mill  
 William Shields in Sinclair  
 William Couper there  
 Robert Mathieson coalier, Kirk-  
 caldy  
 Wil. Glas merchant Kinross

## *Glasgow*

Andrew Galloway grocer  
 Alexander Bow  
 James Brown flax dresser  
 John Brash weaver  
 John Campbell weaver  
 John Donald distiller  
 Alexander Downy weaver  
 William Eaton hosier  
 Thomas Eaton wright  
 James Fulton workman  
 James George tobacconist  
 John Gilles shoemaker

John Gilles weaver  
 David Girdwood wright  
 Alex Hamilton tobacco-spinner  
 Margaret Hamilton  
 James Hood cooper  
 John Kay weaver  
 Mrs. Lennox  
 Walter Lilburn taylor  
 Robert M'Lae smith  
 Mary M'Nab  
 John M'Kindley workman  
 Mungo M'Farlane ditto  
 Robert M'Lintock shoemaker  
 John M'Kinlay taylor  
 William Robertson merchant  
 Thomas Rodger stay-maker  
 Louisa Sharp  
 Archibald Simson smith  
 James Storie weaver  
 John Smith ditto  
 Mary Stirling  
 Widow Tod  
 Elisabeth Williamson  
 John Wilson shoemaker  
 James Walker wright  
 Robert Waterstone  
 James Young printer  
 James Turnbull  
 David Turnbull  
 Matthew Turnbull  
 James Cherrie  
 John Fulton  
 John Jervey  
 Alexander Brown  
 Robert Nairn  
 John Thomson  
 Andrew Brown  
 William Rodger taylor  
 Mary Campbell  
 David Miller, Calder bridge  
 John Anderson, Airdrie, 2 cop.  
 Arch. Hamilton, in Cathkin

*Paisley.*

Ja. M'Quhae stud. of divinity  
 Wil. Brown rocking-weaver  
 John Bain merchant  
 Agnes Brown  
 Daniel Brown weaver  
 John Ballantyne taylor  
 James Laught taylor

Robert Beveridge  
 Thomas Beveridge  
 Robert Black  
 Robert Arthur  
 Robert Carswell  
 William Carlisle  
 George Caldwell  
 John Craig  
 John Dreghorn  
 John Darling  
 John Gib  
 John Glasford  
 James Finlay  
 James Goldie  
 Richard Henderson  
 Alexander Hill  
 Hugh Howie  
 John Hutcheson  
 James Keir  
 John Knox  
 John Lang  
 David Ligget  
 James Miller  
 James Mitchel  
 Michael Maltman  
 James M'Lintock  
 John M'Niel  
 Ebenezer Picken  
 William Robson  
 James Simpson  
 Samuel Smith  
 John Scot  
 William Thomson  
 William Taylor  
 William Whyte  
 Joseph Willie  
 David Willie  
 James Hodgert, Renfrew par.  
 Matthew Biggar weaver Pollockshaws

weavers

*Baker*

*Greenock.*

Alex. Glass tobacconist, 12 cop.  
 John Buchanan merchant  
 William Wallace grocer  
 James Zuill stocking-maker  
 Archibald Shaw shoemaker  
 James Carswell ditto  
 John M'Carter couper  
 William Parker smith  
 Ja. Park shoem. Crawfordsdyke



*Port Glasgow*

William Morison merchant  
 Alexander M'Pherson ditto  
 John Taylor junior taylor  
 Matthew Crawford porter  
 James Taylor ditto

*Lochwinnoch*

Mat. Aitken in East Barnock  
 James Armour in Turnersields  
 Patrick Robertson of Trees

*Houston*

William Dick merchant  
 Robert Shearer smith  
 John Bar wright  
 Mat. Bar farmer, Griefwries  
 William Galbreath smith at  
 Burns of Inchennap  
 George Bar in Kilbarchan

*Kilmacolm parish*

John Glen merchant  
 James Lang ditto  
 John Taylor ditto  
 John Boyd ditto  
 John Baird flax-dresser  
 Samuel Cuthbert couper  
 Alexander Laird taylor  
 Alexander Laird couper  
 James Laird clock maker  
 William Lyle weaver  
 Annabella Laird  
 Wil. Menzies stocking-maker  
 James Murray shoemaker  
 Alexander Semple clock-maker  
 Ja. Laird maltman Romour  
 Alex. Lang farmer Everfoun  
 Wil. Paterfoun farmer Branchiel  
 Wil. Andrew farmer in Gatefide

*Firefaine*

James Couper distiller  
 William Whitehill smith  
 Alex. Gardner farm. Middle-  
 penny  
 Tho. Inglis glazier, Langside

*Killallan*

Patrick Bar farmer Middleglen  
 Ja. Lindsay flax-dresser, Bridge  
 of weir  
 Robert Eteskine dyer there  
 John Bar flax-dresser there

*Galston parish.*

Adam Brown weaver  
 John Brown wright  
 David Allan merchant  
 Hugh Bell  
 Andrew Campbell drover  
 Alexander Combs mason  
 John Gebbie shoemaker  
 Christian Graham  
 John Hunter mason  
 Alexander Kirkland  
 William Lambie weaver  
 Andrew Manson farmer  
 Alexander Meikle shoemaker  
 George M'Coul hedger  
 George Paterfoun malster  
 Archibald Piercie shoemaker  
 John Smith dyer  
 James Smith shoemaker  
 Hugh Wilson butcher  
 Andrew Woolock taylor

*Parish of Kilmarnock*

James Brown farmer  
 John Laurie bonnet-maker  
 John Kirkland calenture  
 Samuel Spier miller  
 Thomas Wright weaver  
 William Smith shoemaker  
 William Steven dyer

*Parish of Loudon*

John Dykes farmer  
 Andrew Mitchel bleacher  
 Jean Mair  
 Thomas Paton farmer  
 Archibald Salls weaver  
 Robert Woodburn farmer

*Dumfries*

The rev. Mr. John Courtas  
 minister of the gospel at  
 Quarrelwood  
 William Thomson shoemaker  
 James Cowan portioner  
 William Cunningham taylor

*Kirkpatrick darham*

James Coats  
 John Coats in Town-head  
 Sam. Collin taylor Minnie-tow

John Coats travelling-chapman  
William M'George weaver in  
Lairdlaugh

William Haighall shoemaker in  
Coalfad

John M'Connel miller in Kirk-  
patrick mill

William Gillespie tenant in  
Lairdlaugh

John Kirk shoem. in Moorwhirn  
William Coupland smith

R. Cunningham taylor westland  
John Canon travelling chapman

3 cop.

*Kirkpatrick-juxta*

Edward Thomson tenant in  
Knockhill

*Glencairn parish*

Walter Clark merchant in Min-  
niehive

John Cunningham farmer Bar-  
bowie

John Edgar weaver Dalwinton  
Samuel Grierson taylor in Min-  
niehive

James Grierson taylor there  
Thomas Gracie dyer there

William M'Whir there  
Murdoch Murphie inkeeper

there

Elizabeth Smith in Glenfan  
Alexander Grierson tenant in

Lochenkitt

*Lochruton parish*

Joseph Laurie in Hills  
Thomas Halliday there

John Carson there

John Clark schoolmaster in  
Betty. knows

Alex. Clark tenant Burnside

*Terregles parish*

Andrew M'Ghie in Kirkland  
John Grierson weaver there

John Sloan there

Samuel M'George in Bowse

*Dunscore parish*

John Turner in Strawhan

William Waugh tenant in Far-  
denrush

*Kirkmahoe parish*

George Halliday weaver in  
Reddingwood

Wil. Brand wright Auchincairn  
Wil. Beck tenant in Rulietown

*Kirkmichal parish*

James Patie tenant in Nether-  
nochenhang

*Balmaclellan parish*

Robert Cunningham tenant in  
Drumwhirn

*Johnston parish*

William Thorburn miller in  
Borland-mill

*Parton parish*

Pat. M'George in Blackhill  
Samuel M'Michael in Upper-  
Corsock

Martin Beg weaver Blackhill  
George M'Lean weaver in

Armannoch  
James M'Connel miller in Cor-  
sock mill

James M'Connel miller in Cor-  
sock mill

*Carsphairn parish*

John Hairstones

Sam. Harries tenant in Kilnair  
Wil. Robson weaver in Crofts

Samuel M'Keur farmer in  
Darngerroch

Mrs. M'George in Lary

Wil. Rowan in Stroanpatrick

Rob. Smith in Netherwhite-side  
James Wilson in Slengebar

James Wallet there

Agnes Hunter there

Hugh Smith schoolmaster in  
Galloway

John Milligan chapman at  
Corsemichael-kirk

Robert Wright mason at Cold-  
stream, 12 cop.

*Irvine*

James Craig shoemaker

*Finwick parish*

John Howie farmer

John Boyd ditto

William Wilson quarrier

*Parish of Rickerton*

George Goudie miller  
 Hugh Paton farmer  
 Hugh Pack coalhewer  
 James Adam taylor  
 James Wilson farmer  
 Thomas Wright  
 James Guiland farmer  
 John Morton farmer  
 David Sawyer

*Hamilton parish*

James Carmichael merchant  
 Thomas Weir weaver  
 James Lang merchant  
 William Cunningham merchant  
 Gavin Rowat wright  
 John Naismith stocking-maker  
 Ja. Morton taylor Garvelhead  
 Alexander Turnbull farmer  
 Haughhead  
 Jo. Fleming Dunsyfine carrier  
 James Rodger carter Laughup  
 Jo Smellie farmer Motherwell  
 Jean Cuthbert Mirriton

*Bothwell parish*

John Jamieson merchant Cle-  
 land

James Cleland miller.  
 William Smith wright  
 John Rodger carter

*Airdrie*

Ann Cleland merchant  
 Daniel Corse wright

*Stonehouse*

James Rowat wright  
 John Smith smith  
 Andrew Jack taylor  
 Sibylla Rowat  
 Isobel Craig  
 Robert Wilson farmer Watston  
 William Laurie weaver Hofenet  
 John Craig taylor Dervil

*Dalserf parish*

James Watt farmer Cannerside  
 James Muir shoemaker  
 Thomas Aitkin Coal-hewer  
 William Couper ditto  
 Robert Summers ditto  
 Alexander Bell ditto, Westburn

*Carluke parish*

William Nicol shoemaker  
 Susannah Muir  
 John Allan quarrier  
 Thomas Allan ditto  
 James Calderhead  
 William Calderhead  
 William Forest servant  
 Thomas Gray  
 John Gilchrist quarrier  
 James Lang weaver  
 William Newlands  
 John Pettigrew  
 William Storie

*Murdieston*

Ja. Inglis farmer, Westerhouse  
 Walter Paterfon taylor  
 Thomas Steel  
 William Gowans  
 Alexander Gowans  
 Janet Nimmo  
 Mrs. Janet Meikison  
 James Watt  
 Thomas Willox gardener  
 Agnes Alexander  
 James M'Carte lint-dresser

*Cambusnethan parish*

John Sandilands smith  
 Thomas Pettigrew  
 Marion Bruce  
 Thomas Scot farmer  
 Robert Young  
 James Lindsay farmer  
 John Burns ditto Walfston  
 Marion Shaddow  
 Marion Shots  
 Rob. Reid farmer in Foulburn  
 James Roger shoemaker  
 Thomas Johnston coalhewer  
 William Russel hammerman  
 Ja. Steel portioner in the Stone  
 Jean Muirhead  
 Jo. Hamilton farm. Calderhead  
 Wil. Dunse merch. Greenhead  
 James Young farmer  
 Thomas Smellie in Evertown  
 Rob Billie portioner in the More  
 William Mackie lint-dresser

*Davie's Dykes*

Thomas Ruffel portioner  
 John Ruffel  
 Thomas Ruffel  
 Robert Ruffel  
 Ja. Stewart farmer, Townhead  
 Mrs Gray in Auchterhead  
 Jo. Forest couper in Killhegie

*Shots*

John Reid farmer Windyage  
 William Brown lintdresser

*Crineldyke*

Alexander Muirhead  
 John Dobie weaver  
 William Law  
 James Bell farmer Greenhead  
 William Robertson  
 Patrick Nisbet wright  
 Margaret Kirkland  
 Gavin Laurie  
 George Carmichael taylor  
 James Scot  
 Robert Young  
 James Lindsay farmer in Wal-  
 stonhead  
 John Smellie weaver  
 James Smith ditto  
 Archibald Prentice  
 John Cameron  
 James Davidson  
 James Smith  
 James Melvin carrier  
 James Petticrew farmer in  
 King'shill  
 John Dalziel  
 Daniel Bailie wright Middle-  
 house  
 Robert Brownlee wright  
 Hugh Smith wright  
 Jo. Morton farmer Westerhill  
 Ann Brownlee  
 Katharine Gilchrist Easterhouse  
 John Brodie in Heckler's-hall  
 James Johnston lint-dresser

*Carnwath parish*

John Cameron  
 Daniel Simson bookseller  
 Thomas Curhertson merchant  
 George Law tenant

*Lamington parish*

James Douglas schoolmaster  
 Mary Wightman  
 John Wightman miller  
 William Smith smith  
 William Lindsay wright  
 Charles Ramsay clotier  
 Malcolm Wilfon  
 James Jackson flax-dresser  
 George Purdie weaver  
 Susannah Johnston  
 John Inglis in Cutter

*Wanlockhead*

James Ramage miner  
 John Ramage ditto  
 Alexander Robertson ditto  
 Robert Tait washer  
 James M'Millan miner  
 Thomas Watson ditto  
 Alexander Lecky ditto  
 Charles Ramage ditto  
 Charles Lindsay  
 John Cuthbertson miner  
 Robert Colthart smelter  
 Archibald Rogerson ditto  
 Nathaniel Paterson ditto

*Leadhills*

Andrew Kennedy smith  
 John Williamson miner  
 Christian Brown  
 Mary Drips  
 John Young storemaster in  
 Craikbridge-end  
 Mrs. Gordon there

*Peebles*

William Veitch mason

*Dunse, &c.*

Andrew Newton farrier  
 Andrew Newton merchant  
 Alexander Bruce lint-dresser  
 John Bruce meal-seller  
 Robert Brown shoemaker  
 William Boyd weaver  
 Alexander Cairns baxter  
 George Cochran wright  
 Thomas Gray merchant  
 John Hunter weaver



Robert Hanna weaver  
 John Ker dish-maker  
 William Mitchel dyer  
 John Paton chapman  
 George Ralph malster  
 Janet Redpath merchant  
 John Straughan weaver  
 Peter Darie weaver in Long-  
 town  
 David Smith grievie there  
 James Turner servant there  
 John Cockburn hedger there  
 Andrew M'Naught in Long-  
 town mill  
 Thomas Henderson school-  
 master in Greenlaw  
 Robert Young taylor there  
 Ja. Cochran shoemaker there  
 George Johnston mason Black-  
 adder  
 Thomas Johnston hedger there  
 Robert Taylor in Whinridge  
 David Cockburn tenant Both-  
 wick  
 James Foreman in Chirnside  
 Thomas Thomson tenant in  
 Leedbraes  
 John Dods in Woodhead

Thomas Hedger in Allanbank  
 John Comb in Mosmains  
 Matthew Gibson in Hairhead  
 James Chirnside merchant in  
 West Besson  
 George Smith merchant in  
 Weiruther  
 George Paterfon in Pilridge  
 Katharine Redpath Ninilmains  
 Margaret Trotter Buttertown

*Douglas*

The rev. Mr. John Thorburn  
 minister of the gospel  
 The rev. Mr. John Fairly  
 minister of the gospel  
 Andrew Bell merchant  
 James Wilson ditto  
 James Begg schoolmaster  
 John Cowan farmer  
 Thomas Veitch carrier

*Falkirk*

Geo. Leishman mercht. 4 cop.

*Bathgate*

John Morton tenant  
 James Steuart miller, Water of  
 Leith,

## ADVERTISEMENT.

There is in the Hands of some Wellwishers, a valuable Manuscript of the late reverend, learned and pious Mr. *John Brown's*, Minister of the Gospel at *Wamphray*, being an Exposition of *Paul's* Epistle to the *Romans*, which is promised, but not yet come to Hand, and for which Proposals will be published in a short Time, by the Printer of these Letters.

Edinburgh, June 26. 1764.

P R O P O S A L S

For Printing by Subscription,

A New WORK, entitled,

A

DICTIONARY

O F T H E

HOLY BIBLE:

C O N T A I N I N G,

An historical and explanatory Account of the Persons; a geographical Account of the Places; and literal and critical Descriptions of other Objects, whether natural or artificial, civil or religious, mentioned in the Holy Scriptures.

Also, unfolding the different Acceptations of the most expressive Appellatives; explaining Scripture Types; clearing the Meaning of many obscure Passages; and reconciling seeming Inconsistencies.

The whole forming

A Body of Scripture History, Chronology, and Divinity; and serving, in a great Measure, as a Concordance to the Bible.

Subscriptions are received by DAVID PATERSON, the Publisher, at his Printing-house, Lawn-market, *Edinburgh*; where may be had Proposals at large, with a Specimen of the Type and Paper.

## C O N D I T I O N S .

- I. The book to be contained in two large octavo volumes, of about 600 pages each, to be printed on a fine demy paper, and an excellent good type; the price of each volume stitched to be only 3 s.
- II For the conveniency of subscribers, a number, containing twelve sheets, will be published every six weeks, at 1 s. stitched in blue paper; the volume, altho' some sheets more, to be contained in three numbers
- III. Subscribers for 12 copies shall have one *gratis*.

### To the PUBLIC.

AS this DICTIONARY of the BIBLE, or *Christian's Dictionary*, is undoubtedly a work of great trouble and expence, so also of great utility The design hereof is to diffuse that knowledge, and explain those subjects, which it is the indispensable duty of every one to be acquainted with; and certainly it claims the perusal of persons of every rank and condition of life It will contribute much to a right and distinct understanding of the Scriptures; and by the alphabetical order in which it is disposed, any person may, with the greatest ease, find out whatever article he desires

Here will be given an explanation of the scripture names of persons, together with a full account of their actions as recorded in the Holy Bible, and the periods wherein such actions were performed; the meaning of scripture types unfolded; the festivals, fasts, laws, ceremonies and solemnities of the ancient Hebrews illustrated; their money, weights, and measures reduced to the English standard; and the time when any particular occurrences took place distinctly related.

The whole collected from the best authorities ancient and modern, such as Josephus, Eusebius, Calmet, Buxtorf, Usher, Sir Isaac Newton, Grotius, Le Clerc, Wilson, Poole, Henry, Howel, Stackhouse, Ray, Prideaux, Cruden, &c. &c. &c.









