

A

TRUE OUTLINE AND SKETCH
OF THE
LIFE OF SAMUEL EYLES PIERCE,
Minister of the everlasting Gospel.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF, IN THE YEAR 1822,
IN SIX SECTIONS.

PRINTED IN 1824, IN THE SEVENTY-NINTH YEAR OF HIS AGE.

“ O God, thou hast taught me from my youth and hitherto have I declared thy wondrous works. Now also when I am old and greyheaded, O God, forsake me not ; until I have shewed thy strength unto this generation, and thy power to every one that is to come.”—Psalm lxxi. verses 17, 18.

WITH AN APPENDIX.

IN THE WHICH AN ACCOUNT WILL BE GIVEN CONCERNING HIS
BEING A PREACHER AT BETHEL CHAPEL, BRIXTON, SURREY,
UNDER THE PATRONAGE OF THOMAS BAILEY, ESQ.

TOGETHER WITH

His Funeral Sermon,

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

AND A CATALOGUE OF ALL HIS WRITINGS, WHETHER PUBLISHED
OR IN MANUSCRIPT.

London :

PUBLISHED AND SOLD BY MR. AND MRS. PIERCE,
FOR THEIR SOLE BENEFIT.

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Catalogue of the Works of S. E. Pierce, see page 124.

ERRATA.

- P. 97, l. 6, after " Mr. Rickleton's works," add, ' All these were presents from Mr. Pierce and Mr. Mead.'
104, l. 25, after " would" dele ' it.'
130, l. 7, after " May" add ' 1824.'
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. A PORTRAIT of the AUTHOR may be had of the Printers.

A
TRUE OUTLINE AND SKETCH
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LIFE OF SAMUEL EYLES PIERCE.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

INTENDED as a memorial to the praise of God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, the Essential Three in the Eternal and Incomprehensible Jehovah, for the manifestation of their everlasting love to him, in Christ; God-man; in salvation by him, and in him; and brought home in effectual calling him out of darkness into the marvellous light of the knowledge of the *glorious gospel of the blessed God*. All which hath been continued and displayed in him, and towards him, and upon him, in the persevering grace and goodness exercised by the Three in Jehovah towards him. In the course of which many providences, circumstances, and anecdotes will be inserted.

It is a question put by the apostle *Paul*, in the 11th verse of the second chapter of his First Epistle to the Corinthians—*What man knoweth the things of a man, save the Spirit of man which is in him?* Surely as far as this truth reaches, none can give a more correct account of what I have been, and now am, than myself. This, therefore, I am about to do. And I begin this, Friday, April 12, 1822, being within three months of seventy-six years of age.

“ Who fed thee in the wilderness with manna, which thy fathers knew not, that he might humble thee, and that he might prove thee, to do thee good at thy latter end.”
Moses.—Deuteronomy viii. ver. 16.

PREFACE.



I AM now entering on a design, which I never very greatly approved of: as it appears to me, there never was but One in our world whose life and death was of real importance, and worth recording; and that is our Lord Jesus Christ, his life, death, burial, resurrection, ascension, and glorification, as it contains the whole salvation of God. I have often borne my attestation to this, as the real index of my own heart. Yet if I write my own life, according to that which goes before in the title-page of these succeeding papers, surely some reason should be given for my so doing. This I deem to be very right to do; and it is as follows:—A friend, whom I have great reason to esteem and value, has intimated to me, it is more than probable some one or other, after my decease, will most likely attempt to give an account of me, which may be very faulty, and at best but a mutilated recitement of incorrect accounts. This person, therefore, thinks it would be far more satisfactory to my real friends—to those who have a sincere esteem for my memory, were it so to be permitted,

that I should give an account of myself, and leave it with my own name inscribed thereon. This, then, is my motive, at the instance of my friend, for my writing this memoir of myself. And this I here express, to shew why I write: it is to oblige my friend, and also to prevent all others from effecting their designs in so doing.

As I mean to give a free account of myself, I would give this general premise:—I am not going to do myself any injustice, by representing myself to be one which is beyond being *a sinner*, or of being now beyond being *a sinner saved by grace*—no, God forbid. I was a sinner as soon as I received personality by conception in the womb. I was born *a sinner*. I have been in a state of sinnership, and remained in a state of sin, until I was brought out of it in and by spiritual and supernatural regeneration, by the grace of the Holy Spirit. I have all sin and sinfulness within me, being the subject of the whole body of sin and death; and when I die, I shall die with the whole of this inherently in my fallen nature. I have had a real and deep experience concerning the truth and reality of all this. My whole remedy and cure from the whole of this, and all the evidences of the truth of this, in my thoughts, words, and actions, have given so many and awful evidences of the same, as have led me to a total renunciation of all hope in myself, either in time, or eternity, but what is

founded only on the everlasting covenant of the Eternal Three, and on the person, blood, and righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ, as he is set forth in the Scriptures, as the one propitiation for sin.

As I shall aim at the greatest simplicity, and that the same may be rightly understood, received, and be as a narrative satisfactory to the reader, I will cast what is before me into Sections.

In the first I will give an account of my birth. The date of it. The place where I was born. The names of my parents. How I was brought up. What my thoughts were about the invisible God. This will be a means of shewing that I was of a devotional cast. Also how I discovered my being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance within me. With some anecdotes in my early life. This will bring me up to about twelve years of age.

Section Second.—In this I will give an account of my being more devout than before. Of what this consisted in. How I was brought under divine influence. By what means. What followed upon this. Where all this left me. And also what followed hereupon.

Section Third.—How I received some blessed apprehensions of Christ Jesus into my mind, from Mr. *Toplady's* preaching at Broad Hembury. Of many blessed experiences and enjoyments which followed on this. Of my removal from Honiton to

London, and the great advantages I received from the ministry of Mr. *Romaine*. And of my return from London to Honiton.

Section Fourth.—Of my going back to London, in the which journey the foundation was laid for my being called forth to minister. This was by means of Lady *Huntingdon*, who gave leave for my admittance to her College at Trevecca, at Talgarth, in South Wales; this was about 1775. I was sent by her into Lincolnshire, afterwards into Cornwall; this was in the year 1777, and then into Sussex. This will contain very many particulars.

Section Fifth.—Of my being called to be settled with an independent church at Truro, in Cornwall, in the year 1784, and of various particulars which befel me there. Of my removal from thence. Of many trials, troubles, sorrows, and persecutions which accompanied me. And of the Lord's goodness towards me; in his carrying me, at times, beyond all.

Section Sixth.—How, and by what means I got to London, and was introduced to one and another, so as to be a preacher of Christ there. I have now been at Shoe-lane, or rather at the chapel in Printer's-court, almost seventeen years. In this part there will be a collection of a variety of particulars.

Thus I have set before my reader my plan; which, if I correctly fill up, he will have the whole

which I can inform him of. In going over each of these, I shall be constrained to speak of my corruptions. Let him not be offended at finding, by my own confession, I am sinful as truly as I am spiritual; neither let him overlook what my spirituality consists in, and how it is maintained, revived, and at times drawn forth; neither let him overlook how I am carried off myself at seasons, by simply looking unto Jesus. With respect to all my publications which have hitherto been brought forth to the eye of the public, they were from 1796 to the present date, 1822. There are many of my writings which never yet, and, it may be, will never see the light.

Having set forth how the following pages are to be filled up, I have nothing to add. There will, without all doubt, be abundance of weaknesses and infirmities accompany this performance. I know of no one of mine, in the which this is not the case; nor do I wish it to be otherwise. I am only solicitous for truth as truth. Here I would, if the Lord please, be most truly exact and careful. As to all other matters, I give myself no concern. As to these papers, whatsoever faults are found by any who may animadvert and criticise on them, it will not disturb me; because I may be at that time absent from the body, and present with the Lord.

I have now before me the course and series of my life, proposed to be expressed, and set forth, in

six distinct sections. These I have now to fill up. May the Lord bless me with a true and proper recollection, that I may give right and distinct views, recitals, and apprehensions of the same. And if our Lord Jesus Christ please, may the reading of this memorial be attended with his presence, spirit, and blessing. Even so, Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

SAMUEL EYLES PIERCE.

BRIXTON,
April 13th, 1822.

A TRUE OUTLINE AND SKETCH

OF

MY OWN LIFE, &c.

SECTION I.—*An Account of my Birth. The Date of it. The Place where. The Names of my Parents. How I was brought up. What my Thoughts were about the Invisible God. This will shew that I was of a Devotional Cast. Also how I discovered my being alienated from the Life of God through the Ignorance within me. This, with some Anecdotes in my early Life, will bring me up to about Twelve Years of age, or it may be a little more.*

I, SAMUEL EYLES PIERCE, the subject and writer of this narrative, the son of *Adam* and *Susannah Pierce*, of Honiton, in the county of Devon, was born into this world, June 11th, in the year 1746, old style, at Up-Ottery, about five miles distant from Honiton, in the same county.* My mother's father was the vicar of

* My grandfather, whose name was *Joseph Chilcott*, originally of Exeter, was the youngest son of the Rev. *Robert Chilcott*, of Exeter, who had four sons, all clergymen in the Church of England. My grandfather well remembered, when a boy, when the Prince of Orange landed at Torbay, in Devonshire, and from thence proceeded to Exeter, and demanded the keys of the city to be delivered to him, which were cast over the city walls. This

Up-Ottery. My mother went to his house to lye-in ; so that I was born in the vicarage house, about half-

must be about the year 1688. He also remembered one Dr. *Knott*, a clergyman, who then served a place called Coomb Rawley, which was about two miles distant from Honiton, who being reputed a conjuror, when he entered at any time into the city of Exeter, my grandfather, with other boys, would join in hooting him, saying, " Here comes Dr. *Knott*, who conjured the white pot out of the pot." This same Dr. *Knott* was afterwards expelled the Church of England, under the idea of his being a necromancer.

During the time of my grandfather's being the vicar of Up-Ottery, he was also permitted by the Bishop of Exeter to be master of the grammar school in that place, which flourished many years very respectfully and beneficially to the inhabitants and students ; and in which most of the gentlemen's sons in the counties of Devon and Somerset were brought up. He was so truly and universally esteemed, that the parents and guardians of the students were always disposed to shew to himself, and every branch of the family, every mark of attention and respect. My grandfather taught my mother to read and write ; and she was a person of such an excellent capacity for reading and writing, few could excel her ; so that a Dr. *Harris*, who wrote the life of *Mary*, Queen of Scots, said once in Honiton of her, There goes a person who for writing and spelling would do honour to a Marchioness.

Mr. *Joseph Chilcott*, my grandfather, had two sons, *Joseph* and *Gilbert Hale* ; the former was an attorney at law, the latter a clergyman. The attorney lived at St. Mary Ottery, and was also buried at that place. He was the grandfather of Mr. *Chilcott*, who now resides in Lemon-street, Truro, Cornwall, whose father died at Bosvigo. The present Mr. *Chilcott*, of Truro, has in his possession a printed Treatise on the Origin of Evil Thoughts, written by Mr. *William Chilcott*, of Exeter, the occasion of which was as follows :—A devout lady of Exeter was at times subject to melancholy, and was tempted to destroy herself, and attempted the same, but was prevented in time from accomplishing her purpose. She afterwards made known the cause of her melancholy in confidence to Mr. *William Chilcott*, who kept it a profound secret, but made an improvement upon the circumstance, so as to write the above-mentioned book. In consequence of the afore-cited circumstance, many of the devout people of Exeter would not retire to their private devotions without their servant or some person with them.

past eight in the morning. My mother was in the marriage state beyond a year, without being in a family way. This gave her some uneasiness. She prayed to the Lord she might conceive and bear a son. She made a vow or promise, if the Lord would be pleased most graciously to answer her, and grant her the request of her lips, she would give me up, and devote me to his service; she would do her uttermost to bring me up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. This, as I have received it from her, was before she conceived me in her womb. She, whilst in a family way, dreamed she had a child, and it was a son, and called *Samuel Eyles Pierce*. This was the reason these names were imposed upon me. My father's father, his name was *Samuel Pierce*. I had an uncle, my father's own brother, wearing the name of *Eyles Pierce*. Many in the family on my father's side, sustained the name of *Eyles*. It was a surname. Yet the reason of my being so called was not on these accounts: it was solely founded on my mother's dream, prior to my birth. My father's parents were passed from time into eternity, long before I was brought into a time state. My mother's parents were both living; yet my grandfather deceased when I was an infant of eleven months old. My grandmother lived several years after; so that I knew her, and can well remember her. Mr. *Joseph Chilcott*, my grandfather, was a clergyman of the Church of England. He was the vicar of the parish of Up-Ottery. He kept a grammar-school at Honiton. He died at Up-Ottery, and his remains were laid in the church porch: so were, many years after, the corpse of my grandmother. My father and mother's parents were originally of Exeter; yet, they living at Honiton, I was brought up there. My

mother being very anxious for my soul's good, endeavoured to instil into my mind, as early as possible, some thoughts of what we frequently style good; so that she taught me all Dr. Watts's hymns for children, so as that I could repeat them before I could even read them. I well remember when, to encourage me, the book was sent for, brought home, and given me as I lay in bed. Soon after which I was sent to a reading school.

Sometime about the age of five years, I was at the pool in the street, playing with a small pitcher, quite a child's toy, and fell into the water, so as to be almost suffocated. There was a person in a chamber opposite, who, after I had been struggling some time in the water, looked out, and saw me, and by her means I escaped death for that time. I was taken out of the water, stripped of my clothes, which were all thoroughly soaked with water, and stood up at the fire all unclothed. This is almost as long back as I remember: what I before recited was before it: and thus you have those things which were in my remembrance, and are the furthest back in my present recollection.

As my mother was frequently instructing me, so she used to recite many things recorded in the Bible to amuse me: such as about *Joseph, Job, the three children preserved in the burning fiery furnace, Daniel in the lions' den, &c.* and then she would put me on reading the same. Thus it served to exercise my mind; so that I at certain times was led to ask her about God, and the Trinity: my mind being then young and tender, she used to be very concise in her answers. When I would ask about the existence of God, and respecting the Holy Trinity, she would say—You must not allow your thoughts to wander on these subjects; neither must you frame up

any thing, nor attend to any suggestion of your own: that it was wholly from the scriptures we could know the Lord: that I must never reason on them, but receive them as they are: that God was invisible and incomprehensible: that when I prayed, I should consider myself in his presence: that prayer was speaking to the Lord: therefore I was not then to let my mind wander, nor think about my play.—All which had their effects on my mind: this I ascribe unto the Lord, and will express the effects all these produced on my mind. Whilst my mind, when very young, was employed in thinking on God, yet I was never suffered to have one corporeal thought of God all throughout my life. The being warned of not letting my mind wander in prayer, and that it was speaking to the Lord, this hath also, from my very youth, had its influence on me: so hath this, that I was not to reason about the Bible, but receive what is contained therein. I say, these instructions have been of great use to me, before I knew Christ. They have also had their effect ever since I have been brought to the knowledge of Christ; and I here recite them, to shew in what way I was brought up, from my very childhood, and in my youth.

I never learnt, neither was I taught the knowledge of the Trinity from any man; no, nor from books neither. It was inlaid on my mind from my youth. So that when a little one, when my father used to convey my grandmother to church, that she might be present at the Lord's table, and I used to be taken up in my father's lap, and ride to church on such occasions, I had these thoughts concerning my grandmother, and the other communicants—they are about to feast with the Holy Trinity. I mention this, it being so peculiar an idea; yet, as I

have before expressed, it was all without the least gross or corporeal idea. This, no doubt, was the effect of being taught that God, as God, was wholly incorporeal. I think it but justice to add, whilst I have said, I did not learn the doctrine of the Trinity from any man, yet I have received much light into the true statement of the same, by the reading of many of the writings of most excellent men. Nor do I want to deny this. God forbid.

You have had hitherto, to the best of my own knowledge and recollection, a true portrait of me. Yet that I may not deceive you, how my corruptions and sinfulness broke out, even when very young; and in the first acts of the same it was in violent fits of passion, for the which my mother often reprov'd me: yet I was at certain periods very undutiful: it would last sometimes longer, and sometimes shorter. But while these fits were upon me, they were always very extreme, and my wretched mind was very sinfully influenced. I was not left without being at times very severely corrected, which I suppose suppressed the same for a season. My mother did not like me to be out of her sight, nor to join with other boys in play, and as I grew up I used to think, 'I will by no means vex my dear mother.' As I was an only child, and there were a variety of devotional books in the house, one of which contained offices for morning, noon, evening, and night, so I would sometimes leave my play, and those I was with, to get home, and say, as was then the expression, my prayers. I found myself more and more thus inclined. I conceive I must have been at this time between seven and eight years of age. My good mother, seeing I was disposed, when out of school, to remain with her, to encourage me, sought for, and borrowed abundance

of plays, histories, romances, and some moral religious books so called; and in the reading the same, I was for the most part engaged when not at school. From these I received a good deal of pleasure; so that to repeat a play, was to me become very amusing; to see one acted was so also. To have an opportunity to have acted a part in one, would have been to me a great entertainment. There was once a short prospect of being called out, with some of the people of the town, to have acted a part in the tragedy of *King Charles the First*, but it came to nothing; which was to me a disappointment. As my mother had brought me, very early, before this, to go aside to pray, so this was still followed. She kept her eye so particularly upon me, that if there was any departure from the same, she would be sure to speak to me concerning it. I have sometimes told a wilful lie on such occasions. It was by what I felt in my mind, and reproofs for my evading the truth, I began to have some discoveries of my being a sinner. I conceive I must have been about twelve years old, when my mother, being about going to the Lord's table in the church of England, for the first time, was very greatly distressed in the morning of that day. It was Whitsunday. She opened her case to me. I was helped so to speak as was to her relief. I remember it to the present moment. The words with which I addressed her were as follows:—*Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted of evil, neither tempteth he any man.*—James, epistle, chap. i. v. 13. *And when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, Satan came also among them.*—Job, chap. i. v. 6. So that these assaults of Satan with blasphemous thoughts, were not to be wondered at. They

were to be looked upon as evidences of the devil's enmity and malice against such as were seeking after Christ. I most certainly said many more, and other like words. These had their effect on my most highly esteemed and beloved parent; so that she went to church, and said to her sister in law, my father's sister, "I should not have come here to-day, had it not been for *Sam's* words. I could not conceive any otherwise of the same, but that the Lord put them into his mouth." As my natural devotion increased, so it was thus expressed, in loving the Lord's house, by which I mean nothing more or less, than the place styled the Church: by loving the forms observed in the Church of England, most especially what is styled, and I then called also, the Sacrament of Christ's most precious body and blood, that I thought, as soon as I arrived at the age of sixteen, I would prepare myself, and go to the table. Somewhat about this time, within a year or so, the tremendous catastrophe of the earthquake at Lisbon took place. This was in November, in 1755. There was, in consequence of this, a public fast throughout the kingdom; and it was the first I ever remember, and the most solemn I ever saw. All sorts of people appeared to be impressed. The minister of Honiton spoke on that occasion with as great earnestness, simplicity, and faithfulness, as though he had been a minister of the methodists. By which I mean, such earnestness, and charges as he expressed, and brought forth before the congregation, and which were such as we had not been used to. This was followed with several awful and alarming sermons on these words—*Wherewithal shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the High God? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves of a*

year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?—Micah vi. verses 6, 7, 8. I well remember these scriptures made very great impression on my mind, when I approached the Lord in prayer. I would here observe, all my praying was then, and for many years afterwards, confined to forms: yet I must add, very many times, my very soul went with the same. From all I have recited, it may appear I was of a devotional turn; indeed it was all I myself had any apprehension of. To be very good, by which was apprehended we must be very devout, often upon the knees, go to the Lord's table, read good books, and be circumspect, and trust in the merits of Christ; this was all which we devout church people, amongst whom I was one, understood of being religious. I would here insert it, that at this very time it was, though I then knew not of it, there were great awakenings throughout our land, and also upon the Continent, which were so universally. I had this from Mr. *Romaine*, who preaching many years afterwards at St. Dunstan's, spoke to this effect, that the earthquake at Lisbon preceded such awakenings on the Continent, and in England, as had not been so evidenced since. I came on to about the age of fourteen; and being to prepare myself for the following day, which was the 30th day of January, on the which I was to fast for the martyrdom of King Charles the First, I in the evening took *Lake* on the Sacrament, and examined myself; and at the

conclusion of the same, these words came to my mind, *Rejoice because your name is written in heaven.* I was not at the time able to say whether it was right or wrong, so this was only a kind of preparation to my being more devout and solemn. And as I proceed, you will clearly perceive such effects followed, as the effect of the cause. I have endeavoured to state the matters of fact as they were in my own mind. And pray, Reader, what dost thou make of the whole of them? Surely thou canst not make Christ, and grace out of these things which have been recited; nor can I myself. Dr. *Owen*, Dr. *Goodwin*, and Mr. *Joseph Hussey*, and, if I mistake not, Mr. *Whitfield*, speak the substance of all this; styling the substance of the same, a temporary work of the Holy Spirit, which leaves the mind wholly unrenewed, and destitute of the true knowledge of Christ; so that such persons, as I have described myself, are altogether destitute of the true knowledge of the Lord and Saviour. I am sure it was thus with me. Therefore let it be observed, I have not set forth what I have expressed, as the true genuine experience of a believer in Christ Jesus; I have been only setting forth what I was, in my natural state, without regeneration, and conversion to the Lord. Yet in this state, and by some discoveries made concerning what I was inherently, it was evidenced that I was alienated from the life of God through the ignorance within me; and it is by the mighty power and influence of divine grace we profit from any impressions made upon our minds. I lived, according to my relation, under the influential conception of devotion, and devotional conceptions; this led me to live, from the same apprehensions, a very devotional life, so that I lived an animal life, a rational life,

a reformed life, a devout life, wrapt up in religion and devotion, such as it was, without the least true and supernatural knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. I would wish to leave the whole of this section to be read and understood. May the end of writing it be answered. If it may be a means of giving any to see the knowledge of Christ is beyond all this, and that the very ideal knowledge of the same cannot enter even in the least measure into the natural mind, let it be altered and amended as it may: this will be beneficial, and serve to contribute and advance the glory of the free and sovereign grace of God. The Lord grant it may be thus. Even so, Amen.

SECTION II.—*In this I will give you an account of my being more and more devout. Of what this consisted in. How I was brought under Divine influences. By what means. What followed upon this. Where all this left me. And also what followed hereupon.*

HAVING been led to consider all religion consisted in close retirement and devotion, I gave up myself more and more to the same, so far as I possibly could. To go to the church constantly, attend the sacrament so called frequently, to observe prayer and fasting, and to be most truly devout, this I thought was to be heavenly minded. And having understood, when persons arrived at the age of sixteen, they might be admitted to the table of the Lord, so keeping this in view, it was my intention, when I should arrive to this term, I would

most certainly become a communicant. Under these views I chose the trade I would learn, and the person also with whom I would serve; thinking of nothing so much as of being very good, and of being swallowed up in the practice of the same. I was by my parents accordingly settled, yet I was by no means calculated for the same. My mind was very weak, and spirits very low, so that I made very little progress; not out of the least obstinacy, but very much through timidity; and also my mind was so engaged in devotional acts and exercises—and the master was a very great hinderance also; he was very discouraging, always finding fault; never putting me in the right method; expecting me to find out this, that, and the other, out of mine own head, so that I was continually confounded and perplexed. All this did not take me off my religious exercises, nor abate my desires and intention of communicating, should I be permitted to live. I will now divert from this subject, and introduce the following anecdotes.

It was before this period the alteration of the style and calendar took place; this was in 1752. I remember going to bed on the second evening in September, and waking the next morning; it was the thirteenth morning of the same month. From that day forward I was taught by my mother to reckon the anniversary of my birth forward eleven days; so that the 23d of June, or the day before Midsummer, as I received it from her, is the precise time of the same.

The alteration of the calendar caused some perplexity. Some complained of it; yea, some superstitiously thought things went cross on the very account of the same, especially as it threw Christmas day eleven days out of its place: some therefore preferred what they called Old

Christmas to the New; and some would keep both, that they might be sure they were right. I only recite this by way of diversion to the mind.

I also remember the commencement of the turnpikes in Devon. They appeared so novel, that the word with many was not understood; and I remember it, as a matter of curiosity, going to see the labourers on the road, and to look at the toll-booth. At school I had the writing out of a piece concerning the roads.

A tremendous fire broke out in a malt-house at Honiton, August 1762. I was the first who gave the alarm concerning it, being then at the age of sixteen. Where I then was, on the sound of fire, the goods were all removed; even the very windows and doors were taken off the premises. When all this was done, it seemed almost a pity they should: it seemed a matter of sorrow; yet so it was, the fire so brake forth and raged, as to burn and reduce a very great number of houses, and reduce them to ashes. It began between one and two o'clock in the afternoon, and was at an end about six, the same evening. I went up to the extremity of its end, to see and take notice of its devouring effects. I well remember the heat of the fire on each side the street was so intense I could not bear it; I was necessitated to go back again. An house opposite that in which those I was concerned with were burnt out, was not only burnt to the ground, but awful to relate, the man whose it was went in to secure some papers, and bring them out;—so it was, the roof fell in—the person was consumed; he was burnt so as to be a mere stump. It was only between two and three in the afternoon when this happened. I have often remarked, in the secrets of my own mind, this which follows:—the person was a

clerk to a dissenting meeting in the town; he was looked upon with very decent respect; yet so it was, when the Lord's Supper was to be the Sunday following, he would be intoxicated on the Saturday night. I was led to reflect on this within myself, as a very solemn and awful dispensation of the Lord's.

Since I came into open being and existence, almost the whole of that town hath been burnt. At several times it has been, the Lord hath contended with the inhabitants of the same *by fire*.

In the year 1747, a most dreadful fire happened in July, on a Lord's day, in Honiton, which consumed three parts of the town, and the damage was computed at 43,000*l*. This was the year immediately after my birth. That which I have related must have been sixteen years since; and many fires have happened since that time.

I am now to return to the subject. These solemn dispensations I have been relating, together with my own natural and devotional spirit, with the frequenting the church, and the intention of going to the sacrament, as I then called it, I became very serious indeed. I had no outward evil to be reformed from. The influence of the instruction I had received from my mother, had been a preservative from all we call outward sin. I was, for I know no better term to express the same by, *a recluse*; one only fitted for a devotional life. I was now changed with respect to my reading. Plays were not so much my amusement; *Milton, Homer, Virgil, Horace*, and such like poetical writers and writings, were esteemed and admired by me. At and about this period, I began to experience that which I was hitherto ignorant of: yet I found it innate in the very constitution, and I looked on myself liable to be cast into hell

for the same. To cure the evil, I would sting myself with nettles; lie on the floor, instead of going to bed. When I found all this was insufficient, and did not effect what I designed, I dropped the same, and substituted fasting instead of these. For a season I fasted Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays, all through Lent. I attempted for a season to fast every Friday; after a season I dropped this. Now whilst I was as sincere in the practice of all this, as I really could be, yet what was there in the whole of this? and what was my life? Why most truly, it was living a serious, moral, a natural religious, devotional, good old Adam's life. And this was all. I was in my sins. I was wholly in myself. I had no spiritual life in my soul. I was not, as yet, brought under divine influences; no, indeed, that I was not: so far from it, that could I have attained the perfection of what I aimed at, and continued in the same to the end of my days, and died trusting in the merits of Christ, as the expression then went, I should not in the least have doubted of going to heaven. My whole devotion and religion consisted in reading prayers, and good books so called; in being very circumspect; in abstaining from all I called sin; and as I was naturally timid and fearful in my temper and disposition, this kept me from the knowledge of men and things, even such as was necessary to qualify me for living in this present state. I conceive it an error to bring up from youth, into the teens, without letting such know, what they will naturally feel and perceive, in the animal life and frame. It is also a great evil not to know what true godliness consists in. I thought it consisted altogether in secret devotion. To

be found in the performance of it, I apprehended, was the very life and essence thereof.

Having thus far given an account of my life and religion, I am next to set forth how I was brought under divine influences: for if there be any correct attention paid, to that I have here declared, there could leave as yet no other impressions on the mind, than what natural religion and devotion produces. I was, every Lord's day, from coming out of church in the afternoon, until eight in the evening, at my father's house, so that here I was secretly exercising myself in devotion. So it was that my mother had borrowed a book, entitled, *The Crucified Jesus, giving an account of the Sacrament, &c.* written by Dr. *Anthony Horneck*. I saw the same, and was very desirous to read it. I did so; and before I had gone half through the same, I experienced that which I had never before, so that I was dead to all but Christ. I was spiritually invigorated; I could no longer read plays, nor see them acted; I had lost all love and relish for the same. At certain seasons, I would, even as I walked in the street, all at once, be wrapt up in a kind of ecstasy, and this in consequence of scripture coming in upon my mind; and the Holy Spirit, by this very means, leading me into contemplations on the love of God. Such a passage as this which follows—*God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.* I should be led from home, to feel the divine influences of the same within me; and be led to wonder, that all men were not taken, and ravished with the love of God. Immediately it would occur to my thoughts, they cannot, but by the Lord's

giving them the knowledge of his love ; and that none could know the love of God, but as it pleased him to make the same known unto them. Now it is from hence I express my mind concerning the season of my being brought under divine influences. The change which had been produced in my mind, in consequence of reading the before-mentioned book, was so different from all I had ever been the subject of before, that I most solemnly ascribe it to the Spirit of the living God ; and to what the scriptures speak of, when the divine writers, in them, set forth, and speak of the new-birth. I was now a new creature ; a regenerated man ; one born into Christ ; one born from above ; an heir of God, and joint heir with Christ : not that I then perceived this, or understood the same. As it respected the evidences of my regeneration, it consisted in the following effects : I had an inward relish of the love of God. I was not contented to be so often upon my knees, and exercising myself in a devotional way, except my mind was spiritually engaged with God, and I myself under sacred and gracious impressions. Yet with all this I was a stranger to Christ ; I knew not his person, blood, and righteousness ; yet he had wrought that good and perfect gift and work in my soul, which will exist in it to all eternity ; although, at the time I am speaking, it was only in embryo ; and alone discoverable by my thinking, speaking, and delighting in Christ, in a very weak, low, and feeble manner, of the good I conceived in being a lover of Him. The acknowledgment of his Godhead was inlaid within me, by the Holy Spirit, as an ingrafted truth in my soul ; so that I was never admitted to call this truth into question, or admit of any doubt concerning it. As to the means of my being brought under

divine influences, I attributed then, and still do, to my reading the book before-mentioned, and the Holy Ghost setting in as I read the same, particularly with some passages therein; in particular with this which follows. Speaking on the love of God, he thus expresses himself—*The love of God is so immensely great, glorious, and incomprehensible, so far beyond our thoughts, that we can have no tolerable ideas of it. There is nothing among all the angels in heaven—nothing in the sun, moon, and stars—nothing amongst men, or beasts, or birds, or fishes—nothing among metals, or minerals, that can be said to be truly like it. No language can reach it; no rhetoric express it; no oratory describe it; no pencil draw it. It exceeds all comprehension, surpasseth all understanding, puzzles the very angels in heaven, and perplexes those spirits of light and glory. It is all sea—all ocean—all light. It hath no bounds, no shores, no limits: and the greatest that was ever said of it, or that can be said of it, is JOHN'S expression, "God is love."*

Such sentences as these were the means by which my mind was so affected as it had never been before. I hereby received some intuitive apprehensions of the love of God. I was hereby inwardly affected beyond what I ever had been before; so when the season came about for the celebration of the holy communion, being now seventeen years of age, and not sixteen as heretofore fixed on, I prepared myself for the reception of the same, and went to church and received it. The *bread* seemed to me to contain the very essence of sweetness; the communion table, and cloth, was to me, in their very appearance, heavenly; so likewise was the minister, and people. I considered myself as having entered into

covenant with the Holy Trinity. Some of these ideas I received from the book itself. I do not mention it as a gospel book; I am only declaring how I was influenced by it, and my own case in consequence of the same. I did not receive the knowledge of Christ therefrom. I was brought so to esteem what I read here and there in it, as to be spiritually-minded. And this I will say, in the writings of many good men, whose works I should be for casting aside, yet here and there may be found some very precious and choice sentences. The book I have been speaking of, I could not read it now; no, nor would I recommend it. I am setting out the account of my life, how the Lord dealt with me. Thus having arrived at the seventeenth year of my age on the 23d of June, new style, at, or about Michaelmas 1763, I went for the first time to the Lord's table. At the close of the evening I was afraid I had eaten and drank unworthily, yet from this I was soon relieved. The reader may be willing to know what followed upon all this. I was brought under the influences of the Holy Spirit; I was hereupon more eager than ever in private devotion. Yet this I cannot deny, there was now a real spiritual-mindedness, such as I was not the subject of before. The book I have spoken of, it was the very joy and delight of my heart. Some of it I could repeat by memory; I found it good so to do. It afforded me real inward satisfaction; as it was, in some parts, grand, noble, and sublime. I went on spending every Lord's day evening in reading it; to which I added Saint *Augustin's* Meditations, as translated by *Stanhope*; and as I read the latter on my knees, so my whole soul went forth in the expressions contained in the same towards the Lord. Once, I well remember,

as so engaged, such thoughts as these came into my mind—*When Christ was in the garden sweating great drops of blood, he foresaw all my sins, past, present, and to come, and died for the whole of them.* This I here recite, to shew, the Holy Ghost having brought my mind under his most gracious and divine influences, so I secretly and imperceptibly received some conceptions of Christ, such as hereafter were more openly to appear: for as to the true knowledge and gospel apprehension of Christ, I was not as yet favoured therewith; yet what I had read had left such a weight on my mind, as was very attractive, especially from Dr. *Horneck*. It may most surely be allowed, what I have quoted from him, could not enter into my mind, and remain there, but it must produce its importance and efficacy therein. As I confess hereby a discovery was begun, of my being born again, and I from hence date my new birth, of my being born into Christ, how was it, some may say, that with all this you were not brought to the knowledge of Christ? To this I would make the following reply:—Regeneration is not the revelation of Christ; it precedes the revealing of Christ to the mind; it is only to the regenerate Christ is made known. This will be particularly explained, and realized in me, when we come to the next section.

I am now to shew where all I have been relating left me. I was still in myself, at times very sorrowful; not as doubting of any part of the reality of what I have been relating: no, not so; but as I grew up, I found corruptions grew up in me, and with me. They sometimes brake forth, and blasted all my designs, hopes, and expectations; and what could I then do? I had no other refuge but to strive with all my might against them.

I did so. I made vows and solemn resolutions against them. I read books; in some of them there were forms of covenanting with God. I met with Dr. *Doddridge's Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul*; in the which is a form prescribed for entering into covenant with God. I made use of it frequently; and pray bear with the expression, for so it was, I damned myself, so far as it was in my power, to all eternity, had it depended on myself in so doing. According to the ignorance of my own mind, I vowed before the Lord, that I would not admit of the least sinful feeling or thought within me; yet notwithstanding all this, I found sin was inherent. It would shew itself; it would not be conquered, and kept under, by all my tears, prayers, fastings, vows, and legal strivings of any sort or kind. Thus I was left in a most wretched state and case of mind; indeed, indeed I was, and this for some years; I suppose between two and three at least. So that after all I have been relating, I was left respecting the state and case of my mind, most empty and wretched. I was at certain seasons, and for whole days together, as one under the sentence of damnation; and that which followed upon it was lamentation, and mourning, and woe. I should have jumped for joy, could I have but apprehended it was possible for the Lord to save me. I knew not one syllable of the covenant of the Eternal Three. I sinned and repented; I sinned again and repented again, and I had no remedy to fly to but my own doings.

About this time a *comet* appeared: I believe it was about 1768. My mother got up about midnight to look at it; she would have me look at it also, saying it was different from the other stars only by its tail. I was struck with awe at the consideration of the greatness,

majesty, and immensity of God. I thought thus;— what if the appearance of this star, which by my mother's account is but reflecting a small lucid appearance in the air, strikes me with so much terror, what must it be to stand before the holy Lord God! I saw not the comet; but the consideration of standing at the tribunal of God, filled me with the most solemn awe, so that I trembled at the very conceptions of the same. I actually prayed in my mind, under these views, that the Lord would actually be pleased to take me out of the body, and cast me into hell, rather than suffer me to live one moment longer; because I was sensible, though I hated sin with my whole heart, yet I should most certainly fall into it, though it would be to the wounding and real grief of my soul. These words then, and afterwards, followed me like a thunderbolt—*And the sight of the glory of the Lord was like devouring fire on the top of the mount, in the eyes of the children of Israel.*—Exodus xxiv. ver. 17. The effects of all this most assuredly shook the whole of my natural and animal frame, so that my nervous system received such a severe blow, as will never be recovered in a time state. The alteration in my body and mind were beyond all possibility of expression. I remember the next day looking into Mr. Hervey's Meditations, in a note of which the following passage was transcribed—*And by him all that believe are justified from all things from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.*—Acts xiii. ver. 39. It seemed to me I received some little support, if it was so: yet this I well remember, I knew nothing of the meaning of the words. After all this I went on with the same round of duties. My memory being very good, I could, and often did, repeat the whole book of Psalms

as they are in the common prayer-book translation. I felt the effect of my very great and tremendous thoughts at the appearance of the comet. I found my former forms of prayer did me no good. I read some sermons of Mr. *Whitfield*; one entitled, *The Lord our Righteousness*, some parts of which I felt. He says—*Are you sinners? so am I. Are you backsliding sinners? so am I. And yet the Lord, for ever adored be his grace and mercy, the Lord is my righteousness.* Yet I knew not what was contained in the declaration, *The Lord is my righteousness.* I heard a sermon preached at East Buckland church, near Wellington, Somersetshire, on the words, *Thou art all fair my love, there is no spot in thee*, by Mr. *Jesse*, whose father was the rector of Wellington. He expressed himself to the people thus—*If you have left all your sins, and done all good duties, and are not come to Christ for life and salvation, you are as far from heaven as if you had not taken one step in the way thither.* He said a good deal of the most precious blood-shedding of Jesus Christ; yet I knew nothing of all this; but I had a conception it was very sweet. When the day was closed, I thought with myself I would have faith and good works, and between both I should be saved, so dark and ignorant was I. I remember after this, as I was coming from Honiton church, on a Good Friday noon, coming down the hill, a circumstance like it. The words came to my mind, and I dwelt on them.

For you, and for me, he prayed on the tree,
 The prayer is accepted, the sinner is free:
 That sinner am I, who on Jesus rely,
 And come for the pardon God cannot deny.

My pardon I claim, for a sinner I am,
 A sinner believing in Jesus's name.
 His death is my plea, my advocate see,
 And hear the blood speak which hath answered for me.

Acquitted I was when he bled on the cross,
 And by losing his life he hath carried my cause.

It brought for the season some blessed relief into my mind; yet this I put away under this apprehension, if I gave way to it, I should be too comfortable, and it would unfit me for that preparation I was to pursue in my approach to the Lord's table. The reader may plainly see it was not owing to any thing in me, or done, or attained by me; I was brought out of myself, and off myself, or ever I had a good thought of the Lord Jesus Christ, and salvation by him. According to what I have written, it appears to myself, no one could be more dark and ignorant of the Lord Jesus Christ than I was. I have as faithfully related my case as I could; and the whole substance of what we are now in this present section come up to, proves I had not a gospel acquaintance with the Lord Jesus Christ. I knew not the doctrines of the gospel, therefore I could not believe into Christ by means of them. If my case was *Ephraim's*, whom the Lord took by the arms, yet most certainly I knew not that he held me, nor that he healed me; nor that I was to be brought forth to the light, and that I was to behold his righteousness. I had no human instructor; no preaching, nothing but the church; nor was there any thing in the same where I was. I began to be more and more observed; to be looked upon as very likely of falling into methodism; to be called nick-names; for at the time this refers unto, the very idea of leaving

the church was treated with the utmost contempt: this, however, did not keep me either from going to church, or going on in my regular way; and some light by degrees broke in upon my mind, so that I should be speaking to my mother, aunt, and others, about Christ. It was most certainly in a very incoherent manner. I used to dwell much on the Epistle to the Galatians, that we could not be saved but by Christ alone; not that I could establish what I spoke but by positive assertions: yet so it was, the Lord gave me secretly and intuitively a blessed sense of his pardoning mercy. These words used to be very precious to me, and I frequently felt the sweetness of the same upon my mind—*I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me, for I have redeemed thee. Sing, O ye heavens, for the Lord hath done it; shout, ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein; for the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified himself in Israel.*—Isaiah xliv. verses 22, 23. I now began by little and little to drop my forms of prayer. To pray ejaculatory, and sometimes I found God in the same; and thus from this to go before the Lord, and pour out my heart before him. I began to believe the Lord's people were beloved by Him before the world began, and that I was an elect person. Now all this was without books, or men; and the satisfaction arising from the same I found to be spiritual. All this would again and again be damped and removed from me, because besetting sin would overcome me, therefore I should be very greatly distressed over and over again. However, so it came to pass, I was very clearly convinced that all my senses, all my faculties, and all my members, were com-

pletely spoiled, ruined, and corrupted by sin. And when deeply distressed on these accounts, some portions of the words of scripture would reverberate on my memory, so as that I was supported by the same. And now I close this part of the outline of my life. If the Lord please, may he bless it, by giving such as have been, or may be under religious and legal impressions, to see, and understand, to what an extent the same may be pursued, and not the least true knowledge of Christ Jesus received into the mind and heart by the teaching of the word, and by the Spirit of God. The Lord grant this. Amen.

SECTION III.—*How I received some blessed apprehensions of Christ Jesus into my mind, from Mr. Toplady's preaching at Broad Hembury. Of many blessed experiences, and enjoyments which followed upon this. Of my removal from Honiton to London, and the great advantages I received from the ministry of Mr. Romaine. And of my return from London to Honiton.*

IT having pleased the Lord to give such a shake to my legality, and that which was connected therewith, as to unbottom me from all hope in myself, so it pleased his Majesty to let in by degrees, on my mind, such views concerning Christ, as that thereby, in the issue, Christ was revealed in me, and formed in me, the hope of glory.

As I was kept in a low frame of mind, in consequence of indwelling and besetting sin, so I was more fond of using such forms of prayers as contained a good deal of

the passion of Christ in them. And having met with an old book of this sort, I was very fond of the use of it. I well remember making use of it on a Saturday morning. When I went to the Lord with it, I found myself ready to sink under the apprehension of fresh contracted guilt; yet in pleading before the Lord what was contained in the prayer concerning the sufferings and bloodshedding of Christ, I found my mind very sensibly relieved: after which I addressed my mother to this effect, that I was ready to sink into hell with the weight of sin before I went to prayer; but having been to the throne, and pleaded the blood and righteousness of Christ, I was quite easy, and free from the same. Thus I went on, and found relief in the subject itself, without any one to guide me, for my mother had never heard the gospel preached. I was myself like the man who saw men as trees walking. After this, a person whom I respected came in of a Lord's day evening, and spoke of Mr. *Toplady*, that he preached the *fall*, and *predestination*. I said to the person, calling her by name, with respect to predestination, it must be so; for it is expressly said, *The Lord will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.*—Romans ix. ver. 18. Awful and solemn as these words are, I found very sensible relief in the very recital of them; thus, in a very gradual way, and by little and little, and to me in an indiscernible way, I was led to the apprehension of the same, and that also in a measure suited to my spiritual case. My particular case which most chiefly afflicted me, was the guilt of sin. I could not think any one's case like mine: I had never heard or read of any like unto it. This was my particular matter I had to cope with; yet at times I would conclude the Lord loved me,

and I founded it on this. It was self-evident there were seasons when my mind was drawn forth sweetly into some enjoyments of the love of God. This I was very sure of. So it was, the great and most truly excellent Mr. *Toplady* was then at Broad Hembury, the minister there. He being in the Church of England, made it to me the more acceptable. One whom I respected said, such and such persons were going the next day to hear him. I was asked if I would go; I fell in with the proposal, and thither I went. Before I arrived at the place, which was five miles from Honiton, I began to feel my mind drawn out toward the Lord, as I had frequently been accustomed to. And I thought with myself thus—How is this! Yesterday I was ready to sink into hell with my own guilt and corruption, now I am comfortable in my aspirations after God. Surely it must be, as I often think, if the Lord did not love me, I should not love him: the one must be the effect of the other. In such thoughts I enjoyed a sense of the divine favour and presence with a degree of spiritual satiety. So I went forward rejoicing. I had one mile further to walk, and then I came to the church. All was thus far well. I saw Mr. *Toplady*, and heard him. The words of his text were—*These that have turned the world upside down, are come hither also.*—Acts xvii. ver. 6. He expressed what the ministers of the gospel turned the people from; it was from all their false bottoms; from their self-righteous views, and schemes. He spake of Paul as being full of Christ; as being always ready to speak of him; that the market-place was a very unlikely place to hear any thing about the Lord Jesus Christ. Yet we had Paul, in the chapter before us, even speaking of the Lord Jesus, and that to the market people.

He spake of the love of God, and said, there never was a time when God began to love his people, nor would there ever be a time when God would cease to love. That this was agreeable to the doctrine of the Thirty-nine Articles, and confirmed it by reading one of them. I felt, and also thought all this very sweet; yet I conceived, had he confirmed it from the word of God, it would have been better. The whole being finished, I walked in the churchyard afterwards, and looking on the graves, I was led to consider the state of fallen man to be just like the state of the dead. That the one was not more void of natural life, than the other was of spiritual. That the spirit of the living God alone could quicken a dead sinner. That any, even the least breathing of spiritual life, was an evidence of a spiritual birth, and therefore it could not but be the fruit of election. I am giving an account of my own feelings and experience at the time I here speak of. In the afternoon Mr. *Toplady* preached again. These were the words of his text—*When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe.*—2 Thess. i. ver. 10. He entered very particularly in setting forth the righteousness of Christ. I sat just under the pulpit, so as to have an opportunity of taking a full view of him. What he spake, entered most sweetly into my mind. I looked up upon him, and thought within myself, this is that I want. I have been aiming to be as righteous as the first saint in heaven; and could not, by all my acts and deeds, attain the same. Now I understand I am to stand righteousness itself, in the obedience of the Son of God. If I could have this man with me, when I were to die, I should not be afraid. What I at that time conceived of this was, could I have the doctrine he

preached of Christ and his personal righteousness so held forth, as to be established in my heart, to be fixed thereon, I should be triumphant over the fears of death. I returned to my own town, and full of what I had heard. It was soon known where I had been, and some dislike was expressed. I went, in course, to my own parish church; but this did not blot out the remembrance that I had been to hear such an one. However I went again, and heard a funeral sermon on these words—*Who is able to stand before this holy Lord God?*—1 Samuel vi. ver. 20. And a most solemn one it was. He set forth the righteousness of Christ as the only garment of salvation. In proposing the question contained in the words of the text, he said, *Ask the men of the world, Who is able to stand before the holy Lord God? the answer will be, The man who hath good works to justify him. This is the very doctrine of John Wesley himself. We are saved on account of our works; yea, because of our works. Woe be to that wretch, and woe be to you, and me, my brethren, if this doctrine be true.* He expressed what he said to the people in another parish the Lord's day afternoon, just passed, and laid great weight on trusting all on Christ. I never was quick in taking in such subjects as some may be. The way I was led was thus: what I heard, and read, I received it intuitively, so as to dwell on it; to ponder on the same; and thus it was, by little and little, I was led to a knowledge of gospel truth and gospel grace. Having heard, I went on in my former way of going to Honiton church, and receiving the communion as before. As to the preaching, it became more and more a mere nothing. Ever and anon, I was influenced to go and hear Mr. *Toplady*. Thus for a

season I went on. My mother died on Thursday, January 3, 1770, suddenly. I had hope in her death, and yet it was like tearing out my very bowels. We were so swallowed up in strict devotional exercises, that I said to my dear parent—Mother, were we certain Christ was coming to judgment, what could we do, or how could we live otherwise than we do? She replied, I know not. The Saturday evening before her decease, I was very low in spirits, and I said—Mother, I wish there was any way of going to God without putting off this tabernacle; I am afraid of what we shall see, and converse with, after we are out of the body. She replied—*I wonder you are so fearful; you, that have been so often at the table of the Lord. If I were to be led through hell after I am out of the body, I should not fear, if Christ was with me.* I then conceived her meaning to be, that so often as I had been engaged in the remembrance of Christ's death, by which, death is abolished, it was, as it were, reprehensible in me to be subject to the fear of death. These were my thoughts then concerning the meaning of her words; if otherwise, it matters not now to either of us. Mr. *Whitfield* died in the foregoing year, as I conceive, and my mother on the beginning of the year following. I suppose she was beyond sixty. Whilst she remained in her coffin, the day before the interment, I felt myself full of sorrow on account of her removal from earth to heaven, and these words came to my mind—*Thy loving-kindness is better than life itself.* I thought, is it so? I have professed it. How comes it to pass I am so cast down on account of my mother's death, of whom I have no doubt of her being among the blessed in glory! The Lord shone with the words into my mind, and I even found

the loving-kindness of the Lord to be indeed beyond all created and temporal good, and was lifted up in heart and affection to the Lord, so as to be sweetly at rest respecting the Lord's dispensation. At night I found my sorrows returned. Yet the next day, Monday, January 7th, I followed the remains of my beloved parent to the house appointed for all living, and left the body in sure and certain hope of a resurrection to eternal life by our Lord Jesus Christ. This I most freely, and in what I call a spiritual manner, expressed, and came home to my friends then present, and never from that day to the present mourned for her. During the same year I had many removes, so that it was but at certain times I heard Mr. *Toplady*. I remember his texts were, at such seasons as I heard him, as follows—*The harvest is the end of the world, and the reapers are the angels.*—Matthew xiii. ver. 39. *Make haste, my beloved, and be thou like a roe, or to a young hart upon the mountains of spices.*—Cant. viii. ver. 14. *O taste, and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man that trusteth in him.*—Psalm xxxiv. ver. 8. *For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God.*—Eph. ii. ver. 8. Towards the close of this year, I was removed to Gosport, in Hampshire, and used to go to the church of England chapel; and to what I called, as even Mr. *Toplady* did, the sacrament; yet in that place I had many real communions with the ever-blessed Trinity. I should frequently be exercised in my own mind thus;—Supposing we heard of a people in America, who knew the Lord loved them with an everlasting love, and that he had sent his Son into the world to live and die for them, and save them in himself with an everlasting salvation,

and had also sent the Holy Ghost to make all this known unto these, how would they live? Most assuredly in the belief and enjoyment of the same. I have, from such apprehensions, been sweetly led into real fellowship with God and the Lamb. Yet had I been at the same time asked what communion with the Lord was, I should not have been able to have spoken it out. Before I left Devonshire, I had one time after another been in the house of a very valuable man, who was well acquainted with the truths of God, and one of the greatest men in prayer I ever heard. He would go over all the great acts of the Lord in salvation work; the transactions from eternity between the Father and the Son; the transfer of the sins of the elect to the person of Christ, God-man; the infliction of divine wrath on him, as the representative and surety of his people, he would very gloriously enumerate. I could not fathom his expressions, yet I perceived a dignity and majesty in the same; and being of a thoughtful mind, these glorious things were again and again reflected upon me. Whilst I was at Gosport, I sometimes would get into a small meeting in Bemister-lane. I had been at the large meeting in that town, and found there was nothing suited me in what was set forth; nor do I ever remember any thing I ever received from the preaching at the place referred unto. I could perceive the minister and people were sound in the faith of the gospel. On one Lord's day in the afternoon I went there, and sat down upon one of the forms; there were a few people sitting above me. The worship was not begun; and these thoughts sprang up in my mind: I thought with myself, *these are the children of the Most High God! How must God look upon them, and how must he love them!*

God must look upon them in Christ, and behold them in Him; and behold them as he doth Him; and love them with the same love wherewith he loveth Him. These were the secret cogitations of my mind, and they remained within me. Soon after, a young man just come from London, called at the house where I was, and said London was full of Methodists; they were got into the churches; that *Romaine*, and others of the same stamp, wherever they preached, the churches were full of hearers, so that the places were ready to break down; and in churches where they did not preach, there were scarce any people attended. O, thought I, *how glad should I be to be favoured with hearing what these preach.* After this, I heard of one who preached at Portsmouth Common, who was said to be a very extraordinary man. I went from Gosport over the water thither. It was a Mr. *Topping*. His text was as follows—*Behold, I create a new thing, or I will do a new thing: now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert.*—Isaiah xliii. ver. 19. He observed every thing in, and throughout the whole creation of God, visible and invisible, fell short of this wonderful work, the creating any of us anew in Christ Jesus. This, he said, was a new work, wrought in the soul by the Spirit of God in regeneration. I felt the majesty of the subject on my mind; and was led, on the following day, to some solemn reflections on the same, and to some deep consideration on the darkness of the natural understanding by the fall, with its entire deadness to God, and the things of God. I heard the same gentleman once more; then his text was as follows—*Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath*

translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son.—Col. i. ver. 13. I was greatly benefited by both these sermons. And thus the Lord led me about, and instructed me, and kept me from many evils.

In the beginning of the following month I got back to Honiton. On the Lord's day following I was at Broad Hembury, it being the first Lord's day in the month, February 1772. Mr. *Toplady* preached on the following words—*But it is good for me to draw nigh unto God.*—Psalm lxxiii. ver. 28. This was the last time I ever heard him there. He administered the communion, and I partook of the same. In the course of the same month, Mr. *G. H. Chilcott*, of Helstone, in Cornwall, quite unexpectedly to myself, came to Honiton, passing through the same to go to London. He was my first cousin by my mother's side. He offered to take me with him. His intention was for my good. Many advantages were, in his view and expectation, to be derived from the same, all which I had no relish for; I wanted to hear Mr. *Romaine*; not that I had read then one single page of his writings, except one single sermon he preached on account of the earthquake at Lisbon. I concealed what I had no relish for, and also for what I had. I obtained leave of my father and aunt to go with the gentleman. We set off from Honiton, on Friday, two o'clock in the afternoon, and put up at a gentleman's in the Strand. We arrived in town about two o'clock, Lord's day afternoon. After we had dined there was a violent thunder storm. I remained where I was. At Tottenham-Court chapel, as Mr. *Brookbanks* was preaching, a person sitting in the corner of one of the galleries there, a fire-ball, or flash of lightning passing through the cupola, killed him on the spot.

As I was now in London, so I was to do the best for myself I could. I had no great share of worldly knowledge, neither was I one whit suited for London. I very soon began to wish myself at home, as I could do better for myself, and be as retired as I liked to be. But here I was, and here I must for a season stay. When I was a little settled, I began to inquire about Mr. *Romaine*. So it was, that by means of the *Daily Advertiser*, I found he was to preach at St. Giles's; Mr. *Madden* in the morning, Mr. *Romaine* in the afternoon, Mr. *Peircy* in the evening. I sat out in the morning to find the church, but missed it, and got into Tavistock church of England chapel. In the afternoon I came properly to it, and entered it at the west door. The place was crowded. I saw not the minister; yet I stood upon one of the benches, and heard him give out his text, which was as follows—*O the hope of Israel, the Saviour thereof in time of trouble.*—Jer. xiv. ver. 8. He said, 'Sirs, if you had all the holiness, and all the righteousness of all the angels in heaven, it would profit you nothing. There is no righteousness will pass current in the high court of heaven but the righteousness of Jehovah-Jesus.' He added, 'and, blessed be God, we can carry this doctrine to sick beds and dying sinners.' He then gave evidence of the good effect of this, by an instance which had lately been a proof of the same. I thought there was such a majesty in all this. I was overcome with holy admiration; and thought with myself, should I continue in London, I would most certainly be a hearer of him: so this was a settled determination. The next day I went in search after one who was recommended to me. I found him an awakened person, and wanted to know who he heard; he told me, and requested me

to hear the minister also. I did so, and was very well satisfied: it was *Dr. Trotter*, a Scotch minister, at Swallow-street, Piccadilly. I went with my friend to hear him on the Lord's day, and be present when he dispensed the Lord's supper, and was very well pleased. Thus I came for a season into very intimate fellowship with my friend.

Easter day being come, not knowing where to find *Mr. Romaine*, being unacquainted where Blackfriar's church was, I went to St. Paul's to the table. Afterwards I set off for the Minories, to seek for one I had known in the country: he was not come from the Foundry. The master of the house was one who belonged to the Tabernacle connection. He having heard of me, asked where I had been to worship; I replied, at St. Paul's. He seemed to stagger at that; saying, he had been informed I was a serious person. I said, I should have liked to have heard *Mr. Romaine*, but knew not where he ministered. He said, you were not far from him when at St. Paul's church-yard. You may hear him to-morrow morning; he preaches Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, in Easter and Whitsun week. You must ask the way to St. Ann's, Blackfriars. In the afternoon I went with my friend to a *Mr. Maxwell's* chapel. There was a prayer meeting, but I did by no means like it. They prayed the minister might come up as flaming fire; this I thought an enthusiastical expression. After this I went with my friend to the Foundry. *Mr. Charles Wesley* preached, but we came almost at the close of it. I was, by means of my friend, admitted to stay at a meeting of the society. *Mr. Charles* read some passages of letters of *Mr. John Wesley's*, which had been lately received, and made some re-

marks. Then there was a scrap of a hymn given out, and sung: then a short prayer. This was over and over some few times; all which I disliked; it was disgusting to me, so I never was there afterwards. The next day being come, I went with my other friend, of whom I spake before, to hear Mr. *Romaine*. We came into church as Mr. *Foster*, who was then the curate, was reading the communion service. I did not know but that he was Mr. *Romaine*; for though I had heard, yet I had not as yet seen the face of Mr. *Romaine*. The service being finished, whilst the psalm was singing, Mr. *Romaine* went up the stairs into the pulpit. It pleased me well to see him: his very countenance gave me satisfaction. He went to prayer, and expounded the 16th Psalm; in the course of which he says—“Believers, you that are believers, God looks upon you as he doth on Christ, and loves you with the same love he does him.” I looked up with amazement. O, thought I, if I can find this in the word of God, it is the greatest truth I ever heard. I will go home and search the Bible. I conceive the 17th chapter of John is the most likely place to find it. I never heard any thing like this. I thought all such men were gone to heaven. I should not have thought there was such a man in the world. Thus I stood all the time, hearing, and gazing, and smiling, so that my friend told me afterwards, he was afraid the people would think I was laughing at the minister. I said, no, that I was not: but the blessing of the Lord on the truths delivered, had caused my heart to dance for joy. As now I knew the church, so thither I constantly went every Lord’s day; and I was so swallowed up in hearing, that I always stood; nor did I lose one single sentence: I received it into my very

heart : I pondered it : I soon distinguished what I heard from all other statements of the gospel. He used almost, at that time, to express himself in such terms as these—*It was so and so contrived by the counsel and covenant of the Eternal Three.* I had never been used to such expressions. There was a sublimity and greatness in them which reflected their glory and majesty on my mind. When he ascended to enter the pulpit, this was the very prayer of my mind—*Lord, give him to speak a great word for Christ to-day.* What he said, entered into *ear gate*, from thence it descended into the understanding ; and I always found I heard from him, what I never had, no not from Mr. *Toplady*. I was so taken with the blessed things he delivered, that I loved him for his preaching above and beyond all others ; yet I never spoke to him in all my life. I wrote once to him, and to Mr. *John Wesley* ; the latter immediately sent one to see, and inquire into my case and circumstances. The former never noticed it at all. I had said to Mr. *Wesley*, *I am not of your opinion, but I doubt not but you say, Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen.* I recite this only as an evidence that nothing would have induced me to like the doctrine of the one, and reject the preaching of the other. This year I had very many trials and removals also ; so that I was removing to and fro, sometimes out of London, sometimes in it, with many temporal discouragements ; yet the truths I received from Mr. *Romaine's* ministry had their continuance, and were spirit and life unto me. In the providence of God, a door was opened for me. I was comfortably settled, so as I could enjoy the hearing of Mr. *Romaine's* ministry, which I valued more than I did my own life ; for I

should have been glad rather to have been a shoe-black, so that I could hear him every Lord's day, than to have enjoyed any temporal good without it. I must here observe, it was not the man, but that which he delivered concerning Christ, which drew me so highly to esteem him. And whilst Mr. *Toplady*, according to my former account, had most certainly been of great advantage to me, yet when I came to hear Mr. *Romaine*, the other was altogether superseded. And whilst I would, and did prefer hearing him, when I could not the other, beyond all beside, yet he was not to me in his preaching what the other was. I have had frequent jibes for my partiality to Mr. *Romaine's* ministry; and especially for saying, If *Paul* was to come down from heaven, and was going to preach at the Tabernacle, and Mr. *Romaine* was going to preach at St. Dunstan's, I would not leave Mr. *Romaine* for the apostle *Paul*, not I! This from one and another was cast in my teeth. We have a saying in Devonshire, *They laugh best, who laugh last*. I knew well what I said. This was my view of the subject: *Paul* had been so long in the state of glory, and had forgot all about sin, and sinfulness—Mr. *Romaine* was in the body; and though so blessedly acquainted with Christ, and admitted, according to my views, into near and personal communion with him, yet he had a body of sin and death, and could not therefore but feel the same; consequently he must preach the love, mercy, and salvation of Jesus, suited to such as were sinners, and sinful. I did not want to hear of the glory of Christ in heaven, so much as of the love and compassion of Christ to such an one as I felt myself to be.

I have many times, when under guilt, and in a sinful case, thought I would go and open my case to Mr. *Ro-*

maine, and in my own thoughts have fixed the time; but I never did. I used to consider with myself, were it so, should I disclose the whole; he, with all his free preaching of Christ, would cry out, You do not belong to Christ. And if he should, I would still go on believing in Jesus, and also in maintaining that I have had some blessed intercourses with him, and he hath been pleased to have been most graciously disposed to have held and imparted many communications unto me.

I remember, once in the street, being very happy in feeding on the atonement of Jesus, such a thought started up—*You are quite comfortable in thinking on Christ: but how is it inwardly? ought you not to think whether you are inwardly holy?* I replied, *O devil, I am at this present time truly happy in Jesus, and I shall not look off him, and look into myself to please you.* The Lord be praised, I never spoke to Mr. *Romaine* in the whole of my life: if I had, I should never so often have spoken of him, and quoted his most important sentences; it would then have been partiality for the man, whereas it must appear to be a partiality for the truths contained in the same.

Having now, for some space, been under Mr. *Romaine's* ministry, and nourished up in the words of faith and sound doctrine, I thought, could I but see my father and aunt, and give them some account of what I had received of the knowledge of Christ, no doubt but they would most gladly receive, and be the better for the same. My spiritual life was an intellectual life. It consisted in spirital conceptions and apprehensions of Christ. This led the mind into spirital communion with him, which communion was wholly intuitive. What I heard, left me employment to study and ponder upon;

so that I once thought, this preaching suits me most exactly: for when I was dark and legal, I was all for doing; and this minister finds me constant employment, in thinking over in my mind the blessed things which he delivers. Many a time, in the streets of London, I have been so swallowed up in thinking on Christ, as revealed, set forth, and testified of in the gospel, as that I have been very likely to have been overrun by the carriages. I was always very simple, and will here recite one evidence of it:—Once being no way apprehensive of any danger, I walked out of Piccadilly down a street opposite St. James's; the guard on duty calls out, Who comes here? I knew nothing of danger, so I made no reply. As the Lord would have it, he calls out the second time, and with a hasty angry tone, repeats the former question. I replied—*It is only I*; then he swore if I had not spoke he should have shot me. You may hence conceive of my weakness, and I cannot but admire the interposition of the Lord Jesus Christ on my behalf.

My father and aunt being desirous to see me, as I also was to see them, I proposed to leave London at such a time. Every thing was properly arranged for the same. Much prayer was put up by me; and I also requested the prayers of others, that I might obtain this blessing from the Lord, of being successful in speaking of the Lord Jesus Christ. This was in August 1775. I was conducted safely through the journey. I arrived with safety, was received very affectionately; but was so far disappointed as to find my message was by no means received. This gave me grief. I expostulated with the Lord. I entreated him, for his own glory, he would not suffer his word to fall to the ground. I re-

turned from a hill, where I had been thus engaged, to the house where I was that morning to have my breakfast. Before I sat down, these words came to me—*He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied.*—Isaiah liii. ver. 11. *Is it so, thought I! Shall Christ see of the travail of his soul, and shall he be satisfied with their persons, and with their number? If my Father is not of the number of those for whom Christ died, do I wish he was? No, I do not. It is neither possible it should, nor do I wish it had been so. Is Christ satisfied with his soul travail, and shall not I?* These were the reflections of my mind, and I received real relief therefrom, and ever after was content; nor was there any hope in his death, though it was several years afterwards. Grace is the free act of God's will, displayed in eternal, personal, sovereign election in Christ, before the world began; salvation was wholly and only designed, wrought out, and performed, on the behalf of them. The Holy Ghost is interested in these; and he hath, doth, and will form the vessels of mercy, and work in them to will and to do, according to his own good pleasure: and here, in the knowledge and belief of this, we should rest, and centre.

Having continued at Honiton so long as I fixed before I came, I left my father and aunt, to return to London. Before I sat off, on receiving a letter informing me such an one was at Langport, in Somerset, and being entreated to make that in my way on my return to London, I accordingly did. In all these goings from one place to another, with all the motives of my own, or others in so doing, I received some instructions, many of which the Lord hath been pleased to teach me to profit from long since. The Lord led me here, there,

and in paths which I knew not. *He instructed me, he kept me as the apple of his eye.* Deut. xxxii. ver. 10. As my knowledge and communion with the Lord was intuitive, so I was favoured with the same, when none had the least apprehension thereof; nor did the conversation of others promote it, or by any means put a stop to the same. May whoever reads my portrait drawn by my own hand in these papers, have a right understanding of the same, if the Lord please. Even so, O Lord Jesus Christ, if it may redound to thy glory. Amen.

SECTION IV.—*Of my going back to London. In the course of which journey, the foundation was laid for my being called forth to minister the Gospel of the grace of God. This was by means of Lady Huntingdon; who gave leave for my admittance to her College at Trevecca, at Talgarth, in South Wales. I was sent by her into Lincolnshire, afterwards into Cornwall, and then into Sussex. This will contain very many particulars.*

IN the past section I expressed my having received an invitation from a friend to meet him at Langport; as I could return that way to London as comfortable as from Honiton, and might thereby have a view of Bath. So out of respect to the person, I fell in with his proposal, and sat off; and passed through Axminster, at which place I had an acquaintance, who was a real saint: after some intercourse with him, I went to Chard. Here I stopped, and went to Crim Chard, and went to a conference meeting. What was here spoken, was not very much

attended unto by me. It was proposed by the people who belonged unto it, to speak on the following words on their next meeting—*The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who amongst us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?*—Isaiah xxxiii. ver. 14. I was at that time an entire stranger, so I departed without being noticed. I understood by their prayers, the pastor of the church to whom these belonged, and whose ministry these people attended, was a very great man in their esteem, that he was not present, he labouring under some bodily infirmity. On my return to the place where I was to sleep, a great deal of regard was manifested by the person of the house for the minister, and a great emphasis laid on his ministerial gifts, and excellency in preaching. I was well pleased with all this. It was Mr. *Benjamin Pitts*. I had no personal acquaintance with him at that time. I was well pleased with the good woman's talk. Her name was *Mary Hern*. I well remember the following words dropping from her, in the course of her conversation that night, and in the course of the next morning. She said a person, a Mr. *Hull*, had preached in her premises; and he went on in such a manner, she wished her minister and all the church had been present. Just on this (said she), he said there were in hell, souls for whom Christ died. Upon this, she said—*My colour came and went, I was quite shocked*. I recite this as expressive of the simplicity of her mind; and that when such blasphemy was uttered, she could neither bear with it, nor the man any longer. Another thing which she expressed in conversation was this—That coming from the meeting she frequented, after hearing, to use her own expressions,

a very soul-searching sermon, a person with whom she walked, as she came up the town, says—*What a great thing it is to be a Christian!* The person I am speaking of cries out—*I do not think it is. Why, is it not the work of Father, Son, and Spirit, to make us so? You are speaking of it as though it were our own act, whereas it is not.* The night being past, and the morning being come, I read some verses in the 61st chapter of Isaiah, went to prayer, and sat off for Langport. I had heard Mr. Romaine preach three sermons from them, nor shall I ever forget what he delivered in one of them. He said—*Methinks I hear one saying, may I come and take the benefit of the atonement? Who art thou? what art thou? art thou any thing worse than a sinner? If thou art not worse than a sinner—if thou hadst all the sins of all London upon thee—if thou hadst all the sins of all the men and women, from Adam's fall down to the present moment of time upon thee—nay, if thou hadst all the sins for which the damned are shut up in hell, it is no bar nor bolt to keep thee from Christ.* I have often repeated, and wrote this, and never did but the influence of the same hath been very efficacious unto my mind. I will here recite another sentence of his preaching on the following scripture—*For thy name's sake, O Lord, pardon mine iniquity, for it is great.*—Psalm xxv. ver. 11. He, in the course of his sermon, said—Some person is saying, *There is nothing you have said reaches my case; my case is peculiar.* To which, by way of reply, he said—taking up his Bible, *There never was any sin committed out of hell but I will undertake to prove, by this book, that it hath been pardoned; and as it hath been pardoned already, it will be pardoned over and*

over again. O, sirs, 'tis easy with the Lord to pardon all the sins of London. This was to me at the delivery of the same, and still is to my mind, whenever I either recite, or write the same, *as apples of gold in pictures of silver.*

But to resume my subject. I walked from Chard to Langport. My friend received me kindly. He was at his father's house; it was a public-house, consequently it was not very agreeable. My friend perceived this, I being altogether out of my element. We agreed, therefore, to set off the next day, soon after breakfast, to a place called High Ham, about five miles distant, to see one who was a spiritual man, as we should thereby get into our proper element. So we accordingly went, and saw the person, and were very kindly received and entertained. We had all of us been hearers of Mr. *Romaine*; this attached us one to the other. In the evening we took our leave of the friend, I never expecting to see him again. As my friend with whom I returned, perceived I was quite unsettled in my frame, so he was free in his observations to me, to whom I also was as frank in my acknowledgments. I proposed to set off the next morning for London. As we could not be together, and there being no meeting where the truth was held forth, and if I remained with him, we could not but be compelled to go to the church, where it had been declared there was nothing either of law or gospel to be found, it was therefore agreed by us, I should walk off early, and go forward on my journey. If it should so be that I came to any place of worship, well; I would make use of it, and then go on again; and if I then came to another place of worship, make use of that also. I conceived to pursue this plan would be more spiritually advantageous, and the thoughts

and time better employed, than by remaining at Langport. This we fixed upon, and were quite free and friendly in the same. The Lord's day being come we got up, and my friend would go some part of the way with me. We came in sight of Somerton; he says you are to pass through that town; when you are completely out of the same, you will come to yonder turnpike-house. The person who keeps the gate is a child of God: be sure you speak and get into conversation with her; she is mother-in-law to the person with whom we dined yesterday: so we then parted. I came to the place sooner than I expected. The door of the house was open; I saw the woman, and asked how far it was from thence to Glastonbury. The distance was notified on a table for that purpose just by, so that there could be no necessity for putting the question; yet the person gave me an answer, and, as I conceived, in an angry tone. I stepped forward, and looking into the house, asked what the clock was; this also faced me, so that I conceived the good woman would think me altogether impertinent. Just at this very instant, a person sitting at one of the windows starts up, and very kindly addressed me; and who should he be, but the very person I dined with at High Ham on the past day. After many very kind expressions, with some particular inquiries how I came there, and how it was that I travelled on the Lord's day, and I had given my reasons for the same, and also a reply to all which was asked, I was very kindly entertained with a very good breakfast of tea. Some other person came in, and it was said these were to set off to go to hear preaching. It was about four miles from thence. They asked me if I would go with them; I was quite willing so to do, and thus we sat off together.

The meeting-house was small. The text preached upon was—*Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord.*—John xx. ver. 20.

Whilst the sermon was not in the way and strain I had been used to, yet I found a savour in it, and heard some very good remarks and observations raised on it. So the worship being finished, we returned back from whence we came, and were very kindly entertained with a very good dinner. After this, I was again addressed on the subject of travelling on the Lord's day. I replied as I had before, that it was not acceptable to myself; that if they could direct me where I might be accommodated for the night, I would most gladly pay for the same, and should be greatly obliged also. They said over again that they could not; on this we parted, and I went on my way, hoping to stop at the next town. I was got out of their sight, when I heard their voices directed to me, as if they were calling me back. I turned about; I stood still, that if I was the person they were in pursuit of, they would evidence the same by making a full stop also. Instead of so doing, they still ran, so I concluded it was not after me; therefore I turned, and went on my way. Then they calling, I found they were pursuing me, so I went towards them. They informed me they had got a place where I might tarry for the night; so I returned back to Somerton with them, and was introduced into the company of two women, who were very kind and simple-hearted Christians. They were much pleased to hear what I had, or could say, concerning the precious Lord Jesus. Thus I slept under their hospitable roof for that night. The next morning, prayer and breakfast being finished, and I being quite ready to depart, one of these good women

must take me to see, and speak to some, who she said were seeking the Lord, she being very confident it would be very acceptable unto them. I went with her, and she introduced me. I spoke to them, and concerning the Lord Jesus Christ, to the best of my ability. It appeared very acceptable unto them. I expressed what I could concerning him, and his free and royal grace. As I was just on the very eve of parting with them, my conductor says to me—*It seems to me as if you were able to preach. Mr. Glascott, every time he comes here, is asking us if we know of any young men who would be willing to go to Lady Huntingdon's college. If you would like it, I would mention you to him the next time he comes here.* I replied—*She might, if she felt herself so disposed.* She on this says—*Do leave your address with Mrs. Smith, at the turnpike-house, and thereby it will be known how to write to you.* I said I would—and thus we parted. I came to the turnpike-house, and having entered it, I gave my account of the kindnesses I had received, and also of what such an one had said to me, and requested me to leave with her my direction. She took no notice of this; I therefore thought I will not say, nor think any more of what hath been said. I secretly thought within my own mind, *the Lord knows me, and also what he hath done in me, and for me. He also knows his own designs upon me. If he has given me any gifts and graces, suited to minister to the profit of others, so I will leave all this with him. He knows where I resided when in London. I will not leave my name. If it is the Lord's will to call me forth, I will have no hand in the same.* So I left Mrs. Smith, having thanked her for her civility and kindnesses, and went on my journey, passing through

Glastonbury and Wells, and so came to Bath. I have been very correct in stating the before-mentioned particulars, because, simple as the whole recital is, and must be confessed to be, yet in the same the foundation was actually laid of my being called forth to preach the word of the gospel; and this will most clearly and fully appear as we proceed onward in the course of this present section. I had, prior to all this, had some thoughts, if the Lord's will concerning me would not sooner or later be manifested in me, and towards me, by his putting me into the ministry. I remember once at Blackfriar's church the following thought sprung up within me—*The Lord be praised I never went forth to preach; if I had, what should I have set forth? I knew nothing of the everlasting covenant of the Eternal Three, therefore I could have said nothing concerning the same.*

At the time I here refer to, Mr. Romaine dwelt very particularly on the acts and transactions of the Three in Jehovah. He would speak most blessedly on the Father's laying sin on Christ, and making him sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. I used to be all ear all the while he was speaking forth the blessed subject. I found I had only to receive it into my understanding, as this was the only way by which I could carry it away in my heart, and live it over in my mind. But to proceed. I came to Bath, and heard a sermon, preached by a Baptist minister, on these words—*We are all one man's sons; we are true men, thy servants are no spies.*—Gen. xlii. ver. 11. I thought it altogether legal. I got safe to London, and to the house from the which I departed, and all was well. Yet a circumstance had taken place I did not foresee; this led me to consider, that I knew not what the Lord

would bring out of the same, therefore I would rest patiently, and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord; and this, like what I before related, all issued in one and the same end. To my very great astonishment, in a very short space of time after my arrival in London, a letter was directed for me, from Somerton. It came by the post. The substance of which was this—that Mr. *Glascott* had been there—the friends had spoken of me to him—that he would advise me to write immediately to *Lady Huntingdon*, and give my own account of myself, and of my views of the ministry, and this as soon as I could conveniently. As I was pleased with all this, so it was the more so, because I had not been the means of it. I was most truly glad I did not leave my name, as it all appeared to be solely the providence of the Lord. This, with the dispensation which had taken place in the situation I had before filled up, and which I could not reflect on myself for leaving, to go down to Honiton, it being a mutual agreement, made me more and more to be convinced it was all of the Lord. What had taken place removed an insuperable difficulty. I could not of, and from myself, have been comfortable to have been the instrument of bringing it about; yet, as the Lord would have it, the whole was set aside without my being concerned in the same. This afforded me real satisfaction: I looked therefore on this as the Lord's act. I then applied myself to consider the before-mentioned letter. I looked to the Lord in prayer for direction. Then I wrote my letter to her Ladyship, and sent it off; then I informed my friends concerning the whole of that which was now before me, and also the persons where I was. Nothing was said to contradict it; all was harmony and good-will. I