

The excellent woman referred to in this letter died soon after. Mr. Hartley, of Haworth, preached the

to the pulpit his whole frame was often agitated so as to give the appearance of great timidity; but when he began to speak, he seldom disappointed the expectation of his hearers. He was a close thinker; his sermons were well digested; and his printed works are highly esteemed. The letter subjoined to this note was written soon after his settlement at Hull, where he was for a long succession of years an instrument of great good. The Catholic spirit which prevailed in that town rendered Christian society among different denominations highly edifying and delightful. With the Rev. Joseph Milner (who had been his school-fellow at Leeds) no less distinguished by his learning than by his ardent zeal in the cause of Christ, and the Rev. Mr. Lambert, his cotemporaries, and bright ornaments of Hull, he for many years maintained the most friendly connexion. Laying aside, for the time, all party distinctions, they often associated together with all the cordiality and freedom of Christian brethren.

Through a Divine blessing on the exertions of these worthy men, in the important situations which they occupied for a series of years with increasing success, large congregations were collected in the places of worship where they officiated, and others have since been raised up, so that few towns are more distinguished by religious profession and privileges. Mr. Lambert's church was formed in the year 1769. On his first going to Hull, only eleven persons were united in church fellowship; and for a long time the prospects were inauspicious; but during the course of his ministry more than six hundred became members of the church, besides many others to whom the Word was blessed, though they were not in communion with the society.

Mr. Beatson's letter contains some account of the situation of the Baptist church when it was written.

"DEAR BROTHER,

"Hull, March 8, 1771.

"Your favour of the 1st instant I received; it rejoices me much to hear of the welfare of my friends, and equally afflicts me when the dispensations of Providence seem to frown upon them. But perhaps if we were perpetually to enjoy its smiles, we should be too much elated, and apt to kick against God. I am sorry to hear of

funeral sermon, from 1 Cor. xv. 55: 'O death! where is thy sting?' &c. This sermon was afterwards published, with a brief account of the departed saint.

your late troubles and disappointments. I am, I thank God, agreeably settled here, though we are not without our difficulties and our trials. We are in all about forty members, and I have encouraging hopes that the Lord will increase our numbers. I find freedom and liberty in my work in general, and esteem it my highest honour to be an ambassador to the 'King of saints.' It is true, I am an unworthy creature, 'less than the least of all saints,' but by the grace of God I am what I am.' I feel, painfully feel, what you say of yourself, relative to the workings of sin within you; but blessed be God, I hope it doth not REIGN in either of us.

"I am in some respects sorry to hear that Mr. Wood has left Halifax; though I have for some time thought there was little prospect of his usefulness there. May the Lord favour that part of his Zion!

"I read with pleasure the plan you suggest in your letter for a correspondence to be kept up, consisting of short hints on passages of Scripture. I should be glad to accede to it, though I cannot say that in doing it I am free from a selfish principle. The following is a specimen of what you may expect from me: Luke xxii. 20: 'This cup is the New Testament in my blood.' 1. Open the nature of this *Testament*, which is the *will* of God concerning his people, and contains in it the names of all that may lay claim to the blessings of it—the *inheritance* bequeathed to them—the time when they shall come to the possession of it. This Testament can have no addition made to it, or diminution from it; and it is actually in force by the death of the Testator. 2dly. What are the *legacies* contained in it: pardon of sin—a justifying righteousness—peace of conscience—support in death—perseverance in grace—victory over death—the reception of the soul into glory at the dissolution of the body—the resurrection of the body at the last day, and the final glorification of both in the full fruition of God. 3dly. Who are the *legatees*? Such who are of a *contrite* spirit—who have a spiritual appetite for heavenly provisions—who are *willing* to partake of it—who delight in the Gospel's joyful sound, and to whom Christ is precious. 4thly. Why is this New Testament said to be in his

Extract of a letter from the Rev. Mr. Parker, of Barnoldswick :

" Nov. 28, 1774.

" I THANK you for your ' Sick Man's Employ.' I have been much refreshed by reading it. It gives me pleasure to find that your mind has been so well engaged, while your place was empty in the sanctuary; and that the Lord was teaching you when you could not teach others. By this, I perceive that a real saint, if in the path of duty, is never out of his way to heaven; and it may be is making the greatest advances when he lies on a bed of languishing, and is ripening fastest for glory when most of all exposed to the storms and blasts of adversity. When there is the greatest submission of mind to the will of God, there is the nearest communion with him, and the best preparation for the full enjoyment of him in heaven. This is the sum total of all we can wish and desire. But, alas! in the present state, sin hangs heavy on our souls. Were it not for this, how much of God's presence and of heaven itself should we have in this wilderness world! Sin is the worst of all evils; it wounds our souls, embitters all our comforts, vitiates our taste, and poisons our nature. It is a disease which bids defiance to the efficacy

blood? Because the ordinance of the Lord's Supper is a representation of the pouring out of his soul unto death—it is expressive of that joy and consolation which spring from a view of his atonement and sacrifice, of that endless pleasure which they shall partake of with him hereafter.

" These thoughts I enlarged upon the last time the Lord's Supper was administered. It was a precious season.

" I remain,

" Your sincere friend and brother,

" JOHN BEATSON."

of medicine, and all that human power can do; but Christ the great physician *can* heal this disease of the soul, and his remedies are exactly suited to our case. Let it be our business to proclaim his excellence to wounded, perishing sinners; let us tell them that there is 'balm in Gilead, and a physician there;' and let us implore the influences of the all gracious Spirit to cause the dying to live, the deaf to hear, the blind to see, the lame to walk, and the once despairing soul to rejoice in hope of the glory of God. In so doing we have reason to believe that our work shall not be in vain in the Lord. Farewell."

The first time he entered the pulpit again, after two months' confinement by this most severe attack, was May 29, 1774. He was scarcely in a state fit to leave his room, being unable to stand during the time of service; and his appearance altogether, with the recollection of what he had passed through, rendered it a most affecting season. Many were melted into tears, on seeing his countenance marked with all the traces of extreme debility and violent pain. His text was, Phil. i. 23: 'I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better, though to abide in the flesh is more needful for you.' From this time, however, he resumed and continued his usual labours, not only in his own pulpit, but in the neighbourhood, and also in more distant places. The texts for many Sabbaths following as selected from the account of sermons which he kept for several years, were such as his recent afflictions, and the realizing views of death and eternity, might naturally lead him to fix upon. 'Ye know not what shall be on the morrow.' 'I have

longed for thy salvation, O Lord!" 'Behold, here I am, let him do to me as seemeth good in his sight.' 'I commend you to God and the word of his grace.' 'Through much tribulation we must enter the kingdom,' &c.

During the month of August in this year he went to Liverpool, and also to Chester, where he often spent a few days during his absence; the distance from Liverpool being inconsiderable, and the prospect of usefulness pleasing. He remained some weeks from home, chiefly, no doubt, for the benefit of his health, which had suffered such a shock by the late attack as he never after wholly recovered. Having signified to his kind friends there, his intention to devote his future attention more particularly to the education of youth, he received several accessions to the number of his pupils. With this increase of family new cares began to accumulate, and new scenes to open upon his view, entirely different from those to which his former days were accustomed. A school-room was engaged at a short distance from the house, and he also began to occupy a small farm, as a necessary appendage to his enlarged establishment.

In the course of the following summer, he was again called to spend some time at Liverpool, both in his ministerial capacity and on account of his connexions with several families, having some of the younger branches still under his care, whom he took with him and brought back again in returning. His stay being necessarily protracted beyond the time fixed, he addressed a letter to the church at Wainsgate, from which some passages are here selected.

" DEARLY BELOVED,

" Grace, mercy, and peace be multiplied unto you, through the knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ our Lord. I am now absent from you in body, yet present in spirit, bearing an affectionate remembrance of you before the throne of grace. God is my witness, how greatly I long after you all, in the bowels of Jesus Christ. It is in my heart to live and die with you. I requested but two Lord's Days to remain here; but unavoidable circumstances will render it necessary for me to continue a little longer, except I were to return hither in a fortnight, which would be attended with much additional trouble and expense. Through the abundant goodness of my heavenly Father, the journey and the means I make use of have been abundantly serviceable in restoring my health. This morning one that was to be intrusted to my care died of the small-pox. 'He was the only son of his mother, and she was a widow.' To-morrow I must assist in consigning him to the grave. Mr. Medley has a child in the same complaint dangerously ill. Thus the seeds of mortality spring up in every soil. I must beg of you to excuse my absence for one Lord's Day more. I trust you will spend the day together in humble and earnest prayer to God, in which I hope to join you in spirit.

" I have endeavoured hitherto to serve you with some degree of diligence and cheerfulness, amidst many weaknesses, temptations, and discouragements, and am willing to be spent among you. The Lord bless you all, revive, comfort, strengthen, and establish you for ever!

" I am your affectionate pastor,

" J. F."

(Postscript.)

"TO MY DEAR WIFE,

"I hope you received my last in due course. I desire you would make yourself easy; cleave to God and trust in him; and may you be very happy in the enjoyment of his favour, which is better than life.

"I am, &c.

"J. F."

October 31, 1775—a letter was received from Mr. Sutcliff, requesting his dismissal to the church at Olney. He had been for some time employed in the work of the ministry. The first pulpit he entered for this purpose was at Trowbridge, as appears from the Rev. Hugh Evans's letter. After he left Bristol he spent six months at Shrewsbury, and as many months at Birmingham, as assistant to the Rev. Mr. Turner. But Providence at length directed him to Olney, where, under the hospitable roof of Mrs. Andrews, he found himself *at home*, and was enabled to expend the greatest part of his income in the purchase of books. No man had a higher value than he for literary treasures, or a more correct and extensive acquaintance with that description of books to which his attention was particularly directed. He was not a mere *helluo librorum*, but the strain of his conversation on all occasions showed that his mind was richly stored with what he read, and that he had a comprehensive view of the arguments and manner of different writers, which he readily communicated to others. In removing to Olney he found himself in a situation which the Christian and the scholar must consider as almost consecrated ground: not to mention that the vicinity was the scene of the

inimitable John Bunyan's labours, Olney itself was distinguished as the residence of the poet Cowper, the Rev. Mr. Newton, and others, who in their respective spheres were among the brightest ornaments of the age. When we consider these circumstances, and the intimate connexion which afterwards took place between him and Mr. Fuller, with others of his own denomination, we shall not wonder that through life he continued to retain a fixed partiality for this favoured place. In the letter mentioned at the beginning of the preceding paragraph (from an immediate attention to which the very mention of the name of *Olney* has almost imperceptibly withdrawn our attention), Mr. Sutcliffe expresses himself as follows :

“ I take this method of informing my dear and honoured pastor, and my beloved friends of the church at Wainsgate, that I think it my duty, with your leave, to remove my connexion with you as a member, to the church of Christ here in Olney. I esteem it a great privilege that my lot has, through Divine Providence, been cast among you, and it is with pain and reluctance that I now solicit my dismissal from you. As long as I have a memory to recollect, and a heart to feel, so long shall I retain the most sincere and warm affections for my friends at Wainsgate. God is my witness that, though removed to a considerable distance, I am not unmindful of you ; but though thus separate one from another, our union to our exalted Head remains indissoluble. Delightful thought ! because Jesus lives we shall live, and *where* Jesus lives we shall also live. But to return to the subject before-mentioned, I think the leadings of Providence evidently point out Olney to me as the place of my present residence ; what circumstances may

hereafter occur I know not; the church has, however, given me an unanimous, cordial invitation to join them as a member. With this I scarcely should as yet have complied, had there not been things in the church which require my attention, with which I cannot properly interfere unless I am a member. Ardently wishing that the Lord may abundantly bless you, and fill up my place, not only with one, but with many who shall shine in Divine gifts and heavenly graces, and entreating that you will remember me in your prayers,

“ I remain,

“ Affectionately yours,

“ J. SUTCLIFF.”

In a postscript to this letter he intimates that there were about thirty-eight members, and that many young persons were waiting to be admitted.

The reply to the request of a dismission is here subjoined:

“ The church of Christ at Wainsgate, near Halifax, to the church of the same faith and order at Olney, sendeth Christian salutation.

“ DEAR BRETHREN,

“ As it has pleased the great Head of the church to call forth our dearly beloved brother, Mr. John Sutcliff, to labour in the word and doctrine among you, and as his situation among you is so far to his satisfaction that he has requested a dismission from us, in order that he may unite in full communion with you, these are to certify, that our above-named dear brother has been for some years a member with us, and that we, as a church, have had much comfort and satisfaction in him. We are

bound to give thanks to God on his behalf, for the grace and gifts bestowed on him. As the voice of Providence apparently directs him to you, we cannot object to his request, but do, as a church, give him up to you in the name and fear of God, that he may walk with you in holy fellowship, and enjoy all the privileges of the Lord's house. Brethren, receive him as becometh saints, both in the capacity of a member and a minister of Christ. Let no man despise his youth, but may you love him tenderly, esteem him highly, and pray for him fervently, that he may be among you without fear.

"That the God of Israel may bless you in him, make him a blessing to you, and succeed all his labours for your good; give him many seals of his ministry among you, and make him a repairer of your breaches; that unity and peace, liveliness, and fruitfulness, may long prevail and flourish among you is the sincere prayer of,

"Your affectionate brethren,

"In the kingdom and patience of Christ,

"JOHN FAWCETT,

"W. SUTCLIFF, &c."

(To Mr. Sutcliffe, with the above under cover.)

"DEAR BROTHER,

"I thank you for your kind letter, and can assure you, that you have a distinguished place in my affections, and a share in my poor prayers. I am heartily concerned for you, and should be glad to see you. If your ordination should be during the Christmas vacation, I shall be strongly inclined to attend, if possible.

"The affairs of this nation, I think, wear a gloomy aspect. Most who mention the unhappy con-

test with America here are desirous that lenient measures may be adopted, and that a speedy accommodation may take place.

“As to the state of religion I have no very encouraging news to communicate at present. In some respects the church was never so unhappy since I knew it; the debate respecting a new meeting house is renewed, and it is more than probable that a breach will take place among us. O, my brother, what a world is this! May you and I be fitted for, and hastening to, a better.

“I am,

“Most cordially yours,

“J. F.”

The ordination took place a short time after, at which Mr. F. was present, and had the province assigned him of delivering the charge to the minister. He often mentioned, in the subsequent periods of his life, the high gratification he enjoyed, by becoming personally acquainted with many eminent ministers who were assembled there on the occasion. Among the rest, the Rev. Benjamin Beddome particularly attracted his attention. He was strongly solicited to take part in the public services of the day; but through that timidity which is often an attendant on genius and talent, he declined it; he was, however, by entreaties, and almost compulsion, induced to deliver a sermon in the evening, with which the audience was greatly delighted.

From the latter part of the preceding letter it is evident that a new place of worship had been for some

time before, and was then, in agitation. The arguments in favour of it were very forcible. Such had been the happy fruits and effects of their minister's occasional labours in the adjoining districts, in keeping up week-day meetings, that though Wainsgate had been sufficiently central for the congregation first raised by Mr. Smith, it was far from being so to the greater part of those more recently collected; who were not only exposed to much fatigue in traversing the valley and mountains, but often found their health endangered from the dampness of the place, after perspiring freely in ascending the hills; and also in hot weather, by being suddenly exposed to the cold in coming out of so small and crowded a place. On the other hand the partialities and prejudices of the original members were in favour of the old meeting house, which was convenient to themselves for attendance, and to which they had so many local attachments. Both the contending parties felt the weight of their own arguments, probably without a disposition to give due attention to the other. Amidst these contests, the mind of the minister, who was always himself a man of peace, was deeply pained; for many months the subject preyed upon his spirits. From a most earnest desire that the matter might be amicably settled, he forbore for a considerable time to take any decided part, knowing that a house divided against itself is not likely to stand, much less to prosper. He felt the strongest regard for those who took the lead on both sides, and laboured with all the meekness and tenderness of a Christian minister to produce an amicable determination of a matter so intimately connected with the welfare of the society. In pursuance of which

design he addressed a letter to them, of which the following is a part :

“ To the church of Christ at Wainsgate, grace and peace be multiplied.

“ DEAR BRETHREN,

“ I cannot forbear expressing my concern for you, while I see you engaged in a contest that threatens your ruin as a church. We are already diminished and brought low in a variety of respects; in numbers, in gifts, in brotherly affection, in liveliness and zeal, and in most other respects, excepting a public attendance on the means of grace. We are too much like a house divided against itself, and cannot stand long without some speedy remedy. I mourn over you, my dear brethren, and in the night my sleep departs from me. I think I could be willing to make almost any sacrifice, if it would tend to bring about peace and restore prosperity.

“ I love your souls, and I would willingly live and die with you. How shall I bear to see the interest, weak as it is, rent and torn to pieces, while the enemies of religion rejoice in your calamity? I know of nothing that could more effectually contribute to bring me down with sorrow to the grave. I am often saying, ‘ O that I had wings like a dove, for then would I fly away and be at rest.’ I now think it my duty to let you know that if things remain in their present state, I am apprehensive that I must either sink under the weight of these things, or otherwise speedily remove into some other part of the Lord’s vineyard.

“ Amidst the various opinions that are given, and the questions in agitation about building or not building, I

tremble for the ark of God. I fear lest the lively stones that should be built up a spiritual house, should be disunited and trampled upon.

"Brethren, as a watchman, I warn you of the danger; none of you can say that my fears are groundless, or my concern for you without a cause. Could I contribute any thing towards the healing of these divisions, how gladly would I do it! But here I am involved in darkness, and I am ready to fancy I hear a voice in these dispensations, saying unto me, 'What dost thou here Elijah?'

"I am,

"Dear Brethren,

"Your disconsolate but affectionate pastor,
and willing servant in the Gospel,

"J. FAWCETT."

"Oct. 28, 1775."

There is reason to conclude that this affectionate, pastoral address produced a happy effect, and that the future discussions were carried on with more Christian temper and moderation. The matter continued for the two ensuing years to be frequently brought forward; and various plans were produced, which had their different adherents, till at length, as will appear in the sequel, this long agitated question was amicably settled.

During these proceedings, many circumstances in his domestic economy rendered a removal from the house at Wainsgate desirable, if not absolutely necessary. The tenement was too small for his family, which, through the kindness of his friends, was rapidly increasing; the distance of the school-room from the dwelling house was likewise a great inconvenience. The proprietor of the

small farm he had occupied for some time also wished to have it in his own hands again. Being thus deprived of the means of obtaining a supply of those articles of diet which are indispensably necessary for children and youths, inquiry was made in the immediate neighbourhood for a place that might suit the purpose. These inquiries proved unsuccessful, or at least were clogged with conditions, that could not be acceded to.

In this perplexity of mind respecting a situation, he went into Luddenden Dean, about three miles from his present residence, to preach in the evening at a friend's house. Here was incidentally mentioned a farm, not far distant, which had been recently purchased by Robert Parker, Esq. of Halifax, and which his steward, who lived near, was empowered to let. He obtained all the information those who were present had the means of affording; and some of the party, who were acquainted with the steward, accompanied him to his house. He had afterwards an interview with Mr. Parker, and took the farm.

In reviewing the dispensations of Providence, whether they relate to individuals, families, or even nations, on how small and apparently contingent circumstances do those events turn which give a change to their future destinies! When we are ready to say, 'All these things are against me;' the Almighty, by some occurrence entirely unexpected by us, makes our way plain before us; the difficulties and discouragements which before bowed down our spirits, then appear to be (as they are in reality) but parts of that benevolent plan designed to promote, though in a way which we could not before comprehend, our best interests.

Brearley Hall was one of those houses anciently inhabited by a respectable family; but, through those vicissitudes so common in the neighbourhood, it had been long deserted by its original owners, and being let into small tenements, was in a most ruined, dilapidated state. The family, however, removed to such part of the premises as were tenantable, in the early part of the spring, 1776, and were for some time exposed to great inconvenience for want of room; but agreeably to the stipulated conditions, the buildings were, during the succeeding summer, fitted up for their accommodation. In this respect the kindness and generosity of the landlord anticipated the wishes of his tenant, though he had been till now nearly a stranger to him. The situation, in all respects, appeared to correspond with the wishes of the family, and to be suited for the purpose to which it was now devoted. In many things it was quite a contrast to the former: the back grounds there were moorlands of vast extent; but the house now occupied stood upon a small eminence, nearly surrounded by a hanging wood, having, in front, a view of the river Calder, and the valley through which it runs for a considerable extent, and was adjoining the public road (scarcely finished at that time) from Halifax into many parts of Lancashire. Agreeably to the ancient style of building, the house, being partly in the castellated form, contained, in the middle, a large room or hall, the height of the building, with a gallery on one side. Whether these apartments were originally intended for courts of justice, or merely for the purpose of festal entertainments, cannot be ascertained; but it was now consecrated to a purpose for which it had, in all probability,

never been used before. It had been the regular practice of its present occupier to have three services every Sabbath at Wainsgate; but as that place was several miles distant, and the family could not conveniently remain there to a late hour, a lecture on Lord's Day evenings was opened in the Hall above-mentioned, and continued for many succeeding years. The first text was happily selected from Acts xxviii. 30, 31: 'Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came unto him, preaching the kingdom of God,' &c.

His resolution was like that of the venerable patriarch, wherever God fixed his habitation, to erect an altar there, publicly to maintain the worship of God, and to use every effort in his power to promote the best interests of the neighbourhood at large. The congregations, at these evening lectures, were generally much crowded, when the weather was favourable, and consisted, for the most part, of persons who were in the habit of attending places of different denominations during the preceding parts of the day. The choice of his subjects for these occasions showed that it was not merely his object to make proselytes to his particular sentiments, but to explain and enforce those great fundamental truths, relating to doctrine and practice, which are of equal importance to all who call themselves Christians. Instead of robbing other churches, his wish was to promote their welfare and prosperity. On summer eves the scene was often highly interesting, while many, not only of those who made a profession of Christianity, but others who had hitherto lived in the neglect of religious duties, joined in these evening

oblations, and afterwards became regular attendants on public worship.

Many young persons, in the higher walks of life, from the neighbourhood of Halifax, were frequently present, friendly connexions were formed with them; and on the minds of several, impressions were made which, there is reason to believe, were never afterwards effaced.

A habit of observing the works of God in creation, and those beauties which rural situations afford, so as to derive mental improvement from them, is seldom to be found. While there are many flowers, and many enchanting landscapes, in the trackless desert, that never meet the human eye, but are totally unobserved, how many scenes in the haunts of men, which in some would excite the most delightful emotions, pass almost equally undiscovered and unregarded, by the great mass of human beings! They have eyes, but they see not; their grovelling souls seem incapable of those meditations which lead the contemplative mind to behold the finger of God displayed in every spire of grass, in the shady grove, and in the purling stream. 'They regard not the works of the Lord, neither consider the operation of his hand.'

The following fragment, found among the papers of the deceased, shows that, however indifferent others might have been to these attractions, they did not now pass unnoticed or forgotten. He was enthusiastically fond of trees and shady walks; which taste, the common trait of a studious mind, his new situation was every way calculated to gratify.

"BREARLEY HALL.

"INSCRIBED TO ROBERT PARKER, ESQUIRE.

"*Rure ego viventem, tu dicis in urbe beatum.* Hor.

"I seize the silent hour of hastening night,
Or the still moments of the morning dawn,
Friendly to contemplation or to song;
Pensive and slow I tread the flow'ry lawns,
Impearl'd with dew; far from the noisy throng,
The smoky city, and tumultuous crowd,
The choicest scenes here bless my roving eyes,
Shame my ingratitude, and stimulate
My too, too languid powers to reach the skies.

"Here blooming nature, with her jocund smile,
Unfolds the rich profusion of her stores,
Pleasing to every sense. The freshening breeze
Comes loaded with its fragrant, precious sweets,
Gifts of Divine benignity to man.

"The listening ear receives the welcome sounds,
Brought by the faithful undulating air,
From the adjacent groves; beneath whose shade
Indulgent Providence has fix'd the bounds
Of my abode, on *Calder's* fertile banks,
Allotting me the task, the arduous task,
Of guiding youthful minds along the path,
The flow'ry path, of wisdom and of virtue.
May but Almighty goodness grant me skill,
By every gentle art to win the soul,
To love and follow whatsoe'er is lovely.

"Parker! to you my untaught muse devotes
Her humble lay; what gratitude inspires
In artless verse, she tries to sing, and hopes
To gain a moment your attentive ear.
Yours are these flowery lawns, these solemn groves,
These purling streams, and all these rural scenes:
Yours is the sweet retreat, the rustic cell,
For contemplation form'd, where oft I sit,
Wrapt up in pleasing reveries, more blest
Beneath the humble ivy-cover'd shed

Than Croesus on his golden throne, or he
Who conquer'd worlds, and call'd the globe his own.

" Oft I, beneath the moss-grown rock reclined,
Enjoy the noon-tide hour, or evening air:
Pleased with the raptures of some ancient bard,
Or later poet, native of our isle.
Here I forget my cares, and almost lose
The sense of pain itself awhile, though oft
To sharp affliction's discipline inured."

In the above verses, a rustic cell is mentioned. This was a small apartment which he had erected, in a retired part of the orchard, for the purpose of spending in it a few solitary hours, during the summer months. It was in the humblest style of architecture. In one corner was a human skull,*

* This skull, which came out of a charnel house, was afterwards consigned again to the grave. The sight of it, while deposited in the cell above-mentioned, often brought to mind the lines composed by Dr. Doddridge, which he put in the mouth of a skull constantly kept in his study.

" Why chuse you in a maze of books to stray ?

I dictate wisdom in a shorter way ;

Nor need I words my purpose to dispense,

For looks like mine are powerful eloquence.

Behold these ruins of a mortal frame,

And say from what dark sepulchre they came ;

My rank, my genius, or my form declare, }

Say, was I mean or great, deform'd or fair, }

The public scandal or the public care ?

Alas ! thou know'st not ; and thy pride must own

That thou thyself must be as much unknown.

Thus shall thy beauties moulder in the dust,

Thy sparkling eye, thy smiling cheek be lost ;

Thy learned brain shall be to worms a prey

And every curious trace be worn away ;

Learned in vain till thou this secret have,

Or to avoid, or triumph o'er the grave."

and underneath it the following inscription cut in stone:

“ In this unpolish'd, lonesome cell,
From noise and interruption free,
My thoughts on solemn subjects dwell,
Death, judgment, and eternity.”

But while his sources of enjoyment and mental progress were thus enlarged, his cares and anxieties, by the extension of his concerns, were proportionably increased; and for many years after his removal to this place, in itself so congenial with his wishes, his bodily health was in a most precarious state. He was seldom free from inward pain, as is feelingly intimated in the close of the preceding lines; and the attacks were not unfrequently so sudden and violent, that there appeared little prospect of his being long able to bear the toils incident to his situation. His countenance was pale, and his general appearance indicated the acuteness of his complaints. The writer of this account was often witness to these severe sufferings; and the painful apprehensions respecting the final result of them, threw a gloom over the years of his childhood and youth. By advice of the physicians, he took many strong and powerful medicines, which, though they might be effectual in dissolving the stone, the supposed cause of all his misery, at the same time were injurious to his general health of body.

During the vacations, he frequently visited Liverpool, and derived some advantage from change of air and sea-bathing. In one of his letters from thence, now before me, dated July 19, 1776, he thus writes:

"I should be glad to know how you are in your health and spirits. May the Lord give you peace and comfort in your souls! Through the goodness of God, I find myself better than when I left home. The change of air, the use of water, and relaxation from the toil of the school, have been of great service to me. I have likewise experienced thus far much composure of mind. Goodness and mercy still follow me! O let us unite in praising our kind benefactor for all his mercies!"

In another, dated July 22, written from Chester :

"I hope I am in some measure kept sensible of Divine mercy, and of my own unworthiness. It has been a humbling season with me since I left home. My soul breathes after nothing so much as fellowship with God, and the enjoyment of him. How empty and vain is all with which this world can flatter us! May the Lord draw us more and more towards himself, that we may love him in sincerity, and live to his honour. May the Almighty bless you and my dear children!—Give my love to them. I cannot enlarge. Peace be with you!"

His heavy and long continued afflictions did not in general prevent the discharge of his ministerial duties, or his arduous exertions in the education of youth; but in some respects gave an additional interest to his sermons, which he delivered with the solemnity of one on the verge of eternity, and expecting soon to give up his account to God.

The regular increase of the congregation at Wainsgate at length convinced almost every one of the absolute necessity of a larger and more suitable place of worship. A plot of ground in the village of Hebdenbridge, as being central, was purchased, but soon after exchanged for another near it, in a still more convenient situation, on which a plain, commodious building, capable of containing from five to six hundred persons, was erected in the year 1777. The plan of it was so much approved, that it has been, with some slight variations, the model followed in the numerous meeting-houses since built throughout the neighbourhood. It was undertaken by a few individuals of property, who advanced the money, which, being in due time refunded, the place was vested in the hands of trustees.

A printed statement was about this time drawn up, with a view to solicit the aid of the benevolent, stating the circumstances which rendered a new erection necessary.

A few passages selected from it may not be unacceptable to the reader.

“ The place where we have hitherto met to worship God was considerably too small for the congregation. In winter it was extremely cold, and in the summer season very uncomfortably crowded; so that persons of delicate constitutions were discouraged from attending on the means of grace. As to its situation, it was convenient for the neighbourhood for which it was first built; but the chief increase of the congregation being from another quarter, in a course of years it was found inconvenient for the greater part of those

who gave attendance there. This was a matter of complaint for a long time, and motions were repeatedly made for a removal, which were overruled by the objections of a few individuals. But the necessity of a new meeting-house appeared, at length, in so strong a light to the body of the people who attended under the ministry of the word, that it was judged a matter of duty to set about it, for the peace of the church, and the advancement and prosperity of religion among us.

“ Our brethren who remain at Wainsgate are embodied together, and have a settled minister; we are at peace and friendship with them. Our own prospects are more encouraging than we could have expected, since, notwithstanding the separation, we have almost double the number of hearers that could be accommodated in the old place. Peace and harmony prevail among us, and we trust that as the Lord has thus far smiled on the undertaking, he will crown it with still farther tokens of his gracious approbation, by giving success to his precious Gospel.”

The expense of the meeting-house, with the ground, was about five hundred pounds, which was partly liquidated by subscriptions in the church and congregation, and partly by generous benefactions from other quarters.

Those who remained at Wainsgate* were principally persons who had taken a part in its erection, and

* In the year 1815, this meeting-house, though it had previously undergone many repairs, was found to be in so unsafe a state, that it was judged necessary to take it down; and soon after a new and more commodious place was erected on the same situation.

attended the ministry of Mr. Smith; or their descendants, whose attachment to the place cannot be wondered at. Their number was, at least, equal to the congregation in Mr. Smith's time, so that those who assembled at the new place, a few individuals excepted, might be considered as the happy fruits of Mr. F.'s personal labours. On this account, as well as his removal to a distance from Wainsgate, the path which duty pointed out to him was evident. The great object of a minister ought to be extensive usefulness, and to co-operate in those plans that are most likely to promote it. As Hebdenbridge was in the centre of a populous neighbourhood, many were now enabled to attend Divine worship statedly, who, from the distance, could only do it occasionally before. This circumstance also rendered it less necessary to hold week-day itinerant meetings, for preaching in those parts which were at some distance. The infirm state of his bodily health, and the engagements in his family, rendered laborious exertions in this way almost impracticable. Riding on horseback, and walking, were both attended with uneasy sensations; and he was often, through extremity of pain, obliged to lie, during the day, in particular postures, on benches or chairs.

In the year 1778, he published his "Advice to Youth, or the Advantages of early Piety." The number of books written expressly for the use of young persons was, at that time, comparatively small; and of those few, scarcely any, on religious subjects. On this account, something of the kind was much wanted; and the reception this book met with from the public far more than equalled his expectations. It appears, from many passages that might be referred to, that it was