

pleasing to them by the primitive hospitality, piety, zeal, and frankness, of their kind host, and the uncommon spirit for hearing the word of God which pervaded all ranks. In looking over the account of sermons preached at different places by the deceased, Lockwood occurs for the first time April 16, 1771. The text was, 'Other foundation can no man lay, than that is laid, which is Christ Jesus.' In the subsequent accounts of itinerant preaching, Lockwood is very often mentioned.

A much esteemed minister, who was at that time resident in the village, and who, after having received his first impressions from hearing Mr. Venn, regularly attended these services, has kindly communicated the following particulars :

"Of those worthies whose names are dear to the denomination to which they belonged, and to Christianity itself, your father, as far as my judgment went, was not inferior to any. A very venerable appearance, according to the costume of the times, a mind of deep research, the strength of his arguments, the fervour of his mind, and sense of the importance of eternal things, which appeared in the whole of his demeanour, produced a strong and lasting effect upon the minds of his hearers. At the moment I write this small testimony of respect, not only to his memory, but to the memory of past times, I feel more than I am able to describe ; the impression then made remains, and will remain, to the latest period of my life. Recollection is a pleasant and profitable exercise of the mind, and especially when it brings to view the days of the right hand of the Most High, and the seasons of heavenly visitation. Three or four texts of the sermons I heard from your

father at that time, I shall mention, as having struck me particularly. You will not expect that I should be able from memory to say much on what was delivered more than forty years ago, being then very young. The first sermon I heard was from Rom. ii. 16: 'In the day,' &c. (This was preached, as appears from the diary, May 29, 1771.) The believer's trials and supports was the subject of another. The last I shall mention was on Ezekiel's vision of the wheels,' in the first chapter of his prophecies, as representing the mystery of Providence. This attracted particular attention."

The collection of papers in the hands of the writer contains a letter, dated Watford, near London, Aug. 15, 1770, addressed to his parent by the late truly pious and amiable Dr. Stennet. It cannot now be ascertained how the correspondence first commenced: but, though no personal interview had taken place, there appears, even at that early period, to have been a mutual regard, which was afterwards greatly increased, and remained unabated, till death produced a separation. The delightful retreat at Muswell Hill, to which the Doctor removed in the decline of life, with his courteous behaviour and the charms of society under his hospitable roof, afforded high gratification and pleasing reflections to many, and to none more than the deceased.

"DEAR SIR,

"I received yours of July, and was greatly comforted with the contents of it. I intended to acknowledge it sooner, but one engagement or other prevented. My health has been indifferent, but I bless God I am now somewhat better. This I write from my mother's, who

lives at the distance of nearly twenty miles from London. Her health being in a declining state, I think it my duty to be with her as much as possible.

"I sincerely sympathize with you in the distress you have felt on account of some misunderstandings in your church, and rejoice to find that, through your prudent and Christian conduct, and the blessing of God, they have in any measure subsided: Trust, my dear brother, in God, and you will still find him nigh at hand to help you. Jesus, the great Head of the church, is touched with his people's infirmities, and, doubtless, has a tender compassion for his faithful ministers when exercised with such trials as these. I have no doubt the good of immortal souls, and the peace of the community you preside in, are your grand objects. Having these in view, a prudent, meek, firm, and persevering conduct, will, with the Divine blessing, carry you through great difficulties, and make you superior to all the discouragements which the devices of Satan, and the foolish passions of men, may throw in your way. And O remember, my dear friend, how good a master you serve, and what exceeding great and precious promises he has made for your support and comfort. This is the time of trial and suffering; but the day of rewards and triumph will speedily come.

"I rejoice with you in the success of your ministry, and particularly in the instance you mention, wherein the great power and goodness of God were seen. There was something truly remarkable in it. An ardent desire to be useful to the souls of men is frequently, through grace, thus rewarded. When we are weak, it often appears that through Divine assistance we become strong. Go on, my dear brother, courageously in

your work, and I doubt not the Lord will be with you.

"I thank you much for the esteem and affection which you express, though undeservedly, for me. I assure you I feel my heart knit to you; and I doubt not you will favour me with an interest in your prayers at the throne of grace; I need them, much need them, so great is the work to which Providence has called me, and so unequal am I of myself to it. We have had lately some additions to the church, and have yet some more in prospect.

"You will remember me affectionately to all friends, particularly Mr. Hartley, when you see him. Wishing you much of the Divine presence, and every needful blessing, I remain,

"Your very affectionate friend and brother,
"SAMUEL STENNETT."

"It will always give me pleasure to hear of your health (which the Lord of his mercy establish), and of your welfare in every respect. Adieu."

Those who are acquainted with the late Dr. Stennett's writings must be pleased to observe, in his private correspondence, the same lovely spirit by which they were distinguished. His own life and character were a striking comment on the discourses he published, on *Personal and Social Religion*.

Among the young persons to whom Mr. F's. ministerial labours were blessed at this time, the course of the narrative now leads our attention to the late Rev.

John Sutcliff of Olney. He was born and brought up in a sequestered spot about four miles from Wainsgate, on the borders of Lancashire. Under the eye of his pious parents he was trained up with great care. He was preserved from associating with ungodly companions, and early instructed in the leading truths of Christianity. The family were in the habit of attending at the old Baptist meeting-house, in their own vicinity, called Rodhill End; but as there was service at that place only every other Sabbath, they went on the intermediate one to Wainsgate; and under the ministry of the Word there, Mr. Sutcliff was brought to a saving knowledge of the truth, and joined the church in 1769, being then in his seventeenth year.

From his infancy he showed a fondness for books; and with little assistance, except what he obtained from private reading, he acquired a competent acquaintance with the branches of learning commonly taught in country schools. In the fifteenth or sixteenth year of his age, he occasionally assisted the Rev. Dan Taylor, in a school which he had established at Birchcliffe. During his attendance there, Mr. Taylor encouraged his taste for learning by initiating him in the rudiments of the Latin tongue; their intercourse was also of advantage to Mr. Sutcliff in the best things. His subsequent determination to unite with the church at Wainsgate, naturally led on to a more intimate acquaintance with the minister and people of that place. From the following letter he appears to have laboured, like many other good men, at some seasons, under heavy discouragements. These he took occasion to state to his pastor, who soon after wrote to him the following lines:—

" MY DEAR YOUTH, " Wainsgate, Feb. 9, 1771.

" That you are still complaining of the power and prevalence of indwelling sin, is no matter of surprise to me. We find one of the most eminent of Christ's servants crying out on this account, ' O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?' Be not discouraged; Christ was manifested that he might destroy the works of the devil. Carry your sins and diseases to the foot of the cross; lay open your sores, your wounds, and bruises, before him, and plead the promise he has made, ' I will in no wise cast out.' Wrestle with him for sin-subduing grace, and lay hold on his strength by the hand of faith. Millions of poor sinners have taken this course, and none ever failed of success. No mean is so effectual for the mortification of sin, as constant converse with Jesus in this manner. May the good Lord establish your heart with grace, and confirm you to the end! Assure yourself of my steady affection for you, as one of the children God has given me, and accept of this small token of the same from

" Your unworthy brother and pastor,
" J. FAWCETT."

The following is an extract from one of Mr. Sutcliffe's letters, written some time, as appears from the date, after the receipt of the above :

" HONOURED PASTOR,

" It is now a long time since I expressed my thoughts to you in writing. Though I feel many discouragements, I trust I have ground to say, that reli-

gion has been for some time on the advance in my soul. As my acquaintance with Divine things, and knowledge of my own heart, increase, I hope the grace of humility is also in exercise. I find a growing pleasure in religious opportunities, and the thought of being deprived of them would be very distressing to me.

“The more closely I am engaged in religion, and the more I live under its power, the more enjoyment and satisfaction I experience from it. The path of duty is not only the path of safety, but of pleasure. My mind is generally most comfortable when lowest in the valley of humiliation; for then I am led to cleave unto God as my chief good; but, alas! I often forsake my own mercies. Many things are ready to captivate my affections, and to divert my attention from what I ought daily to live in the pursuit of; my heart is perpetually prone to forsake the Lord, and to turn aside to crooked paths.—

“Straithey Head, April 13, 1771.”

Mr. Sutcliff, having an increasing desire to improve his mind, frequently went to Wainsgate, not only on the Lord's Day, but at other times. He received during these visits considerable assistance in the study of English grammar, and made some progress in the classics. At one period he resided several weeks at a house near Wainsgate, that he might be under the eye of his pastor, and pursue his studies without interruption. During this intercourse he gave such proofs of his piety and abilities, that his friends saw reason to hope that he was designed, by the great Head of the church, for public usefulness. With a view to this, they recommended him to the patronage of the Bristol Education

Society. Being admitted on the list of students, so great was the ardour of his mind to enjoy the benefit of that institution, and by preparatory study to obtain such knowledge and qualifications as might contribute to render him acceptable and useful as a minister, that what would have been formidable obstacles to many, did not at all deter or discourage his mind from engaging in this hallowed pursuit. Though of a weakly constitution, he travelled on foot from his native place to Bristol (a distance of about 200 miles) in the depth of winter. He was a stranger on the road; but the expences of the journey, which he performed in about seven days, fell short of twenty shillings. He often travelled afterwards on foot, solely with a view to save a little money for the purchase of books.

In what manner he conducted himself there, will be evident from the following letter to his pastor, written by the Rev. Hugh Evans, who, in conjunction with his son, the Rev. Caleb Evans, presided over that excellent institution. From the beginning of the letter it appears that Mr. Sutcliff was at the time indisposed:—

“DEAR SIR,

“Bristol, June 4, 1773.

“I was favoured with yours in due course, and was very willing our friend Sutcliff should return to you immediately, if he and the Doctor had thought it advisable; but as they did not, he has continued with us to the present time. He has behaved with great propriety, and agreeably to his character and profession while with us; he stands high in the esteem of his tutors and friends here, and where he has occasionally preached. His labours at Trowbridge, in the last

vacation, were of great service to the interest, and much approved of by the church. They have had their eye upon him for their pastor; and if his health permit, they still desire it. There is a pleasing prospect of much good being done there.

“His progress in his studies has been as considerable as could be expected. He has lately gone through a course of experimental philosophy, which I hope will be of advantage to him. He has hitherto done you, as his pastor, and the church which recommended him to us, much honour. I trust he will be spared for great usefulness in the church of God, and be a burning and shining light in his day.

“I presume, when you have heard him for some time, the church will give him a call to the ministry, wherever Providence may direct him to labour. I hope his zeal will not exceed his prudence in the services he may attempt while with you, and that he will take care not to injure his health. When the vacation is over, we shall expect him here to pursue what he has begun, and prosecuted thus far with so much success. You have, dear Sir, our sincere and hearty wishes for your success in the same service with ourselves; and we hope you will be the happy instrument of training up many, who may shine as stars of the first magnitude in the firmament of the church below for a time, and in that above for ever. Pray for us, as we desire to do for you; and be assured that I am, with great regard and kind respects to you and your spouse, though unknown, in which my wife and son join,

“Your affectionate friend and brother in Christ,

“HUGH EVANS.”

Extract of a letter from Mr. Sutcliff :

"Bristol, Nov. 4, 1778.

"Many are the vicissitudes attending all things here below. One minister after another leaves the stage. May the Lord enable us properly to act our parts while on the scene of action! Our concerns are weighty indeed. As the painter said, 'Pingo in æternitatem,' so we may say, 'Concionamur in æternitatem.' If we cast our eyes around, what a solemn sight! Souls, immortal, souls by multitudes hastening into another world, who have never called seriously to mind why they came into this! Let us cry aloud and not spare, be 'instant in season and out of season, abounding in the work of the Lord.' May the best of heaven's blessings descend upon you, and prosper all your labours in our Redeemer's cause and interest in the world! Amen."*

* During Mr. Sutcliff's continuance at Bristol and after he had begun to preach, he received the following letter from the Rev. Dan. Taylor. It shows the interest he took in the welfare of his young friend; and its intrinsic excellency, it is presumed will be sufficient apology for inserting it here :

"ESTEEMED FRIEND,

"With great pleasure I often hear of you, and desire to adore the conduct of Divine Providence towards you. May God give you a thankful, humble, upright heart, a watchful spirit, and a serious mind! With trials you are a little acquainted; more and greater will probably come upon you. But he is faithful who hath said, 'As thy days, so shall thy strength be.' Here is a never-failing support. Cleave to this God, and you are perfectly safe. I should be glad of a line from you, or rather of a long letter. In this I wish you to give me a short account of Bristol and the neighbouring parts, especially as to the state of religion. Is there one General Baptist in all the West of England, who believes in those truths which we consider as essential to the Gospel?

"Be watchful over your spirit: prize and redeem time: trust not

The duties of Christian ministers are so diversified and important, and their influence so extensive (if they conduct themselves so as to be respected), that much relating to the best interests of society depends upon them. They have it not only in charge to feed Christ's sheep, but to endeavour to gather and tend the lambs of the flock, to go out after them in the wilderness till they find them. The Divine precept to them, as well as to parents, is to use all proper means, by warnings and instructions, in order to train up the youths who attend their ministry 'in the way in which they should go;' to bring them up 'in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.'

How often have prejudices been removed, and the affections of young persons won by kind expressions and condescending attentions! There is, indeed, the greatest hope of success among those whose vicious habits are not deeply fixed. It would be well if this truth were more attended to. The hopes of families and Christian societies depend upon the rising generation; if *they* unhappily are overlooked or neglected, how gloomy the prospect! John, the beloved disciple, in his epistles often mentions the children of those persons to whom he wrote, in the most tender manner: 'I have no greater joy than to hear that thy children walk in the truth;' and in the close of one of his epistles your deceitful heart: live upon the promises: study the Gospel closely: pray much and fervently: always go forth in the strength of the Lord God: be careful of your health: disregard the applause of men: attend to the advice of the aged, the serious, and judicious.

"Bear with my freedom, and believe me,

"Yours cordially,

"D. TAYLOR."

he addresses them himself, in figurative, but nervous language, 'Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen.'

Ecclesiastical history records that in his sermons he frequently paused, turned to the young of his flock and called their attention in such words as the following: 'Ad vos juvenes,' 'this is for you young persons.' What a model for the imitation of all who have the 'care of souls,' of all charges the most weighty and important! The writer has no hesitation in saying that, through a Divine blessing, the revival among young persons at Wainsgate, and the bringing forward of several who were afterwards useful in their generation as private Christians and public characters, were intimately connected with the line of conduct here recommended. Young children were catechized, both in private and public; a taste for reading was encouraged, by the loan of books; a small circulating library was formed out of the minister's own collection, increased by a small quarterly contribution in the church and congregation. In conjunction with the Rev. Dan Taylor, the *first book society*, on a more general plan, in this part of the country, was established at Heptonstall. Ignorance is the parent of many vices, and in particular of vulgarity and disorderly habits. Of what importance the above society, and almost innumerable others (of which it may justly be termed the parent), have been, in civilizing the manners of the inhabitants, it would be impossible to say. Amusements of some kind are necessary for young persons; and those who direct their attention to such as are truly rational and improving to the mind, are, in the best sense of the word, benefactors to mankind. The books selected for

these libraries were principally on divinity, with historical and biographical works, accounts of travels, &c.

A minister may thus greatly benefit the rising generation, by directing their attention to such publications as both enlarge and please the mind; and while he shows such an interest in their welfare, if they are sensible of the value of his advice, they will love and revere him as a parent. But undoubtedly his most delightful employ will be with those among them in whom he sees some hopeful appearance of early piety, some latent sparks of heavenly desires; he will fan the flame, and encourage the timid and backward in their imperfect attempts to tell what God has done for their souls, either in writing or familiar conversation. He will imitate, in his own sphere, that blessed Jesus, who ‘does not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax.’ He will avail himself of personal and family afflictions, and even common incidents, to deepen the impressions which appear to be made. A considerable number of short letters, displaying different degrees of talent and ability in writing, have been found among the papers of the deceased, written by several young persons at this time; in which they address him as their pastor and best friend, describing the state of their minds, and soliciting counsel and direction: no doubt he had great pleasure in answering them. There was no part of his work as a minister for which he was more eminently qualified; combining in his character that wisdom which is profitable to direct, with the meekness and condescension of the babe in Christ.

In the year 1772, the “Christian’s humble Plea for his God and Saviour,” a pamphlet sold at six pence, made its first appearance. The feigned name of Christophilus

is appended to the preface, his real one being probably withheld to avoid entering further into controversy.

This publication was in answer to a pamphlet, entitled "The Triumph of Truth:" some other attacks on the divinity of Christ are also noticed. He chose to convey his sentiments in verse; not only from having a strong propensity to court the Muses, but because, as Mr. Pope says, "What is so written, both strikes the reader more forcibly at first, and is more easily retained by him afterwards." The arguments in defence of the divinity of Christ, so far as they are drawn immediately from the Holy Scriptures, are stated in a striking and comprehensive manner, with references, at the foot of each page, to the passages quoted. The rapid sale of several editions, some of which were published in London without the author's knowledge, showed the estimation in which it was held, as containing a summary view of the subject.

In March, 1772, he, for the first time, went up to London, being invited to officiate for Dr. Gill, who, through age and infirmities, was incapacitated for his public labours. A short account of this journey is now before the writer of these pages; and it affords many proofs of the interest he took in the objects that here presented themselves to view, which must have been peculiarly attractive to one emerging from so retired a situation; but he expresses the greatest satisfaction in the society of Christian ministers, whom he had before only known by correspondence, or by perusing their writings.

A few passages are here selected from the diary:

"April 1.—Preached at Mr. Wallin's meeting, from

Zech. xiii. 1: 'In that day,' &c. Just before the service began, I received a letter, which informed me that my dear wife was very ill. This affected me greatly. Lord help me! My troubles follow me every where; but I would not repine!"

"Lord's Day, April 5.—Preached at Dr. Gill's meeting, morning and afternoon, from 1 Peter, ii. 7: 'Unto you that believe he is precious.' In the evening at Dr. Gifford's. I was comfortable all the day. O what a mercy!"

"Monday, April 6.—Saw the Museum, where are ten thousand beauties of nature and art. The Gospels written in gilt letters, the Egyptian mummies, the collection of birds, &c. struck me very much."

"Tuesday, April 7.—Heard Dr. Conder, at Pinner's Hall, in the morning, on Eph. i. 7: 'We have redemption,' &c. My soul was richly fed under this discourse. In the evening, Mr. Medley preached in Goodman's Fields, from Acts v. 31: 'Him hath God exalted,' &c. He spoke of Christ as a prince: 1. He is such by nature; 2. He has all the noble and amiable qualities and endowments of a prince; 3. The achievements of a prince; 4. The authority of a prince; 5. The riches of a prince. "He described him as a *Saviour*—exalted by the Father—by the Holy Spirit—by angels, and by Saints. The ends for which he is exalted: to give *repentance*. Finally, for whom is he exalted—for *Israel*. This was a valuable discourse indeed. The former part of it was sweet to me; but, towards the close, vain thoughts robbed me of all enjoyment and profit."

"Friday evening.—Heard Rev. Mr. Foster. His text was 'Whom resist stedfast in the faith.' His leading observation was, that in whatsoever manner

Satan may assault, we should make a stand against him 'by the sword of the Spirit.'"

"Lord's Day, April 12.—Preached twice at Dr. Gill's meeting, and was greatly assisted from above. O what reason have I to be thankful! My text in the morning was "Mercy shall be built up for ever.'"

During his continuance in London, he preached, as appears from his diary, fifty-eight times.

He was absent from his family and flock, at this time, about nine weeks; and, some time after his return, was invited, in consequence of Dr. Gill's decease, to go again, with a view to a permanent residence there. Many things seemed to urge an acceptance of this invitation, as he had a prospect, both with respect to temporal supplies and extended usefulness, far superior to any thing which his present situation was ever likely to afford. His income, as a minister, had never exceeded 25*l.* per annum; and though a revival had taken place, and the congregation increased, several circumstances in the state of the church rendered his residence among them often unpleasant.

The dwelling-house was extremely small and inconvenient, which was now particularly felt, as he had a growing family of young children, requiring more room and increasing supplies. The question of removal was seriously agitated, and so far resolved upon, with the advice of many of his friends, and the consent of some in the church, who were well aware that what they had been accustomed to raise could not afford an adequate support, that part of the furniture and books were sold, and other preparations made for his departure; but his affection for his little flock, which he had so long

tended 'in the wilderness,' would not suffer him to leave them when the trial came. Those disinterested views which first determined him to settle in this secluded spot operated so forcibly, that he could not desert his post. Like the country clergyman,

"He ne'er had chang'd, nor wish'd to change, his place."

When he found his mind to waver, he intimated to the people that 40*l.* a-year would be the extent of his wishes; but though they hesitated, and even declined entering into any engagement to raise that sum annually, his attachment to them was so deeply fixed, that he concluded, at once, to cast himself upon Providence, and live and die with them.

Such a line of conduct as this may not be proper as a general precedent; prudence may frequently dictate a deviation from it; yet it exhibits many traits of character which are endearing in the man, the Christian, and the minister. It shows a delicate and solemn sense of the duties of the pastoral office, not to be deserted, except for the most urgent and satisfactory reasons; steadiness of attachment, compassionate regard, and disinterested love, where that love perhaps has seldom met with suitable returns. Of this the Apostle Paul exhibited a most admirable instance, when he says, 'I will very gladly spend and be spent for you; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved.'

The event now related, was certainly of great importance in the life of the subject of this Memoir. It was, in some sort, the crisis which gave a new impulse to his mind and views, and it was a resolution of which he never afterwards saw reason to repent. Though he

had many trials to encounter, the blessing of Providence attended his exertions, both to provide for his family, and to promote the kingdom of Christ in that neighbourhood where he now resolved to spend the remainder of his days; to which resolution he afterwards steadily adhered, though he was often pressed to remove to more inviting situations. The notes of the two sermons he preached on the Lord's Day, after he had given up all thoughts of going to London, show the state of his mind at that period, both with respect to himself, as an individual, and his family. The circumstance is noticed on both in red ink, August 9, 1772. The former is on resignation to the Divine will, from Lev. x. 3: 'Aaron held his peace:' the latter on dependance upon Providence, from Luke xii. 15: 'A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.' In this sermon he first illustrates the point asserted in the text—showing that abundance is not essential to life, or the comforts of it—that it will neither prolong life, nor give contentment—that many live more comfortably who have not abundance, than others who are in opulent circumstances, a little that a righteous man hath being better than the riches of many wicked—that abundance will neither prevent cares and disquietudes, crosses and losses, nor secure from those afflictions which are incident to man; from these and other forcible considerations, the most powerful arguments are drawn to submit to the disposals of Providence, to live as strangers and pilgrims in the earth, and to direct our desires and wishes to those objects which are not seen and eternal.

The principal, if not the only institution the Baptists had at this time, for training up young men, with a view to the ministry, was at Bristol. To that place, as we have before related, Mr. John Sutcliff was sent; but though the advantages enjoyed under the care of the Rev. Hugh Evans were deservedly held in high estimation, yet the remoteness of the situation, and the increase of churches in the north of England, for which supplies were with difficulty obtained, rendered a similar establishment there highly desirable. The subject was mentioned to Mr. Evans himself, as appears from the letter already inserted, to Mr. Ryland, and other ministers, who all approved of it. Many gentlemen in London were also favourable to the design. In consequence of these assurances of encouragement, a circular was drawn up, addressed to ministers and others, and signed by John Fawcett and John Sandys, who was a young man recommended as a likely assistant in this undertaking.

An extract from the circular may not be unacceptable to the reader.

“ Wainsgate, June 18, 1773.

“ We trust it is our object to promote the cause and interest of our Lord Jesus Christ, and it is our most earnest desire that the efforts we are now desirous to make may be crowned with success, and the tokens of the Divine approbation. It will also greatly contribute to our satisfaction to have your concurrence and friendly assistance in the work in which we are engaged, viz. the training up of pious young men for the ministry.

“ The grand design we have in view is to furnish the churches of Christ with lively, zealous, judicious, dis-

interested ministers of the Word. We need not say how much they are at present wanted. The youths to be admitted are such members of Baptist churches as appear to have promising abilities for the ministry. We are conscious, that no literary advantages, without the above, will constitute a minister of Christ.

“ We purpose (through Divine assistance) to use all proper endeavours for impressing the minds of those who may come under our care, with a deep and lively sense of the awful and important nature of the work ; to recommend the duties of self-denial and charity, and continually direct them to seek the light and guidance of the Divine Spirit, to enlighten their minds, enlarge and strengthen their mental powers, and assist their progress in all the branches of useful knowledge. And in order to preserve a lively sense of Divine things on their minds, it is proposed that they spend, exclusive of the duties of the family and the closet, one hour together, every day, in singing and prayer ; ever remembering that those ministers who live nearest to God are the most likely, by their labours, to bring others to him, and consequently answer the important ends of a gospel ministry.

“ Several candidates have proposed themselves ; we, therefore, hope you will recommend the design to such of your friends as are likely to encourage it.”

An enlargement of the premises at Wainsgate became indispensably necessary to afford accommodation for those who were about to reside in the house, and enter upon their studies. While the additions and alterations were making, the family took up their temporary abode at a farm-house in the neighbour-

hood. Mr. Abraham Greenwood, who had been previously a year and a half with his brother-in-law, the Rev. Mr. Armitage, now came to reside with them, and continued two years and a half. According to a memorandum now before me, he entered July 27, 1772:—he was the first minister at Rochdale, where he remained some years; and is now, in his declining years, usefully employed as a minister in Lincolnshire. After the additional buildings were completed, three other persons were successively added to the number of students: Mr. John Hindle, who quitted his secular employ, Nov. 2, 1772; Mr. Thomas Slater, Nov. 1, 1773; and Mr. George Townend:—they have some years ago finished their course on earth. Mr. Hindle was distinguished as a popular and very eloquent preacher: he was first settled at Halifax, and died in Manchester. Mr. Slater became a clergyman of the Church of England. Mr. Townend was afterwards ordained pastor of the church at Ackrington in Lancashire, where he ended his days, much respected.—A funeral sermon on occasion of his decease was preached by his tutor, and soon after printed. The text was Psalm xxxiv. 19: ‘Many are the afflictions of the righteous,’ &c.

The Rev. Wm. Hartley, still living, began to preach about this period; and though not an inmate in the family, availed himself of such opportunities for improvement as circumstances would admit.

Mr. Wm. Tommas, who resided near Hebdenbridge, a member of the church, and a most amiable, pious person, from every information that can now be collected, showed a great desire to improve his mind, and was not without serious thoughts of the ministry;—being a

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person of property, and living at no great distance from Wainsgate, he attended as often as he could conveniently at the seminary, without any expence to the institution.—The most pleasing hopes and expectations were entertained respecting him: but alas! that dreadful malady, the small pox, which formerly, like the plague, spread its devastations through the country, blasted this opening flower, and consigned him to the gloomy mansions of the grave. He had kept up a regular correspondence with his most intimate friend, Mr. John Sutcliff. An extract from the last letter to him seems too valuable to be consigned to oblivion.

“DEAR BROTHER, “ March 27, 1773.”

“Your epistle arrived safe on the 17th March. How do my spirits rise and my heart leap for joy whenever I hear from you! I know by painful experience what it is to be deprived of a friend,—a friend do I say? if there be any term more tender, I wish to use it: a bosom companion,—one that is dear to me as my own soul! With what regret do I look back on the time I have spent with you at my side!—Often engaged in profitable conversation, though I have to lament that on some occasions the precious moments were misimproved, by the introduction of trifling topics on my part, which damped the holy flame of heavenly mindedness in your soul, and insensibly brought on too light a frame of mind.

“The spring season is once more returned; and this again serves to remind me of the many delightful walks we have had together, sometimes in the valleys and on the hills; sometimes in the verdant meadows, when the surface was all one beautiful parterre, adorned

with charming flowers, which display the bounty of the Creator. But what are those entertaining scenes? What are they when compared with the immaculate, the transcendently glorious Immanuel, the Lamb of God? Do these attract our senses to behold their beauty, and the exquisite skill apparent in their formation? O let us attentively consider for a few minutes the beauties and excellencies of the Son of God!—He who is wisdom itself; who was enthroned in glory unapproachable; he bowed the heavens and came down; clothed himself in flesh; lived on earth; and at length died the accursed death of the cross. Here indeed all wonders meet! Here are beauties that far exceed the works of creation! Here is love beyond degree: he suffered for his enemies,—the offended suffers to set the offenders free! Shall we be silent in his praise though we can no longer unite in this holy exercise? Let us learn a lesson from the tuneful lark: she begins with the dawn of the day, nor does she wait for company to soar aloft with her!—No; when Nature smiles upon her, she seems contented, though alone, to warble the praises of her bountiful Provider. O what reason have we to sing and triumph in the God of our salvation! ‘The winter is now indeed past, and the time of the singing of birds is come!’

“I have had some distant thoughts of paying you a visit, but have laid them aside for the present. The small-pox spreads very much all about us, and has been fatal in many instances.

“The meeting in Wadsworth-lanes is kept up as usual, and we often find it good for us to assemble ourselves together. We have a succession of trials and comforts, but upon the whole I trust we are going on

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well. Many send their kind respects to you, and heartily wish you success in your studies. They express their regard for you in the warmest terms. Mr. Fawcett has been lately at Rochdale:—he generally preaches four times in the week.

“ Begging an interest in your prayers,

“ I remain,

“ Your unworthy but affectionate brother.”

On the back of the letter, Mr. Sutcliff has written the following memorandum :

“ This my dear friend departed this life on Lord’s Day, May 30, about six o’clock in the morning. He died full of comfort and good hope through grace. He left his relatives and friends in the deepest distress. Lord sanctify this affecting stroke !”

The following letter to Mr. Sutcliff contains a more particular account. A letter had been written to him previously, to inform him of his indisposition.

“ MY DEAR SIR,

“ Wainsgate, May 30, 1773.

“ My last, dated the 26th instant, I suppose has reached your hand. If so, you will open this with anxiety to know how it fares with your friend. I will endeavour to give you a more particular account of his disorder. It is about a fortnight since he began to be poorly; the eruption appeared on the Wednesday or Thursday. He was very full, but seemed to go on well. I visited him often, and always found him comfortable in his mind; wholly resigned to the will of God; and steadfastly trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ for all his

salvation. Thursday last, the disorder came to its crisis. Many thought him still in a fair way to recover, but I have had my fears of the contrary, from the beginning of his indisposition. I was with him some time that night. He had, for the most part, the command of his senses. The pox seemed to fill and come forward well; his cheeks were almost all in one, yet he was never blind, till—Oh! how shall I relate it?—death closed his eyes:

“Tommas, the Friend, is dead! O empty name,
O earthly bliss, 'tis all a painted dream!

You cannot, my dear Sir, be more affected on reading this account, than I am in communicating it. The dear, the lovely youth is no more! No more shall we see his countenance smiling, nor hear his improving conversation. You have received your last letter from him. But a few hours before he died, I inquired whether I should write to inform you how he was. He replied, “Tell him I expect to die soon, and he may not be long after me.” On Friday about five in the evening, he had a great accession of fever; was very restless and delirious during the night; the swelling of his head settled; and the eruption fell in. Saturday morning, about three o'clock, he sent for me. He seized my hand with great eagerness, and told me he supposed he was lying on his dying bed: “but the Lord,” says he, “is my refuge; my soul trusts in him; he is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever!” “The Lord has loved me with an everlasting love, and therefore with loving kindness hath he drawn me.” “Since the small-pox came into the neighbourhood, I have endeavoured to live in a state of actual preparation for