

## Preface.<sup>1</sup>

The journals and other papers of Mary Capper, were entrusted by herself to the care and revision of the editor, with the understanding that any use might be made of them which, after her decease, should appear to be right. The present compilation is, in consequence, now offered to the public, with the hope that the cause of truth and righteousness—that cause which was so dear to the subject of this memoir through a long life, may be served thereby.

The character of Mary Capper is pretty fully developed in the subsequent pages; yet it may be allowed to the editor, who had the privilege of near intimacy with her for almost half a century, to remark, that in preparing this work for the press, and consequently dwelling much on the life and conversation of this devotedly pious individual, she has been particularly impressed with the cheerful contentment of spirit, manifested under the varying circumstances of her life. This is the more striking, when the feebleness of her bodily powers, the enlarged liberality of her mind, and her deep feeling for human sorrows, are taken into account, together with her limited pecuniary resources and small personal accommodations. It is true, she was often entrusted with the means of relieving those in distress, which was to her a source of genuine delight; but she steadfastly refused repeated offers of increased comforts for herself; preferring to dwell in comparative obscurity, and in the close vicinity of those dear friends whose society and kindness had largely contributed, for a long course of years, to her enjoyment. Another object which she had in view was, to be so situated as to occasion, to such friends as might be passing through the town, little inconvenience in paying her a visit; for such was her modest estimate of her own attainments, that she could not suppose her friends would incline, or could suitably be expected, to come far to make her a call.

Many, however, as will be seen in the following pages, could bear their testimony to the solid satisfaction which such visits afforded them; and this undoubtedly proceeded from the conviction, that the chief pursuit of Mary Capper's life had been to honour her Lord and Master; by this she gave the strongest proof of her gratitude for the love of God, extended to her in Jesus Christ her Saviour; whose peace was richly shed abroad in her heart, and more especially so as she approached his heavenly kingdom, where all is peace and love, and joy in the Holy Ghost, and that forever!

—KATHARINE BACKHOUSE.

*Darlington, 1847.*

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<sup>1</sup> Note by the Editors of the original *Friends Library*: A few passages in the following Diary, chiefly written during Mary Capper's visit to France, before she became a Friend, and which appeared irrelevant to the object of the publication, have been omitted, and several original letters addressed to correspondents in America, have been added to this edition.

# Chapter I

## *Parentage, education, etc.*

Mary Capper was born on the 11th of the fourth month, 1755. She was the daughter of William and Rebecca Capper, of Rugeley, in Staffordshire. They had a very numerous family, consisting of ten sons and four daughters; some of whom lived to advanced age.

John, their first-born, was a merchant in London, where he died in 1835, after completing his eighty-eighth year; James also died the same year in that city, at the age of eighty-one; having been, during fifty years. Rector of Wilmington, Sussex.

The whole family were brought up by their parents as members of the Episcopal Church, to which they themselves were conscientiously attached.

Mary, the subject of the following Memoir, possessed a mind of no ordinary description; energetic and contemplative, she seemed peculiarly prepared, as Divine Grace was allowed to operate upon her gifted mind, to throw aside the prejudices of education, and to stem the torrent of opposing opinion.

Her susceptible heart was, however, keenly alive to the sorrows of others, and deep were her sufferings, when, for a time, her religious views broke the harmony of the domestic circle; but having taken up the cross of Christ, she was mercifully enabled to follow her Lord in simple obedience, and in full reliance upon his power to preserve and strengthen her through every trial.

Much of the account of her childhood was penned after she had attained the age of eighty years; and a more lively description cannot be given to the reader than in her own words.

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My dear parents, [she writes,] accustomed their children to read the Scriptures. The religious instruction of my childhood was, I think, received from my dear mother. She was a deeply tried Christian mother.

I think it was about my tenth year that I was sent to my aunt Langford, at Macclesfield in Cheshire. She was a serious member of the National Establishment, a very respectable, widowed gentlewoman. Under her kind care, I was instructed in the strict observance of religious forms; to remember the text of every sermon that I heard; to write the Collects, etc. but I do not recollect much serious impression being made on my mind. About this time, there was a great talk about Methodism; our relations, the Rows, of Macclesfield,<sup>1</sup> were said to have turned Methodist, and were lightly spoken of and ridiculed. I well

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1 One of these was Hester Ann Rogers, of whom an instructive little memoir is published.—Ed.

remember that I felt sorry for this; because I thought, if they were good people, and only differed from others in the way that they thought was right, they ought to be loved.

I was allowed to go, with my young companions, to the theatre and various other places of amusement; and I do not recollect that any remark was made, upon time being thus squandered and misspent.

On my return home, some domestic changes had taken place; my second brother, Samuel, was settled in business at Birmingham; and as he was still young, it was considered best for my father to be much with him; so that my dear mother was frequently left with my eldest brother, John, and the younger children, at Rugely. Nursing and needlework were my proper employments, but I was fond of active play; out-doing my companions at ball, jumping, sliding, etc.

[The following extracts from a diary kept by Mary Capper, about this period, show the manner in which her time was chiefly occupied, and the unfoldings of her youthful mind.]

9th. My friend K. Barbor drank tea with me. How delightful and improving is the company of a good and worthy friend! I think I have read that friendship is too noble a passion for female minds; but why so? Have we not souls as well as men? and as capable of the worthiest attainments!

15th. My brother prevailed upon mamma to stay till tomorrow. I am grieved at the thoughts of leaving the country, just now that everything is in perfection, to go and bury one's self in Birmingham, where one does not feel a refreshing breeze, nor see a green leaf, except a few nasty withered things in the church yard, once in the year. I have not patience to think of it! but parents must be obeyed.

8th. Went to Church; we were very fortunate, as we got there before it was much crowded; when we were confirmed. I walked in a very grave and serious humour.

[Respecting this circumstance, she subsequently remarks:] At a suitable age, with great seriousness, and heart contriting impressions, I went through the ceremony of confirmation by the Bishop; a ceremony of no small import in my view; as what had been promised for me by my sponsors, I was, in accordance with this outward rite, bound to perform, as then of age to take the responsibility myself; viz. to deny all pomp and vanity; to walk in God's holy will and commandments all the days of my life. Knowing that I came very short of this, I was distressed, and mourned much in secret. I was afraid to mention my feelings, as they seemed strange, and I did not know of any one who had the like.

14th. Mamma told me of a fault in my behaviour, a repetition of which I will endeavour to avoid.

November 10th. Received a very polite invitation from M. Capper to spend a few days at Castle Bromwich.

14th. Arrived there.

19th. I do not know the meaning of it, but I never in my life wished more sincerely to be at home. I shall

be heartily glad when I get into Bull Street.

23rd. Set out for home with a joyful heart. My father received a sensible and dutiful letter from brother Jasper. O! how my father's eye glistened with true paternal tenderness! That we may all unite, and strive to give joy to the hearts of our worthy parents, is and shall be, my constant prayer."

[The following letter was addressed to Mary Capper by her mother, when left on one occasion as housekeeper at Birmingham:]

*April 17th, 1769.*

My Dear Molly,

You are a good girl for writing, agreeable to promise, every week; pray continue to do so. I observed what you said about the riding-dress; but, my dear child, consider you are one of number twelve; therefore, no superfluities can or ought to be expected.

I was much pleased with one of your letters, wherein you say, 'I have been strongly solicited to go out this evening, but have withstood the temptation.' O! my dear girl, may you have grace to withstand every temptation to evil, or imprudent things; and that you may be able to say, 'Get thee behind me, Satan! for I am resolved already; and my Jesus, who vanquished thee upon the cross, will assist my weakness, and enable me to overcome thy temptations!' Assist and enable us He will, whenever we call sincerely upon Him; and I doubt not, my dear child, you have already experienced a pleasing satisfaction whenever you have denied yourself any amusement, though innocent, if it interfered with what was right and necessary to be done.

Your mother,

—REBECCA CAPPER.

[In adverting to these days, Mary Capper writes:]

I was, at times, and many times, in early life, very thoughtful as to the genuine effect of religion on the mind. My constitution was weak, which I have considered one among other favours; for my nature was volatile, and I was much left as to outward restraints; and, indeed, urged to go to public amusements, plays, dances, etc. which were considered innocent. The first contrary impression that I distinctly remember was once, whilst on my knees, at my accustomed evening prayers; my thoughts being confused and dissipated, I lay down comfortless, believing that whatever distracted and hindered prayer must be wrong. This impression rested with me; and from time to time, led to deep reflection and secret conflict. The witness for truth left me not; and as little sacrifices, such as declining gay parties, seemed to yield a peaceful calm, I was favoured with resolution to persevere. I wept over my dear mother's letter, though she knew not all the temptations I was subjected to. One occasion, I think I cannot forget, because it is

sealed by mercy and by experience to this day; though the thing was, in itself, comparatively little, and I was then young. Being tempted to take some fruit, in a garden where I was unobserved, and being on the point of gathering it, a sudden check arrested me. I cannot distinctly describe it, but I walked from the spot with a sweetness of inward peace, indescribable, such as I think I had never before known; and it arose in my heart, and has remained in my understanding, this is the teaching of the grace of God; or, in other words, of the Holy Spirit! This, we had been taught to believe, would enable us to overcome evil; but it is not sufficiently understood; and when gently developed in the still, small voice, it is frequently not obeyed; and the quick sense of its secret monitions becomes less discernible.

External objects, and the too general example of Christian professors, entangle and allure the mind; the doctrine of the Cross of Christ, or the self-denial thereby taught, is rarely brought into view; or possibly, little understood, farther than as regards strictly moral conduct, and a due observance of religious institutes. This I write, not uncharitably, nor by way of censure. I was favoured with a sense of good, under such restraints as these, before I underwent the ceremony of confirmation; and for several years after this, during many little fluctuations in the domestic arrangements, I continued serious, and given to retirement. O! how would the enemy of all good, sometimes come in like a flood, and almost terrify me with evil thoughts and suggestions. It would be vain to attempt setting forth the hidden striving of nature with the light which manifests the evil, separating the precious from the vile. I was not obstinately rebellious, though my temper was naturally hasty and impatient. On some occasions, my brother James was a gentle reprove, and was in example, kind. In after years, he became my advocate, as a Christian brother; for he believed me sincere, though his religious views were not in accordance with mine.

My brother John married and settled at Rugeley, after which event the rest of the family went to reside at Birmingham with our parents.

[This brings us to a new era in the domestic circle, to which Mary Capper makes some allusion in mentioning the change which afterwards took place in her religious views; and as this change of view and practice first became obvious in her brother Jasper, a few particulars relating to him may here be acceptable to the reader, and useful, as a connecting link in the history of Mary Capper.

He was about four years older than she was, and tenderly attached to her. When quite young, he was sensible of the quickening influence of the Holy Spirit visiting his soul, and it became his practice reverently to read a portion of the Holy Scriptures before he left his room in a morning. On these occasions he frequently sat for a time in silence, in order to wait upon Him, who, he felt persuaded, alone could open the sacred writings to his understanding. While a young man, he accompanied his brother James (who was about to take orders as a clergyman) to London; and during their stay there, they called upon Mary Knowles, who was an acquaintance of the family.<sup>2</sup> On being informed of James's prospects, she

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<sup>2</sup> As there is frequent mention made of this individual in the narrative, it may not be irrelevant to remark, that she was

gave them a description of the qualifications which she deemed essential to a true minister of the gospel. This address, while it produced little effect upon the mind of James, sank deeply into that of Jasper, and he was, in consequence, induced to go to a Friends' meeting. Farther reflection, enquiry and conviction were the means of attracting him very closely to this religious society; but he had much suffering to pass through, in various ways, before he became a member of it.

His parents, who appear scarcely to have considered the Society of Friends to be Christians, from partaking in an ignorance of their principles which was then very prevalent, were, of course, much opposed to his being united to such a body; and his father treated him with a severity which was cause of great sorrow to his affectionate heart; yet he was enabled to continue firm in what he saw to be required of him. He obtained some employment in London, where he was kindly noticed by a few Friends, and the house of John Fry, in Whitechapel, was always open to him.

One day, while he was in much distress, on account of his father's objecting to assist, or even to see him, he went to J. Fry's and found several Friends assembled; among whom was Barbara Drewry, who was engaged in religious testimony. He quietly took his seat near the door of the room; when, without knowing anything of his situation, she addressed him very remarkably; expressing her apprehension that he was under great conflict respecting some requiring of duty; and her full belief that, if he became obedient to the will of the Lord therein, though he might be called upon to give up all that was most dear to him, and every prospect of outward advantage, yet the Lord would abundantly recompense him, and would ultimately bless him, not only with spiritual, but with temporal increase. This proved to him like a brook by the way, and contributed to strengthen his resolution to make a surrender of his all to Divine disposal. Being fully convinced of the necessity of a truly religious life, he soon became sensible of a sincere desire for the best welfare of his dear connections, and he ventured to write to his sister Mary, endeavouring to awaken in her mind a serious concern for her eternal salvation. This letter, however, failed in producing the effect designed, and he received from his sister an answer which was very unsatisfactory to him; the following is extracted from his reply to it.]

#### **TO MARY CAPPER, BIRMINGHAM.**

*London, 28th September, 1776.*

Dear Sister,

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eminent for her great intellectual powers, and for her taste and skill in painting and in needlework: in which arts she excelled in her imitations of nature. Her conversational powers were so great, and so peculiarly fascinating, that her company was much sought, and she was thereby induced to mix unprofitably, with many worldly-minded persons, to her own great loss. She outlived her husband many years, and attained to advanced age. As she drew near the close of life, she was, through mercy, permitted a long illness, during which she was made to feel the burden of sin, and to lament over her misspent time and mis-applied talents; and there is reason to hope that the cry of her penitent spirit was heard, and that she was made a partaker of the salvation which is in Christ.

It is not my intention to enter into a religious controversy, or to persuade you or any one (for I have not myself been persuaded) into errors of judgment; if, as you say, I have blindly and enthusiastically fallen into them; but on the contrary, would gladly acknowledge my weakness and be thankful to be set right. I desire to ask you this question. By what standard did you examine my letter? Not by the doctrine of our Saviour and his apostles I am convinced, or you could not have accused me of enthusiasm; for, as I understand the word, enthusiasm is a mistaken zeal; but, where zeal is directed by truths handed down to us for our direction, it cannot be too fervent. Our misfortune is, we cannot always maintain such a zeal. If you call it a fit, because it is a frame of mind which I am likely to fall from, I agree to it; but this is owing to my own weakness, and for want of steadfast faith and trust in Him who would support me; but to prove that I was, at the time of writing to you, under proper impressions, could I constantly maintain them, they would not only warm my heart with a continual sense of the gratitude due to my Redeemer, but render it impossible for me to do any one an injury, or fall into the least sin. Ought then these impressions to be stifled? or ought we not rather to press after them?

If I remember right, I addressed myself to your heart before, but you have answered me in haste, and I am sensible never asked your poor heart one question about it; but in the strength of your own reason you have confided, and I will endeavour to prove that you have trusted to a broken reed; therefore answer-me a question; and if your heart does not give it the negative, then ask yourself, if you do not deny your Redeemer, by making the Gospel of none effect. Did your heart assent to this assertion in your letter? viz. that you ‘look upon a sincere, humble and uniform adherence to the rules of moral duties as the substance of our faith and doctrine.’ Surely not! for this excludes Christianity; as it is possible to be a strict moralist without one grain of true religion; for many of the Heathens were so, and even Atheists may be so.

Our blessed Saviour himself condemned the Scribes and Pharisees, who were strictly moral; they carried themselves uprightly as to their moral characters, and were looked upon by the world as the best of men; they fasted twice in the week, and were not (as one of them said) extortioners, unjust, etc. and they gave tithes of all that they possessed; yet what does the Lord, who knew their hearts, call them? Hypocrites, who prayed to God with their lips, but whose hearts were far from Him! How is it frequently with us? are not you and I like unto them?

If I have advanced anything in my letter which is unscriptural, point it out to me; if not, how is it enthusiasm?

If we believe that we ‘must one day give an account for every idle word;’ and that, ‘whether we eat or drink, or whatsoever we do, we must do all for the glory of God,’ (which we must believe, or deny our professed faith,) can we watch too narrowly over ourselves? or endeavour, too carefully, to avoid what may tend in the least to alienate our affections from the things which are above?

‘To enjoy is to obey.’ Was our Saviour sent upon earth as a pattern for us? Did He enjoy the good things of this life in the manner you speak of? We are told to use the things of this life so as not to abuse them, but never to rejoice in them, that I remember. When the Apostles were beaten, and departed from the presence of the council rejoicing, was it enjoying the good things of this life? No! it was rejoicing in the Lord; and I believe, that to

enjoy his presence, we must obey his leadings. Read the first chapter of John, and tell me what you can make of it without this belief. In the Epistle to the Corinthians, the ministers of God are spoken of 'as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing.' Were not these, think you, called by those who did not listen to them, a morose set of fellows? Yet, were they not enjoying and obeying? Thus it is with almost all religious people.

I shall not wish for quite so sudden an answer as to my last, but one more to the matter, and honestly produced by serious judgment; a little farther from the surface than your other. My intention was, not to accuse nor to dictate, but to warn you with a desire to enquire after these things.

In true brotherly love, being sensible of my own errors, from a very sinful neglect.

Your true friend and affectionate brother,

—JASPER CAPPER.

[No remark is preserved respecting the effect of this letter on Mary Capper's mind, but it appears to have induced her to reflect very seriously upon her own condition, and to make some enquiry into the faith and practice of the Society to which her brother had become so much attached. She was, at that time, in very delicate health, and her parents resolved (probably under the influence of various motives) to place her in a family in France, for a time.

On this account she was brought into new and trying circumstances; and it is thought that extracts from her journal at that time, will not be without interest in many ways; especially to those in early life, who will see that she possessed a very lively imagination and warm feelings; and who may, by the perusal, be the better prepared to appreciate the sacrifices which she had afterwards to make, in order to obtain peace of mind, and to become the humble disciple of a crucified Lord.]

## Chapter II

### *Sojourn in France*

Birmingham, October 19th, 1776.—Very busy making preparations to set out for London, in the Diligence, tomorrow morning, with M. and M. Bingham; the latter purposing to accompany me to Paris, or some other part of France, where I am going for the recovery of my health, which has been upon the decline for some months.

London, 21st,—Just arrived at the Castle and Falcon; much fatigued, having travelled all night without

sleep. We arrived at Stratford at ten o'clock, and there met with several of Bingham's friends, who were at the inn; we supped together, after which we resumed our journey with fresh spirits; indeed we then stood in need of our best courage, for it was very dark and the roads bad; this, with the fears we had of being robbed, was dismal enough. Just as morning began to dawn we reached Oxford; the daylight advanced with all the beautiful attendants of a fine morn, and it was most delightfully pleasant. Breakfasted at Tetsworth; and heartily rejoiced we were, for we were really hungry, I bore the journey better than I could have imagined; after paying proper attention to the bread and butter, we once again set forward; it was a glorious day, and the country appeared beautiful, in spite of the rigorous season. Immediately on my arrival at my journey's end, I wrote to my brother Jasper, and he came half an hour after, I fainted several times, which is not surprising, as I was much fatigued.

22nd, Was taken to bed last night very ill. My affectionate brother, who had never seen me in that way before, was quite alarmed, and sent for Dr, Knowles, I have slept tolerably. Walked with my brother and my friend Bingham, into Cheapside. Dined with my uncle Smallwood, and spent a rational, agreeable evening with Dr, and M. Knowles, at their house in Ingram Court, I admire the doctor more, I think, than any man I ever met with. He strikes me as a man of learning and affability; polite without ceremony; perfectly good humoured without the least tincture of levity; charitable to all, in thought, word and deed. It is easy to imagine that no one could possess all these qualities without being, in the true sense of the word, a Christian. Though the doctor is, by profession, a Quaker, he is far from endeavouring to influence the judgment of others. We had much serious conversation, and my heart felt interested in every word that fell from the mouth of the worthy doctor, I wish, if my stay in town permits, frequently to repeat these visits, I do not wonder at my dear Jasper being impatient to introduce me into such company, as he knew my inclinations too well to suppose that I should find it irksome. I wish I could prevail upon all my acquaintance to lay aside all their trivial ways of killing time, by playing at cards and such diversions; and in their room to institute improving, rational conversation; it would undoubtedly be better for society in general; we should then enjoy ourselves in reality. How far more praiseworthy those are who spend their time in searching after and admiring the wonderful power and goodness of the Almighty, than such as think of little but the gratification of the senses; who scarcely know or consider how or wherefore this grand universe is supported, or whether governed by a Supreme, All-powerful Being!

Nancy Fry, a very pleasing young person, drank tea with us; I was struck with her appearance and wish to be better acquainted.

The doctor does not approve of my intention of going into a Convent, as he thinks I shall be in great danger of having my sentiments as to religion totally changed; he remarked that the transition from our form of worship to that of the Romish Church was very trifling, and might possibly be brought about, almost imperceptibly, as they spare no pains to gain a proselyte.

This has quite unsettled my designs, as I would by no means throw myself into the midst of dangers,

the nature of which I am entirely unacquainted with. We took our leave of these worthy Friends, with a promise willingly made on my part, to dine with them on Friday, if nothing prevent.

23rd, My brother Jasper called and took us to dine with my brother William, who lives at Holborn Bridge, He appears to be a sensible worthy character. After we had coffee we called a coach, intending to go and spend the evening with my uncle Capper, in Berkeley Square; but an unaccountable whim entering the head of my brother William, (prompted, I make no doubt, by his wish to give us pleasure,) he asked if we should have any objection to see the Opera, to be performed that night, I was inclined to refuse; but fancying that my friend had a desire to go, I accompanied her without reluctance. My disappointment and disgust are not to be described; I had heard much of the shining qualities of [the actress,] and therefore expected something extraordinary; but of all the figures I ever saw, she is the most miserable; and her impudence is inconceivable. In the midst of my chagrin, I could not help feeling emotions of pity for the poor unhappy wretch, who, in her serious moments, must call to mind a life spent in such a manner; how melancholy a retrospect! I may truly say, my intended pleasure was turned into actual pain, I was very ill afterwards.

24th, My brother Jasper called upon me; he was not pleased at my last night's expedition; in truth I was vexed at myself I could not help making a comparison between the different feelings with which I retired to rest last evening and the night before; one all hurry and confusion, without one rational idea; the other calm, serene and pleasing; with a train of ideas, delightful, quiet and composed. I very joyfully performed my promise of spending the day in Ingram Court, and it was as agreeable as I expected. The doctor was at home all the afternoon, and we had much serious conversation, in which my heart was interested, the doctor and his wife explained the benefit arising from silent meetings, which I am convinced must be very great; we are then freed from all external objects, and wait upon the Lord, in silent submission; which must doubtless be a far more acceptable sacrifice than those forms of prayer that are repeated by the lips when the spirit is far from God. This silent meditation is certainly an excellent preparation for vocal prayer.

25th. Nancy Fry called, and went with us to M. Williamson's, a person who keeps bees in a glass hive; it is very entertaining to see these industrious little creatures all busied in their various occupations.

26th. Went, with my brother Jasper, to the Quakers' meeting, and was exceedingly pleased with one of the female preachers. There was silence nearly an hour and a half, in which time I was prepared to receive instruction, and I felt the force of what I heard. Returned to our lodgings well satisfied with silent worship.

27th. Dined and spent a very agreeable day with Nancy Fry's parents in Whitechapel. I admire the whole family exceedingly; such marks of sincerity and friendly civility I scarcely ever received. I shall actually venerate this society of people; for among those that I am acquainted with, there reigns such a universal spirit of affection, with a real desire to please, that I cannot help being strongly attached to those

sentiments which are productive of these social delights; to me far more engaging than the pompous parade that attends the proudly great.

29th. M. Bingham and my brother went with us to the Tower, in order to look at the vessel in which we propose embarking; the Captain is an elderly polite man; he informed us that his daughter would accompany us to Boulogne, where his family resides. He could not say when he should sail; as there are Press Warrants out, a Protection is necessary, or it is possible that all the men may be taken. On expressing our desire to see the curiosities in the Tower, our obliging conductors willingly complied; and being informed that there were no beasts worth seeing, the old lion, etc. being gone to the shades of their noble ancestors, we visited the Arsenal. I was much pleased with the regular form in which all the arms are placed. Could the mind be divested of the idea of destruction, for which these weapons are designed, it would be possible to behold, with pleasing astonishment, the perfection which has been arrived at in the manufacture. On our return we had some conversation with two young girls who had just come from the Ursuline Convent at Boulogne, and were not discouraged by their account. About five o'clock I took leave of my friend, as I had accepted of M. Morris's invitation to spend a few days with her at Tottenham. She received me with that good nature and affability which characterise her. I cannot but spend my time agreeably here, as in the company of M. Knowles and M. Morris, it is impossible to be otherwise than happy. Very poorly and retired to rest early; Mary Booth, an agreeable girl, was my companion.<sup>1</sup>

31st. Poorly all day. M. Knowles was so obliging as to read in the life of William Penn, an eminent Quaker, who suffered much from persecution, being imprisoned and cruelly treated on account of his religious views and practices. He bore all with fortitude; supported by the true spirit of Christianity, he overcame all difficulties.

November 4th. In tolerable health and spirits; have fainted but twice since Saturday. We had company to dinner—Friends, a new married couple! The more I see of these people, the more I admire them; they receive each other with such marks of sincere love and friendship, that my heart partakes in their apparent satisfaction. Spent the afternoon in serious conversation.

5th. Read part of the life of George Fox, and found myself interested in his sentiments, which appear to me noble and full of weight. I quit these kind friends tomorrow.

8th. We embarked on board the "Four Friends," Captain Merriton, accompanied by my brother Jasper. Our fellow passengers appear tolerably agreeable.

11th. After a very tedious passage, landed at Boulogne, surrounded by a number of strange creatures; but my attention was fixed upon two delicate figures, dressed most fantastically, 'far beneath that creature man, who is so proud of being rational!' Their coats were blue and purple, and their hats covered with

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<sup>1</sup> Mary Booth was afterwards the wife of John Fell.

various coloured feathers; a delicate tincture of rouge, and an enormously large muff completed the whole. A polite Englishman stepped from amid the throng, and we willingly permitted him to conduct us to the 'Ville de Londres,' a poor, dirty inn compared with English houses. After dinner we walked in the town. I admire the dress of the tradespeople, which has an air of decent simplicity, but what appeared the most diverting and extraordinary, was that all men and women, rich and poor, had each a muff; it was very droll to see a miserable creature in rags and wooden clogs, with a large muff.

12th. Between eight and nine o'clock, we were surprised by the entrance of an old dame, pale and meagre as an inhabitant of the grave, attended by two or three young girls. After our astonishment had a little subsided, and they were seated, we took the liberty of enquiring from what cause proceeded the honour of this early visit; which, in reality, gave us no satisfaction, as we were not dressed, having only left our beds a few minutes before. They, however, made no apology for throwing us into such consternation, but informed us that they were come for two young ladies, who came over with the intention of entering the Convent. Poor Nicholls and Powell did not seem over pleased with the appearance of their future companions; however they agreed to wait upon them after dinner; upon which they rose and took their leave.

A little after four o'clock, we attended our fellow travellers to the Ursuline Convent, and delivered them into the hands of six nuns, who were dressed perfectly neat and plain. We were informed that the Pensioners rise at five o'clock, all the year. To breakfast is not the custom of the country; but at ten o'clock, they dine upon soup, with a morsel of coarse beef boiled to strings. This is served in a manner by no means elegant. After this frugal repast, they are occupied in studies till five o'clock. Their supper is roasted meat; with a salad, when the season permits. The hour of rest is seven. These particulars did not give my friend and me any strong desire to join them; and what weighs, still more with us is, that we should be under the necessity of submitting to all their customs and superstitions. They have mostly fifteen prayers each day, which would be a burden to those who do not imagine that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Returned to our Auberge, and gave up all thoughts of entering a Convent.

14th. Called on our friends in their prison, as it may justly be termed; we were only allowed to speak to them through an iron grate; poor Powell appeared dissatisfied with her situation, though she was obliged to put on her best looks, and to say that she liked it very well, as the governess who was with them understands English. We returned to the inn by the ramparts, which command an extensive view of the sea, and of distant hills, woods and villages. I observed a large crucifix, placed on an eminence in the middle of the town, and was informed that the people, on certain days, flock in great numbers, to offer their prayers before this figure. Surely this is a zealous blindness, which raises compassion in a thinking mind!

15th. M. Thomas conducted us to one of the best looking houses in Boulogne, situated near the ramparts in the High Town. We were introduced into a pretty parlour; and after a few minutes, M. Brunet made her appearance. I was much pleased with her, and we soon fixed upon terms.

21st. Most tempestuous weather; many of the poor are great sufferers from the high winds, some of their habitations being laid level with the earth; indeed they are not calculated to stand against a storm, being made of nothing but a sort of clay and sticks; the lower sort of people live miserably in this country. They are in general very idle, and consequently very poor; and their religion rather encourages their natural antipathy to labour.

22nd. Fridays and Saturdays we have no flesh meat, which they pretend is a mortification of the body; but for my own part, I cannot consider it any merit to abstain from meat, when the whole art of cookery is exerted to prepare fish, roots, etc. in the nicest manner.

23rd. The whole family at Mass; as the road to their place of worship is too bad for the coach, my friend and I have not the opportunity of going with them. I know not whether I ought to regret this, for I should possibly be under the necessity of submitting to their ceremonies; at the same time I feel a longing desire to join in the assemblies of the faithful. From an idea of politeness, the family desisted from cards; but what was more disagreeable to us, as it prevented our retiring, an optic glass was produced, in order, as they said, to amuse us without wounding our consciences; but they know not our real sentiments.

26th. A great feast; the family at Mass. We walked out, but were glad to return, as it was insupportably cold; we found an excellent fire in our chamber, at which we enjoyed ourselves till dinner. M. Brunet gave us some books to read, telling us she should think it a favour if we would conform to their custom of not working on their holidays. This is disagreeable, as they are numerous, and I cannot find that laziness promotes godliness.

27th. Rose very unwell. Bingham is exceedingly kind and attentive; and nothing can exceed the tender affection of my dear brother Jasper. I think I can never be ungrateful to my indulgent friends.

December 3rd. Company to dinner; never was I so tired! I hope it is not customary to give many dinnerings; if it is, I must provide myself with a large stock of patience. I really seem to pick like a sparrow among eating creatures; four hours at table, eating all the time! The dinner I thought extravagantly profuse; served in three courses of nine or ten dishes each; and afterwards an elegant dessert; then coffee, and to conclude, a glass of liquor. There were four priests present, and all the company ate and drank as if they thought that was the chief end for which they are born.

6th. The morning alone in my chamber. Experienced a calm satisfaction which I would not exchange for all the world can give.

14th. M. Dupont informs us that there is a great talk of war; in short, I think we hear of little else than wars and rumours of wars. I know not when they will follow the advice of the apostles, and beat their swords into plough shares, etc.

17th. Called at the Convent. My brother purposes setting out for London tomorrow.

19th. Took a tender and affectionate leave of my dear brother.

27th. When the card table appeared, retired to my chamber.

January 5th, 1777. A deep snow. My health has been so poor for some time past, that I am reduced to a very weak state; but I think, if the happiness of my friends were not as dear to me as my own, I should be far from regretting my present indisposition, as it inclines my mind to a serious consideration of those things that are necessary to salvation; a consideration which I might have neglected, had I been in perfect health.

6th. What they call a jovial day! that is noisy mirth, in which I found neither wit nor amusement, and therefore slipped out of the room. During the month before Lent, they have no meagre days.

15th. Began the day, as usual, with our studies. After dinner, spent two hours at our toilet, and four hours in visiting; a pretty account this, to give of the manner of spending our time. I am actually discontented with myself; as so many hours employed to no purpose give me no satisfaction.

February 2nd. Went to Vespers for the first time. I was very near the door, and could not see all the ceremonies, but I saw enough to excite surprise. 'My God,' thought I, 'that such a number of persons, seemingly disposed to serve Thee, should imagine that Thou art pleased with the burning of incense, and the lifting up of hands!' The sacrifice of a humble spirit is far more acceptable to our God, who designs that we should worship Him in spirit. But, in answer to all the objections you make to their numerous forms and ceremonies, they tell you that they were instituted by Moses, and commanded by God.

7th. Received a very serious letter; I must own, I think rather too serious; that is, there is in it a kind of melancholy that I cannot make agree with my ideas of religion; which, in my opinion, one should be careful to exhibit as both simple and pleasing.

10th. Company to dinner! I do detest these dinnerings; one loses more time than it is possible for any reasonable person to imagine. It is really a melancholy consideration that so many beings, with faculties sufficient to render them useful and happy, should content themselves with eating, drinking and playing. I hope these feasting will soon cease, as I should suppose they pass Lent in a more serious and moderate manner. I shall rejoice heartily when we return to the peaceful Herdinghen; for the more I see of the world, the more I am enchanted with solitude, and its lovely train of innocent amusements, that prompt the mind to gratitude and contemplation. Charles received a letter from Jasper containing excellent advice.

Am very undetermined about attending a large party to the play and a masked ball. Had I only my inclination to consult, I should not hesitate a moment in refusing; but my refusal is considered as a stubborn resolution to be singular; this is a character that I am by no means desirous of, and many ideas rush into my mind, to vindicate a compliance with the wishes of others; but on the other hand, I am, from

experience, convinced that these noisy diversions intoxicate the mind, enfeeble it, and render it incapable of performing the duties for which we were born. I presume not to judge for others; but for myself, I find it necessary to guard against the tumultuous joys of the world. Nine' o'clock. Not at the ball, which is satisfactory, though the cause gives me pain, as it is the illness of M. Brunet.

16th. Received a pleasing epistle from M. Knowles, containing a few serious directions on the most important object of our lives. My heart melts with the earnestness of my desires to become one of those few that labour after the perfection of holiness.

20th. We are quite pleased with the progress we have made in learning the language, etc. since M. has kept her room. I am not sorry that Lent has begun, as there are no balls, etc. They are not very strict in this family, as they eat meal once or twice a week; in short, I think it is but a farce their pretending to fast; for though they do not eat flesh, they feast upon delicate fish, swimming in butter, etc. This, in reality, I prefer to their days of Gras; and although they scruple to eat a morsel of meat, they do not scruple to give way to their anger.

26th. Walked round the ramparts; the Castle is an ancient pile of building, now made use of as a prison. Two or three rooms, which look upon the ramparts, are particularly reserved for the confinement of young gentlemen who are extravagant, or any way disobedient to their parents. Every father or mother has power to shut up their children for any time they may think proper; for life, if it is thought their crimes deserve it.

March 1st. Received an invitation from an English family, to a ball and concert. Bingham, etc. went, but I was not well enough. Employed the time in reading Thomas a Kempis, and felt more satisfaction than I should have done in their splendid assembly.

11th. Was exceedingly shocked to hear of the death of the young lady whose wedding we saw, not many weeks since; she was taken ill on thursday, and died this morning, leaving a distressed husband and mother. Who, that has any consideration, would be so anxious after the happiness which is so uncertain! These daily instances of the instability of earthly joys should certainly warn us against a reliance upon them. What a melancholy change in this family! the other day, all gay, and flattering themselves with the prospect of many succeeding years! Happy is the mind whose dependence is not upon the fluctuating joys of this world, who can contemplate all with the eye of a passenger that is seeking rest in another!

April 7th. A great feast-day. At Vespers, could not be so attentive to myself as I wished, for there were a number of ceremonies which I could not help observing. It is strange to me that so many absurdities should be considered an acceptable sacrifice to the Lord. I think the priest does little but change his clothes; but I must say that the whole congregation seem to attend with seriousness; much more so than the protestants; and I doubt not the sincere in heart reap the benefit arising from true devotion.

10th. A most delightful day! We walked in the wood, and fixed upon a romantic spot, to build a grotto in.

Heard of the death of a near neighbour, who dined with us soon after our arrival. I think it is remarkable that, out of the families with whom we have dined since we came to this part, three of the principals are dead.

16th. St. Omers is delightfully situated, and the streets long and spacious. Went to the college where my brother Charles and Brunet are. Le Frere Auventin attended us to' the noble structure of St. Bertin's Abbey. There are a number of very fine paintings, which I examined while M. Brunet and the Frere repeated their prayers; this they are obliged to do when they enter the church, as they consider it a spot sacred to the Lord; but in my opinion, all places are alike to our God, who dwells not in temples made with hands, but takes up his abode in the hearts of the meek and humble. Round the chapel are hung the arms of the Monks, as they are all descended from grand and ancient families; they have large fortunes, which they give up, and have all things in common, forsaking the allurements of the world. They at least pretend to lead a life of mortification; fasting and praying continually; but how far they may be inwardly detached from the follies of life is best known to themselves.

Christ and his disciples never excluded themselves from the eye of the world; and I should imagine it is not the design of our Creator that each individual should live to himself After having expressed our thanks to the polite Monks, we departed.

26th. St. Mark. A grand feast! I think these people do little else than feast; we went with M. to Mass; a long and tedious ceremony. I believe they consider the bishop as a being of a superior order; he walks to the church, surrounded by almost all the village, who join in singing psalms, etc. A canopy of crimson, fringed with gold, is supported by four old men; and under this, the great man sits or walks, in state. They say he is a man exemplary for his piety, charity, etc. I hope that all proceeds from the right spring. Education may so far have influenced his mind, that the forms and ceremonies may to him appear necessary; but I must acknowledge that I beheld them with an emotion which I cannot describe. The bishop wears a large ring upon his little finger, which the priest kneels to kiss; the servants kneel when they present water to wash his hands. I was so much affected by these strange, and as I thought, presumptuous ceremonies, that I could not restrain my tears and how earnestly did I wish that all the world were acquainted with that gentle tranquillity which results from a humble waiting upon the Lord!

29th. I could not but make the secret comparison between these thoughtless people, who meet for no better purpose than to idle away their time, and those friends whom I have left in England. I daily wish to be again among them; it would then be my own fault if an hour passed unimproved.

May 4th. Passed the morning alone. I pity those who are unacquainted with the sweet consolations resulting from serious meditation; and with that peace which the world cannot give nor take away.

28th. Boulogne. Arrived in the afternoon. Dressed and sallied forth to spend the evening at an English lady's; when we arrived all the party were at cards, to which we also sat down. While we played, a

circumstance occurred which made me feel in a way that I cannot describe. The sacrament which is carried to the sick, and is always announced by the ringing of a hand-bell, passed by the windows. The company, being mostly French, threw down their cards, knelt and prayed for a few minutes, and then set to cards again. I mean not to censure them; they may act up to their judgment and feelings, but I must confess it would appear to me very presumptuous to address the great Almighty in a form of words, at a time when the mind was interested in affairs so trifling, so inconsistent with that awful sense with which we ought to present ourselves, when disposed to offer prayer.

On our return I found a very affectionate epistle from my honoured mother; all friends well, and kindly anxious for my health.

7th. After dinner, the conversation turned on religion; they were very severe upon me, and rallied me unmercifully, giving me the appellation of Quaker or Trembler. Nothing could be more unjust than their censures of this people, whom they conclude to be unworthy of the name of Christian. I heard all with silent patience. After having listened for some time, I declared myself quite in favour of the real principles of Quakerism; and retired, leaving them to make what comments they pleased.

July 8th. Dined at Marquise; never spent a more disagreeable day; the gentlemen drank a great deal, and in consequence were very noisy and troublesome. I was truly glad when the coach was ordered, but we were no sooner seated in it, than we perceived that our coachman had made as free with the bottle as his master, and we were obliged to get out and march back, about half a mile to Marquise, where we again arrived at the Cure's. To our great satisfaction we found the company dispersed; beds were ordered, and we soon retired; but my spirits were so agitated by the scenes I had witnessed, that I fainted several times. I wished myself in some secluded spot, where I might never more be in company with those, who so shamefully abuse the reason they are blessed with. I am certain that, if others enjoyed these extravagancies no more than I do, they would soon be excluded, as destroyers of our peace. Those recreations which will not bear reflection, are ill suited to rational, intelligent creatures. A train of such ideas kept me awake most of the night. Arrived at Herdinghen the 9th.

August 3rd. Spent a few quiet hours in my own room. Walked into the country, where we partook of a frugal repast, at a farm-house; sitting upon hay, with a plank for our table. The clouds were remarkably beautiful, and I was disposed to enjoy the calm contemplation which the surrounding objects seemed to invite.

4th. In the evening Felicite and I took our book to the garden, and seated ourselves under a clump of trees; we stayed nearly two hours, and enjoyed a pleasing calm; all nature glowing around us. I could not but regret the folly which leads men to search for happiness in crowds, and in pompous parade, when real satisfaction may be purchased at so cheap a rate. As a flower unfolds in the genial warmth of the sun, the mind expands in serious meditation and reflection.

9th. Dined at M. Routier's with three Anglois. I was not satisfied with our amusements; they were of a nature too gay and noisy to contribute to the real delight of the mind which desires something more than momentary enjoyment.

22nd. Felicite and I took a ride to the Bois de Boulogne, about four miles off; it is a delightful spot. We sat under the tress, and enjoyed the tranquillity of the scene. The disposition of my friend seems formed to enter into my tastes.

28th. Received letters from my kind parents; they are anxious and unhappy at my indisposition.

29th. The palpitation at my heart returned with great violence. The physician assures me that it is only the effect of the weak state to which I am reduced, I pass the nights almost without sleep, and have very little appetite, therefore I cannot, at present, expect to regain my strength. I hope I am not impatient under these bodily afflictions; they are light in comparison with a wounded spirit. I have that trust and confidence in my God which makes his will my delight. Though he afflict me, yet will I trust in Him; and while his grace supports me, I can, as it were, forget the present pain, and look joyfully forward to that glory which shall be revealed to those who persevere.

September 1st. A comfortable day, without pain or sickness. Walked out and enjoyed the air, though winter begins to creep upon us, and as Thompson finely expresses it, 'lets loose his northern blasts.'

2nd. Much indisposed, but as it proved a delightful afternoon, my friend and I went in the cabriolet, to the Bois de Boulogne, and reposed under the spreading branches of a fine old tree. As we generally take our books on these excursions, reading and conversation have their turn, and we enjoy many pleasing moments, untasted by those who are engaged in a continual round of more expensive luxuries. How greatly are we mistaken when we consider riches as the only happiness! The truly pious mind exults in well-grounded hope, and steadfastly fixes the eye of faith beyond the present scene.

4th. Again visited the wood, and returned about sunset, which afforded us many delightful views. They brought to my mind those beautiful lines beginning, 'These are thy glorious works, Parent of good!' It is impossible to contemplate the wonders of nature without feeling the heart glow with gratitude to the great Author, whose goodness is but dimly seen in these his works.

16th. Spent the morning chiefly in my own room; the extreme gaiety does not suit me. I feel like a stranger indeed! I have no inclination to familiarize myself with this mode of life; it may do for others, but give me sobriety, with a mind disposed for reflection. A letter just received from my dear Jasper, informs me that he has some thoughts of coming here. I shall greatly rejoice to see him. I cannot but observe how ill-informed we English females find ourselves, in comparison with the French ladies; they appear perfectly acquainted with the rise and progress of all material events in the history, both of their own and other nations. This is certainly a part of education not merely ornamental, which might well be substituted for more trivial acquisitions.

17th. I walked to the grotto, and found it improved in beauty, as the moss has taken root, and flourishes in all its various colours. Boulogne; evening. I can scarcely believe that I am now writing in the chamber of my friend Felicite! At dinner time an arrival was announced; I ran out of the room, and had the satisfaction of embracing the most affectionate of brothers; I readily agreed to return here with him, as fresh company had arrived.

[It will here be needful to break off from the journal for a time, in order to take a glance at the state of things in the family at home. It appears that the decided attachment of her brother Jasper to the principles and practice of the Society of Friends, had awakened many fears in the minds of his parents, who were much alarmed for the consequences of his influence among their numerous children; especially as they could not but see that Mary was strongly attracted to unite with the views of Friends. A letter, written about this time by Rebecca Capper, to her son William, will depict her feelings, in this trying exigency, so as to excite the sympathy of every susceptible mind. It may be premised that William never made much, if any, change in his religious observances, and always remained a member of the Episcopal Church.

*Birmingham, September 18th, 1777.*

My Dear William,

A complaint in my eyes still remains; but I am induced to run the hazard of hurting my sight, to say a few words respecting a letter which your brother Samuel put into my hand last night. Your dear father (for he is indeed dear to me) has not seen your letter, nor if I can help it, ever shall; for the blow which your brother Jasper has given him, has almost struck him to the ground, and I am apprehensive that he could not support another such. As to my own feelings, I forbear to mention them; for I know, and am fully persuaded that, grievous as they are, they ought not to be held in any estimation against that which teacheth, 'He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me;' and if it has been your lot, my child! (for so I will yet call you) to be born of parents that were ignorant and ungodly; that neither by precept nor example taught you to serve God in spirit and in truth; but on the contrary, that it was enough to honour Him with the lips, though the heart was far from Him—but stop, and examine, O! my soul, dost thou not, in this, stand self-accused? I have indeed been guilty of great neglect of my duty, in that state in life in which it pleased God to place me! in caring too much for the things of this world, and in neglecting myself, and also in not instructing my children, to seek after the kingdom of God and his righteousness; not remembering that all these things would be added unto us. But sinful and wretched as I am, well knowing, that as his justice, so his mercy is great; and that, upon sincere repentance and amendment, which, through his grace or Holy Spirit, that He hath promised to those who ask for it aright, and without which we cannot do the least good thing—I say, by this I hope, and will endeavour, to live better, for the short, perhaps very short, time I have to remain here.

Now in the midst of this grievous and very heavy affliction, that we your parents are at this time under, on account of the separation which is already made in the family, and more that are likely to be made; I say, in this I can see a ray of comfort, and can draw this from it; that the Almighty Disposer of all things hath permitted, for

wise and good ends, this his afflicting hand to be laid upon us; that He chasteneth and correcteth those whom He loveth and would draw unto Him; that it hath already inclined my heart more unto Him, and hath caused me to look more strictly into my way and manner of life, and hath raised in me a hope that, by his divine and inspiring grace, I shall be enabled to bring forth good fruits; to avoid those things which are contrary to my profession, and to follow all such things as are agreeable to it. Now this I knew before to be my bounden duty; but we are such poor frail creatures, (at least I find myself such) as to stand in need of frequent stirring up; and it may be one among the various and mysterious ways of Providence, that He permits so many different sects and opinions; as I make no doubt all believe, at least, that they are guided by the same divine grace of Holy Spirit, faith and Holy Scriptures.

You say you are inclined to attend the meetings of Quakers by stronger motives than compliance to Jasper; that you find yourself enriched by the plain truths they deliver; that you are charmed with the love, sweetness, and tenderness of affection which appear among them. Oh! my child, you see not beyond the mask, nor why it is occasionally put on; but to gain three proselytes all at once is a great acquisition!—But stay! where am I running? or where is my Christian charity, if they think they are in the right way? A crowd of ideas press upon my mind, but I will only beg one favour of you; it will perhaps be the last I shall ever ask of you; it is this; that you will, for a few Sundays, go to the Church of which you have been a member, (though perhaps an unworthy one) and set your mind in a right frame of devotion, remembering that you are, at that time, as well as at all others, immediately in the presence of that God who knoweth the secrets of all hearts; and though He regardeth not time nor place, yet reflect and consider for what purpose you are come there; and as much as lieth in you, suppress all vain and wandering thoughts; keep your eyes from looking on the faces of others; and do not, from their look and manner, judge of what passes in their hearts, but be careful of your own; and with fervent zeal and humility, attend to those prayers, praises, and adorations, there offered to the throne of Grace; and though they may be uttered by a man of like infirmities with yourself, yet let not that hinder you from sincerely seeking for the assistance of God's Spirit, to enable you to do that which is right in his sight; and as I am sure you will find what will suit your own feelings; in them join, with sincerity of heart; for though God knoweth our necessities before we ask, yet hath it pleased Him to command that we, his poor creatures, should lay our wants before Him; and if at all times and in all places, why not when we are gathered together?

I have reason to believe my dear Mary's health is but very indifferent at this time, and that her old complaints return with greater force than ever. I firmly believe that the agitation of mind she has laboured under of late, has greatly increased her bodily infirmity.

I think it likely that she and I may never be permitted to meet again in this world; but though by different roads, my sincere hope is, that we shall all meet again in the next. I had promised to myself some pleasure in coming up to London to meet your sister there, and with joy to bring her home, but I fear that is over; her home cannot be with us, her parents; for well I know that would be the cause of strife and debate, which I think it is best to avoid; and if we must be separated, may that Being who first gave you all to me, enable me with patient

resignation to part with you in whatever way He shall think fit! but I find myself a poor frail creature, and do indeed, at this moment fear and tremble before Him.

I had much more on my mind to say to you, but I have lost it; so conclude, with sincere prayer for your present and eternal welfare, your truly affectionate mother,

—REBECCA CAPPER.

[From this letter and from some subsequent remarks in Mary Capper's journal, it appears that she entered pretty fully into her brother's change of religious view, and that this had been so far made known to her parents as to make them hesitate about allowing her to return home. She deeply felt her trying position, and she also sympathised tenderly with her brother, who was, at that time, much distressed in mind. He seems to have been sent, to convey her back to England, without loss of time. While they were detained before sailing, they were in the practice of frequently retiring together, for the purpose of silently waiting upon the Lord, that they might know his will, and experience a renewal of their spiritual strength; and they were often comforted together, on these occasions.

Resuming the journal, Mary Capper proceeds:]

September 18th. My kind friend expresses much satisfaction at my quick return. I really feel greatly at the thought of leaving her, it may be forever! Her tenderness and amiable disposition have gained my admiration and my warm affection, and have greatly interested me in her future well-doing.

19th. Much in my friend's room, either reading or preparing for my departure.

20th, My brother and Felicite accompanied me to the Bois de Boulogne, and we passed an hour very pleasantly under the shade of the fine trees, not in the least regretting the parties at Herdinghen. Mere sensual delights are very unsatisfactory to a mind, capable of tasting the pleasures which result from contemplating the wonders and the goodness of Him who created and preserves this universal frame. All nature speaks forth his praise; and shall not his intelligent creatures admire and extol his infinite wisdom and excellence!

21st. My brother and I declined going to Mass; we passed the time very agreeably; and I experienced true satisfaction in silence.

25th. My brother and I rode out in the cabriolet; he made me acquainted with some circumstances, relative to himself, that are very far from giving me pleasure; however I must not suffer myself to be cast down, but be firm in hope, trust and confidence.

October 12th. My brother and I sat together.

13th. We have not determined when to go, but I hope soon, as the family are in a confusion of gaiety, which seems not to allow a moment for serious reflection. My brother and I are considered stupid mortals, for we cannot join in the vacant laugh, noisy song, etc.

18th. It is with difficulty that I keep up an appearance of cheerfulness, for my spirits are uncommonly affected. The thought of leaving my friends here, and of seeing those in England, causes an agitation which I can scarcely endure.

22nd. On board the same vessel which brought us to this place! I have left the arms of a tender, affectionate friend, and the tears still steal down my cheeks.

25th. Arrived safely in London last night, after a tedious voyage. We were both very ill. This morning we landed from a small boat, and drove to my uncle Smallwood's. I had scarcely sufficient strength left to embrace the tenderest of mothers!

### Chapter III

*Return home in 1777, and memoranda during her stay there—Removal to Wilmington, and journal while there in 1781 and 1782*

[The return of Mary Capper to the paternal dwelling, was the occasion of much trial and difficulty both to herself and to her affectionate parents. She thus writes, respecting this interesting period of her life:]

It was after my return from France that an obvious change took place in my manners, etc., so as to attract observation. The ceremonies of the church, when I attended with my parents and the family, affected me in a very unusual manner; I do not know that I can say painfully, but with a desire to act more conformably with what was preached. Sometimes I wept, and sometimes had to be taken out, nearly fainting; but could not describe my sensations. I had then no intention of making any change in my religious profession; but my dear mother's disappointment was keen, when, in process of time, I felt that I could not conform to what I had been taught was necessary to salvation; and kept much retired, without attending any place of worship.

[About the end of the year 1777, her brother Jasper joined the Society of Friends, and in 1778, he married Anne Fry, the daughter of John Fry, of Whitechapel. In regard to these important changes, his mother remarked that if the thing were of the Lord, it would stand; if of man, it would come to naught.

Mary Capper appears to have made very few memoranda during her stay at home; but the few which

have been preserved, and which are here presented, give proof of the continued seriousness of her mind, and of her desire, under a complication of difficulties and disadvantages, to follow on to know the Lord for herself.]

September 8th, 1779. If men are born merely to live, or rather breathe, a few short years, and then fall to nothing; if virtue is only a name, or a habit acquired by certain modes of education, why have we a secret, unconquerable knowledge of right and wrong? If it be possible to believe that annihilation takes place, after this span of pain and sorrow, we are of all creatures the most deplorable. Brutes have capacities to desire and enjoy, but man has a reasonable soul, which is not to be satisfied with sensual gratifications. How vain! how weak is the human heart! Can a reflecting mind be ignorant of its own instability? Can the maxims of the most learned sophistry fortify us against the alluring poison of those temptations which surround us? Can speculation, or gratified passions, produce those calm, happy effects, which result from a firm dependence on a superior Power, who will reward our humble faith, or assuredly punish our arrogant pride? How amiable is the humble mind, which trusts not in its own strength, which is not above acknowledging its own weakness, and glories only in its hope and confidence in the living God!

March 12th, 1780. The Lord is my rock and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower!" O! who is like unto our God!

What am I, O! Lord, what am I, that thou shouldst so wonderfully extend thy love towards me! Of myself I am worse than nothing; all weakness and contradiction! One moment, fervent in desire; the next, cold and languid in the performance of the least of thy commands. O! woe is me; who shall deliver me from this body of treachery! The Lord himself! The mighty Lord who is my strength, and my help in the time of need. He will graciously dart a ray of divine light into my soul; then shall I plainly perceive that He is the ancient of days, that was and is, and is to come; the sure Rock of defence to all that trust in Him.

How comfortable are the dawnings of divine grace! How encouraging are thy promises, my God! Let me rest in thy truth! Give me sure confidence in thy mercy! Suffer me not to dwell in darkness! O! turn not thy wrath upon her who is insufficient to bear thy displeasure! Let me not put any confidence in my own strength; for, Lord! thou knowest my impotence; the secret thoughts of my heart are not hidden from thee! How shall I stand if thou leave me to my own guidance! but thou art wonderful in goodness, and I will trust in thy mercy. I have tasted of thy lovingkindness, and my soul aspires to the fruition of joy, at thy right hand forever. Amen.

[Soon after making these memorandums, and while in a state of much conflict of mind, Mary Capper was consigned by her parents to the care of her brother James. Concerning this event she thus writes:]

I went to Wilmington, in Sussex, my dear brother James being married and fixed as Rector there. His wife, who was a Biddulph, was an interesting, intelligent, pious Christian, who had her own peculiar scruples of conscience on various subjects; and very tender was my dear brother of her feelings on these

points; so that the removal into his family was some relief to me. He affectionately enquired into my religious views, and sympathized in my distress.

I had sometimes secretly attended Friends' meetings, at Birmingham, in which I remember experiencing much brokenness of spirit; but while with my kind brother, I attended his little church. The private, as well as the more public devotion to which I was witness, wrought much consideration and deep inward thoughtfulness; especially as respected participating in what is termed the sacrament, or the Lord's supper, as it came in usual course to be administered by my brother. It had been, on former occasions, a solemn ceremony of peculiar comfort to my longing soul; and I had much conflict and prayer that I might be satisfied whether the outward and visible sign was important to salvation. With reverence, deep humility and fear, I received the bread and wine. I do not recollect that any observation was made on my being evidently agitated. I sought no human counsel, but the satisfactory, abiding instruction on my own mind was, that the inward and spiritual grace, of which this was only the visible sign, must be something of a higher nature, not dependent upon uncertain means. The best of teachers was pleased to calm and quiet my mind on this important subject, and I no more repeated the ceremony; but these convictions and changes were no light matters to me.

[Upon leaving home for Wilmington, Mary Capper resumed her journal, from which the following extracts are given:]

November 9th, 1781. Having passed a sleepless night I rose early, to go by the London coach; the morning was glorious, and the rising sun presented a beautiful autumnal prospect.

10th. When we reached the Castle and Falcon, London, I was rejoiced to meet my brother John, who conducted me to Gracechurch street, where my brother Jasper lives. He and Nancy expressed their satisfaction on seeing me, in terms the most affectionate, and my heart beat responses. I was surprised and pleased to meet with M. Nicholls, whom I had known at Boulogne. I enjoyed a comfortable evening, and was relieved from all sense of fatigue by the kindness of my partial, indulgent friends.

11th. A seat being engaged for me in the Lewes coach, to set out early in the morning, it was judged best for me to sleep at the Adelphi Hotel, my brother William accompanying me as protector.

12th. I was lucky in my company in the coach; a resident in Lewes, from whom I received every possible civility during the journey, and upon our arrival obligingly introduced me to his sister, a polite, genteel woman, to whose friendly attention I am greatly indebted. Being much in want of rest, I was prevailed on to accept a bed there.

13th. Rose comfortably refreshed, and after a good breakfast, and making the best acknowledgments I could, for my entertainment, I set out for Wilmington. I greatly admire the country; the views of the fine hills diffuse a calm which induces sweet contemplation, and leads the mind to the Grand Source

whence flows every pleasant stream. The beautiful valleys are a delightful contrast, and attract particular admiration.

14th. In the night the wind was very high; I like the awful sound, and find it pleasing music, A fine, calm morning. This place is delightful; the hills are beautiful, even now; covered with the finest verdure, and appear towering almost to the clouds. The north aspect commands a most extensive view; part of Kent, the wilds of Sussex, etc. My father looks remarkably well and cheerful. We enjoyed a comfortable fireside in the evening; my brother reading to us.

15th. The weather astonishingly fine and warm. Assisted to finish some necessary work; am always pleased when I am considered of any use. Tasted the sweets of an hour's retirement; then joined the fireside, and enjoyed the pleasures of friendly intercourse with a mind at liberty, glad, and confident in the living God.

21st. My father talks of leaving us tomorrow; we shall be sorry to part with him, and his employments turn greatly to advantage; the shady walk will be much improved by his labours.

22nd. The day fine, though cold. Rose early; my father set off between nine and ten o'clock; my brother accompanied him as far as Lewes. The original manuscript has a note affixed to this sentence, viz: "This was the last time I ever saw my dear father!"

25th. A fine mild morning; travelled in idea with my father; admired with gratitude the beautiful scenes of nature.

27th. Mild and clear as summer; the sun shone on the tops of the hills, casting a dark shade on the valleys below; the scene was picturesque, and I enjoyed it with the calm satisfaction of a grateful heart. Rode with my brother to East Bourne. I was charmed with the country; riding on the Downs is pleasing beyond all that I could imagine; the air is, even now, quite fragrant with wild thyme, etc. We had an extensive prospect of rich pasturage, with small villages romantically situated; and a fine view of the sea.

December 4th. Read French; in my closet, read Boyle. With a thankful spirit, I have confidence in the living God; my soul resteth in his promises, and shall be satisfied. With hope and confidence I will wait the appointed time. Be steadfast, O! my soul, for the Lord regardeth the sincerity of thy desires; weak in thyself, be strong in faith, and fear not!

February 1st, 1782. Mounted Windore Hill with my brother, I had no idea of the beautiful view which the hill affords; nor could I have imagined that deep snow and cold winds had such charms. Never let us complain that winter robs the plains of their beauty; each season is fraught with instruction and delight.

28th. Had a charming walk before breakfast; the sun shone gloriously, and almost every spray was vocal with the song of joyous birds. Is it possible that the midnight dance, or tiresome frolic, should exhilarate

the spirits, or afford the sweet calm satisfaction which arises from the contemplation of nature! Surely no! My soul now expands and breathes in silence for the only state fitted to enjoy perfect beauty!

March 2nd. Walked near two hours before breakfast.

10th. Rose at seven; walked till nine. Went to church. Whom have I in heaven, but Thee, O! God; and there is none upon earth I would desire in comparison of Thee!

19th. Bear patiently the infirmities of others; thou hast much to be borne with of others!

27th. Retired with my mind disquieted. How many and various are the conflicts with busy passions! folly and vanity rise up daily, and gain strength from our too feeble resistance. My King, and my God! to thee I cry for strength. Humbled by a sense of my weakness, to whom can I apply but to the Fountain of Grace! Still I have faith in his bounty. My soul waiteth for the living God; and when He shall have purified me by his Spirit, all shall be peace and joy! Let none trust in their own strength, but let all praise and extol the Lord.

April 1st. In pain most of the day, but was thankful for a calm fortitude of mind, that disposed me to submit with patience. In the day of trouble I will trust in the Lord my God. Had I the eloquence of angels, I would exhort all nations to trust in the living God. Though he correct, he will never forsake the faithful.

8th. Rose before seven; it was quite an effort, but I should be sorry to fall into my former custom, of losing in sleep many hours which I find, by experience, may be used with pleasure and advantage.

21st. Employed in preparing for my brother's going to Cambridge; he thinks of being absent a month; we shall think it a long time. In the evening I retired to my closet, where I indulged the sweet satisfaction of contemplation; the beauties of nature presented themselves in an extensive view, and nature's God was the object of my grateful praise.

23rd. Walked to Falkington with my brother. Had a letter from my friend Felicite Dupont. Tomorrow we purpose going to Lewes.

27th. My stay at Lewes was longer than I expected, and I feel pleased to return to my favourite scenes. Lewes, though a pretty town, is not in my estimation, comparable with Wilmington. The fashionable modes and ceremonies of the polite circles, give not the pure, simple delights arising from the study of nature; in the former pursuits, the mind seems carried from itself, and wanders in confused trifles; on the other hand, the glowing beauties of nature irresistibly lead to the great Almighty Power, whose wisdom and goodness are inexhaustible.

May 11th. Enjoyed my closet in the evening. It is wonderful that so few seem to be acquainted with the value of quiet.

18th. My brother returned; our mutual satisfaction at meeting is easier imagined than described.

21st. Spent some time in my closet. It will not be long ere the final end of all created things shall come. Watch therefore! be steadfast in prayer, always abounding in the work of the Lord.

29th. Unwell, and my spirits depressed. I earnestly wish to be patient, but I fail daily; yet will I call upon my God, my strength and my only hope.

9th. My mother received a letter from my brother William, with an account of his being fixed in a new situation. In the evening we walked up the hill; the weather was fine, and the sky beautiful, yet was my mind in a disposition not to be pleased. In vain do I search for the cause which frequently indisposes my whole frame, and gladly would I lay aside every unamiable propensity. Our happiness would be too great, should no internal difficulties arise. Perfect serenity and peace of mind are foretastes of future bliss, only permitted at seasons, to encourage our hope and strengthen our faith. Trials are necessary, that by faith and patience, we may obtain the prize of our high calling.

[Although Mary Capper does not seem to have been fully aware of the cause of her frequent depression, during her mother's stay at Wilmington, it appears probable that no small part of it might be occasioned by the knowledge that her parents disapproved of the change of religious profession and practice which her brother Jasper had made, and to which her own convictions powerfully attracted her. Her father however made affectionate mention of Jasper in writing to William, as appears by the following extract of a letter to him:]

*Birmingham, September 9th, 1782.*

My Dear William,

I cannot say but John's letter gave me some pangs for your disappointment, though I think you judged right in rejecting the offer at Norwich. Though a suspicious temper is a disgrace to human nature, yet as the world goes, it is prudent to be circumspect. It gives me pleasure that your undertaking is with the approbation of all your friends; it was sure to have mine, if likely to be for your good. You may depend on your mother rendering you every service in her power, with the utmost pleasure. Jasper may be of service to you, and it gives me pleasure to find you speak so kindly of his brotherly love, etc. True affection, love, and blessings to you all, from, dear William,

Your most affectionate father,

—WILLIAM CAPPER.

[In her journal Mary Capper continues:]

13th. "Forsake all, and thou shalt find all; leave thy inordinate desires, and thou shalt find rest." This is no easy task; self will loudly plead her own cause; but as we keep low, and attend to the voice of Truth, there will be a forsaking of self, and a witnessing God to be all in all. There is a charm in the very dawns of virtue that irresistibly attracts our admiration, and leads sweetly on in the pursuit of true wisdom.

14th. Walked to Milton Farm, and found them preparing for their harvest supper. The quantity provided on these occasions is really astonishing. We went to see our neighbour King's tables set out; they had two boiled rounds of beef, and several roasted pieces, two quarters of mutton and six legs of mutton; with six plum puddings. Their company consisted of men, women and children.

26th. My mother and I went to Lewes.

27th. My mother left me there; she was in much better spirits than myself.

30th. We called at friend Rickman's at the Bridge; we also went to Lambert's, the portrait and landscape painter. Mrs. Lambert showed us the plates designed for the first number of Curtis's botanical work; they appear exceedingly well executed.

October 1st. I had a letter from my mother, who got safe to town, and found our friends well. My brother William is very desirous to have me with him. I am distressed at the thought of leaving Mrs. Capper, nor can I persuade myself that my poor abilities can be any advantage to my brother; however I am ready to try my best skill in his service.

6th. Went to Church. Reflected with gratitude that I had neither opportunity nor strong temptation to join the giddy crowds, who seem to live wholly strangers to the still, small voice, which is not to be heard in tumult and confusion.

8th. Letters from London. My brother expects me in a fortnight.

9th. We drank tea at a friendly Quaker's, and were treated with freedom and simplicity.

15th. I have fixed to be in London this day fortnight; with reluctance I leave these scenes, where I have felt calm, peaceful delight, and with satisfaction have contemplated the beauties of simple nature; but the pleasures of the mind are confined to no place; in every situation, I am persuaded the bountiful Hand that enriches the field and the grove, ever affords subject for admiration, gratitude and praise.

17th. My brother went among the sick; though he cannot administer health, I hope the balm of comfort will be permitted to flow from his lips. The glad tidings of peace are sometimes suffered to reach the afflicted, through the faithful servants of the Lord.

27th. The last day of my residence at Wilmington! Words would fail to describe my feelings!

## Chapter IV

*Residence in London till 1788—Removal to Birmingham—Death of her mother in 1793*

[In the sketch which Mary Capper subsequently gave of her early life, she remarks:]

From the time that I went to live with my brother William, in London, I regularly attended Friends' meetings; not that I was acquainted with their peculiar religious views; indeed there seemed to be a prohibition of aught but simple evidence and obedience. The experience of others did not seem to reach my case; all was to be given up, that all things might be new; and such were the sacrifices required, from time to time, as none can know or understand, save those who have been led in a similar way.

About this time, in consequence of my decided resolution to attend the meetings of Friends, my dear father (no doubt in faithfulness to his own religious views, and from the desire to rescue a poor child from apprehended error) requested me not to return to the parental roof, unless I could be satisfied to conform to the religious education which he had conscientiously given me. This, with a tender, heart-piercing remonstrance from my dear, dear mother, was far more deeply felt than I can describe; and marvellous in my view, even to this day, was the settled, firm belief that I must follow on, to know the soul's salvation for myself; truly in a way that I knew not!

[In this time of deep affliction, she wrote, as follows, to her only sister:]

*February 11th, 1783.*

My very Dear Rebecca,

Must I forever give up the dear, pleasing hope of being received into the house and affections of my once kind, indulgent parents! Oh! my sister, will you, can you despise me? I have no firm consolation but in the belief that I am guided by a superior Power. I have exerted every faculty of my mind; I have resolutely mortified my body, endeavouring to bring it into subjection, free from the influence of passion and deceiving sense; and I have a secret intimation that the kingdom of Heaven is within us; that in the silence of the creature, is the power of God made known.

O! my Rebecca; if you would examine the uniform desire of my life, the earnestness of my supplications, and my present wish of being humble, pure, wholly dependent upon God my Maker, without any confidence in man; if you would thus consider me, without prejudice, I think you would not, could not, reject me! Of my own willings, or self abilities, I deserve little; but in my heart and understanding, I submit to a perfect Teacher; and in his Light, is my life and my hope. Think not, my Rebecca, that I have contracted ideas, which circumscribe salvation to any particular sect. God forbid! my heart is contrariwise enlarged in universal charity. Let each be satisfied in his own mind, and the censures or applauses of multitudes can only be a secondary consideration,

of no weight.

Would my dear parents deliberately compare my conduct with their own principles, I think they would not find that essential difference which a superficial view represents. I wish, and really mean to act as a reasonable creature; redeemed, and born to newness of life, through the death, sufferings and resurrection of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; by whose intercession and promised spiritual assistance, I am encouraged and strengthened to call, and wait upon the living God. If there is presumption and self-exaltation in this faith, I am utterly at a loss how to act; for I dare not trust in man, whose breath is in his nostrils. My hope and my confidence are alone in the Redeemer of his people.

No earthly satisfaction could equal that of being approved by my dear parents; but indeed Rebecca, I cannot—cannot act contrary to what I believe tends to my advancement in faithful obedience to the law of God; the law which I find written in my own heart; for I believe, from that law shall a man be judged, When faithfully followed, it cannot, will not, lead him from the Supreme Good. Every line in Holy Writ tends to strengthen or encourage our hopes, in humble confidence in the One only Good; opening our eyes to the folly of trifling amusements, and to the vain fashions of the world. Farewell, my dear Rebecca! believe me, I never was more affectionately your sister,

—MARY.

[The foregoing letter appears to have been answered by the following from her mother.]

*Birmingham, February 15th, 1783.*

You have kept me in painful suspense for some time, by not answering a plain, simple question; that is, whether you wished ever to return, to give comfort to a poor afflicted parent or not. You have now answered fully to your sister; but why trouble her with a repetition of the same, or to the same purport, that you had written from France? You did very well in not sending the letter you mention to have written to me, if it run in the same strain, and I am inclined to believe it doth; for my present intention is, that I shall neither read nor hear any letter or writing that shall come from you to myself or others, if I can without difficulty avoid it; in consequence of which this probably may be the last time I shall trouble you; and this I intend to be very short; for what can be said to one under such strong, enthusiastic delusion, as to declare against all prescribed rules in worship, etc., and at the same time, hath entered into a Society who do not act, speak or move, or even conduct the most trifling affairs but by prescript? I mean, in anything that carries the form of religion; but you presume to have an immediate call, or direction, from that Supreme Being, whose positive commandment you dare to break, for the sake of a few speculative opinions, made known to you by those whom you esteem; not by persuasion; no! for that way they disclaim, but by a far more sly and insinuating way.

O! my child, I could tell you by what means they have worked on your judgment, but I forbear, as I have not a glimpse of hope that it would be to any good purpose. O! how does my heart, as it were, die within me, when

I think of the effect it will have on your poor father? What would I give that it could be kept from him! and that it may be, as long as possible, shall be my care; for my firm belief is, that if he was to know the contents of your last letter, whilst he is under his present bodily infirmity, he would hardly long survive it; but of what consequence is that to one who, I fear, fancies herself under convincement! but do reflect a little, my dear child; what is it that thou art called upon to do, or what to forego? Our most fervent desire and prayer is that you, and the rest of our dear children, should, through the Grace or Light that is afforded us by our all-gracious God, worship Him in spirit and in truth; without which, most certainly, our prayers become unprofitable, and only vain lip-labour. But there are some forms, you will say, that you cannot assent to; I will admit it may be so, and perhaps there is no system at this time existing that is entirely perfect; but I firmly believe ours to come nearer to perfection than any other. You think otherwise; so did Naaman when he prayed, that when he was performing his duty in that state of life to which he was called, and bowed in the house of Rimmon, that in that thing, the Lord would pardon him; and the prophet said. Go in peace!

Three o'clock. I wrote the above last night, after your poor father was gone to bed; I thought him better yesterday than for some time past; he wrote a letter to your brother John, and was in good spirits; but in the night, was seized with a cold shivering, and hath ever since been very ill. He has not been up today, and I am now attending by his bedside; he is quiet and seems more comfortable than he has been. The great Disposer of all events only knows what may happen; but whatever it may be, I earnestly pray that He will permit me such a measure of Divine grace and assurance, as shall enable me to bear, in a Christian manner, whatever may be laid upon me.

I have run on much more than I, at first, thought to have done, when I sat down to write. I intended it to be but a very few lines. My heart still dictates much more, but I will forbear, as they will not let my child off; one convinced member, as they term it, is of more esteem in that Society than twenty born and bred in it; but I have done; farewell! may you be happy, whatever be allotted for the short remains of your mother's days!

—REBECCA CAPPER.

One other word will drop from my pen, in spite of me. Return; return, my child! and I will receive thee with more joy than I did the first moment I beheld thee!

[Deeply was her mother to be felt for, and great was the anguish with which this letter was perused; indeed this period of Mary Capper's life was seldom, if ever, alluded to by her without much emotion. The conflict was distressing; yet was she strengthened to persevere in what was clearly manifested to be the path of duty; and although her father recovered from that attack of illness, yet' as he did not allow her to return home; and as his last illness was both sudden and short, she was deprived of the consolation of again seeing him, and of receiving from his own lips, an assurance of his affection. It may easily be conceived that this was indescribably trying to her; but she was enabled to lift up her heart, and to commit her cause unto Him, for whom she was thus forsaking her earthly home and parents; and He was pleased to speak peace to her afflicted soul; and in his own good time, to grant her the hundred-fold,

even in this life. The following memoranda, and letter, will bear witness to the state of her mind at this period, and for some time after.]

London, 6th of Ninth month, 1783. Praise the Lord, O! my soul, and be exceeding glad in the God of thy salvation; for he hath done great things for thee, and wonderful is his power! He hath plucked thy feet out of the mire and clay, and hath set them upon a rock; the only true foundation, throughout all ages to the end of the world! My spirit is exceedingly glad that the Lord hath heard the prayers of his handmaiden, and in great mercy, granted my earnest request. He hath strengthened me to part with all the nearest and dearest of his gifts; to sit loose from the tenderest connections, that I may be free to fulfill the great command of loving the Lord my God, with all my heart, with all my mind, and with all my strength.

O! let none think the terms hard! our God is a God of infinite mercy; he is not a hard master, reaping where he has not sown! My soul can testify of his bounty; and my desire, and my glory, is to adore, to praise and to magnify his holy name! Amen! Amen!

24th of Fourth month, 1784. There seems a state brought to the view of my mind, as being attainable even during our sojourn in this world; a state free from sin, when Christ shall dwell in us, and we in him. The righteousness which he worketh in us must be perfect; every will and working of the creature being laid low, God shall reign over all, blessed forever! In this state of freedom from the dominion of sin, temptations and trials may, and assuredly will come; but as we keep close to the light of Christ, inwardly manifested, I believe we shall be preserved blameless; without spot or blemish, to the honour of our great and holy Teacher; to whom be ascribed power, majesty and praise, now and forever. Amen!

22nd of Seventh month, 1784. The ways of the Lord are wonderful and past finding out. O! let none be weary of waiting upon him, for he will be gracious to all those who faithfully call upon him! My earnest cries have gone forth, and I believe the Lord hath heard the voice of my prayer. My groans and my tears have not been hid from him. Glory, praise and honour be to his name! Let the creature lie low, that the Creator may be all in all forever and ever. Amen!

14th of Twelfth month, 1784. O! how pure, how perfect is the Truth as it is in Jesus! Keep to it, O! my soul; turn neither to the right hand nor the left, but press forward, through all difficulties; for the light of Christ within thee will break forth into perfect day, if on thy part thou art steady, undaunted, and of a right faith!—O! my God, help me! leave me not to the delusions, the buffetings of my soul's enemy! Keep me in the patience, that I may watch thy coming, and be found of thee. Thou art worthy to be waited upon, O! Lord, my God! in thee is my hope, and my trust forever! As rest to the weary traveller, so is true silence to the deeply exercised mind.

**MARY CAPPER TO W. B.**

*11th of Third month, 1785.*

Dear Friend,

With propriety I believe I may use the term, dear friend, as all in the Truth seem dear to me. Since our conversation this afternoon, I have had to remember, in a very lively manner, the Lord's dealings with my soul in early life. I was at times visited with a sweet sense of purity and truth; but from my situation and mode of education, I was at a loss how to come at that which my soul seemed to see at a distance.

For several years the prospect was, as it were, closed, or very rarely opened. I thought myself a useless being, and I believe sometimes almost repined that I was born; but about the twenty-third year of my age, the Lord graciously re-visited my soul; and it was, indeed, as the dry and barren wilderness, refreshed with dew. I think I cannot forget the sweet incomes of divine favour. The whole creation seemed new to me; all things spoke the love and mercies of a gracious God. Scarcely a day passed over without some sweet openings, some renewal of my great Master's condescension. I thought myself the happiest of human creatures. Thus delectably did the God of all my mercies allure me into the wilderness! Every required sacrifice seemed ready prepared by his own hand, and I had only to wait his own time. Happy have I thought it, that he was pleased to stay my mind! When my dear, loved parents expressed their concern at my change, it was suggested to me, that for a time, it was my place to be subject in all things lawful, and way would be made where I saw no way; and far beyond my expectation, this has indeed been verified. But what seems more immediately to dwell upon my mind to communicate to thee is, that I have, in my measure, found that the Lord's merciful dealings stir up the envy and malice of our grand enemy, when our gracious Father is pleased to hide his countenance and try our faith, after having sweetly led us in the right way. Then is the enemy as one triumphing over his prey. O! how is he permitted to buffet, to terrify the poor, timid soul! My mind has sometimes been as one almost without hope; and had not the hand of the Lord been underneath, I had surely fainted; but my spiritual eye was led to retrace the paths I had trod, and I was favoured to see the Lord's dealings, and that tribulations were appointed to the faithful followers of a crucified Jesus.

With affectionate wishes for thy prosperity in the Truth,

I am, sincerely,

—MARY CAPPER.

[The following brief remark is among her memoranda:]

On the 2nd of the fourth month, 1785, my dear father died without my seeing him! I heard that he enquired with affection for a pair of garters which I had knit for him, and that he spoke with tenderness of me. O! this was like precious balm!

[No special mention is made of a change in her mother's feelings towards her, but there is reason

to believe that she gradually, from the time of her widowhood, became reconciled to her daughter's proceedings; being doubtless convinced of the rectitude of her motives; so that the way was at length made for Mary's returning to the parental dwelling.

It appears that Mary Capper was received into membership with the Society of Friends about the year 1785, also that she spoke as a minister in their religious meetings soon after that event. With respect to the latter circumstance, she writes:]

It sometimes arose in my mind, that possibly I might have to tell unto others how I had been taught, and kept from the broad way of destruction; and a few words arising, with something of unusual power, I think at the Peel meeting, I stood up and spoke them, and felt very quiet; nor did I anticipate that such a thing might ever be required again; and thus I was led on, from time to time, not knowing but each time might be the last. About 1788, I came to reside with my dear mother, at Birmingham, and she did not object to my regularly attending Friends' meetings.

[The occasion of her leaving London, and going to reside with her mother, appears to have been the indisposition of the latter, and is briefly alluded to in the following extract of a letter to her from her brother William.]

*London, 17th of February, 1788.*

My very Dear Sister,

I cannot delay writing to you, since you say that my silence adds to the painful sensations of your heart. Indeed, my dear Mary, if I could write anything that would alleviate one anxiety of thy dear breast, I would not let a post go without a letter. You will be glad to hear that all things in the family go on as though you were present. I called this afternoon in Berkley Square; uncle John has had a severe fit of the gout. I spent Friday evening with Jasper and Nancy; they are well and comfortable. How could I write so much, and not once mention our dear mother! I am-much grieved at the account you give of her, and hope to have a better in your next. Comfort her, my dear girl! give her my sincere duty and affection, and tell her I am happy that I had such a sister as you, to send to her consolation. Remember me in affection to brother Samuel, to his wife, and to George. I am, dear Mary,

Thy truly affectionate brother,

—WILLIAM CAPPER.

[Though very little allusion to the circumstance is found in any of Mary Capper's papers, it seems scarcely right wholly to omit the mention of a yet more costly sacrifice than any that she had previously made, which was called for at her hands, before she quitted London as her home. She had formed a

strong attachment to a young man Friend, to whom she expected to be married, when she discovered that he did not set a high value on his membership in the Society of Friends, and that he was inclined for more liberty in practice than their principles allowed of. This was a most painful discovery to her; and as farther communication with him proved to her, that he was one who could not fully enter into her religious feelings and views, she felt it to be her duty to break off the connection, though it nearly cost her her life; and she could never afterwards entertain the prospect of matrimony.

The following extract from a letter of her mother's, will show how changed were her feelings towards Mary, and towards Jasper and his wife.]

*Birmingham, June 16th, 1788.*

My Dear Mary,

In answer to your last, I feel truly concerned that poor Smallwood<sup>1</sup> has fresh appearances of his disorder; and sorry I am at the disappointment which his parents must suffer. If necessary I advise, by all means, that you should attend him; for whatever my own views may have been, I readily give them all up, for the good of this poor afflicted child, and the comfort of his father and mother, to whom give my most tender love.

With respect to the other proposal that your brother and sister have signified to you, I believe the bent of your own mind must determine you; this I verily believe; that the goodness of your own heart will incline you to undertake that which is the most needful for your friends.

I have only to add, that (wherever you may fix yourself for a time) whilst you remain single, I would have you to look upon my habitation, so long as I live, as your fixed and settled home. Thank your brother Jasper, in my name, for his attention to your aunt Chase.

Tibbatts<sup>2</sup> was here on Sunday; he says Rebecca is well. Believe me, dear Mary,

Your affectionate mother,

Rebecca Capper.

[Mary Capper does not appear to have kept a journal regularly till after the death of her mother, but a few remarks were penned occasionally; and sometimes the petitions of an exercised soul. The following will, it is believed, be acceptable to the reader.]

10th of Sixth month, 1789. My soul! wait thou upon God; although heaviness and insensibility may

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1 The eldest son of Jasper and Anne Capper.

2 The husband of her sister Rebecca.

perplex and distress thee, yet be not dismayed, nor weary of well-doing; for assuredly they that wait upon the Lord; that patiently and quietly wait, shall renew their strength. They shall mount upwards, they shall rise as upon eagles' wings, they shall be raised above this grovelling earth; but it may be needful that they should feel how necessary it is to wait upon the Lord, and that, with long patience and deep humility. O! Lord my God! if it be thy holy will, be pleased at this time to increase my faith and my patience, that I may more perfectly know and wait upon thee!

Eleventh month, 1790. Thou gracious Fountain of all our mercies, O! be pleased to look down upon us, and save us from our sins! Jesus, the Redeemer, has died that we might be perfected through his atoning sacrifice; let us not then make his sufferings of none effect to us ward, by an evil heart of unbelief! My soul feels a weight of sorrow for my own insensibility; and many, very many, are my imperfections, particularly, O! my God! (may I call Thee my gracious Father!) I have to lament at this day, a proneness to impatience and frowardness of spirit. Gracious Father! I would confess my sins that I may be healed; but Thou knowest all my thoughts, and the devices of my heart; therefore with all my burden of infirmities, weakness and folly, I bow at the footstool of thy mercy, and hope to be kept in patient humility, waiting thy time to deliver me from my soul's enemies; for the power is thine!

1791. At this period of my life, my faith is that there is one God, who is supremely good, and doeth good continually; that at sundry times and in divers manners throughout all ages of the world, He has been pleased to manifest Himself to the sons and daughters of men; that in this our day, He shows Himself in the glorious dispensation of the gospel; having sent his own Son to be made flesh, and dwell among men for a time, in an earthly body.

Though mysterious his death and sufferings, I believe that Christ died to redeem us from sin; and that, in and through Him, believers have access to the Throne of Grace.

Eighth month, 1791. My faith being renewed in Christ Jesus, the Son and express image of the living God, I bow in humility and hope at the footstool of mercy, looking for redemption and remission of sin. O! the malady of the soul! how foul it is!

There is not, in nature, an antidote to so great evil; but the Lord of life and glory came down from heaven, from the bosom of his Father, to recover lost mankind, and throw consolatory hope into the cup of human woe; made a bitter cup by man's disobedience and pride.

Gracious, holy Father! open the blind eye! unstop the deaf ear! that we may see and acknowledge the mystery of thy condescending love!

[Towards the end of the year 1793, Mary Capper appears to have been absent from Birmingham, attending upon a sick friend; during this period she received the following letters from her mother:]

*Birmingham, 18th September, 1793.*

My Dear Mary,

I hope they will not remove the young woman till the doctor thinks it may be done with safety. Don't be uneasy on my account. I continue tolerably well, when I am quiet; and what a blessing it is that I have it in my power to be so! I am not so much alone as you may think, for my neighbours are kind in calling on me. Your brother George dines with me most days, comes home in good time at night, and often looks in, during the day.

Farewell, my dear Mary! I shall be truly glad to receive you, when it is proper for you to come home; but I am not impatient.

Believe me, your sincerely affectionate mother,

—REBECCA CAPPER.

*Colmore Row, 23rd September, 1793.*

My Dear Mary,

I am well pleased that you may leave Park Gate, with safety to your patient. W. Shorthouse tells me he intends setting out tomorrow to conduct you. He did intimate, some time ago, a thought of taking you to Liverpool; now if circumstances coincide, I wish you to embrace the opportunity, as another may not offer. Don't hasten home at all on my account; I seem at this moment quite well. I was out only once yesterday, for the weather was rainy, and the wind very cold. I was very much gratified, and I hope edified, by a discourse on the words of St. James, "Let patience have her perfect work."

I am, dear Mary, your truly affectionate mother,

—REBECCA CAPPER.

[Rebecca Capper died in the twelfth month, 1793; but no particulars are known of the illness that terminated her life, or of her closing moments.]

## Chapter V

*Travels during the years 1794 to 1801—Visits at Stoke Neicington, etc.*

[Mary Capper appears, from the time of her mother's decease, to have devoted herself to the service of

her Divine Master; being a diligent attender of religious meetings, and travelling much to promote the spread of Truth and righteousness in various parts of this country. She was acknowledged as a minister in the early part of the year 1794. Her ministry was sound and of a spiritual character; having herself largely partaken of the conflict between flesh and spirit, she was often concerned to encourage the sincere-hearted, patiently to submit to proving seasons, looking for effectual help to the light and power of our Lord Jesus Christ.]

1794. Third month, 8th. I set out with a minute expressive of the concurrence of my own monthly meeting, to meet Mary Beesley at Bromsgrove, in order to unite with a committee of men Friends appointed by the quarterly meeting, to visit our monthly and preparative meetings.

10th. After attending various meetings, returned to Birmingham, where the meeting for ministers and elders was held in the evening. Ruth Fallows and Sarah Stephenson were present.

22nd. The friends of the committee met, and had a solemn opportunity of conference with us, children in the work; to our edification and encouragement. It was judged best to proceed in the engagement, previous to the yearly meeting.

24th. Monthly meeting at Shipstone; the gathering was large, and measurably favoured with solemnity; to the comfort and encouragement of rightly exercised minds. We called upon some families, after which we sat awhile together, under humbling feelings; then separated to return to our several allotments, having finished the engagement; through which we had been favoured with tender unity of spirit, and we now part desiring each others welfare and growth in the Truth.

Yearly Meeting, 1794. Fifth month, 19th. Martha Routh spread before the meeting of ministers and elders, a concern to pay a religious visit to Friends and others in America; also John Wigham, a similar concern; these came under weighty consideration. In the afternoon there was a meeting for discipline, at the new meetinghouse, for women Friends; the gathering, very large. Patience Chester is clerk, and Sarah Hustler assistant.

20th. An affecting epistle from women Friends in Philadelphia was read; it set forth their deep suffering and humiliation, when that city was awfully visited by the yellow fever.

21st. Attended the meeting for worship in White Hart Court, to my refreshment and comfort. Mary Ridgway was particularly favoured, on the words, "Be still, and know that I am God!" I was inwardly made sensible of the great need there is to keep on the watch, in these large meetings. O! saith my soul, that we little ones may be preserved in the quiet, humble, silent, resigned state! Aware of the great importance of speaking in these assemblies, we should wait for that which burns as a fire that will hardly be restrained.

22nd. Certificates were read, in the select meeting, expressive of concurrence with the concern of the

Friends for visiting America. Some weighty counsel was given, recommending that they who speak in these meetings should be careful only to speak from necessity. The meeting broke up under a covering of solemnity; and my heart's desire is that we may study to dwell in the stillness, wherein self is abased, and the Power of Truth exalted.

I believe that some of us are tempted to think, that unless we appear to take some active part in Truth's service, we may be looked upon by others, and perhaps by ourselves, as useless, lifeless members; but far otherwise is my judgment at this time. The humble patient traveller, who bears the burden of the word, until the right time comes for deliverance, (when the message will be accompanied by a measure of power and authority,) assuredly works essentially for the general good.

23rd. At Horsleydown, gospel ministry was dispensed through Mary Ridgway, a devoted servant. In the afternoon, several testimonies concerning deceased ministers were read, to the tendering and humbling of some minds; raising desires to run with patience, the race set before them. One was from Wales, respecting Dorothy Owen; and one from Ireland, relative to Job Scott.

24th. Our esteemed friend Samuel Emlen, accompanied by another Friend, made us a very acceptable visit. The men's meeting sent us for perusal, a very interesting communication from Friends in America; some of whom, in considering the late awful visitation of some parts of that Continent, were so deeply concerned for the general good, that they had believed it required from them, to represent to the Rulers and persons in power, the necessity for their exerting their authority, to endeavour to suppress all public amusements, gaming, stage entertainments, and dram shops, as being sources of much immorality and profaneness, widely estranging the mind from God and godliness.

27th. A caution was given to be especially careful that our conversation savour not of the spirit of this world; that at a time like the present, when nation seems rising against nation, and the rumour of war sounds in our ears, we may get every one to our tent, and there wait to be rightly prepared to meet the overturnings which may come; not presuming to offer our own conjectures upon events, but rather studying to be quiet, and to mind our own business; the important business of knowing a preparation to meet our God.

28th. Answers to some of the epistles were read. A sentiment ran through my mind, that a day may come when we shall feel some restrictions in our correspondence; at least in the length of our communications; refraining even from good words. We had a very acceptable visit from Thomas Shillitoe and others, who exhorted us to keep to the power in which our meetings were first established; that no mouth should utter words without life; but that in humble waiting upon God, we might know a being baptized into the one Spirit, wherein all are brought into true harmony.

Ann Tuke and other women friends mentioned a concern to visit the men's meeting; they had the sympathy and concurrence of feeling minds. Susanna Row accompanied them, and on their return, she

expressed her satisfaction in having been with them. The meeting concluded in awful, reverent silence, and we separated under humbling impressions.

### *Journey In Wales.*

1794. Eighth month, 3rd. Mary Beesley having long felt a deep concern of mind, to pay a visit to Friends in Wales, and in the county of Hereford, my mind was, after serious consideration, engaged to accompany her; for this purpose we obtained certificates. On first-day, after attending a favoured meeting at Worcester, we dined at Wick, with the parents of my friend, and parted from them in much tenderness of spirit, and in a humbling sense of our own inability for what we had in prospect. Through the care and kindness of Friends we were suitably provided. Thomas Goode, of Birmingham, was sent to accompany us through the journey, and Robert Newman went with us to Ross. Our first stage was to Ledbury, where we lodged. One lonely woman Friend, a widow, lives in the town, and received a visit from us very kindly.

Second-day. From Ledbury to Ross; at Thomas Pritchard's. Went on to Troy; we had to travel through a beautiful country, but the best life was low with us.

Third-day. Before we left William Dew's, had a little glimpse of the Heavenly Father's love, on which a few words were spoken, and we separated in tenderness.

Fourth-day. Monthly meeting at Pontymoyle; to which place we walked about a mile. Though but few in number, there was something of divine power to be felt, wherein we seemed to be owned as members of the living Catholic Church, which is of one spirit, and is united to the Head, Christ Jesus. My beloved friend Mary Beesley was strengthened to open, in a weighty manner, a concern to sit in the families.

Fifth-day. We came to James Lewis's, a remote situation in a valley at Lanelly, in Brecknockshire. Rough and fatiguing roads; we walked part of the way, though heavy rain made it difficult.

Sixth-day. Set out in the morning to visit Richard Harford and his wife, five miles off"; the road is here esteemed good, and indeed so the main road is; but to us the rocks and precipices were alarming, though to be admired as awfully grand. It is a railroad for the use of a coal company: meeting with their wagons and loaded horses was to me frightful; however we were favoured to get safely along. Friends receive us with much cordiality, making plentiful provision for refreshing the body; but ah! a few crumbs from our Master's table are still more desirable to us, for we are poor and stripped of inward consolation; yet favoured quietly to hope for a brighter season. After dinner we sat with the family. If we are preserved from hurting others, or wounding ourselves, it is no small favour. O! Father, preserve us, and leave us not! for we cannot direct ourselves. In the evening, sat with James Lewis's family.

Second-day. Were favoured to leave Pontipool in peace, and came to Penhow Castle, a good old farm

house, where we were very hospitably received. The mistress is a plain, agreeable person, not born in our Society, but convinced by the secret power of Truth in her own breast: we did not see her husband, who was engaged in harvest work. In this family lives a poor old man; blind, and with locks as white as wool; we spoke to him, and his remarks seemed to do us good, evincing that his mind was brought into childlike simplicity, as he, in a few words, described his own weakness, and entire dependence on Divine Goodness. The mistress of the house said he had lived with them for many years, and that she had seen him, at times, in the fields, apparently in a retired state of mind, with tears trickling down his cheeks. She accompanied us to Shire Newton, where was a small meeting. We sat with one Friend's family, and some neighbours, who seemed disposed to receive the Truth in the love of it, as ministered by very feeble instruments, who sought not their own exaltation. Returned to Penhow by a beautiful road, with a fine view of the Bristol channel.

Third-day. The master of the house made way for his men and boys, with the maid servants, quite a large number, to come and sit down with us; and I think we may in humility confess that our Heavenly Father favoured us, in ministering, according to the ability given, and we trust to their edification. Stayed all night at Newport.

I note down, as a watchword for myself, that I am this day made sensible that there is need to watch; and most especially in times of favour, for here is danger of sliding into a state of ease. I have this day felt the reproofs of instruction in my own mind, for not being sufficiently guarded in my conduct toward strangers. There is a propensity in some natures to be open and unreserved; but I wish to be thankful for the gentle, internal monition, and to remember that it is needful to be prudent, especially when thus engaged in the service of the great cause of Truth; even innocent cheerfulness, if not strictly guarded, may lead into inconvenience.

Fifth-day. Came to the house of Evan Rees, Neath.

First-day, 17th. Attended the meetings at Swansea. A day of humiliation and suffering. Returned to Neath.

Second-day. Remained at our kind friend Evan Rees's; not being fully satisfied in our minds, which might be the right and safe way for us to move; we were thankful in believing that our friends felt for us.

Third-day. Prepared to re-visit Swansea; Evan Rees accompanies us; Friends are very kind. We visited the few in their families. There are young people growing up, whose situation seems to demand tender care.

Fifth-day. Came to the house of Jane Lewis, Haverfordwest.

Sixth-day. Received the unexpected intelligence of my brother Harry being called from this uncertain state of existence; his illness was short, and he has left a young wife, for whom I feel much. My dear brother was young, hardly past what is termed the bloom of life.

First-day, 24th. A low time in the meetings. In the family, felt more life and liberty; tender counsel, caution and encouragement flowed toward the children. Mary Beesley very poorly.

Second-day. It appears probable that we shall not feel clear of this place without sitting in the families of Friends. Jane Lewis accompanied us into one family.

Fourth-day. Came with Daniel Starbuck, to Pill, where Samuel Starbuck and wife, his son and daughter and their little ones reside. They were formerly from Nantucket; and in the time of the American troubles, were sufferers, with many others.

Fifth-day. At meeting; poverty of spirit my allotted portion. After dinner, walked about a mile to Milford, where Samuel Starbuck, Jr. lives; his wife was sick, and we sat together in her chamber. We crossed the water, in a small boat, to visit a serious woman who frequents our meetings; her husband is a sailor; the vessel lying near shore she sent for him, and I thought we were favoured together, with a little sweet refreshment, though in a very humble hut, where outward accommodations were but mean; but I thought there was something to be felt far preferable to all that the world could bestow. Returned to Pill.

Seventh-day. Daniel Starbuck and his wife accompanied us to a family who profess with us; but the female branches having married out of our Society, the spiritual life seems to have received a check. Surely these marriages have proved a great hinderance to our brightness as a people! In these parts, in particular, it seems to have been the means of scattering. We dined with these friends, and had an opportunity to express the desire which was raised, that the power of godliness might be preferred to the form. Returned to Haverford.

First-day, 31st. At both meetings. A day not without some light and peace, though intermixed with bitters.

Ninth month 1st. Second-day. We are yet bound here. Called upon a Moravian teacher who had been to visit us; truly a uniting power spread over us, and I believe we parted in that Christian spirit which sincerely desires each others growth in the real principle of Truth. Surely there still are different dispensations, as to the outward, but one and the same spirit. In a few words, delivered in great simplicity, H. S. exhorted us, "as we had received Christ, so to walk in Him." In the afternoon, visited a serious family of Moravians, who seemed to receive us with open house and heart. We had a solid time together. In the evening we had an opportunity of solemn retirement with Jane Lewis and five of her children; something of the Heavenly Father's love was felt.

Third-day. Very considerable was our exercise in not feeling at liberty to go forward; after a season of some trial, and I trust unfeigned supplication, we believed it right to have an evening meeting; which, being mentioned in diffidence and fear to Jane Lewis and other friends, we were encouraged to appoint one. We particularly desired the attendance of servants and apprentice lads.

The gathering was large, and remarkably still. I believe there is a tender, honest-minded people in this

place; and assuredly the Heavenly Father's love is over them, and will gather them unto Himself!

Fourth-day. We attended the women's monthly meeting; no meeting for business held by the men; indeed the discipline is so low, that the very form is almost lost; we wish that a revival, through the power of Truth, may take place among them; seeing that many young people are growing up, who are much uninformed. We rather hope the American Friends S. and A. Starbuck, etc. will be united, and add a little strength, to these feeble ones.

Fifth-day. Parted from our kind friends Jane Lewis and others, in an almost silent feeling of solemnity; our spirits seeming still, as it were, to hover round them, earnestly desiring their growth in the spiritual life. We left them in a feeling of sadness, and pursued our journey in pensive quietness. Our kind and ancient friend Samuel Starbuck, with his valuable wife, accompanied us on horseback. Came as far as Westmore, where we were comfortably lodged in a Friend's family, after arriving late, as the road was rough and difficult.

Seventh-day. Reached Caermarthen. The company of Samuel Starbuck and his wife, was a comfort and encouragement to us.

First-day, Ninth month 6th. We went to meeting in weakness and fear; several sober people came in, and it proved a season of favour.

In the afternoon there was a large gathering, and the power of Truth so far prevailed, that all seemed brought into a degree of solemn stillness. Some exhortations, and some plain truths, were expressed.

Second-day. Travelled through a beautiful country to Llandilo; we met Job Thomas, who conducted my friend and me to his own habitation, a very humble, thatched dwelling. We were kindly received by his wife, a native of the mountains, who speaks no English, but whose countenance bids us welcome to the best they can afford, and we feel easy. It is however somewhat painful that, as there is not room for our kind friends Samuel Starbuck and wife, they are obliged to ride a mile farther.

Third-day. Our kind, attentive friends came to breakfast with us, and we went nine miles on horseback, mostly over the mountains, to visit a man Friend; his habitation is mean, but his hearty reception of us, with his solid, innocent deportment, was ample amends for the fatigue.

Our valued friends Samuel Starbuck and wife left us this evening. Their company has been very acceptable, and we feel pain at parting from them, they having been more like parents to us than any we have met on our journey.

Fourth-day. We took tea with Job Thomas's brother and sister. Some neighbours had been invited to meet at Job's house, and a considerable number came. Job Thomas had something to express, but we sat silent; the people were quiet and solid; yet I thought they were too much looking without, for that which

is to be found within.

Fifth-day. Went on horseback six miles to Newhouse, where we attended a monthly meeting; there seemed to be honest enquiring minds, but too much outward. The members of our Society are very few, and some of them appear not enough separated from the language and corruptions of general custom. The meeting for business very small; the order of the discipline measurably preserved by Job Thomas; but things are low. In the evening came six miles, fording the river Towey, to Llandoverly.

Sixth-day. Job Thomas accompanied us thirteen long miles, over rough mountain road, very difficult for a carriage; we walked a mile or two and stopped at a very poor looking thatched house; we had a comfortable dinner, well cooked, for which they charged only eight pence each. We afterwards forded the river Irvon, and came ten Welsh miles to Builth.

Seventh-day. Job Thomas left us, and the innkeeper came guide with us to Rees Bowen's quiet habitation. The road was rugged, and we were glad to reach the house of our kind friend, being weary in body and mind.

First-day, 13th. Walked to the Pales meeting.

Fourth-day. Set forward, but it rained smartly, and we were very wet before we reached the Friend's house; appearances were rather discouraging, the master and mistress being from home, and a poor servant girl, with three or four children, seemed almost frightened at us; the house very mean, but like many others we have seen; and of this we hope never to utter a word of complaint; indeed we felt it to be cause for thankfulness to be received, and after a time, things became more comfortable. When the woman friend returned, she made up a good fire, and gave us some tea, with a hearty welcome, which quite satisfied us. Being fatigued, we soon retired to rest, and were accommodated far beyond our expectation, with a good bed, dry linen, etc.

Fifth-day. We had a religious opportunity with the family, under a measure of our Heavenly Father's love. We then set out for Pencraig; a terrifying storm of wind and rain came on, such as we had never experienced; but at length, being sometimes on horseback and at others walking, we safely reached our journey's end, to our no small comfort. Poor, wet, dirty figures we were! so we went to bed while our clothes were dried. We here met with James Lewis, from Llanelly, who had kindly been from place to place, in order to join us; it is some encouragement to our feeble minds, when we find valuable friends so disposed to help us on our way.

Sixth-day. A season of religious retirement in the family. Walked to visit a poor man, with whom we had an affecting time, under a sense of a tried, tempted state. Left him in a very tender frame of mind.

Seventh-day. Weather bound; which is no little disappointment; however we are preserved tolerably quiet in our minds.

First-day, 20th. Sat their morning meeting; the afternoon being favourable, we returned to Rees Bowen's, and were thankful to be once more quietly and comfortably accommodated.

Second-day. My dear friend much indisposed and very low, which is discouraging to me; I strive after resignation, and hope for a brighter day.

Third-day. Mary Beesley is better; we went, on horseback, to visit two families, each consisting of a man and wife, and five children. In the evening, Timothy Bevington, Thomas Colley, Joseph Gurney Bevan, and Richard Phillips, arrived very unexpectedly at Rees Bowen's, appointed by the yearly meeting to visit the meetings in Wales; a service which I hope will prove edifying, for they are in want of help.

Fourth-day. Went to Builth, after having a meeting.

Sixth-day. The week-day meeting; a comfortable season in silent waiting.

First-day, 27th. Sat the meeting in poverty, though not without some sense of good. Father of mercies! if we are right, strengthen us still in the right to stay! if we are wrong, thy light impart, to lead and teach the better way! Surely Thou hast raised in our hearts a sincere desire to be thy obedient children! the desire after good is thine, and the work of righteousness is altogether thine; and thy power alone can carry on and perfect thy own work!

Very unexpectedly, a little light broke in upon us, as we were sitting together, retired in spirit, after some Scripture reading, and a few words, spoken in tenderness by Rees Bowen. It was a refreshment, to our drooping minds, and we retired to rest, somewhat revived.

Second-day. Rees Bowen accompanied us to the school, near Llanidloes, where we were kindly received by Robert Whitaker and his wife.

Third-day. Sat with one family. After dinner our certificates were read, before the children withdrew, and we had an opportunity of explaining to them the nature of our engagement. Had a very pleasant walk to visit the family of Richard Brown; and another family, in a very poor cottage. Our minds were comforted in these lowly cots. We had also a time of solid retirement in spirit with Robert Whitaker and wife.

[Extract of a letter from Abigail Starbuck to Mary Capper and Mary Beesley received at Richard Brown's.]

*Milford, 17th of Ninth month, 1794.*

My dear Friends,

We were much pleased to hear from you, as you have been much the companions of our conversation, since we left you in this your arduous undertaking, sincerely wishing you comfort and encouragement in your passing along; which we have no reason to doubt, as I believe your minds are engaged to discharge the trust that is committed to you. Dear Friends, I may assure you it was with reluctance we left you; for the little time that we

were with you had made you feel very near to us, and we felt a near sympathy with you at parting.

We were obliged for your information of the committee's intention of visiting us, and hope they may be the means of strengthening the weak among us, for we have need of help; though I am sensible they cannot do the work for us, (although far more experienced) but that we must each look to our own standing. It is my wish that we may; and that we were worthy to be remembered by you, and to unite in desire after strength to press forward. I believe you will be often remembered by us, in our sequestered situation and lonely sittings. We are obliged to you for your care about our getting home, and can say the satisfaction we received in your company, more than compensated for the little fatigue of the journey. We found our children well. With our united love to you, in which they heartily join, your affectionate friend,

—ABIGAIL STARBUCK.

Fourth-day. A very exercising time in a family; yet we had to believe that Divine love is extended, to gather the returning prodigal. Sat also with a young woman who frequents our religious meetings; her parents being present. It was a time of renewal of strength. Had a satisfactory opportunity with the children after dinner; all seemed attentive, and some tendered; as were our own spirits. Our minds have been a little refreshed in this place.

10th of First month. Fifth-day. Left Llanidloes, and came eight miles to Eskergoch, where we sat their small meeting. The accommodations very lowly; we had a little refreshment with us, after partaking of which, and distributing our morsel, came twelve miles to Machynlleth. Richard Brown accompanied us; his pleasant countenance and his solid conduct, seemed to do us good.

Sixth-day. The morning wet, but we set forward with our acceptable guide; afternoon fine; got to Llwydee, and were kindly received at the house of Henry Owen, which is surrounded by huge rocks; with a grand view of Cardigan Bay.

First-day, 4th of Tenth month. The meetings were held at Henry Owen's; some sober people attended.

Second-day. We set out, accompanied by Henry Owen and wife, and our pleasant guide, Richard Brown. I rode single; the road rugged and stony, surrounded by prodigious mountains, with precipices, and the sea rolling below; the appearance awful, but my mind was preserved from apprehension of danger, which was no small favour. After emerging from between lofty rocks, just at twilight, Dolgelley appeared rather a pleasant spot, though it is a poor mean town.

Third-day. Went to a meeting appointed at Tyddyn-y-garreg; but few Friends. After some conflict, we gave up to what we apprehended might tend to peace; and accompanied by Richard Brown, proceeded to sit in the families separately, and were favoured to get through to satisfaction.

Fifth-day. Breakfasted at Welchpool, where we parted, in mutual tenderness, from our kind guide

Richard Brown. The country now open and beautiful, but my thoughts were much with the inhabitants of the mountains. Reached Shrewsbury. Buildings and signs of opulence, very different from what we have left. Our minds in a low spot; though through condescending mercy, no railing accusation disturbed our measure of peace.

Sixth-day. The few Friends met us here. Received letters.

*Milford, 10th of Tenth month, 1794.*

Dear and esteemed Friend, Mary Beesley,

We have been anxious to hear how you get along, and we had the pleasure to hear from you by the Friends that visited this quarter; their concern was to strengthen what remained, and to endeavour to build up the waste places, and to encourage in us a diligent perseverance in the Truth. It appeared to me that their counsel and admonition was dropped in much caution and tenderness, and I hope it may be attended to by us all. Their visit was truly acceptable.

My dear friend, I feel myself much obliged to thee for thy tender counsel and advice to our son Samuel, and hope it may make lasting impression on his mind. It is my desire, for mine, that they may be enabled to make straight steps, having their eye single, to that which is able to preserve from the snares and temptations which may present; and as for us that are advanced in years, though we are far short of being as way-marks, it is my desire that we may so conduct ourselves as not to be stumbling-blocks; but that we may endeavour to press forward, though many times under a sense of our own weakness and unworthiness, feeling desires to unite with the living, and to be favoured to partake of the crumbs which fall from their tables.

Samuel desires gratefully to acknowledge thy kindness to him; and Daniel presents his dear love to both his beloved friends, he was pleased to hear of their being at Llanidloes, and would be obliged by their opinion respecting the school.

Seventh-day. Set out for Coalbrookdale; good road and fine country; the Severn winds beautifully. Not a little gratified in meeting with our very kind friend, Richard Reynolds, his wife, and dear Priscilla H. Gurney.

First-day, 11th. Sat the preparative and other meetings.

Second-day. Called at two schools, supported by the Dale Friends, for the instruction of poor children. It was pleasant to sit with the children, and to observe the care exercised toward them. We then walked to the cottage, a quiet retreat: we were accompanied by dear Priscilla H. Gurney, who has an apartment at the cottage, for her own accommodation, furnished in simplicity.

Fourth-day. Several Friends accompanied us to their monthly meeting, at Shrewsbury. A small gathering.

Sixth-day. Came to the house of T. Waring, at Leominster. Our mare failing in strength, we judged it best to send her to Worcester, under the care of our attentive and constant guide, Thomas Goode, whom we also think it right to set at liberty to return home. We have to acknowledge his uniformly obliging care towards us, throughout our long journey.

Seventh-day. Again set our faces toward the mountains, to attend an adjourned monthly meeting, at the Pales, in Radnorshire. William Young was so kind as to accompany us. Got to Rees Bowen's about dusk.

First-day, 18th. Agreeably surprised to see Richard Brown, who had come to meet us. Several sober people attended the meeting, to our satisfaction, and we hope in no way to their own hurt. At the meeting for discipline, most of the few members and their children were present, and we have some ground to think it was a favoured opportunity, to our encouragement. The hands of the very few rightly concerned Friends in these parts stand in need of strengthening, and the dear children of instruction.

20th. A beautiful day for our return to Leominster.

21st. At meeting. A weighty part of our concern remains to be accomplished; that of sitting in the families of Friends of this county.

23rd. Entered on the service; the company of our friend William Young is very acceptable to us, 24th. Simple obedience to apprehended requireing is no small exercise; but worthy is the Lord to be waited upon, and in humility obeyed!

29th. Came to meeting at Bromyard.

30th. A day of humiliation and poverty of spirit. Sat with the families; in the evening favoured with a peaceful calm.

Eleventh month 1st. Came to Thomas Pritchard's at Ross.

4th. A little favoured with that which tenders and contrites the hard heart; which is not at our command, but is very precious, and worth waiting for.

6th. Went ten miles to visit a family; very affecting was the situation of the man Friend; lamenting, in much contrition, time passed, with faculties abused; an awful lesson!

10th. Rode on horseback to Cowkerry, and sat with the family; this concludes the engagement here. My mind is in a low spot; but upon a retrospect, do not feel condemnation, but encouragement to continued prayer to the Father of mercies, that I may be a humble, patient believer, waiting at the footstool of Divine grace.

11th. We have not felt at liberty to leave this place, tomorrow being the monthly meeting. If favoured with a little renewal of strength to our edification, we shall not murmur, though we feel it desirable to reach our journey's end.

12th. Sat the meetings under close exercise; we trust that our desires were honest, and the rest we must leave; but O! may the Father of mercies more and more manifest of his own wisdom and pure righteousness, in the secret of our hearts; and may we who profess the Truth, be humble, patient and faithful!

14th. Favoured at Worcester meeting, with inward comfort and peace.

[Soon after the conclusion of this journey, Mary Capper went to pay a visit to her brother Jasper, at Stoke Newington, during which she wrote as follows:]

1795, First month, 4th day. As I rode this evening from London to Stoke Newington, it came under my consideration whether it might not be profitable to myself, or in some measure to the dear children with whom my lot is now cast, to take some written account of my daily thoughts and actions, with the most prevailing dispositions of my mind. It is under humiliating apprehensions that I enter upon this work, as I mean to be honest in the main, though I often think it a favour that we are not obliged to tell all we think; for strange is the motley throng of human thoughts!

This morning after walking to town with my brother, Molly,<sup>1</sup> and the children, went to meeting, where our friend Thomas Scattergood was favoured, in gospel love and power, largely to minister instruction, consolation and encouragement to the devoted in heart; particularly to the young and the rising generation; and I think that according to my measure, my desires were sincere and earnest that the dear children (some of whose minds I am persuaded are favoured with pious impressions,) may be rightly encouraged to hold on their way, in holy integrity.

In the afternoon, after some conflict of doubts and fears, I ventured to express a few words; whether under right influence I must leave to Him who judgeth in mercy: but for this sweet, consolatory word mercy, as a distinguishing attribute of our Creator and Redeemer, surely my heart would faint within me! At the close of the day, while my sister was reading the Scriptures, my mind was favoured with a little overflowing tenderness.

Second-day. I attended the morning meeting. I trust it was not an unprofitable season; it is not pleasant, but I believe it is well for us to be sifted as wheat.

Third-day. Favoured with a renewed desire to walk in humility, simplicity and faithfulness, under which I felt affectionately united to the dear children, their beloved mother, etc.

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1 Mary Whiting, afterwards Harding; for thirteen years the faithful and beloved nurse in J. C.'s family; and one to whom Mary Capper was much attached.

The children went to their grandfather's, and Elizabeth Fry, with her daughter Elizabeth, took tea here, I thought their company pleasant. In the evening my brother read some chapters of the Bible to us, and my mind was comforted. In humble gratitude I may note that, during the greater part of this day, I have been, through adorable mercy favoured, with a secret hope of preservation, and desire after it; of myself nothing; but in mercy, not consumed!

Fourth-day. Without much hesitation, left my bed soon after six. Had a gentle reproof from my niece Rebecca, for being too long in dressing; she seemed to think I had lost some time, which I might have employed in improving myself with her, in the French language; we read together before breakfast. Went to town; it was monthly meeting. Desirous that I may be favoured to distinguish the voice of the true Shepherd from the voice of the stranger, and that I may be made humble, willing and obedient.

Fifth-day. In the Scripture reading and solemn pause, my mind was comforted. My brother was so kind as to read us a little account of the method, pursued by himself and my sister, in the instruction and education of their children. With some parts my mind was much affected, even to tears; and a language arose in my heart, O! that all parents were thus solidly concerned for the good of their offspring! As I look toward my other near and dear relatives who stand in this important station, and towards those who are unmarried, my desire is that genuine religion, in its true spirit and power, may so work upon their minds as to open their understandings in the way that is right, and that will lead to peace, when the world, and all its gaudy, busy scenes, shall vanish as a dream.

Sixth-day. Dear Rebecca showed some disposition to self-will and ill-humour at her studies this morning; in the evening, in some tenderness of spirit, I mingled my tears with hers, I trust to our mutual comfort, and renewed encouragement to strive against the evil propensities of our nature, and to wrestle for the everlasting blessing. Experienced sweet reviving hope and faith, while my brother read a portion of the prophecies of Habukkuk. Retired to rest in peace.

First-day, 11th. At meeting, my mind rather insensible to good, but kept alive in the secret hope and belief, that none ever sought the Lord in vain, though He is pleased at times to hide the light of his countenance from his waiting, dependent children. In simplicity, humility and faith is our safety.

Third-day. Still favoured with desires after preservation, and with some sense of my own weakness, and utter inability to help or save myself. Felt also a strong and affectionate desire for the best welfare of my near and very dear relatives.

Fifth-day. After the usual reading, M. Whiting walked with me to Tottenham meeting. A little act of obedience to apprehended duty, in visiting a family under affliction, seems to have relieved my mind from some oppression; and the kindness of some friends was comforting to me. May the Fountain and Father of living mercies be pleased, in his own free grace, to preserve me, with all his little ones, in simplicity and in true lowliness, and in obedience to his own requirings; in condescending mercy, giving

us to distinguish what is his holy will concerning us!

Sixth-day. The first breathing of my spirit was after preservation from all evil, and that I might more fully know the Power that leads from every hurtful thing. In the afternoon the little girls and I visited some poor families, and had a degree of sweet satisfaction in being empowered to give some relief Great are the necessities of the poor at this day; added to the extreme severity of the weather; every article of food is at a high price; a quartern loaf is 1s. 5d.; much is done by subscription, to alleviate their sufferings, much is wanted.

Seventh-day. In my private cogitations, found self still alive, and that its branches shoot in all directions, and still want the pruning knife. One of the dear children a little untoward; but upon retiring to rest, after lying awhile upon the pillow, tenderness and contrition were granted. Precious are the evidences of a broken heart and contrite spirit; it is my joy to be permitted feelingly to participate.

19th. Second-day. Another little girl added to my sister's olive branches. My niece Rebecca, with her little sister Katharine, went to Plashett, with their aunt Fry. The dear remaining children were as quiet as might be expected, but I felt myself a very poor substitute among them, and was rather uncomfortable. I endeavoured to fill my sister's station, by attending to the little one's lessons. In the afternoon more at leisure, and enjoyed the respite; in the evening the subject of our reading was very affecting; relative to some of the grievous iniquities of the Slave Trade. O! how cruel is the human heart, when not changed by the power of God! I feel sad under the consideration.

Sixth-day. The night was so intensely cold that I could scarcely sleep; what then must be the sufferings of the half-clothed and hungry poor!

A French lesson before breakfast; read afterwards in the Epistle to the Hebrews. The children, at their usual occupations, did not give much trouble, but my mind was anxious and not comfortable. I seemed to wish for more ability to instruct the young mind, and felt myself very ignorant in divers useful things. I thought it would be pleasant to be learned, without the trouble of learning; as in a higher concern, it is desirable to be humble, but who is there that likes to be humbled?

25th. First-day. Walked to town; on our way there and back, my nephew Samuel and I called upon some poor families, and gave a little, through the bounty of a Friend in London. The long continued severity of the weather calls for consideration of the poor. The river is so frozen that the bargemen cannot follow their usual occupation. Coals are three shillings per bushel, and I am told that some of the poor buy them by the quart. Thermometer twenty-one degrees below the freezing point.

A warm desire has been raised in my heart, on my own account, that I may both be preserved from offering the sacrifice of fools, and from keeping back what may be compared to the small tithes, when they are really required at my hands. O! for a right spirit, and a discerning judgment!

28th. The meeting proved a time of conflict. Surely our spiritual enemies are lively! Still I have hope in the promises. The Redeemer of men is my Captain and my Saviour. O! may my spirit cleave unto him, then will my soul be kept from the jaws of the devourer. Elizabeth Fry took me back to Newington. In the evening my mind was not in a desirable state. I spoke to my niece Rebecca in a wrong manner; which upon cool reflection, I was made willing to acknowledge and condemn. O! the humiliations which fallen nature stands in need of.

29th. Surely our Heavenly Father deals graciously with us, when He discovers to us our insufficiency, our weakness and our dependent state! During the morning's reading and retirement, my spirit was raised in desire to follow our spiritual Joshua, that I may witness all the polluted inhabitants to be destroyed; and I wished the dear children might be fed with the sincere milk of the word, and grow thereby, so as to become valiant in resisting evil.

31st. A dawn of fresh comfort this morning, and the day passed in more tranquillity than some preceding ones. It seems probable that my sister may soon be restored to her important station in the family. May she grow in spiritual strength!

Second month, 1st. First-day. Mild but gloomy morning. We walked to town; the meetings were dull. If the great Lord and Master shine not in upon our souls, how is our brightness obscured! yet though he tarry, let us wait for Him. I dined with Elizabeth Bevington, and lodged with A. Christy. In the evening we had a time of retirement, in which I felt a glow of desire that the dear young people might press through every discouragement, and follow their spiritual Leader. And O, gracious Saviour! preserve and lead me also; that while I apprehend it right to speak unto others, I myself become not a castaway.

Third-day. Our usual engagements gone through with calmness. M. Whiting and I visited several poor, and relieved their wants, through the bounty of others; to our gratification and their comfort. Coals and provisions still advancing in price, and many are thrown out of work by the frost.

Fifth-day. My nephew Samuel accompanied me to distribute to the sick and distressed. In the evening, as I was sitting by the bedside of one of the dear children, and reflecting on the prevailing disposition of my mind during the day, I was favoured with brokenness in the recollection that hasty and impatient expressions had escaped my lips, to my own hurt and that of this dear child, who gently, and with becoming diffidence, became my instructor. Sweet and very precious is such a monitor, and my desire is that I may really profit.

Sixth-day. "The word of the Lord is quick and powerful;" a reprovener of evil, discerning and manifesting the thoughts; and I have believed it no small favour to be made sensible of such a secret Power. This morning the dear children not quite so well disposed for application as at some times; but who is uniformly disposed toward good? There is need of patience, both with ourselves and others.

12th. Very severely cold. At the morning reading and retirement, a little secret hope arose, that the power

and mercy of our Heavenly Father was extended toward us. My sister went through some of the children's lessons; they also studied with their master. A liberal and guarded education, under the eye of judicious and well informed parents or teachers, appears to me no small privilege, where the young mind is preserved from imbibing false ideas, and is instructed as to the different natures of things, with a foundation of useful knowledge, instead of that superficial learning which puffs up, and does not profit. Rebecca and I visited some poor families, and had the comfort of finding them in improved circumstances.

23rd. Second-day. The morning meeting was a time of solemnity and instruction. Dined at Joseph Smith's, with Thomas Scattergood and William Crotch. Called on a sick Friend and was comforted. The frost seems again broken up; dreadful have been the accounts of floods in various parts, and complicated are the distresses of many.

Third-day. My brother far from well.

Fifth-day. In the night he was much worse, and our distress was great, yet something of resignation was felt; my dear brother expressed that if the time of separation was come, he had nothing to depend on but mercy; and indeed I believed that, had he then breathed his last, he would have been received into the arms of condescending Mercy. He has been very weak today, though in a favoured, tender frame of spirit. If we dare desire, it is for his restoration; nevertheless resignation is our lesson, and may the great Master give us ability to learn, Himself being our Teacher.

Sixth-day. My beloved brother is much better, and it appears likely that he may be spared a little longer, to fill the important stations, of husband and father; which is no small favour. I think my spirit craves for him, as for my own soul, that we may find a Redeemer's love and mercy, to strengthen and sustain, in every succeeding combat with flesh and blood, which can never enter the kingdom of rest and peace. My purpose of leaving this family, so as to be at my own quarterly meeting at Birmingham, brings me into a strait; nor have I yet fully determined.

Seventh-day. My brother continues to improve. In the evening we were favoured with a little quiet waiting in his chamber; wherein my mind was affected with a sense of our Heavenly Father's love, and gracious design, in handing the cup of affliction. My dear Rebecca was particularly brought near to my best feelings, and some remarks, made in our little private retirement together, affected me; surely the dear child is under the preparing, purifying Hand! May all the dear children be preserved from everything that can harm them!

Third month 1st. London, first-day. I have this day thought it matters little what we suffer, if it have but a tendency to stay our minds upon God. The two little girls and I rode to town; there was much snow. In the evening we had a time of retirement. It is our design to stop a day or two with my brother and sister in Martin's Lane, as I still think of returning to Birmingham soon.

Third-day. The weather still cold and gloomy. I attended Devonshire House meeting; a solid opportunity.

My dear little girls rather too much dissipated, to the hurt, as I thought, of their own peace, and to my dissatisfaction.

4th. Fourth-day. We attended Gracechurch street monthly meeting. Went to see my dear brother Jasper, and were comforted to find him better. I think I feel desires for our growth in the Truth, and establishment therein. In the prospect of leaving, I may add, that my visit has been some help, strength and encouragement, to my feeble mind.

#### **EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM JASPER CAPPER TO MARY CAPPER.**

*Stoke Newington, 10th of Third month, 1795.*

My dear Sister,

I feel inclined to write to thee, though at present, I see but one sentence before me; which is, that since our separation, the little sittings we were favoured to have during thy visit, have returned with savour to my recollection; and some words then dropped have seemed to yield secret nourishment; particularly those recommending us not to look for great manifestations, but to keep little and low. I have been, many times of late, made prisoner under the cruel hands of Giant Despair, that is, so far as Doubting Castle; yet through mercy, not given over into his power. Now and then a dawn of hope revives my soul; and having no other refuge but mercy, through Jesus Christ, who “came into the world to save sinners,” I endeavoured to hold fast this confidence.

No further memoranda occur till the summer of next year.

Birmingham, 1796, Sixth month 21st. Returned to my lodgings, after having been absent two months or more, in which time I have visited, agreeably and I hope not unprofitably to myself, some of my friends, attended the yearly meeting, and stayed some time with my brother Jasper’s family; setting my brother and sister at liberty to make a little excursion among their friends and relations in Wiltshire, etc., 27th. Called at Bingley, and saw our suffering friend P. Farmer, who appears near her end; long and trying has been her bodily affliction, and exemplary her patience, through the aid of that Divine power that helpeth our infirmities.

Seventh month 3rd. I have spent a few days agreeably with T. and E. Biddle, My mind is under an increasing weight of concern, in the prospect of joining some Friends, in a religious visit to the families of our monthly meeting, 7th, An evening meeting was held, at the request of William Savery, from America.

8th. Our conflicting friend, P. Farmer, was released. Dined at Samuel Baker’s, with William Savery, with whom I felt a sweet fellowship. Secretly and earnestly engaged in desire for preservation; and if it be meet, enlargement in thy law, O! my Heavenly Father.

13th. Laid before the monthly meeting my prospect of joining in a religious visit to the families of Friends.

14th. We proceeded in the visit, and are encouraged to go forward in the strength granted; not looking to ourselves. John Southall and Mary Beesley are my companions.

Ninth month 6th. Concluded the family visit. I have little to say, but have a humble hope that mercy will yet be extended to myself, a poor unworthy servant.

Third month 5th, 1797. Our valued friend John Southall was removed by death. I look back with comfort to his simple, humble dedication; and I have also felt a little consolation in having accompanied him last summer in the visit to the families of this monthly meeting.

22nd. Our friends Ruth Fallows and John Cash, sat our meeting; examples of silent retirement in spirit.

25th. Ruth Fallows left us. I wish instructively to remember her quiet example under suffering.

Fifth month 12th. Having heard of the death of our much valued friend Hannah Burgess, I think to set out for Leicester tomorrow, in order to be at the interment at Oakham, and to proceed to the yearly meeting.

13th. Reached Leicester, and was kindly helped forward by John Priestman, to Ridlingfon Park, a house of solemn mourning. John Cash and William and Henry Tuke, attended the burial.

London. The yearly meeting was well attended, and in some of its sittings, much solemnity was to be felt; to some of us it was a very humbling time, but perhaps not unprofitable. George Dillwyn, David Sands and William Savery, gave a satisfactory account of a religious visit which they had paid in some parts of Germany and France. Mary Beesley left London soon after the close of the yearly meeting, but my mind seemed, from the little I could feel, still bound to London. I have attended various meetings, and hope I have from time to time been instructed and strengthened to hold on; in the renewed belief that it is good to wait, and quietly to hope, and to be patient, when we are tried and sifted as wheat.

After some consideration, I thought I might be doing my brother and sister a kindness by staying with their family, and setting them at liberty to attend the general meeting at Ackworth, etc. They were absent six weeks.

Ninth month 2nd. I left Stoke Newington and came to Hertford. Went to Special West's, in his little cart; found them in pretty good health, and in more comfortable outward circumstances than formerly. I believe their concern for the welfare and prosperity of Zion and her travellers, is still alive and daily cherished.

6th. A certificate was brought in to the monthly meeting for signature, expressive of unity with Mary Pryor, in her concern to visit some parts of America.

8th. Concluded it best to proceed homeward, having for some time had a view of accompanying Mary

Beesley in a visit to some of the meetings of Friends in Worcestershire and Herefordshire; with which I had acquainted my friends. John Fry was so kind as to bring me to Luton, in Bedfordshire. I was very kindly received, entertained, and I may add comforted, at the house of Daniel Brown; their son took me to Dunstable.

11th. Came home by coach; 'tis pleasant to return in safety: for this favour I am thankful.

13th. At the monthly meeting, spread my prospect before my friends, with a sincere desire to have their judgment and feeling, and to submit thereunto.

25th. Quarterly meeting at Leicester. Some monies were entrusted to women Friends for distribution. It is a right and a good thing to inspect, and cheerfully to relieve, the necessities of our poor.

Tenth month 2nd. Arrived at Wick, and found my dear friend Mary Beesley tolerably well.

8th. First-day. We were at a meeting appointed at Almerly, a spot where none of our Society now reside. We hope that neither the cause that we were engaged feebly to support, nor the mind of any honest enquirer, was wounded. The company of our valued friend William Young, with some others from Leominster was particularly acceptable. We sat a meeting at Leominster in the evening, with Friends and others.

10th. Set out for Ross and arrived late.

11th. We attended the monthly meeting, and called on Thomas Pritchard, who is very unwell, but in a lively, tender frame of mind; expressing his humble desire for daily supplies of patience, that he may bear his afflictions with propriety. We thought it a lesson of instruction.

16th. At Stourbridge monthly meeting. Apprehending it right for us to propose sitting with Friends in their families, it was concurred with; Elizabeth Lowe joined us, which was helpful to us.

24th. Proceeding with the work. There are seasons when these times of retirement in families are made refreshing to both visitors and visited. The main end in view is, that all within us may be humbled, and our spirits contrited, and sweetly united in a harmonious labour for the prosperity of Truth in ourselves and others.

25th. Dudley. We have been closely engaged; not loitering, but humbly desiring, as enabled, to help and to be helped.

28th. Stourbridge. Visited two very poor creatures, from misconduct and mismanagement. They have been disunited from our Society, not marrying members of it, nor showing any regard for its excellent order or wholesome discipline; yet to such as these, tenderness and love should be extended; and I thought we felt, in one of these opportunities, that precious, sacred influence which breaks the hard heart; and this condescending favour is worth seeking for. O, how it unites! how it humbles the families

of the whole earth, when submitted to; without distinction of high or low, rich or poor!

30th. Left Stourbridge; not without painful feelings, as it did not seem a time for our minds to obtain full relief.

Eleventh month 2nd. Came to Worcester, and dined at T. Bevington's, where we met with Sarah Stephenson, Mary Jefferies, Ann Hunt and Elizabeth Bevington; the two former were engaged in a visit to the families of Friends in this place. In the afternoon we came to Wick, and passed the evening quietly together.

8th. Mary Beesley returned her minute to the monthly meeting. I concluded to remain awhile with her, as her mother is from home.

Twelfth month 2nd. Returned to my own comfortable home.

3rd. First-day. Sarah Lynes, a very young ministering Friend, was at our meeting.

13th. Sarah Lynes attended our monthly meeting, and was largely engaged in the ministry. Ann Baker requested the concurrence of Friends in her desire to accompany Sarah Lynes.

18th. Our quarterly meeting at Coventry. Sarah Lynes engaged in stirring up the members of our Society to a closer attention to the pure principle of Truth, as we profess it.

20th. As Sarah Lynes had a meeting in the evening, we thought it might be right for M. B. and me to stay here, and endeavour to strengthen her hands. The meeting was large.

22nd. Sarah Lynes was concerned to go into the market and call the people to amendment of life, etc. During our stay at Coventry, we attended several meetings appointed by her, and accompanied her to visit the prisoners in the county jail; an affecting scene!

29th. We returned to Birmingham.

1798. First month 1st. My beloved friend Mary Beesley left me.

Third month 23rd. Attended the interment of Sarah Atkins, Jun. at Chipping Norton. William Savery was unexpectedly there. Went to the quarterly meeting at Worcester, and afterwards spent a few solitary days at Wick, my dear friend Mary Beesley being at Worcester, fitting up some rooms which she has taken for a residence.

I stayed several weeks with M. B. in her new home, and found the accommodations comfortable. With peace of mind, all places and all circumstances are made more supportable than we may anticipate.

[While at Worcester, Mary Capper thus addressed her endeared friends Ann Baker and Sarah Lynes, who

were still labouring together in the work of the ministry.]

*Worcester, 29th of Fourth month, 1798.*

Dear loved Ann and Sarah,

How very often have you been the subject of our thoughts! We have spoken of you, I believe, daily, and yet more often secretly breathed in spirit that the Father of mercies might be with you; the account of your exercises affects us with an awful sense of Divine condescension and care, renewedly manifested on your behalf. We have afresh to believe that it is your meat and drink to do your Heavenly Father's will, and that you have, at times, to partake of food which the world knows not of; but we are ready to fear that natural strength must sink under such exertions; nevertheless we desire to trust in that Power that constrains, and also abilitates, far beyond our comprehension; so may you be directed, helped and strengthened!

In unfeigned affection,

—MARY CAPPER

Seventh month 11th. Requested permission, from my monthly meeting, to accompany Mary Beesley in a visit to Friends of Bristol, etc.

22nd. First-day. After our morning meeting, I walked to Wednesbury, Deborah Darby and Rebecca Young having an evening meeting there; it was very fully attended, and proved a solemn time. O! that all might profit by opportunities like these, and gather to God.

Eighth month 22nd. At the monthly meeting at Atherstone; received my certificate. It is my desire to have the unity of my friends, in all these important concerns.

23rd. I thought our meeting was favoured with a renewed sense of our Heavenly Father's regard; such seasons incite us to hope and persevere under discouragement. Mary Lloyd was enabled to supplicate at the footstool of mercy.

Ninth month 17th. Mary Beesley and I had a meeting at Gloucester, and then proceeded to Bristol, where we were accommodated at Thomas Pritchard's, and attended the quarterly meeting.

24th. Were at the quarterly meeting at Melksham, from whence we went to Exeter, and sat the meetings on first-day. Our valuable friend Ann Byrd was with us at these meetings, and at the quarterly meeting at Kingsbridge, where she was a help and strength to us. The young men were, in a particular manner, warned and tenderly exhorted, on the subject of unbelief. A dark and subtle spirit of scepticism seems, as it were, let loose in many places. O! may the God of Truth preserve us.

Tenth month 9th. We were at Thomas Fox's, Wellington; sat with the families there, and had a meeting

with Thomas Fox's work people. Went to Milverton; sat in the families, and had times of religious retirement in the two schools; the children were remarkably solid, and some of them tendered in spirit.

17th. Came to Taunton, where I saw my nephew Edward Capper, (the son of my brother John,) who was stationed there, having enlisted under the banner of man.

29th, Came to Bridgewater, indisposed from a cold, and under trial of mind, having felt a secret impulse to visit the prisoners in the jail at Ilchester; but a fear took hold of my mind, lest we should undertake such a thing without right qualification; or that having heard of others being so led, we might mistake tender sympathy for a call of duty. Under this secret fear, I did not strengthen my beloved friend in her apprehension of duty, but rather desired that we might again try the fleece; so we went to Bridgewater, where we passed a tried week, finding our way closed up. We then judged it best to open our minds to a few Friends, who, to my admiration, felt for and with us, and pointed out a way for our relief. Richard Ball wrote to John Hipsley, who came to us and accompanied us to Ilchester. He spoke to the jailer and under sheriff, explaining the nature of our request; but no such thing was admissible. A chaplain being employed, it was alleged that the prisoners' minds were comfortable; so we left Ilchester not much comforted. We went to Street, where we met with Hannah Barnard and Elizabeth Coggeshall from America.

Eleventh month 22nd. Came home to the house of our kind and fatherly companion, and friend Josiah Naish, who has been with us a considerable time.

25th. At the monthly meeting at Claverham, and sat in some families; but receiving information from Worcester, of the death of H. Beesley, and of the alarming illness of Joseph Beesley, after deliberate consideration, with the concurrence of our friends, we concluded to go to Worcester.

30th. At Worcester, had the satisfaction to find our valued friend better.

Twelfth month 10th. Came home to Birmingham.

31st. Went to Worcester. Visited the poor unhappy prisoners in the castle. Mary Beesley's state of health, a heavy fall of snow, and other impediments, detained us long from our journey.

1799. Third month 9th. We set forward.

31st. At Glastonbury, Joseph Naish joined us.

Fourth month 2nd. We went to Compton, passing through Ilchester. We remembered our feelings there, and were depressed.

3rd. At the monthly meeting at Yeovil. Returning to Ilchester, we gained admittance into the jail, to visit the three poor unhappy men, who were to be hanged in a few days. O! wretched, wretched man, when

separated from the love of God in Christ Jesus!

9th. Came to Bristol quarterly meeting.

12th. We went to Newgate, accompanied by several Friends. It proved a solemn time of warning, exhortation and encouragement, to the poor prisoners; O! that men would fear the Lord, and walk as in his presence.

13th. With Samuel Dyer, Mary Dudley and others, we visited the asylums for the blind, and for orphans; in both places there were religious communications.

Dear Mary Beesley alarmingly unwell, which occasioned a painful delay of two weeks; but every dispensation, if rightly submitted to, is profitable. When she had a little recovered, we ventured out together, and were at the small meeting of Lawrence Weston; dined at John Harford's, Blaise Castle, and had an opportunity of serious communication in the family.

30th. At the monthly meeting, at Bristol, where we proposed going into the families of Friends in the city. After so doing we felt our minds, through condescending favour, humbly and quietly stayed, in the secret hope that we should be helped forward in the line of duty, through all discouragements.

Fifth month 4th. We came to the house of our very valuable friend Joseph Naish, who accompanied us to the families at Claverham, Yatton and Sidcot.

16th. We came again to Bristol, where we met our dear friends Sarah Harrison and Ann Byrd. They, like tender, nursing mothers, entreated us kindly, and cheered our drooping minds, with the language of encouragement.

19th. First-day. We entered upon the serious business of visiting the families, also the schools, and the house of reception for the destitute and vagabond poor.

We remained in and about Bristol for three months, and on the 27th of eighth month, left our kind friend Thomas Pritchard's with quiet and thankful minds.

Ninth month 4th. We reached Worcester; and although we feel poor and unworthy, yet we can humbly acknowledge that the gracious Creator and Preserver of men is ever worthy to be served.

10th. Returned to my own home.

1800. First month 2nd. This year is ushered in with dearness of all provisions. The poor are helped by the establishment of soup shops, and have a quart of good soup for a penny; some of the respectable inhabitants attend, to serve it out and keep good order. This mode of relief gives much satisfaction.

12th. First-day. At Gracechurch-street meeting. Thomas Scattergood was engaged in the ministry, in

language somewhat prophetic of a trying day to come, and earnest exhortation to be prepared for it. I saw and spoke to Sarah Lynes. She continues to exercise her extraordinary gift, and has lately visited the families of Friends of this meeting with Susanna Home.

Second month 1st. Mary Pryor and her daughter Savory dined with us, at Stoke Newington. Mary Pryor gave us a very affecting description of her voyage, and preservation on her passage to America; also permitted us to hear some recent letters from thence, one of them containing a pathetic account of the death, or perhaps we may allowably say the happy translation of Samuel Emlen, whose labours in this country are remembered, by some of us, with heartfelt tenderness.

10th. Attended the morning meeting; these meetings are often very instructive times to young ministers, and I esteem it a privilege to sit them.

24th. Attended the select quarterly meeting, and went home with Mary Stacey, to Lamb's Conduit street, where I lodged, and passed my time not unprofitably.

25th. Accompanied Mary Stacey to the quarterly meeting, which was very solemn and quiet. Awful and affecting were the exhortations and warnings given by our friend Thomas Scattergood.

Fourth month 13th. First-day. I attended the Peel meeting; which is much altered since I resided within its compass, many being deceased, etc. I dined with Robert Webb, who is now mostly confined to his house. I well remember his kind notice of me, when I first attended that meeting. I also called on a poor woman Friend, who in days that are past, showed me great kindness, which I have not forgotten.

27th. First-day. At both meetings. Low seasons are sometimes most lastingly profitable. Walked to an interment at Whitechapel; was glad to meet with Thomas Shillitoe, who kindly helped me along. Returned to Stoke Newington in time to partake of the benefit of the family-reading of the Scriptures, which often proves a refreshment, after a trying, fatiguing day.

Fifth month 7th. At the monthly meeting. Sarah Lynes returned a minute. I dined with her at Joseph Savory's; she very modestly gave some little account of her arduous labours at Leeds, etc.

19th. The yearly meeting of ministers and elders began. It was pleasant to see the faces of so large a number of valuable Friends, who since this time last year, have, many of them, been diligently and laboriously engaged for the spreading of the Gospel; not only in this part of the vineyard, but extending their visits more widely, as strength and ability were given, to go forth, and gather the people to the true Shepherd. It was also very precious to sit under some sense of the goodness of that Power which unites in harmonious desire for the well-being of immortal souls, and that the whole rational creation of God may be brought to know, and truly to serve Him.

21st. The women's yearly meeting opened. Solemnity was afresh felt to spread over us, and a desire

was felt by some, to be so watchful as to keep our proper stations, whether in silent exercise or more active service.

26th. A memorial respecting Martha Haworth was read. Sweet tenderness of spirit was felt, and a desire raised, that through renewed mercy, our minds may be stimulated to dedication.

27th. Felt secret breathings that solid edification might be the blessed fruit of these our large assemblies. Some discouraging circumstances did occur. By high authority we are taught that offences will come; but blessed are they who are not offended in Christ! A letter, addressed to the yearly meeting, by a Friend in Wales, (probably Job Thomas,) now confined to his habitation from indisposition, was sent in from the men's meeting and read.

28th. At Southwark meeting, formerly called the Park; it was a time of refreshing, during the offering of supplication by dear James Graham.

29th. Our friend Phebe Speakman, now about to return to America, addressed us very affectionately. We received an instructive visit from Samuel Dyer, David Sands, and Thomas Shillitoe.

30th. Much counsel was administered, encouraging individuals to circumspection in their daily walk; and to a careful discharge of manifested duty, in speaking the truth one to another, rather than one of another; and after a silent pause, we separated.

Sixth month 1st. At Peel meeting in the morning. Felt a secret sense of reproof for uttering words somewhat hastily, though I did apprehend that I felt a gentle impulse to stand up; but I believe from my own feelings, (afterwards confirmed by my friends) that I did not sufficiently weigh the necessity; and I did not reap the reward of sweet peace; this I wish to note as a warning for the future.

Birmingham, Sixth month 29th. First-day. At meeting this morning felt solitary, having no companion in the ministry; Ann Baker being married, and gone to reside at Worcester, and M. Lloyd being absent at this time. In the evening Mary Stacey and Sarah Lynes had a meeting with the inhabitants.

Eighth month 6th. At our monthly meeting at Hartshill, where I asked leave to visit the preparative meetings; and if the way should open, the families of Friends, in the South Division of our quarterly meeting, also some meetings in Oxfordshire, in which I expect to be joined by my dear friend Mary Beesley. In the evening I went to John Dearman's, as he and his wife had gone from home.

17th. First-day. More than a week has been passed in my new occupations, which take up much of my attention; the dear children are very interesting.

24th. My dear friend Mary Beesley came to accompany me in my journey; both of us having the concurrence of our friends.

25th. We went to the house of our kind friend T. Harris, Long Compton.

27th. Our kind friend took us, in a little cart, to Stow, where we attended a very small meeting. We were kindly entertained by a widow, who does not profess with us, but who seems sensible of the uniting influence of the one cementing Power. After dinner, something better than ourselves seemed to clothe our spirits; and encouragement to the widow, and counsel to her son, were expressed. Came afterwards to Camden.

28th. Rode on horseback to meeting. Here they have some true mothers among them, and agreeable young people, so that the preparative meeting is held to some satisfaction. We lodged at our friend Jeffrey Bevington's, and were very kindly cared for by his wife, who is not only an affectionate, attentive nurse to her infirm, afflicted husband, but also ready and willing to entertain strangers.

After partaking of the refreshment of the table, and through favour, of spiritual refreshment together, we considered it safest for us, in order to find peace, to sit with the other families of Friends.

Ninth month 3rd. Were at the week-day meeting at Shipston; sat with several families, and with some in the station of servants, not professing with us; for we sometimes feel bound, in Christian love, to speak a word of counsel, warning or encouragement, as it may arise in our hearts, to those of other denominations; well knowing that mere outward distinctions are nothing.

5th. We went to the meeting at Eatington. Retired to rest under some feelings of discouragement, with many a fear lest, through us, the cause of Truth should suffer, or any honest mind be hurt.

6th. Visited a family and expressed what seemed to be given us, amid considerable interruptions. Sometimes the hope is raised, that although some visits of this nature may be painful, with little sense of good being present, yet, if of the Great Master's ordering, they may return into remembrance, at a future day. Before we left the house of our valuable friend J. Bevington, we felt a concern to ask his judgment on the propriety of our sitting with his servants and workpeople; after a little deliberation, it was encouraged, and the way made easy; no harm, we humbly hope, ensued, and our minds were at liberty to return to Tredington.

7th. First-day. Sarah Lamley accompanied us to Brails, where the neighbours were invited to meet us, and a considerable number came; we may thankfully acknowledge that something better than ourselves was felt to gather our minds into a sweet stillness; and the people were, in the ability afforded, recommended to seek the substance of religion. Went to an evening meeting, at Long Compton; on the way, took tea with a family, where to our humbling admiration, we received renewed capacity to offer counsel, in a feeling sense of secret help. The meeting was large, quiet and orderly; and may be remembered as a time of favour.

8th. A very stormy morning; when the rain abated we set out, with our steady friend Thomas Harris,

and usual equipage; viz. a little cart and a blue blanket to keep off the wet; and we reached Chipping Norton in time for the monthly meeting. Dined at William Atkins', and called on some friends. A feeling of sadness covered our minds, under which it seemed best to keep quiet, and not to strain our eyes, as in the dark, to discover the cause.

9th. Sarah Lamley met us at Stow, where we attended a marriage; several came in, particularly some young people, and it was a serious time. The young couple had been recently received into our Society; we dined with them at the young man's father's; a humble habitation, but we were afresh convinced that there is no respect of persons with the Almighty Dispenser of good unto the souls of men.

10th. Came to Burford, and sat the meeting on the 11th, which did not fully relieve our minds, so we ventured to consult our friends on the propriety of inviting some of the neighbours, particularly the labouring people and servants, to meet us. We were encouraged to do what we might find to be required, and tomorrow evening was fixed for the meeting.

12th. Had a meeting with Friends at Whitney, and returned to Burford. William Crotch and a Friend from Cirencester, on their way to Oxford, having heard of the meeting, and seeing us just as we reached the town, turned about and sat the meeting, which was helpful and encouraging to us. The gathering was very large, and many stood without; their behaviour was very quiet and orderly, and a sweet, solemn coveting crowned the whole, under which we separated.

13th. William Crotch went with us to Chipping Norton; we dined together at W. A.'s, and parted with renewed desire for the good one of another.

14th. First-day. William Gillett kindly came from Brails, to help us forward, on horseback to Sibford. We sat both the meetings there, and were enabled to exhort to watchfulness, and to a real engagement of heart to follow those things which make for peace. In many places, there seems too much resting in the mere profession of religion.

15th. Came to a meeting at Adderbury. Very kindly we were received at Thomas Wycherley's; both he and his wife are frequently afflicted with illness, and their minds seemed to be kept low and tender. We had a very comfortable night's rest, very sweet was the quiet we felt.

17th. We kept within doors at Banbury, on account of a tumult having arisen about the high price of provisions.

23rd. Select quarterly meeting at Leicester; we had the acceptable company of Elizabeth Coggeshall, who exhorted us to renewed searching of heart. The quarterly meeting next day, a low season.

26th. This morning, had unexpectedly to utter the language of tender exhortation, to a young man just recovering from a dangerous illness; his behaviour was serious and respectful. We afterwards learned

that he is a Roman Catholic.

29th. Sarah Burgess and some men Friends accompanied us to Oakham, where we had a meeting with Friends.

30th. Came to our quiet quarters at Leicester, where we were again received with encouraging cheerfulness. Sometimes it seems as if the mind would sink too low, if it were not for the continued kindness of our friends.

Tenth month 1st. At the meeting here. Spent some hours with an old acquaintance in an enfeebled state of health; I hope the time was not unprofitably passed, though nothing more than social conversation and secret well-wishing transpired.

6th. Visited the prisoners in the county jail, in company with some of our friends. After dining with our kind friend Sarah Heaford, we went to Daniel Woodland's at Narboro, he having kindly undertaken to help us on our way to Sutton, where we propose to have a meeting.

7th. A large and serious gathering at Sutton; the people behaved well, and we humbly hope it was not a profitless time. We trust that some instruction has been gained by us, under the various exercises in this our journey; wherein some unexpected occurrences and detentions have called afresh for dedication, and the resignation of our will. We went to Sutton and back, on horseback, being each provided with a good horse and steady rider, a sight somewhat unusual in this day; five horses, each double-mounted!

9th. Returned to Leicester, and attended the monthly meeting. Afterwards had a religious opportunity with some friends, in which love and tenderness were felt, as well as much sympathy with many now under affliction, from sickness, etc.

13th. Reached Birmingham; it felt very pleasant to return, with peace and thankfulness in our hearts.

18th. This day's post conveyed the mournful tidings of the death of our valued friend Joseph Beesley, at Bath. I purpose accompanying my dear Mary Beesley to Worcester, as she is now stripped of all her near connections.

Eleventh month 11th. Once more returned to my pleasant home. Public distress is great; flour and bread at a very high price.

24th. Flour is now six shillings per peck.

Twelfth month 9th. At our meeting of ministers and elders, we were a little encouraged by the company and communication of our dear friends Mary Ridgway and Susanna Appleby, though the spiritual life seems low.

10th. At our monthly meeting our dear friend Mary Ridgway, was led to lament our poor, low state, as to spiritual vigour.

17th. Felt thankful for a quiet retreat, unembarrassed with perplexing, cares.

1801. Third month 8th. Ann Alexander and Martha Brewster were at our meetings, which were both silent.

9th. Spent part of the day with Ann Alexander and Martha Brewster at Samuel Lloyd's. They seem under considerable trial, in the prospect of visiting families here. Having heard that Thomas Shillitoe has a similar view, they wait his arrival.

12th. This morning our friends commenced the visit, and sat with us. We had a solemn pause of silence, which was truly refreshing. We then were exhorted to become as children; and in nothingness of self, daily to look unto the Lord, that our own wills might become fully subjected. And surely my heart is, at this time, truly desirous that it may be so, a hard strife is at seasons witnessed there.

28th. Sarah Lamley spent part of the day here, to my help and instruction. O! the good Shepherd continues to be merciful.

30th. Thomas Shillitoe and the other friends called here, and I spent some time with them. They have now finished their arduous engagement here. Parting with those who, with meekness and patience, have laboured among us, is not joyous.

Fourth month 12th. First-day. Thomas Shillitoe laboured, with earnestness, in both meetings, to direct the minds of the young people especially, to fear God, and to take heed to the thing which is right.

Fifth month. Mary Beesley and I went to the yearly meeting. At that for ministers and elders, Sarah Stephenson, in a weighty manner, opened her concern to visit America; and Mary Jefferies in much humility, expressed her belief that it was her duty to accompany her. The women's yearly meeting concluded several days before the men's; they had much important business before them. We went to Hertford, and from thence, with Special West and his wife, in their little cart. Very pleasant it was to enjoy the sweet, fresh air of the country, in peaceful simplicity, with dear, valued friends, long known and loved; and whom I do still love, their integrity not having failed, through a long course of years, and many close and bitter trials. Their latter days seemed blessed with a more plentiful supply of things needful for the body than when I first became acquainted with them; and I thought I could partake of the blessings, with grateful acknowledgment to the gracious Giver of all our comforts. We stayed with these friends some days, attended Hertford meeting, and came to lodge at John Fry's, where we were treated with great kindness. During a time of religious retirement in this family, a poor wanderer, from the fold of true peace, came in, and sat down with us. My dear friend Mary Beesley was led particularly to address this unhappy young man, in a very affecting manner. The call was renewedly extended to him, to return unto his Heavenly Father's house, and the stony heart was made capable of feeling, so that great

tenderness was evinced.

Sixth month 25th. Arrived together, once again, at my quiet, desirable home, and found the friend of the house, Mary Hands, in a feeble state.

28th. First-day. The first meeting held in silence. I renewedly believe that there is a Power altogether sufficient to instruct the waiting mind, without a word being spoken.

29th. My dear friend left me. We were favoured to separate under a renewal of tender affection one for the other, which is very precious.

Eighth month 17th. Our dear friend Mary Hands was released; her patience was remarkable to the last.

21st. Under solemn feeling, the last office was performed; nothing like sorrowing without hope, though the silent tear was shed, to the memory of one who was most loved by those who best knew her hidden worth.

Tenth month 3rd. Mary Beesley, who came to me lately, accompanied me to Samuel Lloyd's, to see Ann Byrd and Hannah Stephenson. The long-wished for news, of a treaty of peace with France, was this day announced.

4th. A cold, wet morning, and our meeting very small; little difficulties should not keep us from assembling together. We stand in need of having our spiritual strength often renewed.

Twelfth month 6th. First-day. Our morning gathering larger than sometimes; to some of us it was an exercising silence, though perhaps not unprofitable. It is close work, at times, to be resigned to learn in silence.

25th. Expect to go to Worcester tomorrow; the prospect rather gloomy, it being uncertain where I may settle, as Cornelius Hands intends to give up housekeeping.

## Chapter VI

*Marriage of her friend Mary Beesley in 1803—Removal into Monmouthshire, etc.—Death of James Lewis, 1810*

1802. Third month 10th. At our monthly meeting obtained leave to unite with Mary Beesley, and Ann Pumphrey in visiting the families of Friends at Worcester, etc.

28th. We entered on the visit.

Fourth month 4th. First-day. Our valued friend Timothy Bevington, with difficulty got to the morning meeting, and was strengthened, when there, to deliver an instructive exhortation, in a very tender and affecting manner. His health is now so precarious that it seems doubtful whether he may again be able to meet his friends, in their religious gatherings; but his earnest desire that all may strive to enter in at the strait gate, may be profitably remembered, when his voice shall be no more heard. In the evening, refreshed and encouraged by the renewed belief, that our Heavenly Father binds the poor of the flock, the children of the family, together in sweet union of spirit.

9th. Dined at John Burlingham's; were earnestly engaged in mind, and had to express our desire, for the welfare of parents and children; four sons and five daughters being present. Returned home in the evening, after our various engagements, wearied in body, but mercifully permitted to experience a measure of that peaceful poverty, which is more precious than the increase of corn, wine or oil.

18th. First-day. Our morning gathering, after a season of close inward wrestling, was favoured with a measure of that life which is the crown of all our religious assemblies.

19th. The engagement nearly accomplished, and we may say, with lowly thankfulness, that our minds have been renewed in love towards our fellow travellers in the Christian race. We endeavoured to labour faithfully, in the ability afforded; some seasons of favour were granted, in which we not only felt "good will to men," but could also ascribe "Glory to God in the highest!"

24th. This afternoon died our valued friend and nursing father in the Church, Timothy Bevington.

Fifth month 10th. I returned to Birmingham, still finding accommodation at my agreeable lodgings. After attending the yearly meeting, and spending some time with my dear connections near London, I came to Worcester, with the view of proceeding in our religious visit.

Sixth month 30th. We came to Alcester, and sat in the families.

Seventh month 1st. Before we left, we sat in one family, in which the visit was not so comfortably accomplished as we could have desired; in consequence of a little circumstance having arisen, from which our minds suffered, and were brought into bondage. O! the great need of circumspection and watchfulness!

5th. Returned to Worcester, after sitting in the families of Evesham meeting; we met with some painful things. Unless the great Master be heard and obeyed, the servants seem unable to lend a hand of help.

6th. Our kind guide and companion, Richard Burlingham, Jun. conducted us to Ross, where we attended the quarterly meeting for ministers and elders.

7th. The quarterly meeting was a time of renewed mercy. Afterwards visited the families.

Eighth month 5th. Came to Bromyard. Our minds are often brought into sorrow, apprehending the pure life of religion to have gained but little ground; the cares of this life, with other deceitful things, seem to choke the good seed. O! for ourselves and others, that we may increase in faith and obedience, with a willingness to suffer, when the cause of Truth suffers; or when called upon, to step forward in the performance of any duty.

8th. First-day. A considerable number of the inhabitants came, by invitation, to the afternoon meeting; it proved an open time for communication, and we were thankful, afterwards, to feel at liberty to return home. We reached Mary Beesley's in the evening; and through condescending favour, experienced a sweet, peaceful, stillness; so that we could say it amply compensated for all our trials. O! the kindness and long-suffering mercy of our gracious Creator. How He allures us to serve Him! and to obey all his requiremings.

For a time we did sweetly enjoy our quiet, but our minds were soon brought into thoughtfulness; a Friend from South Wales, James Lewis, having made a proposal of marriage to Mary Beesley. The subject remains under her consideration, and brings much weight with it, being a matter of great importance.

Ninth month 2nd. Took leave of my endeared friend; endeared by often suffering together, and being helped, by that which far surpasses all the efforts of self; and which, in seasons of true humiliation, unites fellow-believers in closer bonds than those of natural affection. The fellowship of suffering is a mystery to the natural understanding of the creature, but I believe opens lessons of true wisdom to the resigned, dedicated followers of a crucified Redeemer; though we feel ourselves very children in this living way, cast up for the ransomed to walk in.

I again came to John Dearman's, to have the oversight of the little flock, in the absence of their parents. J. D. is at Buxton, in a languid state of health. This afternoon had the affecting account of the death of Charlotte Phelps, at the house of her father, Sampson Lloyd. She was a beautiful young creature, married last eleventh month; her husband never had the satisfaction of taking her home.

7th. The remains were interred; many were present, and a solid meeting was afterwards held. Deborah Darby, Christiana Hustler and her daughter, were with us.

9th. I had the privilege of accompanying Deborah Darby in her consoling, encouraging visits to several sick and tried friends. This service, when rightly engaged in, has often appeared to me to be the sweetest portion of the Christian's commission; to comfort the mourners, and to direct the feeble-minded where to look for a renewal of strength.

15th. In meeting, my faith was renewed that they who wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; and although experience confirms the truth, that in this world we shall have trouble, still peace is yet to be

found in the Lord.

17th. I account it a favour to be again permitted to return to my old, quiet apartments, at C. Hands', after an absence of several months, in the course of which time I have seen many changes, and distressing occurrences, with perplexities and dismay. Ah! I have thought, without a humble hope, through faith and obedience, of inheriting the promises, what a vast, howling wilderness is this world! how tossed and troubled on every side! but the simple, obedient children of the one Lord, are not left long in a state of sorrowful disquietude; some sweet calming influence is graciously permitted, to revive the drooping faith, and to fix the hopes on a better and more enduring portion.

Ninth month 19th. First-day. Our meeting unusually large. We had the company of Thomas Speakman, Edward Simkins, Mary Beesley and Joseph G. and Mary Bevan; some of whom ministered to our instruction and encouragement.

Tenth month 14th. Went with James Lewis, to his house at Trosnant, near Pontypool; the house is under repair, and the roads being very dirty, with gloomy weather, conspire to render the situation, in its present state, rather unpleasant. The company and assistance of Mary Pumphrey were particularly acceptable to me. Some substantial privileges are to be found, yet many things are wanting, for neatness and convenience, according to our ideas. There is a good new meetinghouse, very near; the number of Friends is but small; yet sometimes, both in and out of meetings, I have thought there was that to be felt which strengthens to put our trust in the mercies of a gracious Creator, whose care is over all his creatures, however remotely situated; and this consideration sweetly cheers the solitary scene, and supports through the trials of each succeeding day.

Eleventh month 22nd. Mary Pumphrey and I took an affectionate leave of the family, both master and servants having manifested great kindness to us.

Twelfth month 8th. At our monthly meeting I obtained leave to unite with my friend Mary Beesley in some religious service at Warwick, etc.

13th, We went together to Tredington, where we had the satisfaction of finding our valuable friend Sarah Lamley restored, in good health, to her family, after an absence of several months, on a religious visit to Friends in and about London, accompanied by Ann Ashby. It was very pleasant to find Sarah Lamley serene and peaceful.

In the course of this engagement, we held meetings at Shipston and Easington, where we visited the widow Martha Bevington, and were refreshed by observing her calm resignation. We attended Warwick meeting, and had the inhabitants invited to one, which proved a large and solemn gathering. We also sat with about sixty workpeople and children in the cotton mill, and we visited the prisoners in the jail. After attending the quarterly meeting we came to Birmingham.

1803. First month 9th. First-day. A sweet, inward silence prevailed, both in and out of meeting, for the greater part of this day.

12th. Our monthly meeting. A measure of true retirement of spirit is yet graciously granted, in which I feel refreshed, and encouraged to persevere, through trying times.

14th. In a feeling of very tender affection, wrote to my brother Jasper, from whom I have received a kind letter.

16th. First-day. Deborah Darby is here on religious service; she appears much worn down in body, but animated for the cause of religion. Mary Lloyd is her companion.

19th. Received an account, while at Worcester, of the death of the wife of my dear brother John Capper.

### TO SARAH LYNES.

*Worcester, Second month 16th, 1803.*

Dear Sarah,

Day after day thou hast been brought to my remembrance, with very tender love; and a favour I esteem it to be capable of this one mark of discipleship. I am thankful that sometimes I can believe that I have fellowship with the living; and as I apprehend, in some measure of this I now salute thee. Since my coming here, I have had the satisfaction to peruse thy letter to Ann Pumphrey; it was very sweet. I oft remember thee, and it is exceedingly pleasant to my mind; I may say to our minds, including Mary Beesley and our dear Ann Pumphrey, for we often speak of thee together. Thy being excused from some painful exposures,<sup>1</sup> though possibly it maybe but for a season, that thou mayest recover strength, seems to us a present privilege; although thou hast found, and doubtless, in faithful dedication ever wilt find, help sufficient for the day; yet nature shrinks at such a bitter cup, and we cannot but fear the things we may suffer; at least until nature is overcome by Grace.

Thou hast perhaps heard from Ann Pumphrey or her husband; they both look rather care-worn; yet dear Ann's precious gift sometimes breaks through all, in renewed brightness. But, my dear friend! is not this a day wherein the true ministers have rather to mourn in silence than to proclaim glad-tidings! It seems much the case here. Great changes are likely to take place; that of our dear Mary Beesley, thou wilt believe, comes close to me. Very sincere has been her desire to move rightly. It is proposed to solemnize the marriage in the Fifth month.

In assured affection,

—MARY CAPPER.

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<sup>1</sup> Alluding to Sarah Lynes having before had to publicly address the market people in many places.

Third month 6th. First-day. We had the company at meeting, of our aged, honourable friend, Mary Ridgway, and her companion Susanna Appleby. Mary Ridgway was enabled to bear testimony to the excellence of gospel Truth.

24th. Mary Beesley and I went to Warwick, and visited a young man in the jail, then returned to Birmingham, and the poor young man's mother supped with us at Richard Cadbury's. Mary Beesley had to address her in a very solemn manner.

25th. We came to Worcester.

28th. Mary Beesley had a letter from Hannah Evans, of Warwick, informing us that the young man had been sentenced to five months imprisonment, instead of losing his life, as he expected.

29th. Mary Beesley received a very interesting letter from the prisoner, expressive of his thankfulness for the unexpected mercy. The business of this day was gone through under a very precious calm; my dear friends declared their intention of marriage; also Edmund Darby and Lucy Burlingham.

Fourth month 10th. In a large assembly, much favoured with solemn quiet, my much loved friend entered into the engagement of marriage with James Lewis, under a sense of Divine approbation. She was afterwards enabled, in a very calm manner, to address the assembly. Edmund Darby, of Coalbrookdale, and his friend, entered into a similar engagement, in the same place. All things were conducted with much order and seriousness. We had the company of David Sands, John Abbott, and Deborah Darby.

13th. At meeting we had the company of Sarah Lynes, and it was a time of favour, wherein our minds experienced some preparation for setting out to attend the yearly meeting.

15th. First-day. Attended the meeting at Wycombe, the number of Friends but small. We did not sit among them without feeling, and we ventured to express our solicitude that we might all become what we ought to be, and not deceive ourselves or others. The afternoon meeting was rather remarkable, and I think may be remembered at a future day. Came on to Uxbridge, to our kind friends Ann Crowley and sisters.

16th, Reached London in time for the yearly meeting of ministers and elders. There was mercifully, a renewed sense of awful solemnity; and some communications dropped like dew upon the tender grass, to the reviving of the drooping mind. Our friend Ann Alexander informed us that a concern had long been weightily on her mind, to pay a religious visit in some parts of America, etc. which concern was united with.

17th. Thomas Shillitoe, in a very humble manner, opened a concern to make a religious visit to Holland, Germany, etc. It was agreed to take up the consideration at a future sitting, and the dear friend appeared to leave the result with much calmness.

26th. The business which has come before the women's meeting, has been solidly attended to, and some

very instructive counsel given. We separated, after having experienced, in silence, that which satisfies the waiting, dependent soul.

27th. The concern of Thomas Shillitoe was again brought forward, and he was liberated for his journey on the continent. Robert Fowler brought in the certificates of our late friend Sarah Stephenson, and of her companion Mary Jefferies; the latter, in allusion to the death of our much valued friend during their travels in America, acknowledged the gracious support which had been granted her, under the trial. John Hall returned his certificate for visiting America, which he had been enabled to do, to his own relief. After a silent pause, we separated in tenderness of spirit.

Sixth month 1st. Came to Isleworth, where we visited Sarah Lynes.

2nd. Reached Worcester.

21st. It was not without some inward struggle that we left Worcester; having proved our friends, and found them kind, it seemed trying to go and dwell among strangers, in almost a strange place.

23rd. Reached Trosnant. The house in tolerable order, though the workmen have not finished.

Seventh month 1st. Mary Lewis has some serious thoughts of attending the quarterly meeting for Herefordshire and Worcestershire at Stourbridge. The consideration seems important, not only on account of the distance, but of leaving the family, after being so short a time at home.

3rd. First-day. Some of the neighbours came in and sat our meeting very seriously; there was a very quiet covering over us, which seemed to stay the mind. In the evening the family met together, and a little refreshment of spirit was felt. After farther deliberation it was concluded that Mary Lewis and I should go to the quarterly meeting.

9th. We were favoured to return in safety and in peace.

13th. The monthly meeting held here, was attended by nearly all its members; five men, five women and a lad!

22nd. Our endeared friends Deborah Darby and Rebecca Byrd arrived on a religious visit.

24th. First-day. The inhabitants were invited to our meeting in the evening. The Baptist teacher, a kind neighbour, had proposed giving notice to his congregation, and it was a large gathering. At first it was favoured with solemnity; but as the people were unaccustomed to silent waiting, several withdrew after something had been expressed, so that the concluding part of the meeting was not so precious as often is the case, when we meet and separate under the sweet, uniting influence of a silent sense of the love of God, raising in our breasts, love to Him and one unto another. It renewedly appeared to me, as I sat in this gathering, a very serious thing to be rightly and truly interested for the salvation of souls.

Eighth month 2nd. Sarah Beesley came. This evening the few ministers and elders met; no meeting of this kind has been held here of late; the revival of this practice felt to me very satisfactory.

3rd. The monthly meeting was held here; nine women and six men. Mary Lewis spread before them a prospect of making a religious visit in Hampshire, Devonshire and Somersetshire. My mind was not a little affected with the consideration of accompanying her, but I felt very fearful, and reluctant to say anything on the subject.

6th. This morning, after much solicitude to do right, I ventured to address a few lines to my own monthly meeting.

10th. James Lewis is in much pain from an accident, which has wounded his leg; no skillful surgeon being within reach, we feel perplexed.

14th. We sent for a doctor from Newport; his opinion is relieving, though the case is likely to be tedious.

20th. I was informed that the few lines which I sent were presented to the monthly meeting, but not recorded, as the meeting was very small. This is satisfactory, under our present circumstances, which are trying to us all. The prospect of leaving home is rendered very uncertain, by James Lewis's illness. Mary Sterry and her companion arrived.

27th. As James Lewis seems gradually to mend, I think of returning to Birmingham for a time.

Ninth month 2nd. Arrived at Birmingham, and was very kindly received at Richard Cadbury's.

5th. It is pleasant to be kindly received by my friends, but I feel the privation of accommodation, that I could call my own; yet I know not that I could adopt any plan of settlement at present; and my earnest desire is to be so engaged, whether in one place or another, as to find peace, at the conclusion of time.

14th. Our monthly meeting granted me a certificate for the proposed journey; also addressed to Friends in Monmouthshire, where I wish to pass some time. My mind is now more settled in a quiet hope that we may not have done wrong, however the present prospect may terminate.

16th. Had the gratification of spending a few hours with Sarah Grubb, late Lynes, now married to John Grubb, of Ireland, where she is going to reside.

Tenth month 3rd. Went to Worcester.

4th. Proceeded to Leominster, where I met James and Mary Lewis, to my satisfaction.

6th. We had a large public meeting at Ludlow.

10th. Visited the families of Friends in Leominster, etc. and came this day to Ross.

1804. Third month 5th. I had a protracted confinement, by a dangerous illness, at the house of our kind friend Thomas Pritchard, of Ross. I seemed nigh unto death; but was affectionately cared for by Dr. Lewis, Sarah Waring, Mary Lewis, and my sister Tibbatts. I was, at length, once more raised up, and came with my dear friend Mary Lewis to Trosnant, where I have received every kindness and attention, and am restored to a good degree of strength, so that I purpose going to the quarterly meeting at Birmingham.

12th. Arrived at Samuel Lloyd's.

14th. At the monthly meeting, a sweet covering spread over my mind, under which I was led to consider my late suffering and weak state as a merciful dispensation, wherein I had been tenderly dealt with; and whereby I was in measure fitted more fully to feel with my fellow creatures.

18th. First-day. My mind was strengthened; and my lips were opened, to encourage the youth among us to seek after the knowledge of God, and his power revealed in the inward parts.

21st. A letter from London brings the long-expected information of the death of my poor brother-in-law John Tibbatts.

26th. Mary Lewis came here, from Coalbrookdale, where she had been to visit our valued friend Deborah Darby, who is in affliction, and in a precarious state of health.

Fourth month 2nd. We came to Worcester.

3rd. To our agreeable surprise, our dear friend Deborah Darby, came here, with Susanna Appleby; their company was very refreshing. I have again been unwell, and my voice has much failed me; but, with thankfulness, I may remark that my mind is kept quiet and contented. Susanna Appleby gave us an account of the sweet and peaceful close of our beloved friend Mary Ridgway.

9th. We arrived at Trosnant, and had the satisfaction to find James Lewis well; I yet remain nearly mute.

10th. My mind is tendered, under a lively sense of my heavenly Father's mercies, of which I largely partake. Such tender friends! such care and abundant accommodations, in a time of long-continued weakness, far exceed what I have any right to expect, or could have contrived for myself.

17th. My dear friend Mary Lewis has been prevailed on to leave me, and to set out, with her husband, for the half year's meeting at Brecon; they travel in company with Joseph Clark and his wife, and Ann Metford. These friends have been a few days with us, I believe to mutual satisfaction; their little visits to me, in my chamber, were much so to me. My voice has not yet returned.

20th. Mary Lewis came back; and Joseph Cloud and R. Gilkes arrived.

29th. Our friends were at the meeting in the morning; in the afternoon, in condescension to my weak

state. Friends met in our parlour. Joseph Cloud was led to speak very clearly upon the one essential baptism which now saves. Although my powers of utterance are yet sealed up, my heart was tendered and my spirit contrited; and I could secretly assent to what was declared of the power whereby the soul was redeemed from sin.

30th. Our friend Joseph Cloud, having made one of our little family-circle for some time, it felt like parting from a beloved relation, on his taking leave this morning for London.

Fifth month 13th. First-day. I went to meeting, for the first time, since I left Birmingham; my health being improved, though I can only speak in a whisper. Dr. Lewis recommends a change of air and electricity. I consider it a great favour that I can be calm and cheerful; my situation, with my kind, affectionate friends here, being all that I can wish.

Sixth month 10th. I have almost recovered my voice in the last two days.

Ninth month 25th. Mary Lewis and I went to Warwick.

28th. Came to William Fowler's, Alder Mills; took tea with the aged mother, a very valuable friend, who lives surrounded by her children and grandchildren; a lovely train of the latter, twenty-six in number.

29th. We breakfasted at Joseph Fowler's, and afterwards all the families were collected together, and we endeavoured to feel after that holy Power which can direct aright. Reached Birmingham, and had the satisfaction to meet James Lewis, whose company was truly acceptable.

Tenth month 2nd. James and Mary Lewis went home; I believe we mutually felt the separation, after so long a season of uniting intercourse; but it is no small favour to part under the sweet influence of heart-tendering affection; in unity of spirit and peace of mind; no friendship of the world is like this! which I trust will yet bind us together, though outwardly apart. My allotment is still uncertain; the kindness of my friends supplies me with present accommodation.

7th. First-day. The morning meeting was large, and I thought favoured with the overshadowing of that invisible Power which would gather the mind from the lo! heres, and lo! theres, and stay the thoughts and wandering imaginations, bringing all into captivity. I was thankful to feel this, but a fear possessed my mind, in respect of some, that there was too great an anxiety after worldly possessions. It is possible to pursue lawful things too eagerly; so as to be unfitted for higher and more noble attainments. It is a good thing, and becoming our Christian profession, to be content with such outward gain as may enable us to procure things convenient for us, without the appearance of grandeur or superfluity.

8th. Heard of the death of our valued friend Richard Dearman, of Coalbrookdale; his son and wife went there last seventh day, and did not find him more than usually indisposed, but the next morning he was found a corpse in his bed!

18th. Set out for London.

21st. First-day. My brother and sister, etc. met me in town; my dear niece Rebecca looks well, but thoughtful, on the near approach of her marriage.

24th. The marriage company met. A very solemn feeling was experienced in the meeting, and our friend Mary Pryor spoke in a sweet, feeling, and encouraging manner. The day was passed pleasantly at Stoke Newington.

31st. Went to meeting with my mind in a low state, yet favoured with a degree of resignation, and inwardly desiring to be more fully what my gracious Creator would have me to be. My brother John, and Joseph Gurney Bevan dined with us. Spent some hours with a sick friend, who encouraged and instructed me, when I was younger in years, and distressed in mind. I believe it was mutually pleasant to meet, and recall to mind the mercies of our Heavenly Father toward us.

Eleventh month 8th. Mary Harding, who once lived in this family, and was ever affectionately kind to me, spent the day with us, which brought past days into pleasant remembrance.

19th. Had a letter from my dear friend Mary Lewis, with an affecting account of her husband's declining health, so that I am in a strait what to do.

Twelfth month 16th. First-day, As I continue to receive distressing intelligence from Trosnant, I intend to go to my dear friends in their troubles; at least to partake, if I cannot alleviate.

19th. Accompanied my brother William to visit some of our old acquaintance, whom it was pleasant to find comfortably settled, and serious in their lives and conversation.

20th. Snow and cold deter me from undertaking my journey.

1805. First month 9th. William Jackson was at the monthly meeting, and was engaged to set forth, in a heart-tendering manner, the glory, honour and peace awaiting every faithful soul.

17th. Called at John Eliot's, took leave of several of my friends, and feel rather mournful. My sister Anne Capper, my brother William, etc. spent the evening with us.

18th. We parted under more than usually tender feelings.

19th. Came to Thomas Pritchard's, Ross, and found, to my surprise, that James and Mary Lewis had arrived at William Dew's.

27th. First-day. At both meetings. In the evening, the family came together to hear the Scriptures. These are often times of refreshment and instruction to those who hunger and thirst after righteousness.

29th. We left our kind friend Thomas Pritchard and family under feelings of tender and serious solicitude for their welfare. We rode pleasantly to Usk. Found all well at Trosnant.

Second month 3rd. First-day. The meetings were held in silence, but some of our minds were secretly engaged in desire that our ways might be ordered of the Lord. In the evening, when gathered to read the Scriptures, during our silent waiting on God, a feeling of awful seriousness spread over us, and tendered our spirits, so that we all wept; and in brokenness, it was acknowledged that there surely is encouragement to believe, and under all trials humbly to trust, in the Lord. It was a time of renewed favour, and ability was granted to return vocal thanks to the Giver of all our mercies.

16th. We came to Mellingrifiith, Glamorganshire, on a visit to John Harford and his sister. The ride is through a pleasant, romantic country, and the house is delightfully situated, on rising ground, with the river Taff running, with a fine serpentine sweep, for nearly twenty miles, along the valley below.

17th. First-day. The gathering was owned by a sense that the Divine presence is not confined to the many.

20th. Mary Lewis went, with J. and E. Harford, about twenty miles, to seek out one or two poor wanderers, and to endeavour to draw them within the fold, that they may find rest unto their souls.

22nd. We returned to Trosnant.

Third month 6th. A solemn stillness overspread us, at our small meeting. In seasons of inward instruction, the mind often earnestly desires that all the professors of Christianity would embrace every opportunity of waiting for that wisdom which is pure and comes from above. They who will be taught of the Lord must wait upon Him.

22nd. Came to Worcester.

24th. First-day. I was at both meetings. Sarah Beesley kindly accommodates me with lodging, etc. I have gratefully to acknowledge the repeated kindness of Friends toward me, wherever my lot has been cast; and this I mention as one of the many favours granted by a merciful Lord, whom it is my heart's desire to obey; also to serve his cause upon earth, with the best ability which I have, though it be but small; yet a little faith, and faithfulness with it, is a precious thing.

25th. Came to Birmingham, where I found comfortable accommodations, with my own goods in nice order, prepared for me, at Thomas Shorthouse's, Great Charles street; also kind friends to receive me, and to provide for me all things needful, upon reasonable terms. Can I be too grateful, under a sense of the blessings of which I am permitted to partake! How long I may be stationary I know not; but I only desire to be here, or anywhere, just so long as is best for me; and I did not leave Pontypool without mature deliberation.

28th. I walked to see a Friend who has been very ill. He expressed his intention, if restored to health,

never more to pursue business with his former ardour, so as to leave no time for more important concerns. A poor youth dined with us, who seems nearly gone in a decline. I hope he was sensible of his true condition.<sup>2</sup>

Fourth month 10th. At our monthly meeting at Tamworth, it was the exercise of my mind, that the lawful cares and concerns of the present life may not be unlawfully pursued. I dined at John Fowler's, Alder Mills, who is just recovering from a paralytic seizure; a man in the prime of life, with a young family, thus warned to be prepared for eternity!

14th. First-day. The afternoon meeting more lively than the morning. "The life is the light of men," and the crown of our religious assemblies.

21st. First-day. Our morning meeting was very fully attended, and there was a sense of mercy being continued to us, with some renewed ability to minister; and to point out the difference between the dispensations of the Law and the Gospel; with a heartfelt desire that we might be so wise as to avail ourselves of the glorious privileges of Grace and Truth, brought to light by Jesus Christ.

22nd. Deborah Darby and Rebecca Byrd came to Samuel Lloyd's. I called on them, and found them under a weighty concern to visit the families of Friends in this place.

Fifth month 4th. Received the visit of our dear friends, which was particularly reviving and consolatory to me, having been in a low state.

8th. Felt encouraged, at our monthly meeting, to request leave to unite with Mary Lewis in some religious service, on our return from the approaching yearly meeting. Our dear friends, who have been labouring among us, imparted sweet counsel, and Deborah Darby was enabled mightily to petition for the different descriptions present.

12th. First-day. This morning we had the company and labours of Rachel Fowler. Christ crucified, a suffering, dying Saviour, was preached, as being incomprehensible to the natural man, and still a stumbling-block to the uncircumcised in heart, and foolishness to the seemingly wise reasoner; but unto them that believe, the power of God unto salvation. The afternoon meeting was held in a profitable silence.

London, 19th. At Gracechurch street meeting, I experienced that soul satisfying silence which no language can describe.

20th. Yearly meeting of ministers and elders. Much impressive counsel was handed to us, 22nd. The women's yearly meeting. A large and settled gathering.

25th. We received an instructive visit from William Jackson, and some other men Friends. Much was

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2 This young man died soon after; I understood that his last words were, "All is lost, but Jesus!"

said to recommend retrenchment, which was summed up, in a few words, by J. G. Bevan, before they left the meeting, as follows:—"Friends! the way is narrow; contraction, not expansion, is the watchword!" Much concurring advice was afterwards expressed by women Friends; perhaps there has rarely been a time when more solicitude has been manifested for the help and preservation of our youth; that they may believe in Jesus, and bow to his cross, in the subjection of their own wills, and in a life of self-denial; contrary to the false liberty which seeks to lay waste all Christian discipline.

26th. First-day. At Gracechurch street meeting, an impressive exhortation went forth to the rich, that they trust not in uncertain possessions, neither be high-minded, but trust in the living God. At Ratcliffe in the evening, Christ crucified was set forth as the Redeemer of man.

30th. After vocal supplication and a solemn pause, the concluding minute of the women's meeting was read, and we separated.

31st. The meeting of ministers and elders met, granted a returning certificate to William Jackson; and having concluded its affairs, separated under a covering of that silence which precludes expression.

Arrived at Birmingham on the 24th of Sixth month.

30th. First-day. Our meetings both silent; I thought that something was to be felt, excelling words; my own mind was bowed in sweet, inward stillness; with a precious, renewed sense that the spirit of the Lord teaches, in the secret of the soul, more powerfully than any vocal sound, communicated to the outward ear.

Seventh month 1st. A large meeting at the interment of John Hawker. This day week he told me that he was in no pain; only waiting the Lord's time.

3rd. Some of the yearly meeting's committee at our monthly meeting. A very interesting conference took place, which probably will not soon be forgotten.

Eleventh month 12th. Reached Trosnant.

24th. First-day. The meeting silent; yet not without a sense that the Father of spirits instructs his children Himself.

26th. James Lewis having long had a desire to take a journey into Brecknock and Radnorshire, and his wife not being well enough to go, I set out with him. The roads were in fine order; the sun shone gloriously, and the country looked beautiful, though disrobed of its summer mantle.

28th. We accomplished our purpose of visiting our long-afflicted friend, Job Thomas; who, many years ago, had a fall from his horse, whereby he was so greatly injured that he has since been in an affectingly crippled state. The distance from our inn at Llandovery is about six miles; we forded the Toway, and

reached our friend's house about ten o'clock in the morning; his wife received us with hearty demonstrations of pleasure, though she can speak but little English. We were soon introduced to her husband, who is an affecting object; having no use of any of his limbs, and his body being much wasted by long-continued, and as he said, often inexpressible pains, endured for nine years. Truly it is marvellous how the poor frame has been sustained, and the mind favoured with a daily renewal of faith, to believe that an Almighty hand is still underneath.

30th. Came to Joan Bowen's.

Twelfth month 1st. First-day. At meeting, that substantial good, which refreshes the waiting mind, was measurably spread over us, under which my faith was strengthened in the persuasion, that our gracious heavenly Father is nigh unto all those who diligently seek him, however they may be placed, even if in lonely, dreary spots, separated from the cheering society of their fellow-believers. A little snow fell.

2nd. A bright frosty morning. The snow had nearly vanished, and the surrounding hills, mostly covered with smooth green turf, with the sheep grazing on them in large flocks, formed a sweet scene of simplicity. We walked out to make a call, when a company of sportsmen and dogs appeared, eagerly scouting about, to hunt a poor hare from its retreat. This seemed like a breach of that sweet harmony and peace into which the creation might be brought, were the hearts of men thoroughly redeemed. We had some difficulty walking before we reached John Owen's house; he and his wife received us kindly; they have lately joined our Society.

4th. We set out for home, after taking a tender leave of our friends, who have been affectionately kind to us; and the secret exercise of my mind has been, that nothing in my conduct should stumble or discourage the simple and honest-hearted, from earnestly seeking, and following on to know, the perfect way of God's salvation. Our dear friend Joan Bowen seems as a tender mother, in this dreary part of the heritage; and she has been wonderfully supported in her lonely situation.

6th. We were favoured to reach home well; and a pleasant meeting it was.

8th. First-day. Our little gathering was, I thought, particularly favoured with solemnity. The spirit of supplication, as vocally testified through Mary Lewis, was very sweetly vouchsafed; and it proved a time of renewal of faith and of hope. The afternoon meeting was held in silence and seriousness.

19th. Received intelligence of the alarming illness of dear Ann Pumphrey.

21st. An affecting letter informs us that she was not likely to live long, but sweetly enabled to resign all. Dear Ann, we loved her much, and believe that, through many tribulations, she has been fitted for an entrance into rest, holding fast her integrity to the end.

23rd. This morning brought the mournful intelligence of dear Ann Pumphrey's death, on the twenty-first.

Mary Lewis set out with me.

24th. We reached Worcester, and were kindly received by our friend Elizabeth Whitehead. I called at the house of mourning, and found a group of weeping friends, though there seems abundant cause to rejoice for the deceased, her triumph over death being glorious, for the sting was taken away.

25th. A solid meeting at the interment.

31st. At the select quarterly meeting; now but a little band. Last first-day morning, soon after he sat down in meeting, R. Hudson of Stourbridge, was very awfully summoned away by death. The concluding events of this year are very affecting. We had, at this small meeting, the acceptable company of our valued friend Deborah Darby.

1806. First month 1st. The quarterly meeting was a solemn time, and we were afresh counselled to serve the Lord with full purpose of heart.

2nd. We accompanied Deborah Darby to visit the prisoners in the county jail; it was an affecting season.

6th. We were favoured to reach Trosnant safely.

22nd. I thought I suffered loss in our religious gathering this morning, from having been engaged in writing until the very time of going to the meeting.

26th. First-day. Much snow and small meetings. Our evening reading and silent waiting attended with brokenness of spirit.

Third month 14th. Preparing to leave my friends for a time; separation always seems a serious thing. Mary Lewis thinks of accompanying me to Birmingham.

19th. We came to Thomas Pritchard's, Ross.

20th. As we were about to leave, we were much affected by hearing, from Imm Trusted, that his eldest son, a blooming youth of seventeen, had died after an illness of only two days. This solemn event caused us to ponder how far it might be best for us to proceed; which however we concluded to do, after a time of waiting, in solidity and tenderness.

22nd. I was received with much kindness at my agreeable home in Birmingham, and have abundant cause for gratitude.

25th. Quarterly meeting of ministers and elders; the committee and many strangers present. A very heart-searching time.

30th First-day. Thomas Bigg, from Swansea, was at our meetings; his deportment, and his weighty

communications in few words, were encouraging and strengthening to us.

Fourth month 1st. My beloved friend Mary Lewis having left me, I feel low and stripped; we often suffer when together, and when separated, an affectionate union seems to bind us in a tender fellowship.

8th. Some weight of inward distress has, at various times, pressed upon my mind, relating to some individuals, engaged in a trade which seems to me connected with a source manifestly inconsistent with the principle of purity. I have been in some measure, relieved by one individual opening the subject on his own account. I have also, after serious deliberation, sought and found a suitable opportunity of speaking, in simplicity and in great tenderness, to a young man just entering upon a branch of business which seems to me very objectionable, and contrary to our Christian principle. I was treated with much civility, and heard with attention; but alas! interest and false reasoning are strong barriers.

London, Fifth month 19th. Yearly meeting of ministers and elders. Solemnity was mercifully spread over us as a canopy, and vocal prayer was offered. Our aged friend John Kendall earnestly recommended the reading of the Scriptures daily in families; not to satisfy ourselves with perusing them privately, as individuals, but to collect the servants, etc. that all may partake. In the evening the precious gift of prayer was again vocally exercised, and we parted in solemn quiet.

21st. The women's yearly meeting opened. After a solemn pause, prayer was offered, before the business commenced. Much stillness prevailed.

26th. Some memorials of deceased friends were read, and some lively testimonies were borne to the efficacy of that Grace which carries the humble dependent Christian believer safely through life, and which is his support in death.

27th. Several epistles addressed to distant yearly meetings were read; many seasonable remarks were made, and after much deliberation and some alterations, the epistles were ordered to receive date and signature. It was profitable patiently and attentively to observe the mutual condescension, in so large a gathering, to the expressed judgment one of another.

30th. Our meeting separated after a very solemn pause. On seventh-day evening the meeting of ministers and elders held the concluding sitting; a favoured time, which ended in a stillness that excluded and exceeded all words.

I was afterwards confined, for many weeks, with great weakness of body and the loss of my voice.

[During this time of prostration, she wrote as follows, to her affectionate friend Elizabeth Cadbury.]

*Stoke Newington, Seventh month, 1806.*

Dear Friend,

Very grateful has been thy kind sympathy. My long detention in town, with my weak, low state, has been trying; and the continued loss of my voice sometimes brings my mind into a deep and awful consideration, how far I have at any time abused or misused the privilege of speech. My low times, I trust, are not altogether unprofitable, and at seasons I am favoured with much quietness and resignation; with a thankful disposition of mind, tenderly grateful for the unmerited favours received, and particularly, the kindness manifested toward me, in these times of reduction. At my brother John's I have been nursed with much affection, and wanted for nothing that liberality could devise. Dr. Sims attended me daily, and I am now greatly restored and gaining strength. Yesterday I came here for change of air; the family is, at present, large; but as there is a spacious house, I can always retire to a quiet room. Today they are gone to Plashett. I am a poor cipher among them; but in contemplating my weakness, I esteem it no small favour that I am excused from much active duty, in the busy scenes of life; though I think I have learned to feel tenderly for those who are called into the arduous, important station of mothers and heads of families. O! how these must sometimes be sensible of their cares and burdens, their responsibility, and their insufficiency, without divine aid. How often must the heart of these be moved within them; and how frequent their secret supplication at the throne of mercy! The soul-sustaining Grace of our Heavenly Father cheers and helps such, to take courage, and humbly to seek for daily supplies of pure wisdom, that they may order their ways aright.

Accept my affectionate good-will, flowing to you and your tender children.

—MARY CAPPER.

When I was sufficiently restored to travel, Mary Harding accompanied me to Trosnant, where I was, as usual, well cared for, and am stronger, though yet subject to fluctuations. These I also observe in my dear friends. James Lewis is in a very debilitated state; but we have some seasons of sweet consolation, and spiritual refreshment; and are encouraged not to faint in time of trouble.

[The two succeeding letters contain some account of the illness and death of Mary Knowles.]

#### **JASPER CAPPER TO HIS SISTER MARY CAPPER.**

*Stoke Newington, First month 22nd, 1807.*

My dear sister Mary,

I have been, during a portion of this day, employed in lending perhaps the last little help, it may ever be in my power to render, to our dear friend Mary Knowles. Today she was too ill to be seen by me; but not many weeks since, I passed a short time with her, which seemed to revive all that tender affection that we felt for each other in years past, and which, it was pleasant to feel all the intervening billows, of a troubled and troublesome world, had not been able to overwhelm or quench. Yesterday, my dear wife was with her; she is sensible of there being but a step between her and death. The prospect is awful; but she appears tender and resigned, and has been greatly comforted by a visit from John Eliot and Robert Howard. Our kind sister Capper is indeed her

good neighbour; I might almost say, nurse; for she has been at hand and ready to afford her personal aid, as well as her valuable company.

The attention of Mary Knowles's son has been very commendable.

Thy affectionate brother,

—JASPER CAPPER.

#### **ANNE CAPPER TO MARY CAPPER.**

*Paradise Row, Second month 9th, 1807.*

My dear Sister,

Doubtless thou hast heard of the death of our poor dear Mary Knowles. She was closely tried, until near her end, by not being able to feel the presence of Him, whom she sought ability to pray to and to worship; and upon whom she very frequently called for forgiveness. O! how lightly she esteemed all her accomplishments; "what," as she said, "the world calls accomplishments." She said to my sister and me, "I repent in dust and ashes!" I saw her the day before her departure, when she appeared very desirous to feel an assurance of acceptance. Turning toward me, and taking my hand, she said, "I commend you all to God. Possess Him, possess Him, if you can, whatever becomes of me! I hope I shall not be a cast-away forever! I believe I shall not." She was quiet when I left her. Early in the morning the nurse heard her say, "Lord help me to pray; I cannot of myself;" these were her last words. I trust she found forgiveness and everlasting mercy, for Jesus sake.

1807. Fourth month. We attended the general meeting at Brecon, which was a time of instruction, I afterwards accompanied John Harford and his sisters, on a visit to Job Thomas; we found him in a state of more bodily ease than sometimes, and remarkably animated and instructive in conversation; we were some hours very pleasantly with him. Since this time it has pleased the gracious Disposer of life and death to release him from an afflicted body. The remembrance of our visit is sweet. From his house we went to Swansea, where I passed a little time very satisfactorily with Thomas and Mary Bigg; also at Neath. After a sojourn at Trosnant, I came to Birmingham, in the ninth month.

Tenth month 14th. I informed the monthly meeting that I expect to winter in Monmouthshire. This I mentioned for my own satisfaction, as I have ever been desirous, not to act contrary to the judgment of my friends.

#### **JOSEPH GURNEY BEVAN TO MARY CAPPER.**

*Catherine Hill, near Worcester, Tenth month 21st, 1807.*

Dear Mary,

We finished our visit to this quarterly meeting yesterday evening. As to myself, I am leaving this little piece of service nearly as poor as I entered on it, so that thy letter, which I received this morning, at the breakfast-table, was truly acceptable and refreshing; and I read it with emotions of tenderness.

We found it advisable to recommend some things which seem to be well received, and which we hope may tend to mutual strength, if the active members of the quarterly meeting are desirous of doing the little they are capable of, as in the sight of the Lord. I think not one of the monthly meetings is without some feeling Friends; and one may indulge a hope that there are here, at Worcester, some who, if they are preserved humble, may be the means of some revival.

We were twice with William Young, who now keeps up stairs. He seemed very much pleased to see us, but was low, and lamenting the absence of what he said he loved above everything else. He put me in mind of the apostle's words, "Though now, if need be, ye are in heaviness, through manifold temptations," etc. May be it is a cloud permitted to make the glory to be revealed more glorious.

Thy affectionate friend,

—J. G. BEVAN.

Tenth month 30th. My sister Tibbatts and I came to Worcester, and were kindly received at Sarah Beesley's. Mary Naftel being here, she and I made a few calls together, on those who were sick and in trouble. This was pleasant to me.

Eleventh month 3rd. My sister and I returned to Trosnant, where we were received with a cordial welcome; our dear friends are in precarious health.

Twelfth month 23rd. R. S. Harford and his son attended our little meeting. I thought it an unspeakable privilege, which I would not barter for all the world, to have the opportunity of thus meeting in companies, though small, to retire from all, even lawful concerns, and with the best ability that we have, to wait upon God, the eternal, inexhaustible Source of all good. O! how refreshing, to the drooping mind, to experience from time to time, that the Rock of our salvation remains unshaken, though the floods, the winds and the rain may beat upon the poor tabernacle. I do afresh believe, that if through faithful dedication we grow in spiritual experience, we shall acknowledge that there is no joy like unto the joy of God's salvation.

1808. First month 22nd. I set out for Birmingham, in consequence of the afflicting information of the sudden death of J. P. Dearman; a friend whom I loved much, for the integrity of his character; and much affection I bear to those whom he has left.

24th. Arrived just in time to pay the last solemn tribute of regard; afterwards I went to his late residence, and found his tender, afflicted wife more calm than I could have expected, and a sweet serenity seems to

overspread the family.

Third month 29th. Arrived at Trosnant; dear James Lewis seems declining. It is a great favour to meet in peace and affection, though a storm may occasionally arise to disturb the calm, and try our faith. All good is from above, and we are sometimes permitted to feel our own weakness, and manifold imperfections, that no flesh may glory.

Fifth month 16th. I came, in the mail-boat, across the channel to Bristol, by eleven o'clock a.m., Passed the rest of the day with Joseph Whiting and his sister Esther.

17th. My nephew Samuel Capper conveyed me to West Town, where he has a quiet retreat.

21st. Reached my brother Jasper's, in London.

Sixth month 2nd. The women's yearly meeting closed. The attendance has been large and remarkably quiet. Several testimonies respecting deceased ministers were read; a very striking one, concerning dear Job Thomas. His words, expressed a little before he departed, and taken down by his son, were indeed an animating testimony to the power of Divine Grace; and extraordinary was the effect which the reading of them produced upon our large gathering—many were sweetly tendered; and well I remembered my last visit to him, when his countenance seemed to bespeak his near approach to the kingdom of undefiled rest.

5th. First-day. After the meetings, came to Stoke Newington. Stayed awhile with my niece Rebecca Bevan, who is now the careful mother of three children. They are about removing to Tottenham.

8th. Came to Trosnant. James Lewis is very weak in body, but his mind is clothed with love. I thought I never felt more satisfaction and comfort in returning here; all seemed pleasant and peaceful.

#### **TO SARAH (LYNES) GRUBB.**

*Trosnant, Eighth month 16th, 1808.*

Dear Friend,

Although it is a very long time since we had any visible proof that we are remembered of each other, yet I cannot think former days are forgotten. We hear thou art the mother of two babes, who doubtless claim thy maternal care and tenderness; but nevertheless thy faithful dedication of heart to a gracious Redeemer continues. Oh! this is precious to those who love the God of their salvation. It is a great thing that thou art happily united to one of the Heavenly Father's children and servants, who can feel, unite and labour with thee. While I write, my heart seems warmed with a salutation of love and encouragement to you, dear labourers in the harvest of the Lord. May nothing ever dismay or discomfit you! I am a very poor, unworthy individual; but the God of my life has been marvellous in mercy to my soul. When the enemy has pursued as a lion, the power of the Lord

has appeared gloriously, so that I can speak well of his name; and all that is spiritually alive within me craves, that the children of men may seek the Lord, and know Him for themselves. Thou probably knowest that, since Mary Beesley's marriage, I have been mostly with her. Such a quiet retreat, I have considered a favourable asylum, as my health has lately been precarious. Indeed I have abundant cause to be humble, and as dear Ann Pumphrey used to say, to be good, and to be thankful. Dear Ann! how sweet is the remembrance of her! With unfeigned affection, I subscribe,

—M. CAPPER.

Eighth month 17th. Martha Routh came to stay a few days, which was very pleasant to us.

22nd. We accompanied our dear friend to Shire Newton, where she had a meeting with a few serious persons, and then proceeded to Bristol, with John Grace, As Mary Lewis and I returned home, we felt the loss of our valuable friend's instructive company.

29th. Joseph Clark, Joseph Naish, and his sister, and Priscilla H. Gurney came here, to sit with Friends and attenders of our meetings, in their families. Thomas Evans is gone to Myrthir, on account of the illness of Arthur Enoch. He returned with the afflicting intelligence that Arthur died before he got there, leaving a young widow and three helpless babes.

Ninth month 1st. This morning, our dear visiting friends had a very contriting opportunity of religious retirement with us; our spirits were humbly united in renewed faith and hope in the Fountain of mercy. We were refreshed together, and encouraged to believe that our heavenly Father is still nigh unto us, and unto all who sincerely seek Him. In the evening the corpse of Arthur Enoch was interred. A number of the neighbours came to the meeting, which was a solemn time. Those who kindly assisted on this occasion, and some others, supped with us. Mary Lewis was engaged in solemn supplication for all.

2nd. After experiencing a renewed sense of Divine mercy, extended to us collectively, we parted from our endeared friends, who pursued their journey, in order to visit the scattered few in North Wales. After serious thought on the subject, I applied to my own monthly meeting to send me a certificate of removal into the monthly meeting of Monmouth.

Eleventh month 19th. We received the very affecting account of the death of Arthur Enoch's young widow.

23rd. Several neighbours came to the interment; it was sorrowful to think of the three young children thus left.

1809, Third month 5th. I came to Birmingham, 23rd, Feeling my mind secretly bound and gently constrained, in love to my friends, and under an apprehension of religious duty, I joined Sarah Hustler and William Forster, in visiting the families of the North monthly meeting, which engagement we were

enabled to perform, and separated one from the other, after experiencing a measure of that sweet fellowship which surpasses all worldly friendship, or mere natural affection.

Fourth month 29th. Came along to Monmouth; the country was beautiful, and my mind was mercifully clothed with precious peace, so that the ride was not tedious. Had the satisfaction once more to join my dear friends at Trosnant. James Lewis, though considerably enfeebled, testified his gladness on my arrival, and I am thankful to be peacefully at liberty to unite in the cares of this family.

1810. Second month 1st. Our long-afflicted, patiently suffering, and endeared friend James Lewis, calmly breathed his last, having, a short time previously, exclaimed, "Be Thou with me, O! Lord." On being asked if he were comfortable, he answered, "Yes; leave me to the Lord!" These were the last words he uttered. His truly attentive, watchful, tender wife was enabled to assist to the last; finally closing the eyes of this nearest and dearest connection in life.

8th. The remains were interred, after a solemn meeting. James Lewis was a man of unusual simplicity, and without guile; humble and of a retired spirit; yet hospitable and affectionate toward his friends; a lover of those who followed after righteousness. Many a time, during his long decline, he said, that he loved every body; especially those who loved the Lord Jesus, out of a pure heart.

18th. This day received the affecting intelligence of the death of our very dear and justly valued friend Deborah Darby. A dedicated servant, and a messenger of glad tidings to many, she has been in her comparatively short day. She was an example of diligence in her apprehended duties; and was peculiarly fitted by nature and by Grace, for the work whereunto, there is abundant cause to believe, she was called. Surely it is allowable to mourn the privation that we sustain; though, no doubt, the change to our precious friend is glorious.

Third month 28th. Mary Lewis and I attended the quarterly meeting, at Birmingham, had the satisfaction of meeting several of our dear friends, and were refreshed together. During our stay at Birmingham, we were affected by hearing of the death of Edmund Darby, the only surviving child of our dear friend Deborah Darby. He was about twenty-nine years old, and has left a lovely family; only out-living his valuable mother about five weeks.

He was married at the same time and place as Mary Lewis, and only survived her husband seven weeks, though so young a man.

Fourth month 19th. We returned to our habitation at Trosnant; it is a quiet retreat, but we miss the dear head of the family; for although weak in body, he was lively in spirit, so that it was very sweet to be with him.

Fifth month 5th. Mary Lewis, Thomas Evans, and I crossed the channel, and were kindly received at

Bristol, at my nephew James Henry Capper's.

Arrived in London on the 18th.

21st, Yearly meeting of ministers and elders. Though many dear and useful friends are removed by death since last year, and their loss is much felt, yet there is encouragement in the assurance, that the Fountain of help is still open, and that the Head of the Church will not forsake his people.

23rd. Hannah Fisher was appointed clerk to the women's yearly meeting. The attendance was large, particularly of young persons, many of whom appeared serious; and it was very pleasant to observe their settled attention to the business, which is conducted in much condescension and harmony, with a view to promote the good of the body. Benjamin White, from America, came into our meeting, accompanied by Joseph Gurney Bevan. He exhorted us to be humble; and with much tenderness, he particularly entreated mothers to be more careful to adorn the minds of their young children with meekness, humility and virtue, than to put upon them any outward adorning.

31st. After many precious seasons together, and much instructive counsel being given, our yearly meeting concluded.

Sixth month 2nd. The last sitting of the meeting of ministers and elders was held, and we were favoured to separate under that solemn covering of silence, which subdues imaginations, and brings the thoughts into captivity; a marvellous power prevailing over the mind, which no words can fully set forth; it is more precious and more refreshing to the immortal spirit than words can be.

Seventh month 7th. Returned to Trosnant.

17th, This evening one who had lived in this family from a little lad until this day, when he is a stout young man of twenty-one, left us. Tears were shed on all sides. It is no marvel that such separations should be felt, the young man having lived long under the same roof and participated in many times of favour, when heavenly goodness has tendered our hearts, during our family retirements, and in which the late dear master of the family was frequently so broken in spirit, humbled and contrited, that the same feeling seemed to spread over all, Thomas was, we have reason to believe, a faithful servant; diligent, neat, quick in his business; affectionate to his master through his long illness; ingenious and cheerfully obliging; so that he was very valuable in the family. This little testimony seems due to him, from one who sincerely desires his welfare, and that he may be kept by the Good Shepherd, and find mercy and peace.

21st. Again the trial of separation! James Lewis's nephew, who long partook, with kindness and watchful attention, in the necessary fatigue and care of his dear uncle, has now left the house, so that we are reduced to a small number. Serious thoughts have arisen as to the propriety of quitting this lonesome spot; but we shall not do it hastily.

Ninth month. I still find, that of myself, I can do no good thing, but am weak and frail; the Lord's lengthened out mercy is my only hope.

## Chapter VII

*Departure from Trosnant—Settlement with Mary Lewis, at Leominster—Visits to London, etc.—  
Death of Mary Lewis*

1811. First month 30th. Our kind friend S. Waring arrived here, for the purpose of once more lending her aid in this spot, which it seems likely that we may soon leave, being about to remove to Leominster. The prospect feels important.

Fourth month 5th. I took my leave of Trosnant.

6th. On reaching Birmingham, I found Thomas Shorthouse ill.

10th. Our poor friend very ill. O! it is well he can say that there is nothing but the pains of the poor body to contend with. No thought, he says, troubles him; the Lord has been with him all his life long, and is with him now.

12th. Our dear friend Thomas Shorthouse breathed his last.

17th. A good meeting at the interment.

18th. I went to Coventry, under an apprehension that time was particularly uncertain to our long known and truly beloved friend, John Cash. I found him confined to his room, and in a very reduced state, but quite sensible, and with a solemnity of countenance which seemed to bespeak a spirit in great measure gathered from the encumbering cares of time, in which he had largely shared. His conduct was very exemplary, as a man of integrity. Towards the decline of his life, the fluctuations of trade having reduced his property, he very prudently and steadily endeavoured to retrench his expenses; he appeared very cheerful, and truly contented, having the sweet solace of those who do justly. It may be said he was, for many years, a preacher of righteousness, by example and by exhortation; as a minister in our Society, he was truly esteemed, and he was zealous for the discipline and good order established among us.

24th. First-day. As I sat by him, I thought under a very precious sense of heavenly favour, I ventured to remark, that we had partaken of many profitable seasons together, under his roof. "O!" he said, with some animation, looking expressively round on his family, "I hope these dear children have profited."

Some little time after, we cordially took our last farewell of each other, no more to meet on earth; for in a few hours, he quietly passed from time to eternity.

Fifth month 18th. I arrived in Gracechurch-street, London.

[The following are extracts from an account of the yearly meeting, etc. sent by Mary Capper to her friend Mary Lewis.]

Fifth month 20th. My dear friend; it is my desire to transmit a little to thee of that which interests us here, as I may find time and ability. Susanna Naish is my quiet companion; she is separated from her choice friend, Priscilla H. Gurney, whose health does not allow of her uniting with her friends at this time, in entering into the affairs of the Church; and I being under like privation from the same cause, we often think and speak of our absent yokefellows; and my dear friend, the condescending goodness of the one Shepherd being unbounded, surely he is with the solitary in all places, and under every trial; help is laid on One, mighty to save! Yesterday I saw several of my relations; my brother John looks pretty well, but has many troubles; his son Edward remains in the army. My sister Jasper is much shrunk and looks very languid, but is yet, at times, in good spirits and active. My brother William and his wife seem happy in each other. Henry Hull was at this meeting yesterday, and powerfully counselled us to keep the watch, and to stand in our allotments in simple obedience. This morning the yearly meeting of ministers and elders met, and the business was entered on by George Stacey and Dykes Alexander. Ann Byrd and Mary Pryor are among the ancients here. J. G. Bevan looks poorly; his wife is unable to be out.

21st. A humble petition for continued help was offered by Rebecca Byrd. She is very unwell. Now my dear tried friend, I turn to thy letter; thy repeated attacks of illness are surely a great trial, but I know not how to do better than to commit thee to the keeping of heavenly kindness, and to crave for thee and for myself, an increase of faith and patience, that we may steadfastly abide until our measure be filled up. I entreat thee, my dear friend, dwell not upon the gloomy side of things; rather let us endeavour to contemplate with gratitude the Power that has graciously quickened us, and called us to virtue and to glory; which raises the aspiration, make me what Thou wouldst have me to be! Give my love to H. and S. Waring. O! my tender friends, when heavenly condescension renewedly humbles and contrites our spirits, how we do long for the harmonizing influence of Christian love to spread over the whole world!

22nd. The women's yearly meeting commenced, and the gathering was so large that it was difficult for all to be accommodated. Our dedicated, aged friend Mary Pryor, was wonderfully strengthened to proclaim the continued goodness of the Lord, and to encourage the humble, exercised ones. Mary Naftel was refreshing in prayer.

Fifth month 23rd. An instructive testimony was read, concerning John Hall, of little Broughton, who on his dying bed, declared his steadfast faith in Christ Jesus, and was made triumphant in death. A very animating one was also read, respecting Ann Perry, of Coggeshall. She was a poor orphan who, in her childhood, was placed

in a charity-school, and afterwards removed from one place to another, until the age of nineteen, when her lot was cast in the family of a Friend. Here she became truly religious, and was led to acknowledge the purity and efficacy of the Truth, as we profess it, and to unite herself to our Society, wherein she became a preacher of righteousness, in word and in deed.

24th. Edward Simkin and Mary Proud ministered to us at Ratcliff meeting, which I attended; and a prayer was put up that the sons and daughters of men, the world over, might in mercy, be brought under the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit, and that, to the name of Jesus, every knee might bow, and every tongue confess. In the afternoon, a testimony was read, concerning Richard Jacob, of Ireland. It was particularly remarked therein, that his steady endeavour was to overcome evil with good. An admirable attainment! My heart longs after it, but I come affectingly short; yet I must press on.

28th. The gathering was favoured with a particularly solemn stillness, which was truly refreshing. It is a precious thing when this is the case,—when, after our meetings, either for discipline or for worship, something remains to do us good,—to stay our minds upon God.

29th. A very sweet and affectionate letter was sent in from the men's meeting, addressed to them by John Kendall; it was expressive of much love, and a lively concern for the welfare of the Society. He is in his eighty-second year. It was cheering, and seemed like the dew of youth in old age.

30th. Henry Hull, accompanied by three Friends, came to pay a visit to our meeting; his communication was very instructive; particularly cautioning against self-activity, recommending us to be as ready to receive as to give counsel, and to wait reverently for the gentle constrainings of the Spirit of Truth. He remarked also, that diffident minds, to whom this caution least belonged, would be the most disposed to take it to themselves, and thus, he feared, might let in discouragement. He pathetically addressed the youth, calling them into simplicity and early obedience, that they might obtain the inestimable ornament of a meek and quiet spirit. He also supplicated sweetly for all, the absent as well as the present. I felt afresh contrited, and the language was sweetly raised, what sacrifice so acceptable as reverent bowedness of spirit! Our business being ended, a solemn pause ensued. In pure silence there is fulness. What a people should we be, if all did but come fully under the harmonizing influence of that humbling Power, which brings even the thoughts into captivity! Truly my heart is pained when I ponder upon my shortcomings. Ah! I see that it is individual watchfulness and circumspection which is required, and I pray for holy help. The importance of constant vigilance presses upon my spirit. I wish now to advert to thy letter; don't, my dear, be too solicitous about thy young friend; the Power which has mercifully kept him, is, I believe, still near to him. "All is not lost that is out of sight!" let us remember this. Give my love to my friends; I love them, but my spirit is just now contrited within me, under a desire to be more fully what I should be; more meek and gentle, and more patient under little trials; there is more in this than we are always aware of, and I think I never felt it more forcibly than now.

With dear love, affectionately,

—MARY CAPPER.

31st. I was witness to a very awful scene; the sudden seizure, in Bishopsgate street, of Joseph Gibbins. He was apparently in health, walking toward the meetinghouse, when he fell, was carried to a Friend's house, and soon expired. This truly affecting scene probably shook my weak frame; for in the course of a few days, my voice was gone, and much debility ensued. In this reduced state, I was very affectionately cared for by my dear sister Capper, in Ely Place; my mind, for the most part, was graciously kept in a low, tender condition, susceptible of good. Towards the end of the sixth month, my bodily strength was a little restored; and although this is desirable, and to be received with thankfulness, yet the favour of Divine mercy, sensibly perceived, in dispensing the bread of life, is above all.

Sixth month 30th. First-day. I left my dear relations in Ely Place, and was removed to my dear, and equally kind relations at Stoke Newington, where I am tenderly and affectionately attended by my nieces; very sweet it is to be so cared for, in a time of great weakness. My powers of voice are still suspended, but I am mercifully kept from anxiety.

[During her tarriance at Stoke Newington, Mary Capper addressed the following letter to her brother.]

*Seventh month, 1811.*

My dear brother Jasper,

It is difficult for me to speak, but as it particularly impresses my mind, I wish to tell thee, that since my present great weakness and incapacity for joining in conversation, I have remembered early scenes; and particularly since I came here, some transactions between thee and me, which have been of great importance to myself; and I think, as I even now record it with tears, thou mayst be comforted by being reminded thereof; and in low times, for I believe that even confirmed believers have their stripping times, thou mayst be encouraged to hold fast thy confidence, and be thankful that thou hast been an instrumental means of stirring up the pure mind, or gift, in one poor straying soul, at least; yes, my dear brother, even though I knew it not; and I believe thou wast far from knowing, the work which was at an early period begun, in the secret of our hearts. And although many an impediment has been permitted, and we have more and more seen the evils of the human heart, yet heavenly kindness has been underneath, and helped us hitherto.

To return to our early days; it has been revived, almost like a scene of yesterday, when we were young, at Rugeley together, that once, when our parents were out and I was sitting in the little parlour, thou calledst me; and when I came to thee, thou hadst a paper before thee, and hadst been writing. With a serious countenance, thou asked me if I could recollect anything that thou hadst done amiss, or could help thee to remember what thou hadst said or done that was wrong, as thou wished to keep an account of thy actions. No doubt, I thought it strange, and said something in childish derision; at which I remember thou lookedst grave, and saidst the Testament recommended watchfulness; at which I foolishly laughed, and said that that was an old-fashioned book. Well I recollect the inward conviction which I felt when thou saidst, "Oh! sister Mary, if you begin to despise that book, I have done!" Away I ran, but felt much distressed; and I know not, that from that time, I

ever dared to speak lightly of the Scriptures, or of religion.

Although when gradually becoming serious, it was not suddenly that I made any outward change, and though I had prejudices to encounter, yet, here, my dear brother, thou hadst as it were opened a door, which step by step I entered. O! thou knowest not to the full, the strong holds of naughtiness, perverseness, depraved inclinations, petulance and impatience, which were in my unconverted heart, more hard and stubborn, surely, than many others.

Have I not then, great, very great cause to be humble, and to be thankful to the First Cause? and to be grateful, in tender love, towards the instrument of my first awakening? Yes, my dear brother, heavenly Goodness has dealt bountifully with me; and may all thy conflicts and all thy trials be sanctified to thee; and may we, in our different allotments, be of one heart and one mind; ascribing the marvellous mercy of salvation unto the redeeming power of a Saviour's love. Often the secret language of my heart is, "a Redeemer, or I perish! a Saviour, or I die!"

With heartfelt affection, I subscribe, thy sister,

—MARY CAPPER.

Ninth month. After spending a considerable time among my relatives, from all of whom, as well as from their servants, I partook of particular tenderness and care, during my long-continued weak and low state, I gradually recovered strength, and my voice returned, which was very comfortable to me, and relieving to my friends.

17th. I left London, under the care of Mary Harding, and came to her relations at Witney, Oxfordshire.

24th. We were favoured to arrive safely at Leominster, where we found Mary Lewis, comfortably settled in her house.

Tenth month 29th. Came to Birmingham, in consequence of affecting tidings from thence. Our friends Charles and Mary Lloyd have had the affliction of three deaths in their family, in about six weeks. Two of their sons have been taken away in the prime of life, and have each left a young widow and infant family; and their lovely daughter Caroline, twenty-one years old, is called away from this life of vicissitudes, meeting death with calm resignation and peaceful assurance, through the redeeming love of Christ, the Saviour. Her life was exemplary, and she was remarkably useful, in the care of the poor, and the education of their children. Her affable engaging and gentle manners, also her serious deportment, and her religious observance of the times set apart for waiting upon and worshipping the Father of spirits, in public, are a very sweet memorial of her, engraven in our hearts.

17th. First-day. Our valuable friend Henry Hull attended our meeting, and held a large and satisfactory one in the evening.

[From this date it appears that Mary Capper was not so regular as before, in noting down remarks; the next memorandum being an account of the yearly meeting, after which there is a considerable lapse. This continues occasionally to be the case, until the period when she entirely ceases to keep a journal. The omissions are supplied by extracts from letters, etc.]

1812. Fifth month 18th. The yearly meeting of ministers and elders was larger than for some years past; and it was consoling to see the aged standing firm in their Heavenly Master's cause. A very precious feeling of solemnity was graciously spread over us, and supplication was humbly offered at the throne of mercy. The business was then opened by George Stacey, J. G. Bevan, etc. Mary Pryor and John Bateman, as soldiers valiant in their Master's cause, spoke well of his Name, and testified their thankful sense of the continuance of his merciful kindness. Certificates for Friends travelling in the work of the ministry were read; among them, one for Stephen Grellet, of the United States. He is a native of France.

19th. Stephen Grellet prayed, very impressively, for an increase of true judgment, and the spirit of right discernment among us; and that each might be found keeping their ranks in righteousness. A desire was afterwards tenderly expressed, that nothing among us might prove a stumbling-block to the simple and honest-hearted; but that our whole conduct, conversation, and dealing among men, might manifest a consistent, self-denying life, as followers of a crucified Lord, and as waymarks to the flock.

20th. The women's yearly meeting commenced. Our honourable, because firm and faithful mother in the church, Mary Pryor, testified in a very lively manner her sense of heavenly favour being renewedly extended to us. Elizabeth J. Fry supplicated for heavenly help, to keep our allotted places in the church; she afterwards requested leave to pay a visit to the men's meeting, and Rebecca Bevan diffidently expressed a sisterly sympathy, and desire to accompany her, if it was deemed suitable. After solid consideration, the way seemed clear for their liberation, and three elders accompanied them; viz. Tabitha Bevans, Rachel Smith, and Sarah Phillips.

21st. Several testimonies were read, and some animating remarks made on the encouragement to be derived from the peaceful close of those who had been obedient in the day of the Lord's power, and who held fast their confidence to the end.

29th. A very serious consideration of the state of our Society spread among us, and one quarterly meeting seemed to claim particular attention. Just at this time, information was received from the men's meeting, that a deputation was appointed for visiting this quarterly meeting, with a request that some women Friends would unite in the visit. This was an encouragement to those who felt bound to go on this service; the names set down were Sarah Benson, Mary Stacey, and Sarah Hustler.

We were favoured with a visit from Henry Hull, who was led to speak impressively to mothers; recommending them to bring up their daughters to usefulness, and to guard against those indulgences

which tend to pride and haughtiness, lifting up above the cross of Christ. He also said that it had been very pleasant to him, while in this land, when his lot was cast in families where there was a manifest care over servants, and a tender regard to their welfare; not requiring more from them than was reasonable, and maintaining a watchful endeavour to set them an example of meekness, forbearance and Christian humility. With much solemnity, he commended us to God and to the word of his grace. He then withdrew, with his companions, leaving us in remarkable quietness, and some of us in contrition of spirit; somewhat like the early morning of our visitation, and still prized as a precious token for good.

In the afternoon our business was completed, and the concluding minute was impressively read; importing that heavenly Goodness had been mercifully near, to help our feeble endeavours. The covering of inexpressible calm, which spread over many minds, after having borne their allotted portion of hidden exercise or active service for the promotion of righteousness among us, very far exceeded the eloquence of language to set forth, or the comprehension of the restless, unstayed mind. A stayedness of mind upon the object of worship is the solace of the soul.

30th. The adjourned yearly meeting of ministers and elders met under peculiar impressions of sadness, and of sympathy with our beloved friend Henry Hull, who has received information that his wife and son have died of a malignant fever. He sent a message, expressive of his love to Friends, and that, though in affliction, he durst not murmur; for when he left his home, he resigned all into the Lord's hand, who had a right to dispose of him, and of them. A returning certificate which had been ordered for him, was read and signed. We separated under the sense of precious fellowship.

#### **MARY CAPPER TO KATHARINE CAPPER.**

*Leominster, Eighth month 18th, 1812.*

My dear loved niece,

Thy tender affection, thy unity with my poor spirit, is truly acceptable and sweet to me; the ties of relationship are sweet; but how much more important, how far more interesting, when we are permitted a little to understand a fellowship with the Father and the Son, and one with another in Him! how this softens our hearts! how it clothes the spirit with compassion for those who are out of the right way! how it teaches to bear and forbear!

—MARY CAPPER.

Mary Capper now made her home principally at the house of her friend Mary Lewis, at Leominster, and does not appear to have been engaged in much active service for some time. In the spring of 1814, she went to Birmingham before attending the yearly meeting. From Birmingham she thus writes to two of her friends.

*Birmingham, Third month 22nd, 1814.*

Dear Friends,

I have thought much of you since I left, and though my tender affection towards my fellow travellers, in the time of trouble, can avail little to lighten the actual pressure of grief, whether openly manifested or more secretly felt, yet I esteem it a privilege to be made capable of mourning with those that mourn. In my view. Christian sympathy enhances the importance of life, and brings us nearer to the great Pattern of Christian perfection, who was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. The longer I live, the more I seem to see and be convinced, that human nature, with all its propensities, must be subjected and refined through suffering. Marvel not then, my dear friends, when your pleasant pictures may be marred, or even what you may think your reasonable hopes, disappointed. As true Christian believers, quickened by Divine Grace, you have a new path to tread; banded in heart, and united in spirit, to serve the Lord and promote the spread of his righteousness, my dear friends, through all your trials, let not your faith fail, but keep your eye steadfast to the Power that can make you exemplary, and importantly useful, in your day; that, being proved and tried, you may be enabled to speak to others of that help and comfort wherewith you have been comforted. I believe it is the want of entire subjection, which keeps us from the possession of that peace of mind, which surpasses the natural understanding of man, and is a precious token of a Saviour's love. Think not that I write as having attained; ah! no; though at times I am favoured with some foretaste of this Divine gift, I find painful lets and hinderances; but this one thing I desire to do; to press forward with an earnest, humble hope, that He who has awakened my spirit, and a little opened my understanding, will never leave me to my own poor guidance; and I would encourage you, my dear friends, to hold on a heavenly course, without fainting by the way; ever bearing in mind, that it is not by outward observation that we shall stand, but by the Grace of God.

Affectionately,

—MARY CAPPER.

Fourth month 3rd. Ann Burgess held a meeting for those who have joined the Society of Friends, or are constant attenders of their meetings; several were present from my native town of Rugeley, for whom my heart was truly interested. Received fresh accounts of the continued weakness of dear Mary Lewis.

13th. At the monthly meeting at Tamworth; here is a large company of young Friends, who appear naturally lovely and kindly disposed; but there was a feeling that something more is needed; that the heart must bow to the yoke of Christ, and suffer the refining fire to consume the dross, and prepare the vessel for usefulness.

There is a great want of sacrifices and of pure offerings in the Church.

17th. First-day. Dear Stephen Grellet expressed his unity with the poor in spirit, and encouraged the

humble travellers.

19th. Set out for London.

24th. First-day. Was at Peel meeting, and had in lively remembrance the first time of my sitting down among this Society; unto whom I trust, after many years of probation, I am now steadfastly joined in Christian fellowship. My desire is to be brought into, and to be kept in humility and godly fear, by that which did first enlighten me, and convince me of the spirituality of true religion. In the evening came to my brother Jasper's, at Stoke Newington. It feels very pleasant to me to be once more with my dear relatives, and to be sensible of reciprocal affection after long separation.

25th. At the adjourned quarterly meeting, a precious memorial was read, relative to dear Mary Bevan.

26th. Spent the morning pleasantly with my dear niece Rebecca Bevan; she instructs her two elder children, with the kind and important assistance of J. G. Bevan; who takes his seat in the school-room, and appears to feel much interest in the children's advancement. Dear man! he seems gradually declining in bodily vigour, but his company is very instructive.

27th. At the week-day meeting, our aged friend Mary Pryor was enabled sweetly to encourage the lowly ones, to hold on in the path of obedience.

28th. We had a quiet day, in the peaceful enjoyment of social intercourse. How precious and highly valuable is that fellowship which unites families and relatives as in one mind! Never did I more fully feel or prize it, as a heavenly blessing.

Fifth month 2nd. After the Scripture reading and a pause, wherein the watchful, attentive mind has opportunity silently to feel its wants, and reverently to bow at the footstool of mercy, we retired to the school-room, where I sat at my needle, an observer of the great pains taken by my dear niece, assisted by J. G. Bevan to instruct the children; it is very gratifying to me to sit with those who are qualified to teach, and those who are disposed to learn; but I perceive it is an arduous task for the mother of a family, in addition to her other cares, to dedicate so large a portion of time to education.

3rd. The morning was fine, and we had a little stroll in the garden before breakfast. At reading time, the dear children were very quiet, and I thought something precious was to be felt. I ventured to express my renewed sense of the value and importance of the practice of thus collecting together, parents, children and servants, for the purpose of reading the Scriptures, and in order to experience a preparation of mind for pursuing our various occupations and duties, with propriety, and patience. There will be need of patience unto the end of the race.

After school-hours I accompanied my niece to call on the poor and afflicted; a delightful employment,

when we have the will and ability to give pecuniary relief, or to instruct them how to find the true Comforter.

6th. I left my endeared nieces, and returned to Paradise Row; dear Rebecca walked with me and stayed dinner with us, which was very pleasant to us all; indeed it is precious to feel the uniting bond of love and increasing fellowship; as with one desire, to be kept by the one Spirit; knowing our own imperfections and incapacity to keep ourselves from falling.

[On the 12th of the ninth month J. G. Bevan suddenly expired, during his afternoon sleep. In allusion to this circumstance Mary Capper wrote from Leominster:] “He had finished his course; and though survivors may mourn his loss, yet the great Head of the Church can raise fresh supplies, and bring thousands and tens of thousands up and down to cast their gifts into his treasury; yea to dedicate their all unto their Lord’s service; and let him do what He will with them and theirs.”

[The health of Mary Lewis had long been gradually giving way; she was affectionately nursed by her faithfully attached friend, who was with her to the last, and who thus wrote, on the occasion of her death, to some of her dear and intimate friends.]

*Eleventh month 28th, 1814.*

My dear Friends,

This day about twelve o’clock, I was enabled to resign with calmness, the immortal spirit of the kindest friend any individual could have, into the hands of a faithful Creator; no more to witness her tender, affectionate care and attention to me. Dear creature! she slowly declined, though her sufferings have been great, and borne with unusual cheerfulness. On seventh-day morning a stupor or drowsiness took place, with laborious breathings until towards the last, when she calmly expired. She has uniformly expressed a desire to be laid in her husband’s grave; it is therefore intended to convey the remains to Trosnant; the interment to be on first-day morning. Dear friends, farewell, I am as well as can be expected, but I want rest.

Love to all our dear friends, I subscribe myself,

—MARY CAPPER.

## Chapter VIII

*Removal from Leominster and re-settlement at Birmingham—Death of her brothers William and Jasper—Religious services, etc. to the end of the year 1820*

**TO KATHARINE CAPPER.**

*Leominster, First month 23rd, 1815.*

When I can look into my own heart, and have a sense of its natural propensities from my youth up, how marvellous appears the mercy extended to me; so that, my endeared niece, the secret acknowledgment of my soul is, God is love! and willeth not that any should perish.

O! that the whole rational creation, the world over, would receive, own, and strive to obey, his Divine gift of Grace in the heart; then might we, as one large family, together praise the Lord for his goodness, and his mercy which endureth forever. I have long been a debtor to my much loved niece R. Bevan, for a nice, affectionate letter. I have not been unmindful of the privation and grief that has been recently brought upon you, by the awful change which has taken place in the circle of your choicest friends, your justly valued, much loved Christian adviser having filled his measure; his pilgrimage ended, he has left an example to those who loved him, to follow him as he followed Christ.

—MARY CAPPER.

[She this year again attended the yearly meeting, concerning which she made the following memoranda:]

London, Fifth month 22nd. The select yearly meeting met. Many are the vacant seats of those who have been eminently useful in their day; but with humble hope, and confidence in redeeming, sanctifying Power, we look towards a rising generation; many of whom appear to have given up their names, and to be advancing in dedication and usefulness.

William Grover and George Stacey were at the table. Some tender cautions were given, with respect to those benevolent associations, in which members of our Society are now so conspicuous. There was a fear in some minds, even while they rejoiced in the spreading of knowledge, the distribution of the Scriptures and the instruction of the poor, lest a danger might secretly lurk in the pleasure received from eloquent speeches, and flowing language, at the public meetings of these associations; especially lest our dear friends should thereby lose their relish for simplicity, and be gradually drawn from the love of silent waiting in our meetings for worship; that waiting wherein they may know Jesus to be in the midst, teaching as man never taught; and by whom we have access to the Father. There was much worthy of observation in these remarks.

24th, The women's yearly meeting began.

25th. A testimony concerning our valuable friend John Kendall, deceased, was read. He was favoured with heavenly wisdom, in his early years, and dedicated a large portion of a long life, and much of his substance, to the promotion of righteousness. In his love to his fellow-men, and desire to draw them off from misspending their time, he occasionally entered public-houses, and twice the theatre; in order to

persuade those present, who were his neighbours, to consider the importance of life, and of the soul's salvation. In the afternoon, a testimony respecting dear Mary Lewis was read.

26th. At Devonshire-house meeting, some powerful testimonies were borne to the Divine mission of the Saviour upon earth, in his outward appearance, and to the operation of his Spirit, revealed in the hearts of the children of men. Many seemed to be seriously affected.

28th. First-day. Martha Routh was enabled to preach the glad tidings of the gospel; and Jesus was set forth as a Saviour and Redeemer.

31st. Sarah Hustler gave in a written account of the money entrusted to her last year, when she accompanied Elizabeth Coggeshall into Germany and the South of France, She also expressed that she had been thankful to be the medium through which the liberality of Friends, in this land, had contributed to comfort many; and that, while employed in relieving their distresses, she had often thought of her sisters, in her native land, with desires that they might rightly appreciate their privileges, and be willing to make sacrifices to supply their suffering fellow creatures.

E. Coggeshall tenderly touched upon the superfluity observable in clothing, etc. and we were called upon to show our gratitude to the Author of all our blessings.

Sixth month 1st. Instructive counsel was given, relative to the care which should be exercised over servants of every denomination; that nothing may exist in our families that can in any way harm them; and that as much as in us lies, we may encourage them in that which is good. The clerk, in a very feeling manner, read the concluding minute; and after a silent pause, we separated.

[The mind of Mary Capper appears to have been frequently much exercised on behalf of that class of persons, who are employed as haymakers, etc. in the neighbourhood of London; and at this period she expressed her interest for them in the following address, which she had printed and circulated amongst them.]

**AN AFFECTIONATE ADDRESS TO THOSE WHO ARE EMPLOYED IN HARVEST WORK,  
1815.**

How rich, how beautiful are the fields! how promising are the crops, to supply the wants of man and of cattle! Shall we behold them without one grateful acknowledgment to that bountiful Giver from whom all our mercies flow? The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; and you, my fellow pilgrims, who labour and toil in gathering the produce of the fields, and in heaping up stores, you are partakers of the fruits of the earth, you eat of the bread that strengthens the heart of man; and that it may continue to be given to you in abundance, is the desire of thousands, who are themselves supplied with it. Words can but faintly set forth, how affectionately,

how earnestly, your Christian friends wish, that the blessing of the Lord may be with you, in the fields, when your hands are diligently employed in hard labour. They earnestly desire that when the toil of the day is over, peace, the inward peace of your minds, may make your rest sweet, and refresh your weary bodies, fitting you for the task of the succeeding day. Let affectionate solicitude, for your soul's sake, prevail upon you to avoid all excess in drinking; it is an ungrateful waste of the Creator's bounty. Drunkenness unfits both the mind and the body for all that is innocent and good, it is a shameful inlet to bad and idle words, to profane and filthy communications, and to foolish jestings, which things are dangerous in their consequences, and often lead into serious harms, that might not be even thought of in the beginning of familiarities.

Permit a stranger to put you in mind, that without serious thoughtfulness and prayer, neither the poor nor the rich, the labourer nor the master, is safe. We cannot in our own strength resist temptation. Oh! it grieves your friends, who are interested for you, who observe you when you are not aware, it grieves them, when the old men amongst you commit folly, and the young unhappily follow the sad example.

Why will ye not accept a Saviour's redeeming love, who suffered, was crucified and died, to save us from our sins? Receive this exhortation in seriousness, and let it make some impression for good on your hearts, as it is offered to you by a fellow traveller who has your present and eternal happiness in view.

And you, dear young children of the poor, who attend your parents and others in the labours of the fields; remember that your Heavenly Father careth for you; that he pitieth you, even whilst you are ignorant of Him. Think upon his goodness and mercy; He would keep you from sin, from all wicked words, from lies and deceit; take heed, dear children, that you learn not these things from those who are older than you, and ought to teach you better things. Love one another, be gentle, kind and good; then nothing can harm you.

[Mary Capper again attended the yearly meeting in 1816; her diary thus continues.]

Fifth month 20th. The yearly meeting of ministers and elders met; and after a time of reverent waiting, very low as at the footstool of mercy, vocal prayer was offered. Jonathan Hutchinson joined Wm. Grover, etc. at the table. Mary Naftel, in a weighty manner, informed us of a concern to visit Friends in America. After much silent deliberation, a belief was expressed that the meeting might safely sanction the movement, and the language of encouragement was held forth.

21st. Elizabeth Robson opened to the meeting, in much simplicity, her apprehension that it was required of her to visit those under our name in France and Germany. Much tender feeling was expressed, and the decision was left to a future sitting.

22nd. Soon after the women's yearly meeting gathered, a very precious stillness prevailed, and seemed to spread over us through this sitting; a gentle hint was given to be watchful when out of meeting, so that the beneficial impressions received might be retained.

23rd. Four testimonies were read, respecting deceased ministers, who had been favoured to finish their earthly pilgrimage in peace, and with a lively hope of acceptance, through Christ the Saviour, who redeemeth the believers in Him.

24th. It was remarked, that while many are running to and fro in the earth, in order that knowledge may be increased, the retired humble Christian believer, who finds no power to go forth, and can only rejoice with trembling, may, by secret and sincere prayer, be instrumental in the promotion of truth and righteousness.

28th. Some very interesting accounts were sent in from our men Friends, relative to the civilization and improvement of the Indians in North America. Friends in that land still extend much care towards them; schools are established, and Friends reside among them; many of the women and girls have learned to spin, etc. The report mentions that an ancient chief expressed the satisfaction which they felt, in observing the stability of the Friends who had settled among them; that even when the great guns shook the earth they did not seem disturbed; from this they concluded that the Good Spirit was with them.

30th. Counsel was expressed, tending to encourage and comfort the lowly-minded, and to animate all to watch unto prayer, that spiritual mindedness might increase among us, and that our worship might really be in spirit and in truth; even though without verbal ministry. We received an acceptable visit from Richard Phillips, accompanied by William Grover. In the evening we concluded our business, which has been transacted in much harmony, and under a sense of that gracious, condescending mercy, which the Christian believer prizes above every earthly enjoyment.

Sixth month 1st. The adjourned meeting of ministers and elders opened with a fresh manifestation of that Power which draws into solemn stillness, and prepares the mind for secret or vocal prayer; the latter was offered on the bended knee. The concern of Elizabeth Robson was again seriously considered, and it appeared right to liberate her for the service.

26th. At the quarterly meeting for London and Middlesex, Elizabeth Fry of Plashett cottage, was liberated to accompany Elizabeth Robson.

Ninth month 24th. Attended the monthly meeting at Hereford, and under a persuasion that it was a right movement, requested a certificate of removal to the North monthly meeting of Warwickshire.

Tenth month 7th. Requested permission to have a religious meeting with some of the inhabitants of Leominster, before leaving that place; and informed Friends that I felt inclined to pay a visit to some families not professing with us, as way might open for it. The monthly meeting concurred therein, and appointed John Southall to accompany me, when desirable.

8th. Made one call, where we were favoured with a precious sense of the tender mercy of the Lord.

10th. Sarah Waring accompanied me to the house of a very respectable widow, where we took tea; an opportunity was afterwards very willingly given, to have the company of a faithful servant, who had been with her mistress during many years of affliction, and who, being sickly, had received great kindness in return. After relieving my mind, we parted in mutual good will. I afterwards called on several more of my neighbours, and was always kindly received. As I found ability given me, in tenderness and love, I expressed my solicitude for the welfare of the immortal soul, which will have an existence when we shall no more meet, in these poor, frail, mortal bodies. The neighbours were invited to attend one of our religious meetings, and the house was pretty well filled. Stillness prevailed, and some of us were enabled to wait on the God of all grace. Something was expressed in love to souls. I had particular satisfaction, and felt great sweetness, in calling upon two Moravian families. I thought the spirituality of faith in Christ, the Saviour and Redeemer of men, was to be found among them.

I left Leominster in a low frame of spirit, though I did not feel condemnation for anything that I had done, or willfully left undone.

#### TO A FRIEND IN AMERICA.

*Five Ways, Islington, 9th of Eighth month, 1816.*

Dear J.,

I have lived many years, and have seen many changes, and have known privations, by a final separation as to sweet intercourse in this world from those most dear unto me; yet this I can testify without boasting, that heavenly kindness has sweetened every cup. I have of a truth nothing in which I can boast, for I am weak and imperfect as others. In the days of my youth I was volatile, prone to folly, and more tempted by evil than some others seem to be, but the unsearchable riches of our Heavenly Father's mercies have kept me from destruction unto this day; and with the ability he gives from time to time, I can speak well of his name; for though he is pleased to bring our spirits low, and to humble us that we may know ourselves, and what is in our hearts, again he shows himself gloriously, that the poor and contrite ones may trust in him.

Dear \_\_\_\_\_ thou knows these things in the morning of thy days; and an unspeakable favour it will be if thou keeps close unto that which will keep thee, Christ within, the power and safeguard of the Christian traveller. I need not warn thee to beware of the lo here and the lo there, and that thou go not after them. Thou hast kind, affectionate counsellors around thee, who, I doubt not, will aid thee to follow that which is right, and strengthen the witness for good in thy heart.

I subscribe thy sincere affectionate friend,

—MARY CAPPER.

## TO THE SAME.

*Birmingham, 1st of First month, 1817.*

To see thee again amongst us, kept by the power of heavenly goodness, from the evil of the world, plain, humble, and without guile; oh \_\_\_\_\_, language is short in describing what kind of cordial satisfaction this gives to those, who have experienced the fallacy—the uncertainty of this world's most fair and flattering promises. Believe it, there is no joy comparable unto that which arises from a well-grounded hope of the soul's salvation; no torrent of surrounding temptation; no gloss of false liberty; no subtlety of argument; no custom of nations—will, I affectionately hope, ever draw thee to turn aside from the religious principles of thy youth; but that growing years may confirm and establish thy judgment upon the foundation of Christ crucified, is, I believe, the prayer of thy best friends.

I crave the stability, the encouragement of all who profess and have tasted, and spiritually seen that the Lord is good; that nothing may dismay or harm those, is the present fervent desire of thy affectionate friend,

—MARY CAPPER.

## TO KATHARINE CAPPER.

*Birmingham, Second month 11th, 1817.*

My dear Niece,

I was affected by the account of thy dear father's sufferings, and being something of an invalid myself, I thought very affectionately of my much-loved brother, as I lay awake on my bed. I remember the love of our youth; mutual endearment is even more precious now, in my old age, than in the morning of my day. Tell my dear brother that an increased sense of fellowship binds me to him.

I call to mind thy dear father's first communication respecting his sense of the sinfulness of sin; and to the best of my recollection, it was the beginning of serious thoughtfulness, upon the nature of sin, in my mind; though my foolish heart made light of it, just at that time.

But little as a beloved brother may think that he had to do with it, so it is, that I connect the incident, the love for him, and an awful reverence for the watchful Shepherd of souls; as then and now working together for good; even to the end designed, of mercifully redeeming, fitting and preparing for a mansion of purity and blessedness.

With a large portion of love to you all, thy aunt,

—MARY CAPPER.

## TO A FRIEND IN AMERICA.

*Birmingham, Second month 27th, 1817.*

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

I am now favoured with apartments where I retire in sweet quietness, and at seasons enjoy a peace of mind that no power on earth can give; and all the gratifications of worldly pleasures are but as dross, in comparison with it; not for anything that I have done, but in adorable mercy this precious foretaste of blessedness is graciously given, to soften the infirmities of increasing years, the decays of youthful vigour, and above all, to increase faith, to strengthen hope, to clothe the mind with genuine “humility, and fix our affections upon things above, where all is joy and purity. That, dear \_\_\_\_\_, in life and in death what can there be so essentially important, as the true knowledge of our faithful Creator, and of Jesus Christ whom he has sent to reveal the way of eternal salvation? How can rational beings with immortal souls live carelessly, unconcerned, as it were, upon a subject so important? Cherish the living spark, the good seed in thy heart, and thou wilt find growing fruit to the praise of the good Husbandman, and thy own unspeakable peace; an inward calm and gentle joy with which no stranger intermeddleth. The stranger to this secret operative power in the soul, entereth not into its nature and origin, neither can he; but the soul that has tasted, though but imperfectly, of this revealed goodness, is at times constrained, as it were, to say and to crave, Oh that men would seek the Lord, that they might know him, and praise him, for his mercy and for his goodness.

Though, dear \_\_\_\_\_, we are assured that they who seek shall find, and that treasures of Divine wisdom and knowledge shall be opened unto’ them, yet there is many a dark and gloomy day on this side the promised land. It must needs be that we feel the separation which sin has made between us and our God, that we remain children of nature, liable, prone to corruption and disobedience to God’s holy law, until we be quickened, made alive unto the necessity and goodness of our heavenly Father, by the revelation of Christ within the hope of glory, and the name or power given by which we must be redeemed or saved. Keep close, dear \_\_\_\_\_, to the religion of thy parents; let their God be thy God, and he will open thy understanding, and make plain, things that may at times seem too hard for thee. Humility and contrition of spirit seem the only safe dwelling place whilst we are clothed with these poor corruptible bodies; and we shall find that there is great need of patience unto the end of our Christian pilgrimage.

It is very pleasant to hear of dear Mary Naftel—that she is favoured to get along so comfortably, and under the care of kind friends who can feel for and with her. If thou hast opportunity, please to express my tender affection; and tell her, if thou thinks well, that I begin to feel settled, as it were, amongst my own people; and as far as my capacity seems to go, I feel thankful for the present, and desirous to leave the future unfoldings, to the great Hand that has graciously and in marvellous mercy, led me hitherto.

Very affectionately, thy friend,

—MARY CAPPER.

*Birmingham, Fourth month 18th, 1817.*

Dear M. S.,

Doubtless thou hast had accounts of my weak state of health; I am indeed again reduced very low, but I see it is my place to be quiet and patient, which is the petition of my spirit more often than the day. Subjection of the will, and the reduction of all that is contrary to the righteous law of Christ, however secret it may be, is the work and end of pure religion in the soul; whatever our name, situation or rank in life. Sickness and retirement do not exclude trials of faith; nor do I believe that an active, busy scene, in things lawful, precludes the precious influence of that divine, heavenly Power, which, if believed and obeyed, leads out of error, and opens the way of truth.

My voice remains suspended, so that it is a fatigue to make myself understood. I have the great privilege of a quiet, pleasant, little room, where I am much alone.

*Birmingham, Fourth month 26th, 1817.*

Dear W. F.,

Though I am now in as poor and weak a state as thou hast heretofore seen me in; yet being favoured to feel some liveliness of spirit, and interest in those things which I am persuaded make for peace, I earnestly desire the increase of spirituality among all professing Christians; that we may manifest of a truth, that we believe in God, and in Jesus Christ whom He hath sent. To experience the change from nature unto grace, is more to be desired than kingdoms; and is worth enduring conflicts and distresses, to know realised in ourselves; and if so might be, to prepare us, to strengthen, help and encourage other burdened souls.

I doubt not thy continued dedication is attended with many trials and sacrifices, but also with many gracious helps, many sweet mercies; and thou knowest these cannot be bought too dear; in fact, what has the most favoured servant to give, which has not first been received? The best enjoyment of every good gift is a grateful sense of the bounty of the Giver.

[Mary Capper did not attend the yearly meeting, but her sister Anne Capper sent her the following particulars.]

Fifth month 11th. First-day. We had a precious company to dine; our dear brother and sister John Capper called, and silence ensued. Mary Proud and Mary Alexander spoke sweetly, and I think our dear brother and sister were comforted. My brother is seventy.

19th. Today my Jasper is sixty-six; upon looking back, I find both the brothers increasingly desirous of yielding themselves to best guidance, and preciousy drawn from visible things. The opening of the yearly meeting of ministers and elders today was a time of refreshment to many. Elizabeth Robson gave an account of the labours of herself and companions; also of their great trials in having to leave William Allen in his affliction, and in the death of his wife.

20th. William Byrd first broke silence, in testimony; then his wife in prayer. Then Hannah Field, from America, with much simplicity, informed us of her prospect of visiting those under our name in France; and Elizabeth Barker hers, to be the companion of Hannah Field. Much sympathy and unity were expressed.

23rd. At the meeting for worship we were comforted together; bread was broken, blessed, and handed to them that were brought low. The dear, simple-hearted American Friends dined with us; eight of our children were with us, and many others. After dinner, in a religious opportunity, Hannah Field and E. Barker, had to exhort and encourage us. E. Barker also appeared in supplication.

25th. First-day. Thy dear brother, Ann Crowley, and I, were privileged with the company of the dear American Friends, to go with us to attend the interment of my aged friend, Benjamin Angell, of Brentford. I think he was eighty-three. The instructive society of our friends was very precious to us. At the funeral, Hannah Field encouraged all present to come from shadows to the living substance. E. Barker and Ann Crowley were engaged in reverent supplication, and several friends in testimony.

31st. The select yearly meeting concluded under a very solemn covering. My dear husband is very poorly, but we have had to commemorate the Lord's tender dealings with us; he is so favoured, in this time of sickness, that it is with reverent, humble gratitude I perceive the increase of his faith and love. Surely goodness and mercy have followed him all his days! of this I also have largely partaken.

[Rebecca Bevan also sent an account of the daily transactions of the women's meeting, to which she subjoined the following; her last address to her aunt.]

*Tottenham, 1817.*

I have endeavoured, my dear aunt, to keep a daily account of the proceedings of our yearly meeting, but it is so inferior to what I could have wished, that I believe it must go, without any other recommendation than the affection which induced me to begin it, and I hope thou wilt accept it as a proof of my love. I was gratified by thy kind letter, sent by one who appears to have grown so much in all that is good, as almost to discourage some of her companions in the Christian race; but while I have been writing this, the words, "In my Father's house are many mansions," have afforded me a ray of encouragement, and renewed my hope.

I think, if I could slip away from my engagements, I could enjoy a few quiet days with thee; but at present, that is out of the question; my dear boys are just coming home, for a six week's vacation, and our two youngest have the hooping cough. I believe the rest have all had it, and it is not very violent. My father is but poorly.

Thy very affectionate niece,

—REBECCA BEVAN.

[Rebecca Bevan died the 9th of the eleventh month of this year, in the faith and hope of a humble Christian, having endured a very suffering illness with much patience.<sup>1</sup>]

**MARY CAPPER TO JOHN AND SARAH GRUBB.**

*Birmingham, Sixth month 7th, 1817.*

My dear exercised Friends,

I seem as though I could not well forbear to communicate a little of my feelings toward you, as they arise in freshness, though it may be but in a very small measure that I can enter into your tribulated state. A petition something like this has arisen on your behalf; “O! Father, help with holy help, thy humble, dedicated servants; sustain them continually through heights and depths. Their conflicts are fully known to thee, though it may be, not unto any fellow mortal. O! when the poor, weak, human frame is overwhelmed, and seems ready to sink, and the heart to fail, may it please thee, thou source of true consolation! to be the strength of the heart! to pour in Gilead’s balm, and prove thyself their Holy Physician.” Weak and solitary as I am, yet I cannot count myself dead, so long as I am capable of feeling an interest in the labours of those who are actively engaged. May the Lord of the harvest be in the midst, and bless his servants, and crown his own works! I hope, if it be best, that a little respite will be given you, to recruit your health and spirits. Depression is not unusual in bodily weakness; but doubtless there is a suffering with the Church, spiritually, that goes yet deeper; nevertheless, my precious friends, look forward—the end will crown all; because you do know in whom ye have believed, and because your Redeemer liveth, ye shall live also,

—MARY CAPPER.

**TO E. C.**

*Alder House, Tenth month 10th, 1817.*

My dear Friend,

Thou canst better think than I tell, the feelings of my heart, respecting the alarming state and inexpressible sufferings of my dear, much loved niece Rebecca Bevan. Greatly will she be missed in her family, and in that station where her services and abilities were called into action. The intelligence received gives no reasonable hope of recovery.

Dear creature! while I secretly participate in the present affliction, and mourn the privation that will be felt by near and dear connections, the cheering, precious consolation of my soul is, that the all-wise Disposer of events sees fit to gather her devoted spirit from the trials and pains of the body, at an early period of life. The Divine

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<sup>1</sup> See Piety Promoted, Part XI. page 189.

will, done in us and through us, is all in all. My views extend to that blessed time, when the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our heavenly Father and of his Christ. It seems that tribulation, pain and suffering, is the medium whereby grace triumphs over nature; sustaining faith, the gift of mercy and goodness, will, I humbly hope, uphold us through all. I seem strongly inclined to return home; retirement will better suit the sympathetic sadness that clothes my spirit, though the friends here are tenderly kind. Still it is not my own little apartment, nor so much in the way of seeing you, as a part of our family connection, and hearing almost every day or two some account of my dear afflicted relatives.

My love to all,  
—MARY CAPPER.

### TO A FRIEND IN AMERICA.

*Birmingham, Eleventh month 11th, 1817.*

Dear J.,

Whether I may write to thee, or from concurring circumstances, which sometimes disqualify or impede communications, I may remain silent, I think that in sincerity and real affection thou mayest rest satisfied there is a secret precious bond that strongly unites us in one view, one permanent object, of important interest; and though for a season we have our trials, thou dear \_\_\_\_\_, in the morning and prime of thy youth, and in the evening and decline of my natural life, this is my consoling, unshaken belief, that we shall reap the matured fruits of patient continuance in well-doing, if we secede not from that gracious Power which worketh (as I assuredly believe,) in us, to will and do that which brings solid peace to the soul.

Dear \_\_\_\_\_, suffer no inward or outward suggestions, no rising tumult of thoughts to discourage thee from pressing after that which is manifested in the secret of thy soul to be light and pure life unto thee. We must not look to others for example, though it may be, at times, we may be animated and helped to hold on in integrity by the faithful followers of a crucified Saviour. Our safety is, the reproofs of instruction by the still small voice within. Happy, yea happy for those who humbly bend to the power of the religion of Jesus whilst they are in the tender years of youth. Nothing can be more true than that it keeps them from a thousand snares and makes their virtues strong. Seeing thyself weak, poor and helpless, subject to much tossing and trouble of mind, from doubts or from fears of falling through divers temptations, does in no wise manifest thy being forsaken, but rather that thou art under the direction of Him who teacheth as no man can teach; that he is leading thee and proving thee to show thee what is in thy heart, to humble thee and draw thee out of every confidence, but in the revealed Word or power of Jesus in thy soul. I believe it is safe to keep these secret manifestations within the silent recesses, entering, as it were, the closet, having the door shut, that the intercourse may be in secret with Him who knoweth and alone can answer the prayer or inmost breathing of the awakened soul. If my small experience has taught me anything in this best of schools, the Divine Teacher instructs in stillness, and leads gently along; the docile learner scarcely perceives the progressive steps of attainment. The fear of offending

willfully in thought, word, or deed, predominates as a check to evil, and as a spur to obedience. Hold fast the knowledge and the power thou hast received; and when thou art sensible of coming very short of the standard of Truth, in lowliness, in quietness and patience, wait the return of increased faith and power. There is forgiveness and mercy with Him who knoweth us altogether.

Whenever opportunity offers, please express to our valued dear friend Mary Naftel, that her message is very cordial and acceptable to me, and she has a return of my love and tender desires, that when her arduous labours are finished in your land, she may, under divine protection, return in peace into the bosom of her own family. My health has been benefited by a visit to my native town of Rugeley, and inhaling the pure air of Staffordshire, sweet and clear.

I have written thee a long letter, and hope it will convey an outward sign of the sincere and dear love I bear to thee, as thy friend and fellow traveller to a better world than this.

—MARY CAPPER.

#### **MARY CAPPER TO HER BROTHER JASPER CAPPER.**

*Birmingham, Second month 7th, 1818.*

My dear Brother,

Often in my solitude I think of thee; my heart seems increasingly bound to thee, as we descend the slope of time. In some of my best moments, thou seemest present with me; and in my low strippings, I think of thee. When Satan whispers ugly things, and would fright my soul from prayer, sometimes on my knees, “with teary face,” like the poor Indian, bending low, I seek relief; and though many a time no form of words presents, there seems a spiritual intercession, and a calm succeeds; not always immediately. Faith and patience are kept alive by exercise. Then, again, I think of thee, and my soul takes courage.

May we not be thankful that we can, in the secret of our hearts, believe, “The precious blood was shed, to cleanse this heart of mine!” Yes, thine and mine! from all sin! that being justified, we may be glorified; clothed in the fine linen, white and clean, as no fuller on earth can make it! No skilful alchemist can so separate the precious from the vile! My beloved brother, may we be more, and yet more, favoured with joy and peace in believing, is the prayer of thy sister,

—MARY CAPPER.

#### **TO RICHARD AND ELIZABETH CADBURY**

*Worcester, Fourth month 27th, 1818.*

My very dear Friends,

I don't know how I can sufficiently prize the privilege of having your kind regard, and the love of your dear children, which is as a cordial in my advancing days. I think I shall return on sixth-day; I am aware that I shall then have but a very short time to rest before my journey to London, should my health continue equal to the undertaking.

Dear Jesse is, I hope, better; I believe he has learned from the best of teachers, the Spirit of Christ manifested in his heart, that it is good for us to suffer cheerfully, when pain or affliction is brought upon us. Please to express my tender love to him, and tell him that I remember, when I was young, that I was often sick, and my high spirits were brought low; and now I am increased in age, I am very sensible that these dispensations were blessings to me; as they gradually led me to think upon my Creator, and that there is a heaven where purified spirits live forever. Dear Jesse, I believe, often thinks of this, and herein I trust we have sweet fellowship one with the other, though we do not often express it in words, and we may be personally separated; but there is a precious union of spirits, sweeter to my mind than worldly possessions.

—MARY CAPPER.

Fifth month 18th. Yearly meeting of ministers and elders. Some of the old standard bearers still remain. William Tuke, lively and zealous for good order and discipline. William Grover, William Allen, and Dykes Alexander at the table. Hannah Field, in a very humble, simple manner, informed us that she believed the time was drawing near for her to return to her native land; she spoke very modestly of her labours, but said, that for the encouragement of others, she could thankfully acknowledge, that she had been helped and sustained in all her difficulties and trials; with tenderness of spirit, she also mentioned the affectionate regard and kindness which she had everywhere received.

19th. A particular solemnity seemed to spread over us, when William Rickman, of Rochester, in a humble, affecting manner, laid before us a concern for visiting some parts of North America, for which service he was liberated, after weighty deliberation.

20th. The women's yearly meeting, gathered in remarkable stillness. The meeting at large is much helped by the business being conducted with propriety, and so as to be clearly heard; a prevailing quietness contributing greatly to the advantage of the whole. A memorial was read concerning Special West; it was very interesting to observe how heavenly goodness followed him through life, and crowned him in death.

22nd. A very large gathering, and again favoured with a settled stillness. We are greatly privileged with a clerk and assistants, fully competent to their important office. A testimony concerning Martha Routh was read. Much excellent counsel was given.

24th. First-day. At Gracechurch street meeting, the Christian doctrine of true self-denial was remarkably held up to view; viz. "Art thou slothful? deny thyself! Art thou covetous? deny thyself! Art thou hasty in thy temper, and prone to speak what may pain others, and wound thy own soul? Deny thyself!" etc.

25th. A very impressive testimony was read, respecting Rebecca Bevan. After having endeavoured to fill the stations of child, wife and mother, with scrupulous propriety, she had no anchor of hope but in the mercy of God in Christ Jesus, in the love and righteousness of her Redeemer; and here her faith was ultimately both strong and animating; so that we, who loved her much, have abundant cause to rejoice in the belief, that all is well with her. She was thirty-four years old. As she attended the last yearly meeting, the circumstance of her early death seemed striking to many; Hannah Field particularly alluded to the solicitude which she then expressed for the guarded education of children.

26th. A testimony concerning dear Sarah Hustler was read. Some beautiful and impressive truths were declared, and encouragement was expressed to such as were cast down.

27th. A recommendation was given to avoid providing more than is needful for the table on first-days, that servants might not be unnecessarily engaged. A desire seemed to prevail that we may all be fervent in spirit, and alive to a sense of the condescending goodness of our Heavenly Father.

29th. Our yearly meeting closed, under the favoured covering of a solemn silence, which no description can fully convey to those who have never known its power. No words can so fully calm and satisfy the soul!

#### **TO RICHARD AND ELIZABETH CADBURY**

*Stoke Newington, Seventh month 6th, 1818.*

My dear Friends,

Your continued kindness towards me, raises a very grateful feeling in my mind. I have considered myself largely indebted to dear S.; her watchful attentions are not forgotten. I have moved about but little, as I yet remain weak and unequal to those exertions which I see others so actively get through. Indolence does not seem to beset me, and I desire to move in the path appointed to me; sometimes I think it amounts to very little active service. I have spent some very pleasant time with my dear brother Jasper; some days we have been much alone. I hope our religious experience has in degree increased with our years, and that now, in our declining days, we are strongly united in a bond that cannot be broken by the power of the grave. Our hope, our confidence is anchored upon the Lord of life and glory. O! this is precious, and calls for the deepest sense, and the acknowledgment, of condescending goodness and mercy toward the children of men.

Affectionately,

—MARY CAPPER.

**TO THE SAME.**

*London, Ninth month 18th, 1818.*

My dear Friends,

I came from Stoke Newington yesterday; my dear brother Jasper has long been a severe sufferer; I never saw him anything like so ill, nor do I recollect ever to have seen any one in such unremitting pain. You, my dear friends, well know the anxiety of watching over an endeared sufferer, when all our efforts are ineffectual to give ease; my beloved brother's mind is evidently fixed upon the Redeemer; these storms shake not the foundation, though the poor tabernacle totters with the vehemence of the blast; but the Rock of ages stands sure; what a marvellous mercy is this! My very tender love is to your dear, precious, suffering child; though it would gratify me to sit by him, and to witness the condescending goodness that keeps him in peace, while his poor mortal body continues from day to day, to be in much pain and affliction, I am satisfied that the pure Spirit, from the Fountain of all good, often sweetly unites us when personally separated. I esteem it a great privilege thus to believe. My absence from you, dear friends, would be increasingly trying, if I did not apprehend that I am desirous to be just where I think I ought to be, although very little, if any obvious benefit arises from my small services; I do not so much look at that as at the gentle pointings and openings in my own mind.

Affectionately I subscribe, your friend,

—MARY CAPPER.

Ninth month. I have received an account of the death of dear Jesse Cadbury, who was only a child in years. He expressed that he was satisfied he should die in the Lord, and go to that better country, where he should sing Allelujah forever. Dear, precious child! his love to me now feels inexpressibly sweet.

Birmingham, Eleventh month 13th. I accompanied two friends on a visit to the few remaining at the Alder Mills; this pleasant spot, a few years ago, wore the appearance of an earthly paradise. Distress and separation of families, with many strippings and sorrows, have now marred the pleasant picture; and the tender sympathy of friends is cordially accepted.

18th. After our meeting, I accompanied Elizabeth Cadbury to call upon some Friends who are parents; we took the Epistle on education, issued by the last yearly meeting, and it was read with seriousness. Some observations were made, as an incitement to watch carefully the opening capacity of the infant mind, to receive religious instruction; and to cherish the first breath of the spirit of prayer; the gentle desire to know the Author of their days; to encourage them to think of Him, to love Him, to fear all that might offend Him.

Good impressions are often discoverable in young children, before the natural will and the bias of evil example, or strength of wrong dispositions, gains the ascendancy and precipitates them into evil actions; so that it is highly important for parents and instructors, to endeavour, with all possible attention, to find opportunities for instructing them in the principles of the Christian religion, leading them to the Saviour,

that they may receive his blessing, and be enabled to resist the tempter.

26th. Dined with the young family of our deceased friends John and Priscilla Dearman, who were both taken away in the prime of life; but there is a protecting Power extended to the orphan; such have an Almighty Father, who heareth and answereth prayer. I hope the visit was not unprofitable.

Twelfth month 8th. Called on several Friends with the epistle. Great openness appeared, even with thankfulness that so much care is manifested among us, and extended towards those whose situations and circumstances in life, much, if not wholly, exclude them from the privilege of attending the yearly meeting, and of other interesting intercourse with their friends. In the afternoon we sat with some young people, a brother and a sister, who were early left motherless; they manifested much tenderness, and their flowing tears seemed to do us good; our minds were sweetly brought under the influence of heavenly goodness.

16th. I united with S. and R. Lloyd in calling on some friends in the station of parents; the epistle on the subject of education and early religious instruction, was seriously read to them; they were also recommended to introduce into their families, a publication by Henry Tuke, setting forth the principles of the Christian religion, as professed among us; with Lindley Murray's Compendium, on the same important subject. The Book of Extracts of the yearly meetings' minutes, much elucidates our discipline, and brings before us beautiful advice, that has been issued by successive yearly meetings, for the help of the body; this, with many other excellent publications, were recommended to be read in families. We found that most parents could acknowledge their need of encouragement, in their endeavours to watch over themselves and their dear children; lest they should faint in their minds, or grow weary, or negligent in watchfulness and prayer. Our visits seemed to be accepted with feelings of unfeigned good will, like those which prompted them. That which unites sojourners here in one desire to obtain the blessing of the promised land, was, in degree, felt from house to house.

#### TO KATHARINE CAPPER.

*Worcester, First month 18th, 1819.*

It was very kind of thy father, in his almost solitary sitting, when his health and spirits were so much affected, to turn his thoughts in this tendered frame towards me; his free communication is truly gratifying. I am often alone, and then, what I consider mental intercourse with my beloved relatives is sweet; the confirmation that it is at times mutual is encouraging.

Thy beloved brother's visit, I doubt not, was gratifying; I think I should have participated with you in the chaste joy of seeing dear relations walking in the Truth. Real gratitude for such favours is not the produce of our native soil; the happy culture of Divine grace brings first the blade; and so, if not untimely nipped, comes the ripened crop; but the husbandman, in nature's field, has long patience, and he is not dismayed at every dark

and gloomy day.

—MARY CAPPER.

### TO HER BROTHER JASPER AND HIS FAMILY

*Birmingham, Fifth month 1st, 1819.*

My dear brother Jasper, etc.

To be hasty in feeling disappointments, and not prompt to acknowledge gratifications, will not, I hope, be laid upon me. This very morning I received a fourfold kindness, making ample compensation for my disappointed anticipations. Wrong, you did me none, so to forgive there is nothing; and in the present instance, I may consider myself a gainer, by thy pen being called into action, to tell me that you loved me, etc. It is more to me than a library of books! My dear sister, the comparatively transient pain, which is past, is more than repaid by present feelings; arising from a spring afresh discovering itself from beneath an accidental covering of some scattered fragments. 'Tis enough! the stream remains undiminished, and I am now in my own comfortable apartments, alone, without interruption enjoying your kind communication.

How manifold are my consolations! I would not change my imperfect sense of the mercy and the favours conferred daily upon me, for the possession of worldly wealth and power. With reverence, not with boasting, I write; for I am sure it is of the Lord's mercy.

My beloved brother and sister! it may possibly be our experience in days to come, that, whilst others in stronger health, are more actively and conspicuously engaged in promoting the right thing, and in beholding the manifestations of the Lord's power in the earth, we may have to taste of the pure water that flows softly, in the low valley, where there is freshness and greenness, and where the longing soul is satisfied, even though separated from Christian friends, gathered together to help one another. The great Helper of these, also "setteth the solitary in families."

I have to contemplate many distresses around me, in the present day of commercial troubles. The gracious Creator of man has surely some wise, benevolent purpose, in this chastisement; his humble children and dependent servants will submit with reverence, and crave for patience of soul, with wisdom to direct their steps. My dear nephew and niece! I did not know the power that I seem to have possessed, to cause such a muster of your forces in your four-fold epistle. There is strength in love, which does as much execution as silver trumpets and battering rams. In most cordial, sweet affection towards every one of you, including the lovely children, I subscribe your strongly attached sister and aunt.

—MARY CAPPER.

### TO JOHN AND SARAH GRUBB.

*Birmingham, Tenth month, 1819.*

My endeared Friends,

No human language can, I believe, fully set forth, that quickening, living virtue, which unites the heart, soul and spirit of those who love the Lord Jesus, and cherish his redeeming power in the soul. Surely I was favoured to feel something of its precious influence in being with you; and since my return home, I have often thought of you, with the same impression of your deeply hidden, and more openly manifested trials and engagements. Your life, spiritual and natural, with all that you are, and all that you have, is the Lord's; let Him do what seemeth Him good! A little while and time shall be no longer! Be of good cheer, my much-loved friends! press on, meekly and steadily, without over much solicitude; trust the whole rational creation, and your own souls, as quietly as you can, or may obtain faith to do, into the hands of a faithful Creator. He worketh wonders in his unfathomable mercy.

In recurring to dear J. G.'s impressive exercise of spirit, as I was at the time, so have I since been, led to trace something like the deep and mournful travails of Isaac Penington, when he expresses himself thus; "O! how I have prayed for the lost world! for all the souls of mankind! How hath my soul bowed in unutterable breathings of spirit before God, and could not be silenced, until He quieted, or satisfied my spirit, of the righteousness and excellency of his will, and bid me leave it to Him!"

It would be precious, if so ordered, that you found your family well, whether you are permitted to rest and enjoy your domestic comforts for a shorter or a longer time. May Israel's Shepherd protect your tender lambs, and bless them with docile spirits; that they may be kept within his safe enclosure, and come to know Him for themselves, as the good Shepherd, who careth for the lambs, or the little ones, who desire to love Him, and to obey his voice. To your dear mother, please to express my tender love; advancing age has its trying weakness; but O! the sustaining comfort of looking to a Saviour's love; through whom, even in our weak estate, we have access to God.

Farewell, my dear Christian friends! accept the love of your attached friend,

—MARY CAPPER.

#### **TO HANNAH EVANS OF WARWICK.**

My dear Friend,

It is a reviving cordial to the Christian traveller, when we can feel union of spirit by the way, each having an appointed path to tread, and pressing toward the same mark; yet the heart, surrounded by its fellows, often feels alone; and none can fill this void, or satisfy the soul's desire, but that Almighty Power in whom we live, and move, and have our being. It will perhaps be matter of surprise, though I hope not irreconcilable to thy best feelings, that my mind has been seriously impressed, for some time past, with a view of a visit of a

religious nature, to the families of Friends at Coventry; to some in other places not in profession with us, and more particularly to the county jail and house of correction, at Warwick; so impressive has been this prospect, that I concluded it best to consult a few friends, who encouraged me to lay it before our monthly meeting. A certificate is ordered; this must detain me till our next monthly meeting, unless, without infringing upon any rule of good order, I might go forward to Coventry, while the weather is somewhat mild. I wait the decision with quiet submission. I think I have no self choice, in the time or the thing.

Now, my dear friend, I claim thy help and sympathy. Long as I have been engaged in this way, this is the first movement I have made alone; and I seem like a very child, in want of help and direction. Let me hear from thee soon.

### TO THE SAME.

*Eleventh month 24th, 1819.*

Dear Friend,

How precious is it to feel the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace Although there may be, and there are, in our present state, seasons, not a few, when dark and cloudy days obstruct our vision, surely I may, with serious, contrite feeling, say, that condescending mercy has graciously joined me to a people, in whose religious principles my soul finds full satisfaction; and language cannot set forth the precious fellowship, that in some favoured times, solaces my poor spirit, in the company of those who are spiritually alive, even in these trying days, when we are indeed a mixed people, and the pure life is often, to our apprehension, trodden down. O! the sense of this is surely a sign that we are not spiritually dead, nor living at ease in the midst of the desolation that surrounds us. Our humble trust is still in the Lord, though unbelief abounds in the nation.

I am satisfied and confirmed by thy judgment, and strengthened by thy sympathy, to wait the full time of the meeting's approbation. I believe it is, in most, if not in all cases, safest and best, to avoid giving occasion of offence or remark. I have not a decided sight, whether I had best move with or without a companion; this I trust will rightly open in due time. I feel satisfied the delay is no hurt to me; and in all things, there is instruction.

In dear affection,

—MARY CAPPER.

### FROM HANNAH EVANS TO MARY CAPPER.

*Eleventh month 27th, 1819.*

My dear Friend,

I received thine, and am pleased my last met thy approbation. In respect to thy having a companion, I think that

is a very weighty consideration, except any friend should feel a similar engagement of mind, and you could, in true gospel fellowship unite; then it might be helpful, for I believe there is strength in unity; if not, in my simple opinion, it will be best to go without any constant, nominal companion; for I do believe, that in the important work of visiting families, especially, except it is one who is rightly brought under the weight of the service, it is better to go alone. And be not discouraged, my dear friend, at the prospect of having no outward companion, for I have no doubt but He who putteth thee forth will go before thee, and encamp round about thee, and that is enough.

Well! thou hast my free sentiments, which thou must place to the account of true friendship; I trust I am deeply interested in that noble cause which thou art labouring to promote; and that it may please thy Divine Master to “send thee help from his sanctuary, and strengthen thee out of Zion,” was the petition of my spirit this morning, before I left my pillow.

#### **FROM MARY CAPPER TO KATHARINE CAPPER.**

*Dale End, Eleventh month 29th, 1819.*

My dear Niece, etc.,

The communications handed to me, one day last week, have not failed to help and cheer me. There is strength in unity; and very precious is that secret Power that joins the spiritually living, in one hope of salvation.

Thy dear father’s tender interest and kind concern for me, is truly welcome to what I esteem some of my best feelings; the approbation of a mind, humbled on a bed of languor, is likely to be genuine, and is strengthening to that in my heart which I hope is pure and lowly, only desiring to do the will of my heavenly Father. I feel little and childlike, and a sweet tenderness of spirit keeps me calm; like what I can imagine to be subjection to a father’s will. My dear love is to my sister; her exertions and patience are admirable; you all have much anxiety and fatigue; so it seems that, through diverse dispensations, we are led, by the same Hand, in the path of subjection. I hope we shall often think of one another, when duties, differing in kind, call for resignation and endurance.

#### **MARY CAPPER TO HANNAH EVANS.**

*Twelfth month 7th, 1819.*

Dear Friend,

Very cordial is thy letter! I think I feel grateful for such free, sisterly kindness, and thankful for the confirmation that the secret movements of my heart have a spring, better and higher than self-will or self-contrivance; indeed I think my views are simply to do what is required at my hands, ere my natural day is ended; my strength is small, but I dare not dwell on that, though it is discouraging. My heart’s desire is that patience, humility and

dedication may be perfected, in the way that my Lord sees meet. The time for my liberation approaches quickly. I have been a little engaged about home, so as to leave free from debt.

I think of coming first to Warwick; though the concern there is of less extent, yet it is important, and in its near approach, very weighty. I like to anticipate being under thy roof, in simplicity, quietness, and above all in Christian sympathy; and how very few feelingly know what this is, O! how precious to the poor exercised mind! I have not heard of any one to accompany me; but that I leave, and subscribe,

—MARY CAPPER.

### MARY CAPPER TO THE FAMILY AT STOKE NEWINGTON

*Warwick, Twelfth month 18th, 1819.*

My dear, loved Relatives,

I am desirous to relieve your affectionate solicitude by informing you, that I am cared for with all possible tenderness; and my weak body has borne exposure to cold and fatigue without much suffering. How shall I fully set forth that condescending, merciful regard which has clothed my mind with stability, and kept me close to that Power, by which I believe I was moved to leave my own comfortable dwelling, in order to do whatever might be developed for me, as a dutiful child.

I came, in simple obedience to apprehended Christian duty, to Warwick, on the 9th, and was affectionately received by Hannah Evans, whose mind seemed prepared to feel with me. William Whitehead, a kind, valuable elder, of this meeting, entered into my views; and being well acquainted with the jailer and his wife, he easily obtained access for me to the prison, where, accompanied by these two friends, I arrived about the time fixed for the visit. The poor men prisoners were all placed in the chapel; a great calm mercifully spread over us, and supplication was offered, that heavenly mercy might, in truth, be felt to be over all. The stillness was admirable; and we were favoured to feel a measure of our heavenly Father's love to be extended to us, wherein help and comfort were offered to the longing soul.

On fifth-day morning, we were introduced to the women; it was an affecting time, and many tears were shed. I do believe Divine mercy was near to us; and I know that Christian good-will flowed towards this unhappy, misguided part of our fellow creatures. How marvellous is the love of God! how it would gather all! With earnest solicitude that we may be kept lowly and patient in the day of trial, I very affectionately subscribe, your closely attached relative,

—MARY CAPPER.

[The following account of the visit to the female prisoners was afterwards sent, anonymously, to Mary Capper; it was written by a person who was present on that occasion, in a letter to a friend of hers.]

## VISIT PAID BY A FEMALE FRIEND TO WARWICK COUNTY JAIL.

December, 1819. This person had a private interview about two months since, with the servant who murdered her mistress. She is one of the Society of Friends. Last week she paid a visit to the female prisoners, and you must set her before you, in a dark brown gown, a handkerchief pinned close up to the chin, and a plain muslin cap, covered with a black silk hood.

There were thirty persons assembled, who rose up to receive her, and remained standing till she began to pray, kneeling. She sat down with her eyes fixed on the ground, as if in deep thought, and then rose, saying nearly the following words, "This silence, no doubt, will be incomprehensible to your minds, but it is nevertheless useful. I wish you to check your busy, active imaginations, to be silent and to think; to consider your past ways and your present situation, with all that belongs to you, temporally and spiritually; to remember the great God, who although a God of power and justice, is also a God of mercy; who will hearken to your prayers, if offered with unfeigned repentance, through faith in his Son, Christ Jesus.

Think of your sins, with that humiliation which becomes us all; but particularly, those, in your unhappy situation, who are placed here under locks and bolts and bars, for having offended against the laws both of God and man. In the world, you have practised deceit, and sought a refuge in lies; and are you happy? You have coveted and taken what was not your own; and are you happy? No! Yet you thought you should be, or you would not have done these things; you see then that you were mistaken. I pity your mistake; and as a fellow-pilgrim in the journey of life, earnestly tell you, that there is no happiness on earth, but in that obedience which is the evidence of our gratitude to God the Father, and faith in Him, and in the merits and sufferings of Jesus Christ his Son.

Many of you have been tempted to do wrong through poverty, distress and bad company; and when you return into the world at large, as I trust many of you will, may you remember what, before, brought upon you sorrow and degradation; and never fail to pray for the grace of God, to enable you to forsake your evil ways; that, by honesty and staying at home, not going from house to house, hearing and telling lies, you may obtain kind friends, and be happy by leading a new life. I warn you against hardening and encouraging one another in vice, while you remain here, by laughing at sin and making light of your crimes; but may the care bestowed on you, by the excellent mistress of this establishment,<sup>2</sup> who is equally earnest with myself for your souls' welfare, be hereafter rewarded by the knowledge, that sinners have been turned from the evil of their ways, and that you can say, with humble thankfulness of heart, "Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name!" She then shook hands with all the prisoners, and addressed them individually. To the murderer she said, "May God Almighty bring conviction to thy soul!" and I could not help addressing my mite of exhortation to her, by begging of her to improve her mind.

The individual spoke for an hour and a half, so you will readily believe, that this is only a very small part of what she uttered, but I have endeavoured to recollect the heads of the exhortation.

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2 Esther Tatnal.

**MARY CAPPER TO HANNAH EVANS.**

*Coventry, Twelfth month 23rd, 1819.*

My dear Friend,

We parted peacefully; may I not say sweetly? though feeling our mutual privation. I fancy thee at home missing thy nursling; and I feel as weaned from a tender, nursing mother. Well! do not let us dwell too much upon these pleasant things by the way; possibly it is best for us to walk alone! My strength is small, but I believe it will revive as occasion requires; do not let us doubt, but humbly believe from day to day. My mind, through marvellous condescension, is favoured with stability and calmness; with a childlike tenderness towards all the creation of our universal Father. This is from a Power, higher and better than anything of my own. I hope I am thankfully sensible of the mercy, and not impatient, nor dismayed at the strippings and secret plunges of my spirit, again and again showing me what is in the human heart, and teaching me that the sanctifying power of Christ, revealed by the Holy Spirit, believed in and obeyed, is the only safe armour of the Christian.

I subscribe, affectionately,

—MARY CAPPER.

**TO THE SAME.**

*Foshil Lodge, Twelfth month 28th, 1819.*

My kind Friend,

Thy sympathy is cordial; I have had my plunges and strippings, since I last wrote to thee; yet let me, with reverence and humility, say, that my mind has been kept from sinking below the confidence of a Christian believer, whose only sure reliance is on the Rock that followed Israel, and that Rock is Christ. I have been into some families; and I am thankful that thy judgment strengthens my own, that it is safe, and best for me, to be alone; I trust it is no presumption or self confidence, but in that measure of love and good-will which daily clothes my spirit. I have had no offer of a companion, so that I have been spared the trial of having to decline.

Thy tender feeling for me will, I believe, be afresh excited when I tell thee, that my precious brother Jasper suddenly breathed his last on the 24th. He was truly a precious brother! We were, I trust, joined in spirit, so that death cannot separate us. On the 9th of last month, he very solemnly said, "When my time is come, if I should say little or much, anything or nothing, I request it may be said, that I died, relying on the mercy of God, through Christ Jesus;" and on the 11th, "None but Jesus can do helpless sinners good, and I am one!" He was at that time very ill, but afterwards revived for a time. About a week before his death, the pain, etc. having returned, he said, "I never saw myself so lost and undone without a Saviour, as I have done in this illness. I have suffered anguish of mind; and but for faith in the Saviour, what should I have done! He has paid our great debt!" On the day upon which he died, he expressed to his wife, his belief, that when he should be taken from

her, God would be her consolation. The last conflict came on, just after lying down in bed, and he peacefully expired in the midst of his family. We have often had sweet converse together; that is over, as it respects this state of existence, and it becomes us to leave all that is to come, in the ordering of a faithful Creator.

I came here yesterday, with a view to have some rest, which I need. The links which bind me to earth and to endearing connections, are gently loosening one by one; and my spirit, in some favoured moments, aspires to a more perfect union. Farewell, my much-loved friend, I subscribe affectionately,

—MARY CAPPER.

### TO THE FAMILY AT STOKE NEWINGTON.

*Twelfth month 29th. 1819.*

My dear Mourning Relatives,

I am much affected by the intelligence of dear Katharine's letter. Although the event has for some time been anticipated, nevertheless, now the spirit has fled, what a void does the affectionate heart feel! In my measure, as a sister, increasingly united to a brother, evidently increasing in all that is lovely, and fitting for heaven and blessedness, I participate with you in mourning our loss. Every day, for some time to come, will, I seem aware, add to your sense of it. Necessary arrangements, arouse every tender emotion of the heart; scenes past, and sweet communion almost forgotten, revive with fresh interest. Link after link seems to be rapidly breaking; but there remains a soul-cheering belief, that although yet but faintly seen and imperfectly understood, there is a union which cannot be broken! When you are shedding tears over the grave of our very dearly beloved one, calm resignation, and the assurance that his redeemed spirit is clothed with the righteousness of Christ, in whom he trusted as his Saviour, may be your stay and your strong consolation. Long have we known him as disclaiming every rag of self-righteousness. How often was his spirit broken and humbled! It is precious to remember these seasons.

—MARY CAPPER.

### TO E. C.

*Warwick, First month 7th, 1820.*

I have had no very late intelligence from any of my dear sorrowing relatives. Much I think of them, but our mourning is sweetened by hope; how widely different to a gloomy spirit of sorrow!

With heart solacing satisfaction I recur to the last time I spent with my beloved brothers, now both of them taken from pain, sickness and sorrow; their immortal spirits, I assuredly believe, sanctified, redeemed, and admitted into the kingdom of heaven; where the ransomed of our Lord join in the glorious anthem of thanksgiving and praise.<sup>3</sup>

I am not, however, insensible of my own privation. The affectionate communications of my dear brother Jasper have now ceased, yet a precious sense remains of a union never to be broken, and here every discontent is swallowed up, in the perfect fruition of light, life and love. It is very sweet to reflect, that my present engagements were known and approved by my beloved brother, at a time when his spirit was so nigh to the haven of rest and of purity.

—MARY CAPPER.

#### TO REBECCA LAMLEY.

*Birmingham, Second month 14th, 1820.*

My dear Friend,

With tender love I remember thee, and think of thy lowly diffident mind. There is surely a possibility of dwelling so much upon our own weakness and unworthiness, as to overlook, or sink below, the heavenly gift of Divine grace, which is given to every one to profit withal. “The Lord preserveth the simple;” and I do believe, dear friend, that through merciful kindness, thou art one of the simple in heart, desiring to follow a crucified Saviour. Take courage, then, and think upon a Redeemer’s love more than upon thy unworthiness. It is not because of our righteousness, but of mercy, that we come to know the mind of Christ, and deliverance from those things that grieve the Holy Spirit. Take courage, I again say, my tender friend, and give no place to distrust. I subscribe, with endeared love, thy fellow traveller and friend,

—MARY CAPPER.

#### TO HANNAH EVANS.

*Birmingham, Second month 15th, 1820.*

My dear Friend,

I hope it may not be too much to say that the union that I have been favoured to feel with thy spirit, brought me into a measure of suffering which has not passed lightly over. These secret dippings may possibly be among the “all things” that work together for some good, we cannot now see; and here I do desire to leave what I do not understand.

Thy lines were cordial, and I am thankful that thou couldst feel sweet satisfaction in reviewing my little acts of dedication. I may humbly say, that in delivering up my certificate on fourth-day, I believe there was a precious evidence felt by more minds than my own, that I had been mercifully kept from hurting the cause unto which my heart is bound. My prevailing petition was and is, “Abba! Father; keep me from evil; the evil of my own

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3 Her brother William died in the third month, 1819.

heart, and the evil that abounds in the world; thine is the power, and the glory forever!”—How very beautiful and instructive are some of the morning portions; it seems helpful, consoling, and uniting that we can read them, as if we were personally together.

Thou possessest the rare and happy art of compressing so much in a little, that I am almost afraid, my lengthened scribbling should surprise, I will not say alarm thee. Do not, my dear Christian friend! if thou canst avoid it, suffer thyself as it were to catch at discouragements when they present inwardly. Thou knowest what I think on this subject.

—MARY CAPPER.

### TO THE SAME.

*Birmingham, Third month 7th, 1820.*

I begin to think the time long since I received thy “*multum in parvo*,” but I am satisfied that we are united in spirit, even though mountains should rise up between us. How sweet and cordial it will be to my feelings, to welcome thee under my roof, is not for me to express. I quite approve thy note, and thank thee for the perusal of it; it has been delivered. I am at no loss to enter into thy feelings as therein expressed. Ah! “What is the chaff to the wheat!” and what is outward conformity if unaccompanied by true spirituality of mind! Here it is that Christians taste and know the true unity, and can feel one for, and one with another, in their pilgrimage, and in this painful mixture of things, where faith, patience and forbearance are often brought into exercise.

This evening is our meeting of ministers and elders. The Dudley and Stourbridge Friends add to our little number. We are preserved in unanimity and affection, which is better than increase of numbers.

8th. I hope I shall not improperly call for thy sympathy, but it seems as if the small measure of my active services must be filled up, without much delay; so that, after a time of serious consideration, and something I believe of that dipping and stripping, known only to those who have trodden in the same path, I have this day laid before my friends, a concern to attend the ensuing meeting for Friends of the principality of Wales, at Coalbrookdale, next month; also to visit the families of Friends in Shropshire, etc. Thus I have again thrown myself upon my friends, and I feel little, low and quiet. The approbation expressed was encouraging, and my heart craves to be kept by that sustaining Power, which alone can effectually keep from error, on the right and on the left. My love to T. S. and to his wife and family; I do not forget them. A rising generation claim the love and interest of those who are hastening to the close of their earthly pilgrimage, and who wish peace, with joy unspeakable, to those who may fill up the places of the faithful.

Farewell, affectionately,

—MARY CAPPER.

[In this visit, Mary Capper was accompanied by her friend Hannah Evans, from whose memoranda the following extracts are taken.]

1820. Fourth month 15th. I went to Biringham, to accompany my dear friend Mary Capper in a religious visit to the families of Friends in Shropshire monthly meeting.

17th. We went to Coalbrookdale, and were cordially received at our valued friend Sarah Darby's.

30th. Went to Horse-hay, where we were kindly entertained by our friend William Stanley and his wife.

Fifth month 2nd. In the evening, a meeting appointed for the workmen employed in the iron works, was held in one of the mills. It was estimated that more than a thousand attended; I think it may be said to have been a memorable meeting, for the feeling mind must have been sensible of the condescending goodness of heavenly Love. It was thought dear Mary Capper was on her feet near an hour and a half, during which time, as also in time of silence, it was as quiet, as though all had been of our own Society. It was truly a satisfactory meeting.

14th. First-day. At meeting, morning and evening; the last at Coalbrookdale. It was a precious time to us, wherein we felt the over-shadowings of heavenly kindness and love, to the reviving and strengthening of our minds; from this meeting, we came away, comforted and refreshed. Also in the evening, when the family, etc. were collected to read, was a precious opportunity. Divine goodness and mercy were afresh extended. The spirit of prayer was felt, and vocal supplication offered.

Having gone through the families in this monthly meeting, I can in sincerity say, with reverent gratitude, that I have often had cause to be thankful, that I was permitted to accompany my endeared friend in her arduous engagement; and have had to admire the condescension of Divine goodness and love, in furnishing and helping his faithful, dedicated servant, from day to day, to divide the word aright, to the several states of the visited. And although I have had little to do in verbal communication, yet I trust I have not been altogether an idle, unfeeling companion; but have often felt a deep secret, travail of spirit, and fervent breathing, for the support of my beloved friend, and that the Divine blessing may attend her labours; and I think I may say our spirits were nearly united in the bond of gospel fellowship.

19th. Under a precious feeling of our heavenly Father's love, we took an affectionate farewell of our kind friends at the Dale, and returned to Birmingham, in the enjoyment of sweet peace.

21st. We parted under a sense of that uniting love which remains to be a badge of discipleship, and I returned to my own habitation with thankfulness.

**TO HANNAH EVANS.**

*Polesworth, Ninth month 5th, 1820.*

I am low, in mind and body, yet I dare not let go my confidence, that heavenly Mercy will not leave me to follow a vain shadow, or to kindle a fire, and warm myself with the sparks. There is nothing that my soul longs after with so much earnestness, as the real substance of the religion of Jesus, the soul-satisfying bread of life, daily ministered to nourish and keep alive the immortal spirit.

Fifth-day. I returned home this morning, a little weary. Thou mayst rest satisfied, my dear and affectionate friend, that I take as much nourishment as I conveniently can, and my health and strength seem marvellously equal to the exertion required. Do not let this subject occasion thee solicitude. I should prefer, if thou wilt indulge me, that we rarely advert to anything merely personal. I subscribe, in a very feeling sense of thy love.

Thy affectionate friend,

—MARY CAPPER.

[The following is a memoranda of a religious visit in Herefordshire and Worcestershire.]

Ninth month 13th. Our monthly meeting at Birmingham. The sympathy and unity expressed, and the solemnity that spread over the meeting, were precious and encouraging to me.

17th. First-day. At Bromyard, we were a poor small company at meeting. There is deep instruction, to a rightly waiting, exercised mind, in these low sittings; all our dependence, for spiritual refreshment, being simply upon Him who is the Spiritual Head of his people. My heart does admire, and greatly desire, that I may reverently, and thankfully estimate the marvellous condescension, and mercy of our faithful Creator.

18th. I called on a poor family who once belonged to our religious Society; but from causes well known to themselves, distress and perplexity have been their lot; nevertheless such poor wanderers should be, at times, sought after, visited and invited to turn to the good Shepherd for help. I came to Leominster in the evening, and was very affectionately received by my kind friends H. and S. Waring.

19th. S. Waring had a minute willingly granted, to accompany me through the families of Friends in Herefordshire.

20th. The quarterly meeting large, and a time of spiritual refreshment.

22nd. S. W. and I came to Hereford, on our way to the interment of dear Rebecca Pritchard, she was about twenty-four years old; a lovely wife and mother.

24th. First-day. Ross. The interment was a solemn time; it was attended by the mournful husband, his father, and Roger Merrick his father-in-law, etc.

26th. We visited Roger Merrick; the house of mourning and the children of affliction, often afford lessons

of deep instruction, and I thought it was so, on this occasion.

**TO HANNAH EVANS.**

*Ninth month 28th, 1820.*

Thy cordial sympathy and encouragement are acceptable. In this mixed scene, O! what a favour is the sweet drop of love; inducing the poor mind to look to the pure, undefiled source; thence comes the true union of spirit, which subsists through all low times; enduring all that may be allotted; trusting and believing that we shall not be forsaken. The designed end of our trying times doubtless is, that we may be a praying people.

—MARY CAPPER.

Tenth month 6th. J. Newman kindly conveyed us in his carriage to visit a family at a distance, some of whom attend our meetings; two of the daughters have joined our Society. We found their father a serious, kind and liberal-minded man, and our visit was truly pleasant to us.

10th. Came to Hereford.

13th, Some serious neighbours came to tea; some well-meant enquiries were made, and I believe were cautiously answered. Conversation on important subjects requires watchful circumspection.

18th. We took tea today with a Baptist teacher, with whom, and his humble, sweet spirited wife, I had in years past some acquaintance. It is precious to find, that unity in the one Spirit, continues unchanged; we had a little sweet converse, and thought the time came too quickly for our separation.

**TO HANNAH EVANS.**

*Hereford, Tenth month 18th, 1820.*

My dear Friend,

I desire to be really thankful, that day by day, my mind is measurably stayed upon the requirings of the day, with little of unavailing anxiety. Many times I do think myself a poor, weak child, learning to step alone; being set upon my feet, I must creep or go as I can. This matters little, if I be kept from dangerous falls.

I cannot yet fix a day for quitting this place, as I am in a little suspense, as to the movements of my sister Anne Capper. Should she, in her return from the North, pursue her design of passing some time at Birmingham, I feel strongly inclined to meet her and her daughters there; my sister's health is so very precarious, that it impresses my mind, that this opportunity missed, I may see my dear sister no more.

19th. We have several visitors, not of our Society, especially some young women, who appear to have seeking, tender minds, and their behaviour is quite agreeable. Two of this description breakfasted with us this morning.

The longer we stay here the more we find of a spirit of enquiry after the pure spirituality of religion and its effects; yet we feel a fear that there is much danger of some talking away what they feel, and which is intended for their own help. As to my own steps, I am satisfied it is not my proper business to direct them myself, but simply to follow, as my heavenly guide leads the way, and mercifully keeps me childlike enough to obey. Farewell,

—MARY CAPPER.

19th. Two very serious young women took tea with us; they had been at our meeting, and they appeared to be pleased with the Scripture reading, etc. in the evening, also with the expression of a little affectionate counsel. Something is at work to disturb the false rest and the indifference which has long held many Christian professors in a state of lukewarmness and of dangerous security. May the work go forward, to the glory of our gracious Lord. O! that the unsanctified activity of the creature may not hinder its progress! To my poor frame, this was a wearisome day; but I do not see it best to withdraw from such society as may fall in our way, without our seeking it, or from those who may desire information, though maintaining their own opinions. My soul craves the clothing of Christian candour, of meekness, lowliness and godly simplicity, that so nothing may harm me, nor the increase of pure righteousness be hindered, through me.

21st. Two young men called, and appeared serious and tender. One of them, with whom we had before conversed respecting women's preaching, to which he had strenuously objected, as contrary to Scripture injunction, expressed, with gratifying ingenuousness, that, after comparing the texts, he thought he might be mistaken, and that he had maintained the argument too warmly; a modest confession, more beautiful than any victory!

25th. The monthly meeting at Ross was small; every feeling within me seemed bowed, and bound to the suffering spirit of the tried and oppressed ones; of which number I believe there are some in this place.

31st. I came home; and my sister and nieces arrived at Richard Cadbury's, in Bull street.

Eleventh month 5th. After having cordially met, we have now parted in sweet affection; my preciousy endeared relatives set out for home this morning. The separation was accompanied with heartfelt regret, but a soothing calm blunted the keen edge of pain; for we feel a humble confidence, that our spirits, whether absent or present in person, are anchored on the immovable Rock, the soul's best hope.

**TO HANNAH EVANS.**

*Birmingham, Eleventh month 8th, 1820.*

My very dear Friend,

The visit of my precious relatives has been short, but the interview has left feelings not easily, I trust, to be forgotten. My dear sister is weak in body, and endures much suffering, but her strength of mind seems to raise her above human infirmities. Her testimony to the power of Jesus the Redeemer was very impressive and excellent.

My mind now seems bound to pursue my own uncompleted concerns, as soon as I well can. I think of going first to Bromyard.

—MARY CAPPER.

11th. A kind friend accompanied me to Bromyard.

12th. First-day. Several Friends came, very kindly, from Worcester, as I had mentioned to them a concern which I felt, to invite some of the inhabitants to sit down with us in our religious meeting; the help and countenance of my friends were very encouraging. About three hundred persons attended, and their behaviour was becoming. My mind obtained some relief; but there is often a painful sense how poor our endeavours are to arouse the lukewarm, and to induce a steady retirement to the gift of grace in the soul. This must be left to the Great Physician. Came to Leominster in the evening.

#### TO HANNAH EVANS.

*Eleventh month 14th, 1820.*

My kind and dear Friend,

I now address thee from Leominster; a place which revives many an interesting scene, finally closed as to this life; yet it remains to be a place of interest. Where indeed, can our lot be cast that we do not feel an interest in the salvation of souls! though the power to manifest it may sometimes be withheld, the secret breathings of the spirit, with sighs and petitions that cannot be uttered, are not, I surely believe, unavailing; at least they tend to keep our own hearts tender, pitiful and humble. I left Birmingham as intended, and came to Bromyard. I had mentioned to a few friends my view of inviting some of the inhabitants to our meeting. The prospect was discouraging; there is only one family under our name in the place, and as a religious body we are but little known. However, I find it my business to keep in as much simplicity as I can, to the gentle intimation of duty, and to leave all the rest. Friends were very kind, though some expressed that such invitations were rarely much attended to, in that place. Information was also received that the only female Friend in the town was very ill. Through all, my view remained unchanged. An active, kind, feeling Friend accompanied me from Worcester, and I lodged at G. Kilsby's; his sister Ann was in a dying state, and finally closed her earthly pilgrimage

on second-day, I believe in the sweet and peaceful assurance of a heavenly inheritance. Several Friends from Worcester joined us on first-day morning. Two o'clock was appointed for the meeting with the inhabitants, and a full attendance there was; the people were serious and attentive, and I trust that many were favoured with a sense of the enduring love, and of the renewed merciful calls of our heavenly Father. I have been thus particular in my detail, in order to set forth how good the Lord is, and that we should rely upon him, in all and through all.

Thy affectionate friend,

—MARY CAPPER.

17th. Mary Watson, from Ireland, travelling through our land on a religious visit, accompanied by her daughter Jane, wished to hold a meeting here this morning; it proved a precious season.

20th. S. Waring and I went to Hereford.

21st. Our friend Mary Watson came to the monthly meeting. Her company was encouraging, and the meetings were favoured with the renewed extension of that Power which alone can do the soul abiding and effectual good.

22nd. I returned to Leominster.

26th. First-day. Attended both meetings; at these times, when met for the renewal of our spiritual strength, as we have no outward dependence, the rightly exercised heart retires as into the inner temple, and patiently wrestles for the Divine blessing, and for ability to worship in reverence and in truth; so that each may obtain the heavenly savour of goodness and mercy, cleave thereunto, and daily live under its influence.

Twelfth month 3rd. First-day. I believe there is, among the little company here, an exercise of spirit maintained, that while others of our fellow Christian professors may congregate in larger bodies, and join in outward performances, in prayers and songs, etc., we may be found humble, and acceptable worshippers. In the evening, a young man, a stranger, came to my quarters, as he said with a desire to receive some religious counsel; he seemed to be simple-hearted, and I afterwards understood that he is one of a poor, dissipated family, in this place. He is like a brand plucked from destruction; and is one who, with other lads here, was apprenticed by the philanthropic Webb, who some years ago, distributed a large amount in an extraordinary way.

Tenth month 8th. Made a few calls which were relieving to my mind. I also made a few purchases for distribution, with a view to benefit both the seller and the receiver. In the afternoon visited at the house which dear Mary Lewis inhabited.

9th. Took tea with the Moravian teacher, named Church. His mother's name was Chase, and her brother married my Father's sister. My aunt Chase and her daughter were of the Moravian connection, and died in London, within a few hours of each other. Our meeting together at this time was satisfactory; for notwithstanding some diversity of view and of practice, true unity is to be experienced in the one Holy Head.

10th. First-day. The neighbours being invited to sit with us, more came than could be accommodated. O! the love of God in the heart; how it would gather the minds of all, and stay them upon that teaching which is truly profitable in all things, as to our social, relative, and religious duties. We must patiently bear with our own, and one another's ignorance. If good arises, and is felt to flow among us, it is of the Lord's mercy; may He have the glory, and the grateful praise forever and ever! In the evening I was favoured with a measure of lowly calm.

17th. First-day. At both meetings, and had a parting opportunity with a few individuals. In tenderness of spirit, and I believe with good desires we separated.

18th. Worcester. On leaving Leominster, heaviness clothed my spirit, though I know not that I brought it upon myself, by wilful omission or commission; but I do mourn over the want of real renovation and sanctification in the human heart.

20th. The quarterly meeting. It is gratefully to be acknowledged, that notwithstanding many in our Society have adopted the customs of the world, and drunk of its beguiling spirit, we are yet a favoured people. In our religious assemblies may be felt a gathering Power, that would help us in our Christian pilgrimage, and increase our knowledge in divine truths, settle, stablish our Christian faith, and sanctify our hearts, with all our affections.

25th. This morning, as I sat alone, a lowly calm covered my mind, which was very precious and encouraging; and it seemed to increase, while reading some beautiful chapters in Isaiah, descriptive of the peaceable kingdom and government of Christ.

29th. My dear friend, and true Christian helpmeet and companion, Hannah Evans, arrived, to unite with me in a visit to the families of Friends, and other service in this county; this was cordial and reviving.

31st. First-day. In our religious gathering this morning, we were favoured to unite in spirit, and were again enabled to believe, that the Lord continues to be gracious, and to give his waiting children to taste of his mercies; and at times feelingly to acknowledge that He is good, and ready to do good to all who seek Him. The evening reading was instructive. Thus favourably closed the year.

## Chapter IX

*Religious services in Worcestershire, her own quarterly meeting, etc.—Death of Anne Capper—  
Mary Capper returns home near the end of 1822*

1821. First month 1st. Worcester. We began the visit to the families, being gently constrained to unite in this work by a measure of Christian love.

4th. We have sat in many families, we hope to some profit. It is little, however, that we can do one for another, though at seasons, a constraint is felt to leave our own home comforts, and thus to visit the professors of the same religious faith.

7th. First-day. At meeting we were again favoured to experience that it is good to wait for a renewal of spiritual strength.

14th. First-day. One of close religious engagement, and of inward breathing of heart to be kept in the path of duty. Heavenly counsel can alone direct, and keep in safety, from day to day.

18th. In our meeting for worship, we had renewed cause to acknowledge that the Lord's mercies are both ancient and new.

23rd. A fine, mild day. We walked in the garden, and I think gratefully enjoyed the sun, in its brightness and cheerful influence on all around; not forgetting the bountiful Giver of all we enjoy. Bless the Lord! all ye who partake of his mercies, in all places; whether surrounded by the beauties of the country, or supported by his daily Providence in the noise of the town. O! the heart that trusts in Him can acknowledge his power to sustain in all lawful engagements.

28th. First-day. The afternoon meeting was largely attended, an invitation having been given, more especially to servants and apprentices employed by Friends. The intent was partly answered, but there was a mixed company, which was not quite so relieving to the minds of those, on whom the weight of the concern rested, as it might otherwise have been; however, when we have done what we can, we must endeavour to be quiet.

30th. Left Worcester and came to Netherton. We were pleased with the delightful calm, and with the beauties of nature surrounding the habitation, and still more so with our reception from the family.

31st. We were conveyed to the small meeting, where condescending Goodness was in the midst. I thought in my heart, how excellent is a lowly, stayed frame of mind, waiting for that spiritual refreshment, which comes from the presence of the Lord.

Second month 2nd. My dear companion so unwell that we have had a restless night. In renewed times of

proving, and fresh trial of faith, the best we can do seems to be, to endeavour to be still, both in body and in mind, that the secret word of instruction may be rightly distinguished; either in reproof, humbling, or opening new springs of help and of pure knowledge, for our own advantage, or that of others. In something of this state of mind, we sat down with this family; it was a serious time, I hope to mutual profit; a little spiritual refreshment was ministered to my own mind. I do crave this, from day to day, lest I perish.

4th. First-day. We had a very crowded meeting at Bewdley, some invitation having been given. The gathering was attentive, and was affectionately addressed; may it be blessed of Him who giveth the increase.

5th. After the morning Scripture reading, something by way of an affectionate farewell, mingled with some gentle caution to this kind family, most of whom are young, was feelingly expressed, and we separated in much love. Arrived at Worcester.

6th. Called upon a young woman, not of our Society, whom I had before visited, when she was under the reducing effects of sickness, and when her mind was susceptible of good impressions. Returning health, youthful vivacity, with an attractive share of personal beauty, and mixing in gay, dissipating, fashionable amusements, and those frivolities which allure from seriousness, and fail not to mar the growth of holiness, have, I fear, for a time at least, laid waste the engaging loveliness of a humble and broken spirit; though there are still tokens of a tender mind. Dear young woman! my heart feels an interest in her true happiness, and I am well satisfied in having made the call, which she seemed to receive kindly, expressing her sense of the motive, with rising tears.

7th. We came to Evesham. Our minds were favoured with a peaceful acquittal, having gone through our late engagements, with a sincere and watchful desire to be kept simple, humble and faithful in the line of duty; the only way of peace and safety. Richard Burlingham and his kind wife gave us a cordial welcome.

8th. The monthly meeting; a time to be acknowledged as a renewal of condescending favour. What shall we render to the Lord!

11th. First-day. In the morning meeting, Richard Burlingham spoke impressively; in the afternoon, a considerable number of servants in Friends' families, labouring men, etc., came by invitation, and their behaviour was becoming. The nature of silent waiting, for the renewal of our spiritual strength, was a little explained; it is but little understood, among Christian professors; and to be fully so, its incalculable benefits must be, in some degree, experienced. Hearing or doing is too often rested in, as religious worship; with very little sense of that heart-humbling Power that contrites the spirit, and prepares an acceptable sacrifice, though no vocal sound be heard.

13th. In the evening I read to the family an account of my dear brother Jasper's illness and close; a very

precious feeling spread over us in contemplating the dissolution of a brother, so beloved by me in life. We separated under a tendering sense of heavenly goodness and mercy toward the children of men. O! that every rational creature would seek to know the God of our salvation, that so all might praise Him.

14th. Sat with a young woman to whom tender counsel was given, with sincere desire that she might be preserved from the strange notions of liberty, and of alienation from the cross of Christ, which seem to abound. Our safety is in humility and in stillness; that we may be taught to know ourselves, and often to resort to the place where secret prayer is wont to be made, where the simple-hearted wait for an increase of understanding, to know and to keep in the paths of uprightness, that they may be at peace. These read the Holy Scriptures with reverence and lowliness of mind, that they may come unto the Light, the Life and the Way, whereof the Scriptures do testify, even Christ the Lord. We had our fears for this dear young woman, but parted in the tender clothing of Christian love.

16th. A day of much engagement. In the evening, sat with the heads of this family. How precious are the Lord's visitations! when received and cherished, how wonderfully does He, here and there, raise up servants and handmaids, to set forth his praise,—to testify of his power and mercy!

17th. An unlocked for opportunity occurred to express our interest for two young persons for whom we had felt much when under their father's roof. This seemed a time of tenderness not to be lightly esteemed. Times of instruction, we may feelingly say, are in the hand of Him from whom all our mercies flow. Soon after dinner we left this kind, interesting family, and little circle of friends, with hearts united, I believe, in a bond of love and precious fellowship, strong and lasting; to endure so long as we continue upon the immutable foundation of Christian faith. We came to Alcester.

18th. First-day. In the afternoon a little company of serious neighbours sat down with us, and we may gratefully acknowledge that it was a precious season.

19th. Sat with the heads of the family where we dined; the children were not present, though some of them old enough. We thought it a privation; in some visits of this nature, we have had cause to believe that heavenly kindness was extended to the dear young children. We returned before tea, and sweetly enjoyed the domestic comfort of the family. How precious is Christian harmony and quietness of mind, when either the toils of life, or the duties of a day, are drawing to a close, without a bitter sting or restless anxiety! O! this is marvellous mercy! soul-satisfying reality! no idle tale! no cunningly-devised fable! May my soul, in unison with every humble believer, bless the Lord.

20th. I felt unwell, but set out, with my dear companion and helper, and I believe true burden bearer. We had some distance to walk, to sit down with a widower and his sister; our feelings were those of lively sympathy; but hope shone, as a cheering ray, upon the way to obtain the crown immortal, at the close of the earthly pilgrimage, when we shall no more mourn the separation one from another. The one redeeming Lord and Saviour worketh his own righteous work, in the humble, contrite heart.

21st. A precious meeting in the morning. In our little evening company, we had some beautiful Scripture reading; the concluding chapters of the Gospel of John. How pathetic, how convincing, to minds which resist not heavenly influence, is the language setting forth the crucifixion, the resurrection, and the re-appearance of Christ to his disconsolate disciples; as they were assembled together, "the doors being shut," he manifested himself in the midst. O! how graciously were we enabled, at this time, to comprehend something of this heavenly visitation, and to close, with sweetness, the evening of this day.

22nd. After taking a serious and affectionate farewell of our kind friends, and of a valuable female servant who had waited on us, we went to Warwick, where we arrived about noon, and entered the neat, comfortable habitation of my endeared companion and friend Hannah Evans. We were received with smiles of welcome by her sister and faithful servant, and are thankful for such an asylum, being weary and in want of rest.

After a few days repose at this place, my mind was unexpectedly tried and brought low. I trust I am not apt to seek, or to enter into important engagements, without seriously pondering the subject in secret, ere I venture to open it even to my dearest friend or companion; but after some time of trial, and I may say distress, I thought it best to acquaint Hannah Evans, that I believed I must visit four poor unhappy men, recently committed to the county jail, for robbery and murder. This disclosure did not surprise my friend, for she had had a secret sense of the conflict of my mind, and this was helpful and encouraging to me. Thus I believe the dedicated mind is renewedly prepared for every fresh act of service, whether it be considered little or great. It is not having been helped in times past that will suffice or sustain; but through self-reduction and abasement, our confidence is afresh fixed upon the unfailing Helper of those who seek his divine direction and guidance.

26th. Suitable arrangements having been made, my kind friend Hannah Evans, and a few serious persons, accompanied me to the jail, where we were freely admitted. The mistress of this vast family, Esther Tatnal, being unwell, we were attended by her daughter, and by the gentlewoman who was with us on a former occasion. My mind was under a weighty concern, as we were conducted by the head turnkey, into a clean commodious room, where the four poor men were seated on a bench. The turnkey then left us; it was a heart-affecting moment. First sat the desperate ringleader; then the brother of the unhappy woman who was executed for the murder of her mistress, and whom we visited three times within these walls; this poor fellow seems to have been drawn in by wicked companions; he is about twenty-five and ignorant, but not unfeeling; he was greatly agitated on reference being made to his sister. We have been told that his afflicted mother died soon after hearing that he was committed under suspicion of being guilty of the same awful crime as his sister. Another of this wretched, deluded gang, also appears young; the fourth is middle-aged, and the father of several children; when his poor wife received the sad intelligence, she was taken ill and soon died, leaving a new-born babe. We understand that he was in an agony of distress, when his poor destitute, helpless infant was brought to him, and that he said, "Had I followed my wife's advice, I should not have been in my present situation," They all sat very quietly, and seemed to attend

seriously to what was expressed. We then took an affecting leave of them, under a mournful sense of human depravity. We had an impressive religious opportunity, in the chamber of E. Tatnal, whom I was concerned to find in a feeble state, her life being of public importance, as well as private benefit. She knows, however, where to seek that which can sustain through every duty and every affliction.

28th. The monthly meeting, when Hannah Evans returned her minute. There is nothing of which self can boast, but we can, in lowliness of mind, speak well of the gracious Power that helped and kept us, as we went along together in the work. I continue awhile with my dear friend, as my strength is much exhausted. Very tender is her care and attention, and I desire to be grateful for this, among many other favours bestowed.

Third month 4th. First-day. The morning meeting was small; our numbers being few, and some of these few, not rightly estimating their privileges, possibly not fully knowing them, often neglecting assembling with their friends for worship. The afternoon meeting was attended by many serious persons, who were invited to sit down with us, in our simple way. The opportunity was a relief to some who often feel a solicitude for the more universal spread of that righteousness which, we read in Scripture, is to cover the earth as the waters cover the sea.

8th. Many calling to see us, it proved something like taking a solemn farewell.

9th. This morning I left the house of my dear friend and companion, Hannah Evans, and her domestic circle, from every one of whom I had received all the soothing kindness and attention which my feeble state required. I have now arrived safely at my own comfortable apartments in Dale End, Birmingham. My heart craves a lowly, grateful and abiding sense of the Lord's manifold mercies.

13th. I was much gratified with the company of my dear niece M. and her husband; they were returning from visiting their relations in the south; it was to me an unexpected and interesting interview, and I think it was mutually endearing; my heart owns, and my hand records it as very precious to me; and I felt thankful for an apartment and a table furnished with things needful to refresh my dear relatives on their journey. We parted, as we had met, in the sweet feeling of love and harmony, but my mind seemed to tarry with them; they are young, and may live to see many days, and vicissitudes. One immutable truth will, I hope, be engraven on their hearts; the invincible power of God, revealed by grace in the heart, as brought to light by Jesus Christ, the Redeemer, the Saviour, by whom we come to know our own incapacity, and our need of a new heart, new thoughts and new affections; a knowledge hidden from those who are wise in their own conceits.

14th. Our monthly meeting, where I delivered in my certificate granted for the recent religious engagement. The best report I could give was the acknowledgment of heavenly condescension; unto which every faculty of my soul desires to be in subjection; yea, evermore, so be it!

## MARY CAPPER TO A YOUNG MAN.

*Third month 27th, 1821.*

Dear J. G.,

It is a precious thing to remember, and to be remembered by one another for good. Often times, dear youth, have I remembered thee, and I am gratified by thy sweet token of affectionate regard toward me. If a union of Christian good-will can afford help, and surely there is strength in that love which wishes well to souls, thou art favoured. Thy dear parents, thy Christian friends, all plead for thy establishment on the Rock, Jesus Christ, the Saviour sent into the world, clothed with humanity, to be crucified for the sin of the degenerate, human race, who died, in his human nature; was chastised, smitten and bruised, for our sakes; bearing the iniquities of us all. O! who shall understand these things, except the Father reveal them. A Saviour crucified for our sins! a Saviour glorified for our justification! Flesh and blood cannot reveal this great mystery; but heavenly condescension opens the understanding of the babes, the lowly and the simple in heart. It is not by human art and subtle reasoning, but as we become subjected, and receive the kingdom as little children, willing to be turned from the evil of our ways, our self-will, our selfishness in all its devices, that we can understand the love of God in Christ Jesus.

Often I think of thee; thou art not left to grope in the dark; the instruction of pious friends has been as line upon line, precept upon precept, extended towards thee; and to crown all, that light has arisen in thy heart, which is graciously given to the children of men to profit withal. I humbly hope it may yet shine more and more, unto the perfect day; to show thee the exceeding great love of God in Christ Jesus, who is revealed herein, to sanctify us throughout, in body, soul and spirit.

I think of thee, I trust, with a Christian interest; I think of thee as in the dawn of human life, full of warm energies; glowing, at times, with vivid expectations, even of temporal enjoyments. Thy human nature points at this, and urges the natural heart to press after this delusive happiness; we may look round about us, and see to what a mournful crisis this has brought thousands of our fellow sojourners on this side the grave. Surely we may cherish the consoling belief, that a gracious God is dealing very mercifully with thee; in pity for thy immortal spirit; He sends the gentle consumption of the body, to teach the heart wisdom.

Submit, dear youth, to the power of the indwelling Word of light and life, that searching, quick and discerning Word, unto which the Holy Scriptures do amply bear testimony, and of which we particularly read in the first chapter of the gospel records of the Apostle John.

I need not say more, and I hope I have not said too much, to testify my real good will; thou hast indeed a place in my best love. My heart's desire is, that the end of our faith may be crowned with the salvation of our souls. Thy dear parents have a share in my best wishes. Farewell! whether we see each other again in mutability, or not, I do cordially and very affectionately subscribe,

Thy friend,

—MARY CAPPER.

**TO HANNAH EVANS.**

*Fourth month 23rd, 1821.*

Dear and kind Friend,

Cherish not the apprehension that I have any view of the near approach of the spirit's dismissal; my hope, if it be best, is, that my feeble frame may gently decay, without acute disease; nor would I willingly be impatient under the bonds. Let the Lord work his own work, for my full sanctification, is my prayer. I am recruiting, and my voice has returned, though as yet weak.

Dear E. S. with her afflicted daughter! I often think of them. It is in times of lowliness of mind that we have the sweetest fellowship one with another, in a measure of that blessed union which binds and bends the natural will to the cross of Christ. May our abiding be here; let others soar above, or where they will!

With love, I subscribe,

—MARY CAPPER.

**TO THE SAME.**

*Fourth month 29th, 1821.*

My precious and endeared Friend,

United in the fellowship of the gospel, being partakers in measure of each other's consolations and trials, may our souls be possessed in patience, through drought and famine! I dare not for a moment harbour the thought that heavenly kindness has forsaken us, however we may be tried, tossed and not comforted; it is doubtless a necessary discipline, a salutary chastening. In this I take courage, that nothing in heaven or earth can compare with a Redeemer's love and power, and "all the fitness He requireth is to feel our need of Him." Are we not then, in this sense, claimants on his compassion, his mercy and his love? Never did I more fully feel it so.

Thy friend,

—MARY CAPPER.

**TO THE SAME.**

*Fifth month 28th, 1821.*

My dear Friend,

Last week, I was inclined to accept an invitation to visit a young woman who is a member of our religious Society, and who sometimes attends our meetings, but whose appearance, manners, etc. differ widely from the simplicity of our profession, and from that into which the pure spirit of Christianity leads. This dear young woman was deprived of her mother when a babe, left much to inconsiderate persons, and much indulged. No wonder then, that submission to the restraining power of religion, to the cross of Christ, formed no part of her instruction; but the good Shepherd leaves us not thus to stray, wander and perish. With what heavenly kindness He seeketh that which is turned out of the way! and healeth that which is wounded! Yea! hath long patience with that which is crooked. In lowly reverence, my heart ponders and admires the mercy and goodness extended to us all.

We have now an encouraging hope, that this young person is really under a deep consideration of things belonging to the soul's salvation, and I was comforted in this little visit. She has made a decided stand, and determined no more to frequent the theatre or other places of diversion, though solicited by her companions, and even urged by those who ought to be the guardians of her youth. Instead of the fathers, children become teachers.

I observed, and perhaps a little entered into thy mournful anticipation, of the execution of the sentence on the three misguided, unhappy men, who suffered on sixth-day; so abiding was the feeling, that on seventh-day, I called upon the distressed widow and family of B. I found her sorrowful, but not violent in the expression of her grief. She seemed to receive my visit just in the way I could wish; she said, and I believe, she thought, it was very kind to call upon such a poor afflicted, deserted family.

She hoped, that as her husband had told her, he had made his peace with God. She asked if I would like to see his corpse. I secretly started, as it were, at the idea; however, after a little pause, I accompanied a young man, who was there, into a decent, clean chamber, where the coffin was. The young man appeared very serious, and drew aside the face-cloth. The countenance was in no way disfigured. I was satisfied in paying this little visit, as following an impulse of humanity, and my mind seems relieved by it. I understand the poor family are left in low circumstances; a trifle which I gave, was thankfully received. Farewell, my dear friend; may thy soul prosper, and be in peace, prays thy friend,

—MARY CAPPER.

Seventh month 2nd. I came to Warwick, from our quarterly meeting at Leicester. My strength being unequal to much travelling, I have written to my monthly meeting, to inform my friends of a concern, which I have long felt, to hold some meetings among various religious professors in this county, Worcestershire, etc. as way may open for it.

4th. I attended the monthly meeting here, and Hannah Evans was liberated to accompany me, should my own meeting concur in my view. Thus it is comely to move in good order.

8th. First-day. I accompanied William Whitehead and Hannah Evans to a meeting for worship, held

annually at Berkswel; the house was well filled with country people, who behaved quietly. Tender counsel and serious exhortation were expressed among them.

14th. I received the document from my monthly meeting.

15th. First-day. William Whitehead and Hannah Evans accompanied me to Harboro, a village where Friends have a meetinghouse, but no meeting had been held there for several years; it seems to be a populous neighbourhood. Many serious persons attended both meetings; some, I believe, were sensible of a secret feeling, which has no fellow, nor can the skill of man form any thing like unto it.

We had taken some provisions with us, but a poor man's table was kindly spread for us with refreshments, of which we cheerfully partook; and before we separated, our spirits were refreshed with something better than outward bread. The father of this family is a serious man, in the meridian of life, but so nearly blind as to be incapable of doing anything for the support of a wife and numerous children. His mind appears to be favoured with submission; his eldest son, a steady, agreeable youth, who attends our religious meetings, is an apprentice, at Warwick.

18th. A suspension of vocal utterance, with much weakness, attends me. In unspeakable mercy, my mind is calm, and I hope to be quiet, in passive duties, or to be willing to do what may be required, and I may be enabled to do, from time to time.

19th. The coronation of George the Fourth. My heart, it may be with many others, breathed an early morning desire, that our present king may receive the anointing, not symbolically alone, but that grace and holiness may be poured into his heart. May his people thus pray for him, and may the King of kings answer the prayer by a blessing upon us all! the choice blessings of an increase of true godliness, and of peace one with another!

20th. Health and vigour a little revived, with a quiet hope that some prospects may be fulfilled. My friends are very kind and helpful, for which I desire to be thankful. The highly respected mistress of the county jail, Esther Tatnal, took tea with us.

21st. My heart was affected by the coming of an interesting old man from Harboro', to inform us, with much simplicity, that he had been solicited by many of the people, to come over and invite us to have another meeting among them, and that the people of the fields might be asked to attend; by which I understood the labourers, particularly those now engaged in harvest work. It is cause for thankfulness, that these, who literally gain their living by the sweat of their brow, have a desire to know, and to feel that mercy, that goodness, and that power, whereby we are brought to an experimental knowledge of sanctification and salvation, as testified of in the Holy Scriptures, and unto which the Spirit of Truth bears witness in our hearts. We dismissed the poor old man with some tracts, and parted in mutual goodwill. O! it is precious when a savour of good is felt; be the outward appearance ever so mean and lowly.

22nd. First-day. Had a meeting at Radford, where we were kindly and freely accommodated in a noble old mansion, now occupied by persons who attend our meetings. About one hundred and fifty people assembled, and great stillness prevailed. Our hearts were thankful for such renewed favours. I crave continual preservation, and that every act of dedication may be sanctified, and all within me kept from presumption, and from whatever is contrary to that which is alone our sanctification.

These public gatherings are very trying to my nature, and often reduce me to a low state, and cause me to search, and to re-search, who hath required them; but in my ponderings on my bed, I have renewedly believed that I must not draw back, whatever it might cost me; my peace seems at stake, and all else I must leave.

23rd. We took tea at J. Greaves's, at Barford; they very kindly permitted a large room in their house to be fitted up for the reception of those invited to sit down with us, in order to wait for, and to feel after, the fresh manifestation of that heavenly Power which alone can do our souls effectual good. We had a large assemblage; the order and the quiet were admirable, as the heat was oppressive. If Jesus was in any measure exalted, and had dominion in the heart, his glorious name be praised! but the reduction which I feel is not to be described.

25th. Much discouraged by the illness of my dear friend and helper, Hannah Evans, as it does not seem probable that she can accompany me to a meeting appointed at Leamington.

After a time of inward breathing for help, a strong cry or prayer was raised for entire resignation, and a lowly calm was graciously granted. In our little gathering at meeting, this morning, the petition of my heart seemed answered; a sweet, indescribable stillness clothing my spirit, as a token of assurance that I should not be made ashamed of my hope. It was a close trial to leave my dear friend behind; however, a kind feeling female companion was found; we took some refreshment with a kind friend, who is now at Leamington, with her daughters for their health. Their appearance, their serious countenances, with their expressions of regard, also their company and that of several others, were a comfort, help and strength to me. The gathering was large, and a peculiar solemnity spread over us, during a considerable time of silence. Supplication was then offered, I hope reverently and feelingly, after which ability was given to speak of faith in Christ, as a renovating principle, designed to work a change in the heart, to which the Scriptures testify; the Spirit by which they were penned, opening them to our understanding, that we may come unto Him of whom the prophets and the apostles did write, etc.

29th. First-day. My dear friend is mostly confined to bed, my voice is again suspended, and my bodily weakness is great; yet in marvellous mercy, we are kept in quiet contentment, and even, at times, can be cheerful though we are something like a hospital of infirm, deaf, lame, and temporarily dumb; for Hannah Evans's nephew is here, and is unwell; and her sister is very deaf.

31st. Last night was nearly sleepless, from an apprehension that I could not be easy without proposing

another meeting at Leamington. I think I do not feel so much an unwillingness to submit to such a requiring, as a fear of mistaking any apprehension of my own for a higher impression.

Eighth month 7th. My dear friend continues so unwell that she has consented to have medical aid. All religious prospects seem veiled for the present.

8th. I was at the little meeting; I thought we sat in low places; these searching times are doubtless designed for our good, that we may become grounded in that faith and confidence which is not easily shaken, I accompanied an acquaintance from London, to inspect the county jail; the strangers were highly pleased with the cleanliness and excellent order of the establishment. But few are now in confinement there; one poor man is in, for stabbing another, so that he died. It seems to have been an act of passion, not malice, and the poor culprit excited our compassion, by the deep traces of sorrow in his countenance, though he said little. We sat down with him, and I believe did enter a little into his distress; it was affecting to witness, but less so than the careless manner of some, who appeared unconscious of the misery consequent on sin. Escape from confinement, too often seems the main object with these poor creatures.

12th. First-day. I was at both meetings, where we were favoured with some renewed extension of heavenly good; also in our evening reading and retirement in my dear friend's chamber; she seems to be recruiting.

14th. A thankful and contriting sense of mercies received, continues to cheer, even under the sackcloth that covers some of our spirits, when, from day to day, we are led in a way that we know not, and hidden, inexpressible conflict is our allotment, doubtless for our farther purification, being encouraged to believe that we are branches engrafted into the living Vine. We know that the husbandman purgeth the fruit-bearing branch, that it may bring forth more fruit.

16th. Our dear invalid came downstairs. The mind seems to have no better anchor than resigning all unto Him who formed us, and who knows us altogether as we are. None other can give patience, calmness and submission, to the poor conflicting spirit; this my soul does witness, in self-abasement.

19th, First-day. My dear friend able to go to meeting this morning, and in a feeling manner to bear testimony to that Power, which, as it is received, cherished and obeyed, keeps the soul alive in times of trouble. In the afternoon, we went with her brother Daniel Evans, to his habitation, Goodrest Lodge, which is on a large farm; in the evening, we had a meeting with a considerable number of servants, labourers, etc. which ended well.

20th, After the Scripture reading, something was expressed by way of stimulating the mind to meditate upon Scripture doctrines and records, that we may receive a right understanding of them, and guard against our own constructions or interpretations. Daniel Evans conveyed us to Leamington, where notice had been given of a second meeting. Many came to it who were of a serious description; and it may be, the

design was answered, and the sacrifice accepted. We returned to Warwick in peace; my dear companion not having materially suffered from the exertion and the excessive heat.

22nd. At the small meeting, a precious time of refreshment, of spiritual feeding upon that which is meat indeed, and drink indeed! In the evening, a meeting was held for the servants of Friends, young persons, etc.

24th. Mournfully affected by the information, that, at the assizes, several criminals were condemned to suffer death; among them the unhappy murderer. Much feeling thoughtfulness came over us, as to the desirableness of visiting him or his companions; but after a time of deep consideration, and being satisfied that our own will was given up, though we were not disposed to proceed lightly in so important a thing, we were favoured to rest, in a calm and peaceful belief that we were excused. Yet Christian concern, with a tender breathing of spirit, that mercy might be extended to these our unhappy fellow creatures, was cherished in our hearts.

25th. We were kindly received, at our former quarters, at Alcester.

26th. First-day. In the morning, several strangers were at our meeting; in the evening, in consequence of a general invitation having been given, a very serious, well-behaved company attended. It is gratefully to be acknowledged, that at this day, Christians of different names, and in various ranks of life, can cordially meet together, in our meetings for worship in a Christian spirit, where little or nothing presents to occupy outward observation. That a large, mixed company, sometimes incommodiously seated, should mostly be so still, so serious, during a time of silence, is admirable; and not a little consoling and helpful, to the rightly engaged and truly spiritually minded among us.

[Respecting this evening meeting, her companion and friend, Hannah Evans, thus writes, “My dear friend, Mary Capper, was greatly favoured; she was largely engaged, in gospel love, both in testimony and supplication; it was indeed a memorable time, and brought to my remembrance ancient times, when the power of the Highest so eminently overshadowed the assemblies, to the conviction of many; and I was ready to say in my heart, surely some good will be experienced from this opportunity.”]

28th. Had a meeting with some of the manufacturers of needles, who are employed here. The quiet behaviour of all was very satisfactory, and we hope the time was not unprofitably passed. Marvellous is the mercy that would gather the wanderers, and the forgetful ones, into the Shepherd’s fold, and protect them from the destroyer.

29th. A favoured time at the meeting. In the afternoon came to Evesham, and were, as usual, cordially received by Richard Burlingham and family.

Ninth month 2nd. First-day. In the evening, we had a large gathering of labouring men, and of lads

employed in nail-making.

3rd. We took tea at the next house, and had a lively remembrance of having been favoured together some time back, with a precious sense of heavenly Goodness; since this time, the family have been tried by the long illness and death of a sister, in her twenty-second year. She suffered much, from pain and weakness, and from reflecting upon misspent time, and talents unimproved; but she was favoured with an evidence of the extension of redeeming Love, and closed her day in brightness. Some of her remarks were read to us this evening, and a humbling sense of the mercy which follows us all our lives long, drew our minds into stillness and much sweetness. A little expression followed.

5th. Attended the meeting at Bewdley in the morning; and in the evening, had a very large one at Kidderminster; about fourteen hundred persons present, many of them employed in the carpet-manufactory. At the close of the meeting, many were anxious to shake hands with us, and blessings were pronounced upon us. In condescending mercy, the evening closed peacefully, which compensated for bodily fatigue.

6th. Exhaustion kept me late in bed; we were permitted to be quiet, and sweetly retired in the family till evening, when we attended a meeting appointed for the neighbouring poor, at Bewdley; the feeling when among them was very precious.

12th. The quarterly meeting at Ross was well attended; many young persons were there, whose serious countenances were cordial to their well-wishers. I believe it was a time of spiritual refreshment.

16th. First-day. In the morning meeting, renewedly confirmed in that faith, which, if we were but humble enough to submit to its operation, would work by love to the purifying of the heart. In the afternoon many of the neighbours sat down with us, by invitation, and I think it was a time of profit. I am satisfied that the Divine will is, that we should come to a more perfect knowledge of the exceeding riches, through Christ Jesus, which are in store for those who patiently seek, and faithfully obey, the revelation of the Spirit of life and truth, in the secret of their hearts; and who rest not in outward and visible signs, which fall short of the thing signified.

17th. A day of social enjoyment with our friends. This is very gratifying, in its right time and place; the mind being at peace, though in a lowly state, and being resigned again to suffer, according to the Divine will.

18th. We left Ross, after being enabled to express, in the family, what relieved our minds, and contributed towards our looking homeward with peaceful hearts; not in exultation; ah! no; but in humble thankfulness for the mercy and condescension that kept us from wilful disobedience, and has brought us, thus far, without condemnation. O! it is an unspeakable favour to know, and freely to acknowledge, the heavenly power that keepeth the heart from being overcome of evil.

19th. Sat with the few friends at Alcester in their meeting, which was a precious time of religious

retirement, and tenderness of spirit. O! that the children of men, the world over, were brought into a willingness to wait in stillness, that they might know the power of godliness, and go on from stature to stature, increasing in holiness; that sin and transgression might in very truth be finished. We considered this meeting (in which we had sweet unity with the truly waiting, lowly spirits, who have no outward teaching to depend upon) as a gracious close to the religious engagements which we had in view, when we respectively left our habitations. Unto our heavenly Guide, our holy Teacher, our alone effectual Helper, and merciful Keeper, be all the praise!

#### TO HANNAH EVANS.

*Birmingham, Tenth month 3rd, 1821.*

My very dear Friend,

That we have thought of each other, and moreover, with the best ability that we have, have prayed for each other, is an assurance consoling to my feelings; thus our separations are measurably sweetened, and our hearts encouraged to believe firmly, and to watch constantly; so that whether together or apart, our confidence in Him who is our Rock, may be sure and steadfast. On entering my parlour, it seemed lonely, but peaceful, and this is what our souls thirst after. I hope we have both felt thankful for the favour of being led along in that path of dedication which opened before us, and for being brought back to our habitations without any sense of condemnation. My spirit was much tendered, and my heart inexpressibly affected with the consideration of these mercies, as I sat among my friends at meeting this morning. O! the heart contriting sense of heavenly goodness is no cunningly devised fable, but a blessed reality, sometimes granted to the poor, the humble, the obedient mind. A taste of the precious favour is sufficient to encourage the believing soul still to press onward, and not to tarry in the dark, dreary valley of perplexing doubts and fears. Farewell, my precious friend! my heart salutes thee.

—MARY CAPPER.

#### TO THE SAME.

*Eleventh month 15th, 1821.*

My very dear Friend,

The first thing that arises to communicate is, suffer not my length of silence, at any time, to cause a crooked thought to perplex or distress thee. "Fervent prayer and firm believing," are far better occupations, in times of doubt and uncertainty. Thou knowest we love each other, or this freedom would not be comely.

I receive very affecting accounts of the increased weakness and protracted sufferings of my dear sister Anne Capper; at the same time it is cause of gratitude, that her faith and her prospects of glory are so lively, and her

rational powers so strong. I think much of her.

[Her sympathy for this beloved sister, was soon to be exchanged for thankful rejoicing for her deliverance. Anne Capper peacefully breathed her last, on the 19th of this month.<sup>1</sup> Upon this occasion Mary Capper wrote to the family as follows:]

*Warwick, Eleventh month 21st, 1821.*

My precious Relatives,

The account of the release of my dear sister reached me this morning. Very calm and lowly was the clothing of my spirit, with an assurance that those who have passed through many tribulations, and who have, through faith, endured to the end, cease from their labours, and enter into their Master's rest, pure and undefiled! Ah! my brother; ah! my sister; how often have we conversed on subjects connected with this incomprehensible theme! My heart retraces the longing, thirsting desires of our souls, even while clouds and fears and distresses intervened. The veil is now rent, or drawn aside, to those who are gone from works to rewards; to us who remain, surely it is a stripping season; we must endure a little longer, I hope in patience.

A bright, instructive example has been set before you, dear children, of what the Lord does, for those who seek Him and obey Him.

Farewell, affectionately,

—MARY CAPPER.

#### TO HANNAH EVANS.

*Severn House, Twelfth month 3rd, 1821.*

My dearest Friend,

I feel a reverential thankfulness, that in thy present tried, low state, heavenly mercy so evidently sustains thee through all. May we cherish the blessed hope that heavenly goodness will be with us all our life long! Nothing short of this can keep the soul in patience, and give resignation, when all visible things speak, as it were, desolation and breaking up. What a stay to the poor mind to have an immutable foundation; even the sure mercies of God in Christ Jesus! A life of ease, and enjoyment of earthly things, is in no wise desirable to the soul that has had a taste of the pure, sanctified joys of redeeming love. Hold fast thy lowly confidence, my precious friend; and may the great Restorer of all righteousness be with us, at all times and in all places! Do not exert thyself to write; I do not desire it. I am well satisfied that we have closely-attached hearts, and I trust we

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<sup>1</sup> See an account of her in "Piety Promoted," 11th Part.

are both travelling on towards the end of all sin and sorrow; no more to feel sickness, cloud or doubt, or even animating hope; but to enjoy light, life, and purity forever!

—MARY CAPPER.

### TO THE SAME.

*Birmingham, First month 31st, 1822.*

My very dear friend, and fellow traveller towards a land of promised rest; where human frailty, sickness, sorrow, and perplexing things, arising from ourselves or others, will no more offend. Let us press on; not as having yet attained, but looking forward, with strong faith in that invincible Power, whereby all our spiritual enemies may be subdued; yea, Satan trodden under our feet. Peradventure this may not be shortly, but surely, in due time; this my heart takes courage in believing; and the more we press after the pure river of life, the more we shall drink of its refreshing streams; nevertheless there is a time to be athirst, in order that we may know how to estimate that which ministers refreshment and strength. Sound faith and love, patience and perseverance, are the cardinal points of a Christian traveller, after boxing the compass from side to side!

### TO THE SAME.

*Birmingham, Second month 19th, 1822.*

My dear Friend,

I cherish the gladdening hope that thou wilt be here ere long, and am thinking of having a cleansing from the external defilement of smoke, etc. that no outward appearance may affright thee.

I think my soul longs for inward washing, purification, and entire redemption from all that defiles the inner temple of the heart, that the best of friends may dwell there. This entire sanctification through the Holy Spirit, how wonderful, how important! yet how neglected by many! and how slow in its progress when we think we are earnestly desiring it! Day by day, it seems in my view a marvellous work; and though at times I am cast down, I am not in despair, for I know in whom I have believed although for a season He seems to hide Himself from our view, and then our hearts are sad; yet, are we not kept from presumptuous sins, meek and lowly? O! my precious friend, surely with some measure of experience, we can say, it is the Lord's doing; for our souls have been sore vexed. Thus I believe, in our different allotments, the Father of mercies, God only-wise, permits his children to be exercised and disciplined. To be humbled, and to keep humble, is not the work of human prudence.

My dear love is to you all, as fellow travellers, pressing after the mark. Doubtless we often tenderly sympathize with each other; we have all equal need to watch and pray continually; though there is a difference in circumstances, situations and tempers; nevertheless all is summed up in this, a Saviour or I die! a Redeemer, or I perish!

—MARY CAPPER.

### TO THE SAME.

*Key-Hill, Third month 12th, 1822.*

My affectionate Friend,

I have only been out once since I entered this hospitable dwelling, but my cough is much relieved. I think of returning home tomorrow; our select monthly meeting is to be in the evening; a poor little few! but what can we do better than desire to keep our places in humility and faithfulness? the Power that has raised the few labourers can raise up and send more, hew and when he sees meet. I believe it is safer to look to the fountain than to the streams; yet, as the streams flow pure, and unite, they may form a broad river. Thy tender love and precious sympathy suggest something like this, of an encouraging, cheering nature to my exercised spirit. I know something of depression that seems to weigh me down; my heart breathes a desire that we may yet be kept from falling, and finally be made conquerors, through a Saviour's redeeming, all-vanquishing power.

In tender love,

—MARY CAPPER.

Sixth month 12th. After secret prayer for right direction, and that a plain path might be opened before me, I ventured to inform my friends at the monthly meeting, that I had a view of some religious services within the limits of our quarterly meeting. In reverence, my spirit was bowed, and I believe there was a fellowship of feeling, and a desire to liberate me to pursue the path of apprehended requiring.

I think my heart's desire is that all my steps may be ordered by that Power which alone can keep me, so that the evil one harm me not, and that no harm be done by me.

I passed some days quietly, in my own comfortable apartments, where I have all the accommodation I desire, and which I hope I willingly leave, when called upon so to do. I visited some poor neighbours, gave away tracts, wrote letters, and arranged all, so as to leave with calm satisfaction.

24th. Lodged at Sarah Gillett's, at Shipstone.

25th. My dear friend, Hannah Evans, from Warwick, joined me, and we went to the select meeting. Our number is small, nevertheless we may gratefully acknowledge, that through divine mercy, we maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace; though we often sit as in the valley of humiliation, and as in solitary places. The reports given by our friends who had been appointed to attend the yearly meeting, though expressed in few words, were very satisfactory and animating; somewhat comparable to the odour of precious ointment, descending to the outer skirts.

26th. At the quarterly meeting, we had line upon line, and precept upon precept. In the evening, we came to Sarah Lamley's very pleasant dwelling at Tredington.

27th. William Lamley kindly conveyed us to Warwick, where, once more, I was favoured with a peaceful feeling, under the roof of my affectionate friend. It is a peculiar favour to be united in spirit, while we feel our own entire dependence, at all times, upon an invincible, though to the natural eye, invisible Power; this is more precious, and more to be desired, than any other gratification we can have in being together.

[The following was written, about this time, to her nieces, who had recently lost their last remaining parent.]

*Sixth month, 1822.*

I feel tenderly for you, my endeared nieces, as being yet comparatively in the morning of your Christian pilgrimage, and natural day; be thankful that you can believe, there is a secret gracious Power that keeps us from hardness of heart, and works in us and for us that sanctification which comes by the revealed love of God, in the manifestation of Jesus the Redeemer, through the Holy Spirit. Keep lowly and watchful; that your steps may be rightly ordered, and the end will then be peace. Temptations gradually lose much of their power. Merciful kindness places the poor dependent believer, after a time of probation, in a state of comparative quiet, wherein the fulfilment of the will of a faithful Creator is his paramount desire. I wish thus to express myself, with real humility and caution; nevertheless this is my present view of Christian advancement; and happy are they who hold on their way, through every successive stage, and persevere through every trial.

I passed through some exercise, in the prospect of leaving my quiet habitation, to be engaged for an uncertain length of time; but necessity seems laid upon me; the rest I must leave.

I hope your visit to Sunderland will be mutually beneficial and comforting. I have twice read the very interesting testimony respecting your precious mother; and though it appears long, I do not know what part could well have been omitted.

What a life of extensive usefulness! What unfeigned love, and what activity, to serve her fellow-probationers, under every name and circumstance! Above all, what an exemplification of that which the Spirit of Christ Jesus can work in the human heart! subduing, sanctifying every thought and imagination; giving the victory over all, with a full sense and acknowledgment, that not unto us, but unto his Name belongeth the glory! O! the humility, the wonderful patience, granted to your precious parents! May I reverently pray that our end may be like theirs! or, in the language of your redeemed mother, simply petition, "Thy will be done!" Here I desire to stay my mind, and be at peace.

Once more, my endeared relatives, may it be well with you in life, and in the hour of death, fervently desires your aunt,

Seventh month 3rd. Monthly meeting. The meeting for worship was to me a time of deep secret feeling. My dear friend Hannah Evans obtained leave to unite with me in my engagements.

4th. We visited two females and their brother, who are in the county prison for debt; he is in a very suffering state, from a disease which is increased by confinement; they have been in prison more than two years, and have little hope of liberation. We pitied them much; especially as one brother has already died within the walls.

5th. We again entered the prison doors, not unfeelingly, nor in a light mind; we first had a private interview with a poor unhappy man, committed for killing his own son. He said it was done in a fit of unguarded passion; he appeared sorrowful, and spoke of his guilt with mournful self-condemnation; also with particular feeling, of his aged mother, who lived with him, wishing me to call on her. It was truly affecting, and tears of sympathy flowed. William Whitehead and Esther Tatnall were with us; the poor man was grateful for the visit. We afterwards sat with the women; it was a time of serious feeling, and of solemn supplication.

7th. First-day. We held two meetings for worship, at Harboro, in a meetinghouse belonging to Friends; both gatherings filled the house. The clergyman of the parish said that he would give notice; and at the close of the morning meeting, his two very agreeable looking daughters came up to us, and invited us to dine at their father's, saying he would be pleased with our company. This is worthy of grateful remark, as manifesting the diminution of prejudice; and I think we should be thankful for every increase of Christian good will, and in true lowliness of heart, render the praise where alone it is due.

Unprofitable indeed is the labour of the servant, unless the Lord grant his blessing. May we watch and pray continually, lest, while we seem zealous for the good of others, we neglect our own hearts, and evil find an easy dwelling there! My spirit is often humbled under a sense of the possibility of thus falling, even after my heart may have been enlarged in love to my fellow creatures, and my lips opened, in some measure to set forth the love of our heavenly Father, and to invite sinners to repent, and to accept salvation. Much lowliness, and oft-times fear, have clothed my spirit.

8th. A calm day, under the roof of my dear friend. We have in contemplation another visit to the jail.

9th. William Whitehead accompanied us to the prison, where we always gain easy admission. We sat with the men and boys in the chapel, about one hundred and fifty in number; it was affecting to see so many lads; some of them scarcely eleven years old, who had been guilty of theft. Poor S. D., committed for the murder of his son, still excites our compassion, by his mournful countenance. We have reason to think that our visit was satisfactory. The improvement in the discipline of the prisoners is very great; there is

wonderful order, obedience, and cleanliness. The women and lads are employed, and many of the men knit, or stitch patten ties, etc. We left them with the heartfelt desire that their future days may be their best days; that, in repentance and amendment of life, they may know the way of peace.

10th. Our little meeting was a time of sweet contrition; with a precious, consoling belief, that the Lord is on the side of those who wait upon Him, and who can truly say that they have none whom they desire in comparison of Him. We afterwards called upon a friend in trouble.

### TO RICHARD AND ELIZABETH CADBURY

*Warwick, Seventh month 10th, 1822.*

My dear Friends,

It seems long since we parted. My chief aim and desire is, to fill up whatever may be required in the allotment assigned. I seem low and dependent every way; my health, my powers, depend upon renewed strength and mercy every day. We have had some heart-tendering opportunities in the county jail. The worthy, kind, and seriously-minded mistress is particularly prompt to promote whatever may tend to her own information, or to the good of the great household. She may be considered a blessing in her important station; she carries authority in her solid, yet gentle manners and countenance; and seems to be loved as well as obeyed.

—MARY CAPPER.

11th. We were conveyed a little way into the country, to see some persons who have separated themselves from the religious Society of Friends and joined the Unitarians, and who are bringing up a large family in this way. Much Christian solicitude has been manifested by divers Friends, toward them; the parents more especially, as being responsible for the instruction of the children. Little good seems, at present, to result from the care repeatedly extended, as respects the ground and foundation of faith. There seems to be a subtlety in argument, and in reference to certain Scripture testimonies, which, as yet, fortifies the heart; and if we are right who have strong consolation in believing on Jesus, as a Redeemer who shed his blood, a ransom for sinners, a propitiation for the sin of the world, our Mediator and Advocate with the Father, then there surely must be a veil over the spiritual understanding of these seceders; and nothing short of heavenly Power can convince and convert them. To pray for one another, with the best ability that we have, is a duty ever to be cultivated.

13th. Called on a poor old woman, who has for some years been in outward darkness; her placid countenance and lively sense of mercies received, in the midst of privations and sufferings, seemed to do us good, and to confirm our belief, that the Fountain of pure light and of consolation is revealed, without partiality, in the seeking, humble heart. This belief is precious and cheering.

14th. First-day. William Whitehead kindly accompanied us nine miles to Berkswell, where Friends have a meetinghouse. Very few of our own Society met us; it would have been pleasant if more had inclined to come, to countenance and hold up the hands of those who are concerned to labour for the spread of religion. The house was crowded, and many stood without; notwithstanding the heat and the pressure, their behaviour was becoming; every serious mind may be encouraged, and thankfully acknowledge that there is an evident improvement in the manners of the people generally, particularly observable when invited to sit in our meetings, where there is little to attract outward observation. Their stillness and sobriety are instructive to those who are engaged, in Christian love, to visit them. This opportunity was, I believe, favoured with that condescending mercy that is both ancient and new.

The meeting at Warwick was postponed till evening, and was attended by a considerable number of the inhabitants, I hope it was a profitable time of religious fellowship; in the solemn feeling that, with our Heavenly Father, high and low, rich and poor, are equally the objects of his tender regard, and matchless love. How marvellously does the Almighty Father remove every narrow prejudice, cause discouragement to vanish, and from time to time open the understanding in things belonging to the soul's salvation; drawing aside the veil of human ignorance, and sometimes opening the lips to set forth a little of what the Lord of life and glory hath done, and in his faithfulness will do, for those who truly seek to know and to obey Him! I thought, as far as it concerned myself, that I was sweetly compensated for exertion and fatigue.

15th. A day of rest; with little interruption, save what often occurs in the necessary attention to the common concerns of life; and these concerns may frequently be numbered among the things which may tend to the furtherance of our growth in Christian experience.

16th. We came to J. B. Lowe's, at Easington; a retired spot.

18th. An instructive time at meeting. Sat awhile in serious retirement with W. B. in his almost solitary dwelling. We have some ground to believe that these visits from house to house, with a feeling desire after that which is of more value than temporal prosperity and ease, are mutually profitable; bringing into view, and into deep consideration, the state of our own hearts, and how we stand, in the all-seeing eye of a faithful Creator.

19th. Visited a poor widow in affliction; her calm resignation was striking; also her confidence that her heart will be sustained in peace through all; and that, if bread and water only be her lot, she shall be content, and commend her family to the Lord. Surely this is the blessed effect of the power of religion on the mind! We called on William White, a Friend far advanced in age; he lives in great simplicity, with a grandson who works as a shoemaker; without female aid, the house is comfortable, neat and orderly. The grandfather is provider and head cook, and they appear to eat their bread in quietness, and to be cheerful. It was very pleasant to see a youth, of really pleasing person and manners, contented to follow a humble occupation, in a retired village, and to live in a very lowly way, with his aged grandfather.

20th. After a day of retirement in spirit, and of secret prayer for renewed direction, and continued help in our Christian movements, I thought we were favoured, in sitting in the evening with J. L. and his wife, with a sweet and encouraging sense, that the stream of heavenly life flows soft and sure, to the refreshment of the retired, waiting soul; though we may again and again thirst and be weary.

21st. First-day. In the morning, sat the small meeting. The pure Fountain of life is open for the few, as freely as for the larger number. In the afternoon, many serious persons came, by invitation, to sit down with us. We were favoured to meet and to separate in much stillness; the meeting closed with prayer.

23rd. Sat with the only two families, at Tredington, who profess with us, and were favoured to feel that contriting Power which is ancient and new. Some part of this day was agreeably and profitably spent in reading some very interesting writings of Friends, and their sufferings for the testimony of a good conscience, and the promotion of universal righteousness, in the time when Friends were first gathered to be a people, conscientiously separating from established forms, and with upright hearts, seeking to possess the substance typified in the shadows of good things to come.

24th. At meeting at Shipston, and had a family sitting, wherein we were unexpectedly favoured with a more than common sense of the extension of heavenly love; for which condescension to our low estate, humble thanksgiving was rendered.

25th. After breakfast and reading, we had a profitable pause; some encouragement was given to dedicate a portion of the morning to retirement, prior to entering into the occupations of the day. For men of business this is especially necessary, in order to keep the mind calm through the perplexities which may occur; without such a stay the mind is in great danger of being estranged from God and godliness.

26th. Called on several; one large family where the mother was deceased. It was pleasant to see the young people seriously disposed; encouragement flowed toward them, to keep out of the mixtures, to be content in a plain way of living, and to seek the Lord's blessing, which is the best riches.

27th. A day of close engagement. After dinner we went to Stow; and on to Morton, to call on a poor woman who was born and educated in our Society, but who married out of it. Friends had visited her frequently, and kindly cared for her. When we entered the little cottage, our surprise was great to find that the poor woman had breathed her last about midnight; and that on third-day (this being seventh,) her husband, on coming out of his garden, where he had been digging potatoes, fell from his chair and expired, without speaking. It was an impressive scene, to behold a husband and wife thus lying lifeless in one chamber; they were about seventy-seven years of age, and had lived harmoniously together about fifty years. We sat down with a few of the kind neighbours, who had waited upon this feeble pair. The little religious opportunity was consoling; for a calm belief seemed to clothe my spirit, that, as their lowly hearts had been united in life, so, in death, their spirits were not separated.

28th. First-day. Went to meeting at Stow. An invitation was given to the townspeople to sit down with us

at four o'clock. It proved a crowded company, but very orderly, considering the heat, thunder and rain. It was an instructive time. After meeting, my feelings were closely tried, in having to give up my dear companion, who was obliged to return home; however, we desired properly to submit. I felt lonely, though my mind was favoured with quietness; and this wonderfully sustains, through whatever comes upon us.

29th. Took an opportunity of expressing some tender counsel and encouragement, to the elder daughter of the family where I am staying; her peculiar circumstances call for sympathy. Those who dwell at ease, and are surrounded with accommodations, little know the difficulties that many large families have to encounter. Attended a very large meeting, at Stow, on the occasion of the burial, in one grave, of the poor man and his wife, who died at Morton. Vocal labour seemed called for. It was a time of no small fatigue; but this is the thing least to be considered, if the blessed Name be exalted.

Eighth month 4th. Went to Arnscot, where a Friends' meeting is annually held; it was large. My mind was in a tried state, though mercifully kept patient; and I was thankful for the labours of some dear friends, who had to speak of the efficacy of the grace of God, revealed in the heart to cleanse from all sin, when believed in, cherished, and obeyed; and purifying from evil thoughts, words and works.

Christ died to save us from our sins, and not in them. O, the importance of every heart coming to know Jesus, in his spiritual appearance, sitting as a refiner with fire and as a fuller with soap! It is mournful that many religious professors seem to remain at ease in a nominal profession; with but little of that sense of sin, in all its deceitfulness, which is discovered by the shining of the true Light in the heart. Many seem content to be thought moral and respectable; but this falls far short of coming unto Him whose gracious consoling invitation stands on Scripture record, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden!" with the precious promise, that they shall find rest. All other rest is polluted.

As I was bereft of my companion, dear Sarah Lamley kindly joined me, in sitting down to enter into feeling with a man and his wife who came from a distance; the poor woman married out of our religious Society, wherein she had her birth and education. By this step she and others who have come under my notice, have brought upon themselves many distresses which they might have been spared. We had another sitting with persons similarly circumstanced, having a large family to bring up. We endeavoured to impress upon them the necessity of seeking the Divine blessing, and that the parents should encourage one another to live a religious life, and to be conscientiously diligent in attending some place of public worship.

6th. At Radway, I again met my kind and endeared companion, to our mutual comfort. The monthly meeting was held here, and afresh we had to acknowledge the mercy manifested toward the children of men, and toward our little religious band, though scattered up and down, here a few and there a few, with many deviations from rectitude. Mercy is still graciously extended towards us, as a separate people, and still preserves faithful standard-bearers, both in advanced age and among the rising youth, even in some solitary situations. We have sweet, clean, comfortable accommodation at the cottage of H. Summerfield,

a wonderfully active, kind friend, in very advanced age, who has, for many years, gained a comfortable income by her industry.

7th. Attended the meeting, paid several family visits. There is much outward simplicity in this little group of cottagers, and in their rustic manners; something to be learned, and yet something wanting; viz. more earnestness, in many, to experience the work of sanctification.

8th. A pleasing young friend procured a little cart, to convey us about three miles, to the village of Tyso, where we arrived safely, after jumbling over very rough roads. We sat in one family, and then called on another, consisting of a man, his wife and three children, in a poor habitation. We thought ourselves well repaid for our exertions, for there seemed to be peace in the dwelling, and heavenly kindness near us. These are precious feelings, and I think we are made thankful for such favours, extended to ourselves and others.

10th. Had a very comforting time with dear Hannah Palmer, in her eighty-ninth year; her natural and spiritual faculties lively. It was inexpressibly sweet and refreshing to feel an undoubted evidence, that there was no cloud in her way; nothing to separate the soul from God; no distrust or unbelief; but confidence that, by the new and living Way, Christ Jesus, there was, and is, free access to the Father. Marvellous mercy! the work of redeeming love! We took tea with a widow who has many trials; the little circle of Friends, in this retired, quiet spot, are not without their distresses. It is well to visit such in their own dwellings; and possibly some good may arise from passing a few days among them. This evening we had a precious little sitting with a poor man, at the close of his hard day's labour, in the harvest field; his spirit was so tendered that the floor was wet with his tears. Ah! these are times of special favour.

11th. At meeting in the morning we found the necessity of deep labour, and of diligent watchfulness, in order to experience the arisings of the fresh spring of life. In the evening we had a crowded meeting of the villagers.

12th. We left our very kind, aged friend, H. Summerfield, with affectionate feelings, and in a grateful sense, that merciful condescension had been with us, under the humble roof of this dear friend, whose earthly pilgrimage seems to be drawing to its close.

13th. We were conducted to Campden, where we were cordially received at the comfortable habitation of Mary Bevington. She is a widow, in weak health and advanced life, yet freely disposed to entertain and to help those who, she believes, are bound to promote the cause of righteousness. As our time here was likely to be short, it seemed to impress our minds, that some steps should be promptly taken for having an evening meeting with the inhabitants; this our kind friend quickly promoted; the Town Hall was proposed, easily obtained, and a carpenter set to work; so that a neat and commodious room was soon fitted up. It was a large meeting, but very still; and we had cause to be thankful for the help received, enabling us to do what seemed required.

[Mary Capper's humble-minded companion, Hannah Evans, having left a few memoranda respecting this religious engagement, and particularly mentioning this meeting at Campden, the following remarks are extracted therefrom, as showing how these labours were appreciated by those who witnessed them.]

Although I kept no journal, while I accompanied my endeared friend Mary Capper, in her religious visits to Friends in the South monthly meeting of our county, yet I can now, after the close of the work, say, that my heart was often clothed with thankfulness, and I am at this time humbled under a sense of the weakness and poverty which I often felt when sitting by this dedicated servant; yet I trust I was not an idle spectator, but enabled secretly to unite with my dear friend in the important work, with earnest desire that I might be enabled to be a help-meet, and bear part of the burden. I did often thankfully believe that she was greatly favoured, and instructed to divide the word aright; particularly so in a public meeting held in the Town Hall at Campden; where the Most High was graciously pleased to honour us with his presence. My beloved friend was engaged, for nearly an hour and a half, in a beautiful testimony; during which time I seemed, in an uncommon manner, to be in the enjoyment of heavenly Goodness, so that I thought it something resembled a Pisgah sight of the holy land of rest and peace, in a way rarely known by me. The people behaved with great solidity, and I thought the opportunity was cause for thankfulness.

[To return to Mary Capper's diary:]

Eighth month 14th. We had a time of lowly reverence of spirit, with the dear, humble-minded friend, under whose roof we have been kindly entertained and refreshed; soon after we took our leave, apprehending it may prove a final farewell.

15th. We came to Long Compton, and were but a small company at meeting; but we had afresh to experience that the spirit of the contrite ones is, from time to time, revived; so that it remains to be a blessed thing to be the Lord's poor.

16th. We visited an aged, infirm couple, in a very poor dwelling; we may observe, that when individuals among us lightly esteem their privileges, and turn their backs upon them, in the early period of life, their advancing years are often marked with distress, and the want of those comforts which they might have had; nevertheless, in this case, we had to admire the enduring mercy, extended even to old age; the cheering rays of light and of saving love, breaking in upon them, as in the eleventh hour, in their poor desolate dwelling; this is marvellous love indeed! We afterwards visited another of these poor forlorn ones, in his old age. He lives with a daughter-in-law, who has a large family, and who seemed to have her hands and her mind full of cares and encumbrances. She looked rather shy upon us at first; but after a little free discourse, and some little acts of kindness, the clouds began to dissipate, and I felt a flow of tenderness toward her; viewing her as encumbered with many things, and possibly unacquainted with "that good part," needful for keeping the spirit calm, and all things in subjection. After a time, she was

informed, that the object of our visit was, to sit down quietly with her father-in-law, who was present; and she was invited to sit with us, which she readily did, with several of her children. The free and unchanging love of our heavenly Father broke in upon us. Wonderful is his mercy and goodness! The dear children were quiet, and the poor woman melted into tears. We left her under much feeling, and upon our telling her, that there was likely to be a meeting for the inhabitants on first-day evening, she said she should be glad to attend. Thus can the precious love of God soften obdurate hearts!

In the afternoon, we had a time of sweet retirement with James Bissel, in his humble dwelling, where he has lived in solitary widowhood upwards of twenty years; he is eighty years old, and his children have settled at a distance. It is admirable to witness the peaceful content, the comfort, neatness and order, of some of these solitary ones; and how little suffices for nature's real wants, where the mind has happily found the true anchor.

17th. I feel both weak and low; but through adorable mercy, I still go on, from day to day, in bowedness of spirit, I trust, so as to bring no condemnation, nor grieve the pure mind in any. If this be the case, I may be content, and render thanksgiving.

18th. First-day. In the evening we had a very full gathering; there was seriousness and stillness, but there did not seem to be the prevalence of that Power which contrites the heart, nor the openness to receive its influence, that we have known in some places. The cause we desire to leave, except as it induces a close heart-searching for ourselves; this secret work is, I am aware, needful; both when at home, and still more so, when moving from place to place, as we are at present engaged in doing.

22nd. We came to Brails; both of us poorly, and low in mind; yet not without a cheering hope, that by and by, it may fare better with us, and that we may be comforted with a little of that comfort, wherewith we have sometimes been enabled to comfort others.

23rd. We met, a large family party, at breakfast. One of the little boys is about to leave home for school; we had a sweet time of feeling, with him and his brother who remains at home in delicate health; their hearts seemed tendered at the thoughts of separation, and it was like soothing oil, to participate in the sense of their brotherly love.

W. Gillet and sons have a manufactory in this village which employs many poor people; some of them came yesterday, at the request of the young bride, to take tea at the house. They were all neatly dressed. After their repast, we heard some young girls read in the Testament. J. G. has a school-room fitted up, where he teaches these poor children to read and write; we saw some verses of their composition, which were to be admired for their simplicity and originality; they chiefly related to the beauty of nature's scenes around them; the birds, fields, etc. There seemed something peculiarly pleasant, in the thought of these poor children being encouraged to observe objects around, and to cultivate and improve their minds. We were told, their essays were put into a certain place, to be examined by their master, who opens the

budget once a month. This afternoon we visited a poor weaver, who has come to meetings for some time; we went to his habitation, which we find the most satisfactory way, when it can with propriety be so; we found his wife in a very declining state of health, and in a feeling frame of mind; an infant was asleep in the cradle, and there was a little girl, about seven years old, who manifested susceptibility of mind, by her tears, as we sat in solemn stillness; this was very precious to us, as the effect of that power which standeth not in words. Vocal prayer was reverently offered, and we believe the visit was acceptable.

In the evening, in retirement in this family, we were refreshed together, in drawing nigh to the true Source of help. As our minds are stayed here, all our wants are made known; and our pure desires are answered in due season, in the measure best suited to our growth and establishment in the Wisdom that comes from above. I trust these steppings among our friends are made mutually profitable.

25th. First-day. Our minds were, I believe, afresh humbled with the prospect of the day opening before us; quiet resignation is the best preparation for whatever may be brought upon us. After breakfast and the Scripture reading, I was constrained to express something, by way of stimulating to good order in sitting down to meals; that we may be favoured, in our short pauses at such times, to participate also in renewed refreshment of spirit. Paying but a slight regard to these moments, allowed, in a family for individual, secret breathing to the Fountain of all our rich supplies, temporal and spiritual, is attended with great loss. There is a danger of the lamp of life, in a spiritual sense becoming dim, and even being extinguished, by the cares of this life. The deep work of regeneration, redemption and entire sanctification, is not sufficiently the object of Christian professors. The meeting in the morning was small; in the evening there was a very large attendance, and the meeting closed under a reviving hope that mercy and goodness were over us.

26th. Once more came to Shipston, as it seems that the close of our engagements here away is drawing nigh. I think we simply desire to depart in peace; to be willing to invite some of the inhabitants to sit with us tomorrow in our meetinghouse, looks like the way to a peaceful release. This fresh act of dedication requires fresh-submission.

27th. The company of our kind friends from Brails, and of dear Sarah Lamley, was truly cheering. The house was pretty full, but want of punctuality in coming, interrupted that stillness which we consider a needful preparation for the spiritual refreshment which comes from the presence of the Lord.

I believe this meeting was thought satisfactory, yet in several of the last which have been held, my mind has not been so entirely relieved as on some former occasions. I desire humility and patience under the trial, as I am not conscious of wilful omission, or presumptuously engaging in service, without the fresh constraint.

28th. After a night of close searching of heart, with a desire for right discernment and entire resignation, I concluded to propose to my dear companion, if she could see it right, that we should stay over first-day,

and have another meeting. Disappointing as this was to us, I was encouraged to believe, that I should be helped through this proving time. The thing was mentioned to a few friends, and no obstacles arising, my heart was partly eased of a painful oppression, and we had a comfortable time at the meeting this morning. Afterwards we came to Sarah Lamley's, at Tredington; a nice resting place!

29th. These kind friends being freely disposed thereto, we had a meeting this evening in their house, which has been licensed for the purpose. A good sized room and large passage, were nicely fitted up with seats, and accommodated about one hundred persons. It proved a satisfactory time.

31st. We have been favoured with two days of rest, both of mind and body, in this rightly regulated family, where the circumspect conduct of the mother seems to spread over, and influence the household. Our time was pleasantly, and not unprofitably, passed in reading, writing, and walking in the garden and fruitful orchard; also in a stroll in the village, which is a poor scattered place, with very few good houses.

Ninth month 1st. First-day. We were conveyed to Shipston in Sarah Lamley's carriage; the first meeting was a time of some rather remarkable counsel being expressed, especially to the young men, relative to the subtlety of the human heart. Nothing short of living under the all-regulating power of the Holy Spirit, manifested within us, can keep from evil. In the afternoon a very large meeting of the inhabitants gathered, and sat becomingly with us. It was a time of some openness, and I trust ended well.

2nd. Arrived at Warwick, with peaceful and thankful hearts, and in renewed confidence that all will be well that is ordered of our gracious Lord.

4th. The meeting was comforting. In a close retrospect of our late religious movements, I hope I have been afresh instructed, and confirmed in the belief, that the Lord teacheth his servants to profit; secretly instructing, gently reproofing, and sealing his counsel with an evidence that no other teacher can impart. W. T. a solid and agreeable Friend, a minister, who is at Leamington for his health, spent the day with us.

11th. Our little gathering was favoured with the fresh extension of our Heavenly Father's regard. W. T. is still here; his solid, waiting frame of spirit was helpful, and the exercise of his gift in the ministry, truly acceptable. He dined with us, and we then went to the prison. It was distressing to see so many fresh faces and wretched objects. Many have come for a short term of imprisonment; some waiting orders for transportation. Very trying to the keepers of the jail is this class of prisoners; they are less subordinate than the others, and their manners and language more licentious. Alas! alas! poor unhappy men! We sat down with them, and prayer was offered for them; but we know that no efforts can avail, unless the Lord of life touch the hard heart. The poor man is acquitted of the intentional murder of his son, and is only to remain a few months in confinement; but we have reason to fear that he has not a right view of this mercy.

## TO ONE OF HER NIECES.

*Ninth month 12th, 1822.*

I have no discouraging language to hold forth; very marvellous in my view is the mercy that redeemed my life from destruction, and withholdeth not his goodness in my old age.

Prize your privileges, my beloved relatives! nurtured in the pure principles of gospel Truth, the unsophisticated religion of Jesus! My heart, my understanding, my every faculty is satisfied with the pure principles professed by the Society, in their first powerful promulgation, and as I now believe them to be, held by the honest, simple and pure in heart, and the faithful in word and deed, among us. To be united in such a Society; to know the Foundation and living Corner Stone! ah! my soul, what is there comparable to this! not the increase of corn, wine or oil, or of any worldly possessions! With these views, my precious relatives, I do, at times, feel a gentle constraint to leave my own home comforts, which I highly value, and to go from place to place, and from family to family, with a heartfelt desire, so far as ability is given, to stir up the pure mind, which is liable, you know, to be oppressed; hardly rising at times above visible objects. Alas! how few come clean out of selfishness, and of the spirit and defilements of the world! Far am I from writing thus, as having overcome, but my heart's strong desire is to press on; not looking too much at discouraging things, past, present, or to come; but with a steady faith to put my trust in that Power which can subdue all that stands in the opposition. O! how does the Lord instruct us to live above perishing things, even his goodly gifts. How are we led along, as we can bear it! Thus, in all things, we may gather instruction; leaving such as we understand not to a future day.

—MARY CAPPER.

Ninth month 22nd. First-day. With the unfeigned desire to be kept in my right place, I signified my wish to have some of the neighbours invited to the afternoon meeting. In the morning several came, and I thought a very precious sense of everlasting love was spread over us, and gathered our spirits into that serious calm, wherein the voice of the true Shepherd is distinguished from the voice of the stranger; a blessed preparation for each heart to receive heavenly instruction immediately opened therein; or, if so permitted, through the medium of words fitly spoken. The afternoon meeting was largely attended, and afforded me some relief.

23rd. We once more entered the prison, and sat down with the women, most of them newly committed. I felt particularly interested for a poor old woman, who seems likely to be executed for coining, and who seems scarcely aware of her awful situation. When we were last among the women, something impressive was felt and expressed, to a poor old female, who was confined for life. She has since died, we hear, in a favoured state of mind.

25th. Our quarterly meeting. It was to me a time of tenderness of spirit, and shedding of tears, not of sorrow, but of precious feeling, under the ministry of a Friend from London, travelling with certificate.

30th. I left Warwick, and my dear, affectionate and truly sympathizing helper and companion, in the work whereunto I believe we were both of us bound; though her labour was frequently in silence, an important help it was, and my heart was made thankful for it. It is doubtless allowable to feel the separation, and to be sad for a season; yet in our several allotments, lowly peace will be found. I arrived at my own comfortable apartments, after an absence of more than three months. The mercies and comforts shed around me are very many, and I desire preservation from evil, and that I may render praise and thanksgiving to the Father of Mercies. Now and ever be his glorious Name magnified!

In the tenth month I visited the families at Stourbridge and Dudley, and had large public gatherings in both places, I believe to satisfaction.

Eleventh month 13th. Delivered up my certificate. The retrospect of an engagement so important, and in the latter part without a companion, seems to contrite my spirit, and again to raise the grateful acknowledgment, that in marvellous condescension, strength is given to those who have no might of their own.

#### TO ONE OF HER NIECES.

*Twelfth month 30th, 1822.*

I do not forget thee, my beloved niece, as one desirous to be and to do just what thy Heavenly Father would have thee. Conflict, doubt and fear may assail, even after being favoured with an evidence of the uprightness of our intentions. This is no new path. Do not bewilder thyself, but try to be content with a little ray of light. I commend thee, with my own spirit, to the gracious care and guidance of the great Shepherd of the sheep! I am gratified by Mary Hanbury's love and remembrance. She has no small share in the desires of my heart, that the children in our Heavenly Father's family may be kept from all that can hurt or destroy; so that the holy plant may rise into excellency and dominion.

In much affection, thy aunt,

—MARY CAPPER.

## Chapter X

*Services in and about London, in the years 1823 and 1824.—Letters, etc.*

TO K. C.

*Birmingham, Second month 10th, 1823.*

My dear Niece,

No change of circumstances will, I hope, be permitted to interrupt what I esteem a precious union of spirit: however imperfect it is, I do hope it arises from a spring unpolluted. It is a relief to my mind, that thy important decision feels satisfactory, and that calmness seems given as an evidence of right movement. In all our steppings, this token of higher approbation than our best friends can give, is truly desirable. I feel affectionately disposed to receive thy friend as one I could love for his own sake, because I believe there is a good work making progress in his heart. O! the condescending Power that begins and carries forward sanctification and redemption; perfecting the Divine image in the soul. Mayst thou, my precious niece, be favoured with a faithful helpmate on thy heavenward journey! May you freely dedicate your talents to every service unto which you may be called! whether separately or unitedly. Close heart provings strengthen the bond of true union. I love those who can calmly endure tribulation or conflict, best known to their own hearts.

—MARY CAPPER.

Fourth month 9th, 1823. Mentioned at our monthly meeting at Stourbridge, a prospect of attending the yearly meeting, and of some religious service in and about the city of London. A certificate of unity was granted.

*Fourth month 17th, 1823.*

Dear M. S.,

I have been concerned to hear of the sickness of thy dear children and servants; this trouble, I trust, is passed over; leaving the mind farther prepared by experience to encounter the next. In vain do we look to live at ease, in a world of fluctuations and trials; neither religion nor the nature of visible things, teaches any such doctrine. The religion of Jesus, as promulgated in the gospel, urges the necessity of daily bearing the cross of Christ, by which we are kept in lowliness of mind, subjection and patience, looking unto Him who bare our infirmities, and our chastisement was upon Him. Please to refer to this text; it does not occur correctly to me, though the precious savour cheers my heart. I have been under a considerable weight and depression of spirits at the prospect, under I apprehend religious constraint, of attending the yearly meeting, with a view to some other engagements. I believe none can fully enter into the preparatory low dippings, the humiliating self-abasement, the searchings of heart at such times needful, but those who, in some sort, have gone through the like siftings, etc. to fit them for inviting and encouraging their fellow-believers to lay hold of eternal life and be steadfast unto the end. Every fresh dedication is a fresh act of faith; no former experience will avail for present requirings. For my own part, I find as much fear and difficulty in decision and in speaking at this day as in the earlier periods of my life.

May it be well with thee, is the affectionate desire of thy friend and fellow-probationer.

—MARY CAPPER.

**TO RICHARD AND ELIZABETH CADBURY**

*Warwick, Fourth month 25th, 1823.*

My dear Friends,

I think it will gratify your affectionate solicitude to have information of my safe arrival thus far, and that, through condescending mercies, which are new every day, I am favoured with a calm, lowly frame of mind, not painfully solicitous as to how I may be disposed of. In the simplicity of a dependent child, my heart has craved entire submission and dedication. Here seems to be my strength, my peace, and my safety; and here I strive to dwell from day to day.

I have left many very dear, tried friends among you, unto whom I am bound in Christian fellowship. All have their secret bitters, their provings, humiliations and distresses. Their hidden way is known to Him who sees in secret, and never forsakes his poor suppliant children. Though our outward path differs, there is a deep sense that tribulation marks the way to the kingdom; it is tribulation that worketh experience, patience and hope; and thus it differs widely from worldly sorrow. Jesus died for sinners; to heal their wounds; to seal their redemption! Farewell, my dear friends; may your peace be sure; Your friend,

—MARY CAPPER.

Fifth month 7th. The monthly meeting at Warwick was a time of precious union of spirit; a sweet sense of Divine love was felt among us, in which there is true fellowship.

9th. I left my dear friends under a degree of depression, in the prospect of a long separation.

[This visit to London and its neighbourhood was attended with many trials to her affectionate feelings, in the blank occasioned by the death of her brothers, and of many dear friends, with whom she had been accustomed to take sweet counsel, and who had been removed from this fluctuating scene, since her former visit; so that it was evident that she often felt as one stripped and alone; yet the desire to cherish a thankful spirit, enabled her often to be cheerful; and the watchful frame of her mind was instructive to those where she sojourned, as she endeavoured, from place to place, to do her Master's will.]

19th. Reached London on the 14th, and found my dear eldest brother in a weak state. Passed some days with him, and am now with my nieces, who are in sorrow, on account of the death of their much loved friend Mary Hanbury, the only child of William Allen.

29th. After the business of the yearly meeting was satisfactorily concluded, a very impressive pause ensued, for a considerable time; we seemed reluctant to separate, so precious was the bond of union and

of cordial affection, as one family. O! that a growing union or fellowship, in the Holy Head, may be our individual experience; then will there be a harmonious labour, in our various allotments, to promote the good of the whole.

Seventh month 14th. Attended the morning meeting. A diary of Robert Searle was partly read: it is the Christian experience of a poor man, in the station of a servant. The recital of his conflicts, under the influence of Divine grace in the soul, much affected, and I hope, both instructed and encouraged me; seeing the fight of faith is to be maintained, through trials and provings, however our circumstances may vary.

In the afternoon came to Peckham; here I find an interesting family of children. The more familiar we are with such, the more we become sensible how much depends upon a patient, watchful care over them.

17th. My niece and I took tea with Margaret Hagen, a kind friend, in the decline of life. Her house is beautifully situated in a garden; the calm scene was gratifying, but a secret sense of spiritual refreshment was more sweet and encouraging to my soul than all that the visible world can give. I imperfectly expressed some of my feelings, and we separated pleasantly.

20th. First-day. The meetings were more refreshing seasons than I have of late experienced. I dined at Mary Dudley's, she, dear woman! is confined by weakness, and appears to be near the close of her labours and exercises, which have been many.

22nd. Called upon two young women, sisters; I thought there was a consoling evidence of heavenly and protecting goodness, while sitting with these dear young women, and I was thankful that I had had courage to follow the gentle pointing to call.

23rd. After the usual morning Scripture reading, I had to express my desire for the growth of the root and fruit of holiness in this family. I also took an affectionate and serious leave of the servants, in a manner unexpectedly impressive to myself, and I believe not quite unprofitable to them; so that I may say, that after many days of humiliation and some secret distress, not discovered by outward sackcloth, my weak faith revives a little. In reverence I note it, as a fresh token of mercy.

24th. We went to meeting; the retrospect is comfortable. What a privilege it is to retire from the noise and hurry of the busy city, in order to meet, whether few or many, in religious fellowship; reverently waiting on the unchangeable Source of mercy, not being soon weary in mind.

Eighth month 2nd. Accompanied Charlotte Dudley to call on a friend; in a time of religious retirement, renewed desires were felt after that heavenly power which alone can do us good, and direct us aright.

4th. Came to T. B.'s, at Camberwell. This visit gave me the opportunity of tenderly feeling with a faithful, female servant, who has lived with T. B. for twelve years, and who is about to leave, from a sense of

gratitude to a brother, now in trouble, who was like a father to her in early life. The prospect of poverty and distress does not deter this affectionate sister from leaving comparative ease and plenty, to assist her brother in the day of trial. We had a sweet time together, with a fellow servant, who seemed of a tender spirit.

11th. Attended the morning meeting, with my niece. In the afternoon, prepared to leave her dwelling, as the household is about to undergo a change; these vicissitudes are very impressive and may be instructive.

13th. A very large gathering in Gracechurch-street meetinghouse, on the occasion of the marriage of my niece. It was a time of solemnity and quiet. Comfort and counsel were ministered, and prayer was offered for help, and wisdom to direct, in all our various stations and duties through life. I went to Tottenham in the evening.

14th. Went to meeting with my nephew and his children. My mind was deeply affected with a sense, that Christian believers must know a breaking down, ere they can experience a building up, in the heavenly power, on Christ, the chief Corner Stone, elect and precious. All other foundations must be razed; not one stone left!

15th. I feel much at home here, being left free to pursue my way, as seems best; my dear niece having considerable domestic occupation, and now, in early life, filling up, as far as she can, I think, the vacant place of her precious mother.

19th. After rather a restless night, comforted with the thought, which arose with much sweetness, that the kingdom of heaven, wherein dwelleth righteousness, will make amends for all.

A variety of new publications, on many subjects, not uninteresting, and may be, instructive, are in circulation in most families. It seems, as far as my observation goes, that these novelties induce much transient reading, if it may be so described; but I doubt whether abiding profit, in the useful and substantial culture of the mind, is thus obtained.

21st. Observed vacant seats at meeting; yet it is pleasant to see that there are some, especially young men, who do leave their lawful concerns and attend week-day meetings. This dedication will not surely be time lost, or vainly spent!

24th. First-day. Both meetings remarkably favoured, as times of waiting for spiritual refreshment, and witnessing the living Spring measurably to flow.

27th. Took tea with a young couple, and was gratified with the visit. It is very pleasant to observe young persons entering upon the important duties of life with seriousness and discretion.

Ninth month 5th. Deborah Stacey kindly called with me, upon a few friends in their comparatively poor

habitations. It seems right, and in my view, instructive, that those who abound in ease and outward accommodation, should visit the poor, and cheerfully give, out of their fulness, a little of the good things that they possess.

11th. The monthly meeting. A day of some exercise of mind, and considerable weakness of body. What should we do; where should we find a calm, lowly resignedness of heart and of will, if the Father of Spirits helpeth us not?

My certificate was read, and I informed Friends how I had been engaged; that my movements are not in the usual course of a general visit to families, but chiefly among the poor, the lonely and the afflicted; and that I have in view, a meeting for servants, before I leave this place.

13th. This day mostly spent in serene quietness, intermingled with social converse. These are in my estimation, some of the sweet favours bestowed upon intelligent beings; freedom of spirit with mutual cordiality, is truly gratifying and often profitable.

14th. First-day. The morning meeting was a time of sweet solemnity to me, in silence; and in this I believe spiritual strength is renewed and a pure offering made, which is accepted.

19th. Dined with Hannah Kilham, who is preparing to sail for Africa. The meeting for servants in the families of Friends, was held in the evening, and was, I believe, satisfactory.

20th. Mary Harding accompanied me to Winchmore Hill, through a beautiful country, luxuriant in gardens, fruits, trees, shrubs and flowers, which the grateful mind may thankfully admire. In our way we made a call at Palmer's Green, where we met with refreshment acceptable to the weak body, and a yet more sweet and precious revival, in the fresh arising of that which strengthens the life of the soul. How incomprehensible to the careless, unwatchful, worldly spirit, is this unity, which is to be felt in the bond of peace! We were very kindly received under the roof of John Catchpool, with that plain, simple cordiality which gratifies what I esteem as some of my best feelings.

22nd. A day of unusual fatigue and exercise! L. Catchpool accompanied me, in their convenient little carriage, about ten miles, and we made seven calls. In this round, we met with a variety of character and outward circumstances; some scenes almost of poverty and distress, brought on through want of care, industry and prudence. Thus, when we will mix our own cup in life, we increase the bitters!

23rd. Called on a tender-spirited, pious man, not professing with our Society; he is afflicted with bodily weakness, though in the meridian of life; his wife and daughter were with us, and we had a sweet little season of favour together; in oneness of faith and of spirit, I believe. O, how precious is this! strangers to one another, dwelling far apart on earth, brought to acknowledge together the wonderful power of our God!

24th. A very small number give up their time, on these workings days, to assemble for worship. The meeting was to me, and I believe to the few present, a very precious time of fellowship with the faithful and simple-hearted, the world over; also of very tender compassion for those who rob their own souls of that chaste joy, of that lovely, gentle spirit of peace, which flows from the celestial Spring. Returned to Tottenham.

25th. Called on a widow and her son; it was a time of renewed favour; condescending Mercy, which continues to be ancient and new, tendered our hearts; and this, as I apprehend, is the daily bread that we are taught to pray for.

27th. A favoured morning at William Forster's. After the Scripture reading we were sensible of an impressive silence. Dear Hannah Kilham, who is now on the point of leaving her native country and dearest connections, for service in a strange land, and among strangers, expressed, in a very feeling and humble manner, that nothing short of confidence in her God could sustain her, in so painful and arduous an undertaking; and that gratitude clothed her heart toward those who had aided and encouraged her, whatever may be the result. We were all tendered and comforted together.

28th. First-day. In the morning meeting, I found relief, in the expression of my firm belief in Christ crucified, as the Reconciler of fallen man to the favour of God; that in Him, our glorified Saviour, we have redemption, and acceptance with the Father; and that there is no other foundation than this which is already laid, etc.

29th and 30th. Attended the quarterly meeting. Some were absent, on the account of the death of Mary Dudley; thus are we stripped, from time to time! Came to Clapham.

#### TO HANNAH EVANS.

*Clapham, Tenth month 6th, 1823.*

My dear Friend,

Thy love manifested in thy letter was never more acceptable. My almost continual prayer is, that our faith may not fail, even when blind and not discerning the Hand that guides. To be kept quiet, and still looking to the only sure Helper, stripped and wholly dependent, is a safe though humiliating state. There are times when we desire no other, than to be kept in our right allotments, however trying to our nature. Ah! we know, in our measure, that a glance of Divine approbation, a ray of a Saviour's love, makes up for all privations; for all that we can suffer, in this our pilgrimage. This is not our rest; we seek one to come; full, complete in Jesus, the resurrection, the life eternal, the light, where darkness cannot enter! As I awoke this morning, very low and weak, my mind in some perplexity as to my next steppings, and how I am to creep through the approaching winter, the name of Jesus seemed to arise with uncommon sweetness, and to bring with it a calm, in which I desire to

keep still, without attempting to “awake my Beloved, until He please.” It is consoling that I feel assured thou understandest this, and a great deal more than this, without my being more explicit.

In tender love subscribes thy friend,

—MARY CAPPER.

Tenth month 6th. Dined with Thomas Brewster; a friend in whose house I stayed a few weeks many years back, at Woodbridge, when his sister Hannah, afterwards Alexander, lived with him. His own family is now grown up. I felt constrained to refer to days past, and to commemorate the mercy that I trust has kept us, through many changes and many trials, on Christ, our hope of salvation; the Rock that standeth sure, in the midst of floods and storms! May we, with reverent gratitude, take courage and press on; not as having yet attained, but reaching forward to the mark!

8th. At Gracechurch street monthly meeting, my mind was much tried; we know not, at all times, the cause of secret trials and siftings. I do desire an increase of patient endurance. I expressed a little, but I know not why it is, I rarely obtain relief in meetings; yet I am not conscious of wilful omission or commission. I desire instruction day by day, that I may not err, nor hurt the right spirit in any; nor wound it in myself. O! it is a great thing to be kept in a humble and discerning mind.

9th. Hannah Messer read to us a remarkable account of a female, in a low station, at Yarmouth, who devotes some of her time to reading the Scriptures, and instructing the prisoners, etc. It is wonderful how much this individual has been enabled to do, in the reformation of those who have come under her care. She gains her own living by industrious labour, devoting one day in the week to her benevolent engagements.

12th. First-day. Wandsworth. I cherish the belief that our religious meetings, whether consisting of few or many, and whether times of silent exercise, of suffering humiliation, or of secret rejoicing, are to the sincere, times of pure instruction. In the afternoon meeting, I thought a little life arose among us, toward the close; we must ever bear in mind that this best good must be patiently waited for. From time to time, obstructions may arise; nevertheless if we faint not, there surely will be a rich reward.

15th. At Croydon meeting. A large proportion of young persons. An earnest solicitude is felt, that by this class in every denomination of Christian professors, Christ crucified for the sin of the world, may be believed in, and received in every heart, as a Saviour and a Redeemer; by the shedding of whose blood we are washed; and by whom, as the new and living Way, we have access to the Father. Dined with the widow of Frederic Smith; she seems to be waiting, in humility and faith, to be soon united to those, who, having passed through great tribulation, and had their garments washed white in the blood of the Lamb, are surrounding the throne, with palms in their hands.—Returned to Wandsworth.

16th. At meeting, on taking my seat, my spirit was clothed with solemnity, and if I may so say, entered into deep, secret exercise, on account of those who walk in a tribulated path, much unnoticed; it may be, unknown. This spiritual baptism seems to me, too little experienced, in these days of comparative ease; and dwelling as in ceiled houses, with gratification in outward display. But there are an afflicted few, with whom my heart seems to unite; and so I think it was this day, both in and out of meeting.

18th. Had a little friendly communication with the dear young people at Ann Masters's, also more privately with some of them, before taking leave; which I did under a sense of their kindness, and a desire to withhold nothing that I ought to make known to them. I believe that friendship would be truly valuable, and our mutual intercourse instructive, did we speak to, rather than of, one another.

19th, First-day. At Southwark meeting. O! how I did desire that we might not be a superficial people, nor be satisfied with a nominal religion, but that we might in sincerity, humility and earnestness, seek and find Jesus of Nazareth, the crucified Saviour of the world; the Redeemer and the Mediator, by whom alone we can draw near to the Father. O! this important truth; how it presses upon my spirit, in meetings and in many companies. I fear it is not sufficiently pondered in the heart.

22nd. At the Peel monthly meeting. The meeting for worship was, I thought, favoured with an encouraging evidence, that mercy is not withdrawn from us, as a Society; that the humble and dependent are, from time to time, spiritually strengthened. I mentioned my prospect of visiting families. My mind was favoured with freedom from anxiety as to the future.

26th, First-day, Dined in a family who profess with us, but no way opened for a religious visit; it was therefore perhaps the best I could do to be quiet; though I felt sad, and mourned over that indifference and dissipation which stifle the good that might arise. In the evening, I was in a very different family; there was ability to express, and openness to receive, what arose as counsel, caution or encouragement; and we were comforted together.

Eleventh month 2nd. First-day, Christ rejected was the awful subject of contemplation; and in unison with something similar, spoken by an exercised minister, the matter was farther enlarged upon, with the sincere desire that it might impress every mind.

3rd. A favoured time in a poor family; in the fresh sense of heavenly kindness being manifested without partiality, both to rich and poor. It was a time of prayer and contrition of heart.

4th. Though unwell, I thought it best to pursue the plan laid out; as I would rather suffer inconvenience than give trouble, or disappoint those who expect a call. Having to go a considerable distance to a poor family, and the wind being very boisterous, I was conveyed there. The mother and children were in waiting, and the father, a labouring man, soon came from his work. It is instructive thus to visit those who labour for their bread, and are honest, frugal and diligent. There seems a blessing upon these; and among them is granted a nearer access in prayer, than with those who live at ease, in their sumptuous

dwellings.

Twelfth month. 28th. A meeting was held for servants and apprentices employed in Friends' families. Allusion was made to the lowly birth, and to the example of the Lord of life and glory, who was, among men, as a servant; also to the exceeding great love of God, and to the forgiveness of sins, through the sacrifice of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the Sent of the Father; purifying our hearts from unrighteousness, by the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit.

Thus close my very slow movements through this monthly meeting, and a quiet assurance clothes my mind, so that I thankfully hope that no presumption or wilful negligence, has been permitted to take place. I desire to come under the searching Power that knoweth all things, and seeth me just as I am. I covet no false covering, nor any subterfuge.

30th. At the quarterly meeting, Sarah Grubb was led to speak, with wonderful power, against the Babylonish mixtures, in which, as a people, we are mournfully involved, at this day. We have faithful testimony bearers.

#### TO HANNAH EVANS.

*London, Twelfth month 30th, 1823.*

My endeared Friend,

How fares it with thee? It is long since I had a line from thee, but I feel assured that, thou wilt unite in my feelings of lowly thankfulness, when I tell thee that I have been mercifully led, in my solitary path of apprehended duty, to close the protracted engagement in the Peel meeting; the extent of the widely scattered families far exceeded my expectation. A meeting was held for servants, etc. which was well attended; and my secret hope is, that it was crowned with the presence of our dear Lord and Saviour, and that a measure of his precious power was over all. Thanksgiving and praise be rendered for his enduring mercy and condescending love, which is yet stretching forth the Shepherd's crook, to gather the wanderers to the one true fold. Farewell, my precious friend.

Thy attached,

—MARY CAPPER.

#### TO THE SAME.

*London, First month 2nd, 1824.*

My beloved Friend,

Thy affectionate salutation reached me, after I had dispatched my last to thee. I am now resting for a time with

my niece. I send thee my memorandums, which are scarcely worth perusal; I have considered myself as a little one, in leading-strings, mercifully kept from “wills and wonts,” from choosing or refusing; going forward or stopped by the way, just as my tender, watchful Leader opened the path before me. O! what shall I say of his mercy and condescension to one of the least of his flock! Let Him, the good and gracious Shepherd, be praised! Do not, my love, think thy honest dedication is unacceptable. O! that there were more, simple, dedicated, faithful servants, in all places. How would Zion’s borders be enlarged, spiritual strength increased, and those streams flow as a river, which make glad the heritage! Well! we must do whatever we can, and possess our souls in patience.

I dare not name a time for quitting this vicinity; when it arrives, it will be hailed as a favour. Thine,

—MARY CAPPER.

First month 1824. I am now favoured to partake of a peaceful calm, at my niece S. C.’s. Much spiritual enjoyment I look not for; many things obstruct the feeling of joy; but lowly peace, with the evidence of being kept by a gracious Lord, in a plain, simple path, is enough to satisfy the poor, exercised travailing soul.

13th. Visited Esther Whiting; she has long been in a tried state, and is nearly helpless; the earlier part of her life was passed in faithful service, in the family of my brother Jasper, and she now enjoys an annuity, from his liberality, which is some alleviation. Her mind is calm, and she expressed a desire to be patient, and to experience the operation of that redeeming, sanctifying Power which could prepare her to die in peaceful confidence in her Saviour’s love.

19th. First-day. Not without trials of faith and patience. Too few rightly prize the privilege of the time set apart for public worship. So lightly, or frivolously, are some minds occupied, that our meetings for worship are often oppressed; the light and life which might arise are pressed down, and we are not comforted together; nevertheless the humble, resigned and faithful ones may be encouraged still to wait and to hope for the renewal of their strength. I thought there was more life to be felt in the afternoon meeting, which ministered some encouragement.

21st. Accompanied Sarah Foster to Plaistow monthly meeting, whence Elizabeth Fry took me to Plashet, where a room was allotted to me, to pursue my own occupations, or join the family as best suited me. Their family party is large, and their dinner-hour late. I usually dined and took tea with the children, and joined the family in the evening. I endeavoured to be present at the morning reading of the Scriptures, which was mostly an impressive time. Sometimes I had the privilege of Elizabeth Fry’s company in my apartment; but almost every hour of her time is importantly occupied, in benevolent exertions for the poor and miserable; much depravity comes under her notice.

What should we do if the foundation on which a believer’s faith is built were not sure! but it is confirmed to us by the living Power that cannot fail; “the foundation of God standeth sure.” Rest, O my soul, in this;

although storms may arise. Ah! ye poor benighted sinners, may Light mercifully beam on your souls, and bring conviction for sin!

Second month 1st. First-day. Plashet cottage. I have, for about a week, been kindly cared for, in this calm, lovely retirement, the habitation of Joseph Fry's sister. I was a little relieved by some expression of my feelings, in meeting this morning; but alas! the anointing Power, the abiding sense of redeeming love, seems low; patient suffering is the lot of believers; resignation gently smoothes the way, and faith is an anchor to the soul in the day of trial.

3rd. The weather is now very fine and mild; the spring flowers open their cheering beauties, the little lambs are brought forth in the fields; these are interesting objects.

8th. First-day. The morning meeting was a time of close exercise, in exhorting and endeavouring to arouse the careless professors. O! that there was an awakening from a state of ease and deadness, as to the spiritual life! the afternoon meeting lively; the evening passed in a calm frame of mind.

11th. Was some hours alone with Sarah Sheppard; this was very sweet to me, as this dear friend, being very deaf, seems to dwell as in the closet of prayer, the door being shut. It was refreshing to sit with her, as with one who is preparing for a kingdom where all infirmities will be done away. I hope to remember with profit, the privilege of being admitted as a familiar friend under this roof. This dear friend employs herself industriously, in reading, in working for her numerous grandchildren, and in attending to abundant applications from the surrounding poor.

12th. Passed the day quietly, enjoying mutual communication and interesting reading at Edmund Fry's. These allowed intervals are to me gratifying, even in my present increased years; though not strongly bound to earth or earthly things, I have a pleasure in contemplating talents improved, inventive powers and genius rightly applied.

17th. At the monthly meeting I produced my certificate, and proposed going into the families of Ratcliff meeting. A feeling, humble-minded, valuable minister, Mary Marsh, expressed her unity, and her willingness to join me, which was acceptable to the meeting, and truly cordial to me.

19th. We had three sittings, in which we were favoured with an encouraging hope, that our engagement was under the direction of that Power which keepeth out of error.

22nd. First-day. I thought more solemnity and settlement of mind prevailed in the meeting, than in some where there is more expectation of outward ministry. A precious feeling clothed my spirit.

Third month 1st. We had several very interesting sittings, and may truly say, how various are the allotments of individuals and of families! We certainly see through a glass darkly, and can make but a very imperfect estimate how all things work together for good to those who love God.

5th. Great indeed is the variety which comes under the notice of those who thus go from house to house. Our Guide must be steadily kept in view, that we may not look on outward things and judge thereby.

10th, We hope to conclude our engagement this week. A desire daily clothes my spirit, that I may be led safely along; neither too much cast down, nor in any degree rising above the rightly directing gift of Grace!

11th. We took tea with Elizabeth Emerson, a valuable Friend in advanced life; of a tender spirit; encouraging to those who are younger and less experienced. We also had a time of entering into sympathy with a Friend and his wife who are in difficult circumstances. There are divers individuals and families, in the environs of this vast city, who are so situated as to claim tender care, and Christian notice.

12th. We were conveyed in a carriage, as far as it could safely go, and then walked, to the humble dwelling of a poor Friend; and while sitting with her, by her little fireside, I think we had afresh to believe, that the great Giver of all our mercies condescends to comfort those who seek Him, and who trust in Him. Among the hidden ones, the poor and the lonely, we have at times been refreshed together with what is far better than all that this world can give. We also visited a family, some of whom were not members of our Society; we met with a kind reception, particularly from the husband, whose mind is very susceptible of good impressions. It is not a name, neither is it forms, nor the relinquishing of outward forms, which can bring us into possession of the inward and spiritual grace. A new life, a spiritual creation, a death unto sin and a new birth unto righteousness, are the genuine effects of believing in Christ, of cherishing and obeying the teachings of his Spirit. We paid a very interesting visit to an old man in Trinity Almshouses, who had been a pilot in early life; he has a very neat, commodious, quiet retreat here. I think he married out of our Society. He is much respected, and his appearance is very striking; he is eighty years old, a fine, manly figure, with an animated countenance; he has long been painfully afflicted; yet he appears patient and contented, and manifested tenderness and feeling, with a grateful sense of the blessings continued to him. He expressed thankfulness that he was remembered and visited by Friends, whose meetings he attended, as long as his infirmities would allow.—In the evening, we sat down with Joseph Fry and family. There is a uniting power in religious fellowship, which diminishes not with time.—This brings us near the conclusion of our present engagement; no great things have been attempted; if we have been in the way of our duty, I believe we desire no more; a peaceful acquittal will be a sufficient recompense for our small labours.

14th. First-day. Low, but feeling no condemnation. I consider it a favour to walk in the valley of humility. At both meetings and in three religious opportunities, I thought the best life triumphed over human weakness.

15th. Dear Mary Marsh and I dined in Whitechapel, with the Friends who showed me so much kindness at Leamington. I parted with my kind, humble-minded companion, under comforting feelings.

17th. Attended the marriage of one of my dear nieces, and we dined at Clapton. The day was very fine, and all around was pleasant, with a calm cheerfulness becoming the occasion.

26th. Clapton. I have been resting here, in bodily weakness; this, under the sanctifying influence of heavenly Grace, maybe one of the means whereby a dependent mind is brought into subjection, humility and true resignation. Dear Esther Whiting's sufferings have now terminated; I went one day to see her; there was a sweet sense that heavenly Goodness was near, though the powers of nature were failing. May we seek the Lord, in the days of health and vigour, that He may be our support, when human aid is of no avail!

28th. First-day. I walked to Tottenham, and was favoured to receive spiritual refreshment. Dined with Tabitha Bevans and her sister. I thought we were united in that fellowship which flows from a belief in God, and in Jesus Christ, by whom we come to God.

29th. Attended the quarterly meeting of ministers and elders, and spent the rest of the day very pleasantly, with my dear sister Rebecca Tibbatts; it is satisfactory to see her comfortably settled with her son.

Fourth month 1st. On sitting down in the meetinghouse at Tottenham, after the interment of Esther Whiting, a precious feeling stayed my mind, in contemplating the kingdom where the redeemed of the Lord will forever unite in thanksgiving and in holy rejoicing.

2nd. Came to stay a few days at John Lister's, Stoke Newington, in order to call upon some of the few remaining here, with whom I was formerly acquainted.

3rd. In our calls, met with scenes of sorrow; saw William Allen's little grandson, bereaved of a young and lovely mother, and visited some young friends, whose parents are both deceased since I was last under the roof of my dear brother and sister in this place.

4th. First-day. Attended the meeting at Gracechurch-street. A day of some fatigue of body, and trial of mind. If in all things we are taught to profit, whether by a fresh sense of our own imperfections, or a sight of weakness in others where we did not expect it, it is no matter; instruction may remain for future benefit.

5th. Mary Lister called with me on Margaret Allen. She is reduced to a very weak state, yet there seems a lively sense and savour of that which is better than natural life; and my heart believes this will reign triumphant when the grave shall claim the poor, perishable body.

6th. My usual hour of rising is now six o'clock. The mornings are cold, but not unpleasant; a little turn in the garden, to observe the progress of Spring, in the vegetables and flowers, seems refreshing.

15th. Some time was very agreeably spent in reading extracts from the letters of Hannah Kilham and others, now benevolently engaged in the instruction of the natives of Africa, on the Gambia. These people

appear to be living in a disorderly state, far from enjoying domestic happiness. May such as are more favoured thankfully estimate their own privileges, and contribute to the instruction of others!

**TO HANNAH EVANS.**

*Clapham, Fourth month 17th, 1824.*

My beloved Friend,

I send some extracts from letters of Hannah Kilham, etc. I wish some liberal-minded Friends in the country, who devise liberal things, would read the reports, and find their hearts disposed to add their names to the subscribers, or transmit a donation. I think it would be a source of satisfaction, upon serious reflection, in days yet to come.

Never I think my endeared friend, did I more feel the force of the words, “rejoice with trembling.” Every returning day and hour brings some proof of weakness, some disclosure of what is hidden in the heart; unlooked for circumstances arise to ruffle or disturb us. O! how pure is that calm, that peace which descends from the Spirit of the Lord! How different from the spirit of the world, from unsanctified self, from the unsubdued natural temper! The state of my own heart leads to these reflections, and to the earnest prayer, that I may maintain the watch against the cruel enemy. Farewell, affectionately, my dear friend. Thine,

—MARY CAPPER.

17th. It renewedly impresses my mind, that when a family meet together in health and safety, to partake of the first morning refreshment, there is a propriety in a serious pause, and a grateful recurrence to the Source of all our daily mercies. I am satisfied that we cannot too frequently recollect, that every hour in the day, we have need of the extension of that Power, by which alone we can be kept from evil. We separated this day, from the breakfast table, I hope, under profitable impressions.

18th. First-day. A day of serious engagement. Oh! for an increase of spirituality, and more entire sanctification. My anchor of hope is in the Redeemer, to cleanse from all sin.

19th. Came to Clapton. The weather is mild, and the country beautiful, yet my spirit seems sad, and I am poorly; but I ever think it right to cherish a lively hope and consolation in the mercy of God, in graciously providing a Mediator, a Saviour! Without this hope, this consoling faith, what should I, what could I, do!

21st. In this young and growing family, there is ample subject of interest and serious occupation. I had a delightful walk with my young nephew, the eldest child.

22nd. Was gratified in walking, with a little party, to Tottenham meeting. Our long devoted and

experienced friend, Thomas Shillitoe, spoke with feeling and earnestness, on the subject of entire resignation, or subjection, to the will of our Heavenly Father; that its effects were peace. Probably few are better qualified to elucidate this subject; as his life seems devoted to the fulfilment of apprehended duty.

27th. Came to William Cawthorne's, at Somers Town, in Westminster quarter, this being the only meeting of our Society, near London, that I have not attended. I cherish the hope, that by and by, I may return, without any painful retrospect, to the enjoyment of my own home, and more select and endeared friends.

29th. The meeting proved to me a time of comfort, with a little fresh ability to encourage others to seek after the knowledge of God, and faith in Jesus Christ, as the Saviour, by and through whom we are redeemed and accepted.

Fifth month 10th. Left my kind friends at Somers Town; our separation was mutually felt, apprehending that we might thus meet no more, as dear William Cawthorne seems in declining health; patiently and even cheerfully bearing his bodily weakness and harassing cough.

17th. Yearly meeting of ministers and elders. Though many labourers in years past are now gathered to their final abode, there yet remains a faithful few. Among those who have seen many days, and kept close to that holy Power, which can keep us from fainting by the way; it was cheering to see William Grover, still active and useful; also James Howarth, etc.; and among the mothers, Mary Proud, Rebecca Byrd, etc.

19th. Women's yearly meeting. A full gathering, and something like a fresh evidence that we are still a people waiting on the Lord for his blessing.

20th, A testimony was read concerning James Birch. It set forth a character remarkable for simplicity; faithful to the Grace or Light of Christ manifested in the soul, which, as it is obeyed, will ever be found powerful to regulate throughout, and to sustain the soul in every conflict in life, and in the hour of death, as this dear Friend did experience. There was also a testimony respecting Elizabeth Foster.

I knew her in former years; she was of a lively turn of mind, which, at that day, almost revolted at the idea of the sufferings needful to subdue the will, and bring all into subjection; but the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit wrought the great change, and brought low all that was lifted up, or opposed to the cross of Christ. She could declare her experience of the marvellous mercy of God, in Christ Jesus, and she closed her day in peace.

In the afternoon an impressive testimony was read, setting forth the early dedication, exemplary life and peaceful death of Mary Hanbury, in her twenty-fifth year; the only child of William Allen. Many young minds seemed affected, and I thought the desire prevailed, that the purifying Word of power might do the same great work of sanctification for all of us. A precious time of stillness succeeded; and then a recommendation to be serious and retired in spirit, and earnest in watchfulness and prayer.

21st. Much was expressed, setting forth our faith in the Scripture doctrines, concerning the propitiatory Sacrifice, etc.

27th. Our honourable and aged friend, Mary Proud, was enabled, under much bodily weakness, in the strength afforded, to kneel, and powerfully to commend the keeping of our souls to the mighty power of a faithful Creator. The concluding minute was read, and after a solemn pause, we separated.

Sixth month 2nd. My sister Grace Capper conveyed me to Snaresbrook, to spend a few days at the beautiful country residence of my kind and much loved brother George; for whose uniform affection I feel very grateful.

5th. I think my dear brother seems rationally and thankfully to enjoy his house and grounds, on returning from business in the city. It is one of my gratifications, to find a thankful mind in the midst of worldly possessions and prosperity. His carriage brought me this day to Tottenham.

6th. First-day. Dined with Alice Chorley; a friend whose long-proved integrity, and plain, honest dealing and speaking, I do admire and respect.

7th. Favoured to feel the thankful hope, that I have not been forsaken, nor left to my own devices, in my solitary stoppings, in the course of which I have had many searchings of heart.

9th. At Gracechurch-street monthly meeting, I felt a concern to go into the men's meeting; G. Birkbeck kindly accompanied me. To myself, it was a very serious time; I endeavoured to open the view then given me of the purity of that life which is hid with Christ in God. I think I felt the awful import of the subject, and a sincere desire that I might not exceed in words.

#### TO HANNAH EVANS.

*London, Sixth month 10th, 1824.*

My very precious Friend,

I have often thought, since separated from thee, and thy dear sister Lamley, (both of you faithful testimony bearers whom I dearly love,) that vast is the difference between fine speaking and that humble, lowly, self-denying life, shown forth in the silent, persevering example of a meek, consistent walk, as in the presence of the Holy One. For myself and for others, I have been distressed and oppressed; I have had close provings and deep trials; but in abundant mercy, the thick cloud, is in degree, dispersed, and a renewed dawn of consolation and of confidence arises. That Divine Power which delivereth my life from destruction, again gently breaks forth. I note it with reverent gratitude.

—MARY CAPPER.

Sixth month 11th. Came to the house of my dear brother John, where I think of remaining a short time; and if permitted to leave this great city in lowly reverence and peace, and charity towards all the world, I think I shall be thankful.

14th. We had some sweet portions of reading after breakfast, and a silent desire arose to be strengthened to live and abide in the purifying, redeeming spirit of the Saviour. It seems a growing experience with me, that there are favoured seasons when a deep inward sense of the work of sanctification and redemption, seals the lips in solemn silence.

20th. First-day. Having made many calls last week, I attended the Peel meeting, and was enabled to express an affectionate farewell desire, that the love of God might increasingly abide in our hearts, in which love we should have fellowship one with another, when personally separated. My mind was comforted, and a lowly calm clothes my spirit. Dined at John Eliot's, who conveyed me to my brother's, where we passed the remainder of the evening in serious reading, etc. What a favour, that amid diversity of operations, a precious harmony prevails, where the Redeemer is believed in, and his Spirit owned, and permitted to work in us and for us; teaching to bear and forbear, in meekness and love.

21st. Several of my dear relations called on me, and we separated in much affection, which sweetened the parting, even if we should meet no more! Spent most of the day in calmly enjoying the company of my brother and sister and dear niece Selina.

22nd. After breakfast my heart was renewedly filled with a grateful sense of the merciful dealings of our Heavenly Father with us, as a family; that in our different situations in life, and modes of manifesting our religious faith, we all agree in the great, essential truth, that to know God and Jesus Christ, so as to obey, is life eternal. We had a solemn time together, I hope in the unity of the Spirit, which may yield us comfort and encouragement, at some future day. Accompanied by a kind friend, I left London in the afternoon, and travelled about twenty-four miles, to W. L.'s delightful habitation, near Berkhamstead. My mind is in a low, yet calm state; with serious recollection of affectionate relatives, etc.

#### TO HANNAH EVANS.

*Sixth month 23rd, 1824,*

My dear Friend,

Yesterday I really turned my back upon the great city of London, and was soon set down at this neat, little dwelling. The transition from smoke, dirt and noise, is very striking, but my spirits are low. I cannot suddenly rise above the deep feeling, left by a solemn parting from many near relatives; yet I am thankful in being able to say I am without painful accusations; and surely this is enough, in a world where offences will come, and where evil abounds on every hand.

Oh! it is a mercy to be permitted to return towards my own dear friends, even thus far; in a sound mind and in rather an improved slate of health, I do not puzzle much about the means of getting forward, as way has been marvellously made for me. I am now drawing nigh to the completion of every object I had in view when I left my home. I am humbled in the retrospect, and desire no higher joy than the peaceful assurance that the precious Truth, as it is in Jesus, has in no way suffered through me. Very affectionately,

—MARY CAPPER.

28th. Came to Banbury, where I was cordially received by J. and M. Gillett, who have removed from Shipstone. Attended the quarterly meeting of ministers and elders. William Byrd, his wife, and George Withy were there.

30th. The sight of my friends at Shipstone, where I attended meeting today, and their kind demonstration of affection, undiminished by long absence, was more affecting than I could well bear. Dined at dear Sarah Lamley's, at Tredington, and proceeded to Warwick, where I enjoyed the long desired gratification of seeing my very dear Christian friend and fellow traveller in this probationary state.

#### TO RICHARD AND ELIZABETH CADBURY

*Warwick, Seventh month 3rd, 1824.*

My dear Friends,

I was safely conveyed hither on fourth-day, and dear H. E. received me with cordial affection. She is looking worn and poorly; her dear sister, R. Lamley, is in a weak state, though somewhat revived. Her countenance is wonderfully bright; expressive, I think it may be said, of a spirit redeemed from evil; her conversation is sweetly innocent, about the place where angels dwell, although she thinks that a cloud veils these glorious things from her. Ah! it is precious to believe that this veil of human infirmity will, ere very long, be rent, and an entrance given into the everlasting city, where the Lord God and the Lamb are the light thereof My mind is calm; no distressing retrospect.

I trust I may safely say, I am satisfied with the secret evidence that my gracious Lord condemns me not. O! 'tis his favour that keeps in peace, resigned, and even thankful to be numbered among those who partake of the tribulations of the gospel, and who are, at times, permitted to rejoice in hope that consolations will more and more abound, letting patience have her perfect work. I could not manifest to my dear friends what I felt, at once more being permitted to see their faces. It was not insensibility; it was not diminished affection, or diminished interest in that which binds us as links in one chain. Do tell this to such of my dear friends as I might seem to overlook.

I have no evil tidings to report; whatever may be mingled in the cup of the true believer in the mercy of God

in Christ Jesus, all will be well; and in the end, life, light and glory will arise and shine forever! Farewell, dear friends.

Your affectionate friend and fellow-sojourner,

—MARY CAPPER.

Warwick, seventh month 11th. First-day, Many days have now passed over, in the sweet enjoyment of one another's company, as a little social band. Rebecca Lamley gradually gaining strength; her mind clothed with simplicity, gratitude and love: Sarah Lamley is also, at present, one of our favoured circle; for it is a favour to me to make one with the lowly, the poor in spirit, who desire to possess their souls in patience, and hold fast their integrity to the end. No joy is like unto having the evidence that the Lord is on our side!

12th. My dear friend Hannah Evans and I went to the county jail, having learned from our friend, E. Tatnall, that there were some female prisoners for whom she felt considerable solicitude; particularly one in very precarious health, who seems penitent. We were introduced to three in one ward. The poor young woman, specially alluded to, was sitting, decently dressed, in an arm-chair. It was truly affecting to see, within the walls of a prison, under locks and bars, a sister by creation, with the appearance of talents, and of delicacy above the common standard. They were all committed for a misdemeanour. Enduring Mercy, which penetrates even prison walls, yea! the strong hold of the hard heart, was, I do think, manifested, to the bowing of our spirits together, and the prostration of our souls in prayer. We went through all the female wards. In the afternoon I took an affectionate leave of my precious friends, and came to Birmingham, where I was cordially received at my ever kind friend's, Richard Cadbury's. Sweet thankfulness, in mercy clothes my spirit.

14th. I returned the certificate, granted me last year, for service in and about London; which, having endeavoured to perform to the best of my ability, I am favoured to return home in a thankful frame of mind; feeling, at times, something like the simplicity of a harmless child, with the approbation of a tender, reconciled Father. O! merciful condescension; with which no earthly possession or gratification can be compared.

#### TO HANNAH EVANS.

*Dale End, Seventh month 29th, 1824.*

My very kind Friend,

Thy last communication has been cheering to me; to learn that weakness and infirmities are borne with meek endurance and resignation, is precious, as a confirmation that heavenly help is nigh, even that power whereby

Divine Grace triumphs over human nature. Doubt it not, my Christian friends; I dare not question, or doubt it; "That which has helped us hitherto, will help us all our journey through." Naked faith, without claim of merit in ought that we can do is the anchor of my soul. O! what a mercy, in old age, to rest in redeeming love; a Saviour crucified! a Saviour glorified! May we happily be among those who centre here.

When thou seest E. Tatnall, my Christian love is to her, with the expression of the animating hope that she will be helped to hold on in well doing. I remember the poor female prisoners with very tender feeling.

Very affectionately, I subscribe,

—MARY CAPPER.

### TO R. AND S.

*Eleventh month 19th, 1824.*

My kind young Friends,

While I decorated my windows and little apartment with the yet remaining beauties of a rich and luxuriant summer, how could I do otherwise than think of the great, benevolent Power that liberally bestows, and fits the awakened mind to enjoy the outward blessings that surround us! Even in the smoky, dense atmosphere of active commerce, and busy streets, there are times of cheering reflection, and transient views of happier, purer scenes than we can now see. I am sometimes favoured to participate in a glimpse of that renovation, that new creation, wherein old things shall have passed away, and we, being born again, shall rejoice in the new heaven and the new earth.

Thus I thought of you, as your kind attention furnished me with the means of present gratification. The flowers are fresh and beautiful. Accept my very affectionate acknowledgment, and my heartfelt desire, that lowliness of mind, sweet peace, and assurance forever may crown all. With tenderness and love, I subscribe,

—MARY CAPPER.

### TO M. S.

*Birmingham, Eleventh month 29th, 1824.*

My long known and valued Friend,

Had thou and thy dear connections been much less in my remembrance than has really been the case, the receipt of thine would not have failed to revive the sincere love, the desire of my heart, for thee in years past; when I first saw thee in the simplicity of a schoolgirl, and in thy growing usefulness to thy precious mother, when she was stripped and bereaved. The after steppings which have marked thy life, so far as they have been known to me, have obtained my tender regard, and I may perhaps safely say, my Christian solicitude, that Grace, Mercy

and Truth may be magnified in and through thee.

Parental duties, etc. make a Christian's life serious and important. What, less than a Christian's own experience, can qualify a parent to "bring up a child in the way he should go?" It is pleasant to call to mind being with you; when, notwithstanding busy, moving scenes around me, activity in which it was not my personal concern to enter, I could enjoy interior quiet, cheerful calm, with a sense of goodwill toward every living creature; and I feel a persuasion, dear friends, that no lawful station, no honest pursuit, precludes from the love of God; and that, through this, all the toils, the lawful cares, and the troubles of human life, may work together for instruction, correction, and perfecting the Divine Will.

When, or if ever, I may again fill the well-remembered corner chair, time must unfold; as yet I have no glimpse of it; nevertheless my love remains undiminished. In tender affection,

—MARY CAPPER.

*P. S.* I wish to have my Christian love expressed to \_\_\_\_\_. It is a great mercy to be kept, by the power of God, steadfast and without wavering, as to the object of our faith, through all the trials of our probationary state, to be abased, to suffer want, and sometimes to witness Grace to abound, and in all things to be instructed, to be humble, contrited, thoroughly sensible of our dependent state, at all times, and on all occasions. This is mercy! all mercy!

## Chapter XI

*Account of her last journey with certificate, as a minister—Concluding extracts from her diary.*

### TO HANNAH EVANS.

*Bromyard, Second month 11th, 1825.*

My much loved Friend,

Thou knowest that I may be reckoned among those who see but a very little way before them, scarcely knowing what an hour may bring forth. Desirous, I hope I am, to possess my soul in patience, and to be found watching when our Lord cometh. However weak, poor, and unworthy to be esteemed a servant, my heart's desire is to be made willing, without unavailing hesitation, to do the Master's will, to the best of my understanding and ability; if I err, when thus simply surrendered and dedicated, the stripes will be few and gentle.

On receiving the alarming intelligence of Thomas Hughes's illness, it almost immediately sprang in my mind that I should go to Bromyard. In a prudent point of view, it seemed unlikely, and I said little about it; but the

event, the death of a young man, who had for years considered me as an adopted mother, and for whom I had felt the solicitude and affection of a relative, seemed so decisive, that I did believe it required of me to look beyond bodily infirmities, fears and discouragements, Richard Cadbury, like a kind friend, and sympathizing brother, offered to accompany me, which was a truly acceptable relief, and the journey was performed with less fatigue than could have been expected. The interment took place the following morning. The attendance was large. My long-suspended voice was restored, when on my knees, in the act of prayer. I remain but weakly. Farewell, affectionately,

—MARY CAPPER.

### TO RICHARD AND ELIZABETH CADBURY

*Second month 17th. 1825.*

My dear Friends,

I came safely to Leominster, in improved health, though still in a weak state, but I do not feel condemnation for making the effort. I have, before this day, found that when the mind is weightily impressed, and we can calmly look beyond surmise and doubt, for help and direction, there is a strength equal to the day. My heart's desire is to live close to this Power, in deep humility, at all times and under every dispensation. My low seasons are doubtless profitable, and I desire an increase of every Christian virtue, to the praise of my Redeemer and Lord.

I am well satisfied with having spent a few days at Bromyard, under the roof of my much valued young friend. I felt the settled assurance that all was well with him, and that there was mercy in the dispensation, unseen by mortal eye. It was gratifying to learn the general estimation of his character for industry, integrity and benevolence; also as a consistent member of our religious Society; prompt and useful in the station where his lot was cast; unassuming and exemplary. 'Tis consoling to those who loved him to contemplate his meridian sun thus set in brightness. My love is to you all, affectionately,

—MARY CAPPER.

### TO M. S.

*Birmingham, Third month 23rd, 1825.*

My kind Friend,

I think we parted under reciprocal feelings; my spirits were rather below their usual key, so that the beauty of the bright sunshine did not cheer me, and I thought I left thee in perplexity. It was not in my power to help thee, though fellow feeling may not be altogether useless. I believe there is individual profit in it; as far as respects myself, my mind is humbled, and my spirit tendered, in feeling with the tried and the afflicted ones. The ways of Providence are a great deep; we cannot do better than submit, in reverence, as dependent beings, who see

through a glass darkly.

I was very pleasantly received; my apartments clean and delightfully comfortable, though surrounded by smoke, dirt and noise without; but there is a favoured retreat wherein outward disturbances cannot enter. This is the secret place, where my spirit strives to enter and abide.

—MARY CAPPER.

**TO HANNAH EVANS.**

*Birmingham, Fifth month 2nd, 1825.*

My beloved Friend,

My appetite and strength continue very weak; but what shall I say of the mercy, the goodness and heavenly kindness shed round about me! The envious power of the evil one seems rebuked, and not a thought has troubled me. It is the Lord's doing; and O! may patience and resignation still be granted.

I am sorry thou art suffering from various causes; but thy mighty Helper, in whom is thy trust, will never leave nor forsake thee. All thy troubles will, ere long, be taken from thee, or thou from them. My dear love to thy sister, and to your faithful Mary. Hannah Simms is a great blessing to me; I consider her as the servant granted to my fervent prayers.

Thy affectionate friend,

—MARY CAPPER.

**TO HANNAH EVANS.**

*Fifth month 12th, 1825.*

My tender Friend,

I have been once out, but the exertion is rather too much at present, as I walk very feebly; my spirits are lively as ever, and I do not pass my days idly. It seems desirable to set many of my little concerns in order, as I wish as little trouble as may be to those who survive me. I consider my present restoration among the Lord's gracious dealings toward me; and I am content; yea! I ought to be very grateful, very humble, and resigned either to life or death.

Thy affectionate,

—MARY CAPPER.

## TO M. S.

*Birmingham, Fifth month 17th, 1825.*

My dear Friend,

Among other kind friends, thou hast manifested a tender solicitude in the time of my weakness. I believe the great reduction of my strength occasioned some serious apprehension, but it has pleased that great Almighty Power, in whom is my confidence and hope, again to revive, and daily to recruit my poor frame, for the great end of farther sanctification. The days of my pilgrimage I consider as not a few; and though I have seen and felt much evil, nevertheless my quickened spirit can often praise the Lord my Redeemer, and speak well of his name. His Light and Love is revealed in the heart, and being obeyed, there is understanding given, to walk in the way that leads to pure peace, putting to silence all unavailing speculations, doubts, and perplexities, which disturb the wavering mind. Sweet is such a foretaste of rest, prepared for the people of God; of every age, nation and denomination, who are brought to receive the heavenly gift of the kingdom, as docile children; in no wise presuming to question. Why is it thus? The Almighty Power can work this subjection in the heart; for marvellous is the power of redeeming Love! Seek after it, my dear friend.

—MARY CAPPER.

## TO KATHARINE BACKHOUSE

*Birmingham, Eleventh month 7th, 1825.*

I have but little to say of my movements; my secular concerns are few. I have food and raiment convenient for me. O! I have comforts befitting old age; a cheerful fire, a good bed, etc. all that my drooping nature wants! My bodily health continues beyond what might be expected; my mind—O! here is the marvellous mercy! my mind is kept lowly, calm and content; though daily in the exercise of faith and patience. I have been much from home; some little engagement, one way or other, has claimed my attention, and a willing mind has been granted. However small, if any, the service, peace and love have been the unmerited, free reward; and again I retire, as for an uncertain period, to wait, and to be ready, come whatever may come.

—MARY CAPPER.

## TO HANNAH EVANS.

*Birmingham, Eleventh month 18th, 1825.*

My beloved Friend,

Ere thou receivest this, thou wilt probably have heard of the death of S. Burlingham's amiable wife; the interment to take place on first-day afternoon. If thy bodily ability permit, I think our tender regard and sympathy would not admit of hesitation to meet in the scene of sorrow.

I am not very well, yet I dare not get from under the solemn pressure on my spirit. Ease and quiet seem desirable, but no outward consideration can come in competition with the little sacrifices we can make, in endeavouring to fulfill our apprehended duties, whether active or passive. I very often think, my dear friend, of thy comparatively solitary, patient, enduring exercise, and unfeigned solicitude for the increase of righteousness. Thy secret wrestlings and earnest prayers, in the silence of all flesh, I do not, cannot doubt, are as acceptable as the obvious, active services, where something of self may be intermingled, sometimes I have thought more availing.

In heart-humbling feelings on my own account, and endearing love to thee, I subscribe,

—MARY CAPPER.

### TO HANNAH EVANS.

*Birmingham, Third month 7th, 1826.*

My affectionately and truly-interested fellow traveller in a path hidden from human view, and with which the worldly selfish spirit has no fellowship! Thy feelingly communicated letter of sympathy, it is almost needless for me to say, is as a refreshing stream, proceeding from the inexhaustible Fountain, that sends forth its pure water, far and wide, into the low valleys and thirsty ground. Much as I have been reduced, in body and in mind, I am satisfied with the lowly calm that is afforded, and in which I feel no discouragement, but am ready to say, It is enough. Yet I feel a solemn seriousness, in the view of opening my concern to my friends tomorrow at our monthly meeting. I have had a little conference with my dear friend Rachel Lloyd, whom I esteem as a worthy elder and mother in the church. Though, my beloved friend, I perhaps know but little of the peculiar circumstances that are now permitted to try thy faith, yet can I, dare I, doubt the sufficiency of that Almighty Power that has been with thee all thy life long? Did not Mercy watch over our childish days, and the yet more dangerous years of youth, when vivacity and inexperience led towards evil, which might have embittered our growing years? This Mercy follows us still; it is our hope and stay to this day; our all in all!

8th. A certificate is ordered to be brought to our next monthly meeting for me, as friends have expressed unity with my prospect; so far, my spirit seems relieved. In precious fellowship with thee, my dear friend, farewell!

—MARY CAPPER.

### TO KATHARINE BACKHOUSE

*Birmingham, Third month 11th, 1826.*

Increase of years wears down the powers of nature, but sometimes I marvel at the activity of my little, weakly frame; shaken as it has frequently been, through the long space of seventy years! and, even now, I seem like a child beginning to learn the perfect will concerning me. Sometimes light arises out of darkness,

and simple dedication, with the little strength that I have, seems the way to obtain peace. Thus, after a time of much reduction of mind and body, with a little revival of strength, a prospect, which I have had at times for some years, has revived; to visit the meetings and families of Friends in Derbyshire, Notts, and some parts of Leicestershire. The undertaking seems great; I have indeed felt it so; almost enough to overwhelm my weak powers; but I am not my own, and the time draws on when all sacrifices will be over, and redeeming Love be all in all! The unity of my friends is helpful to me.

I have received a very satisfactory account of the calm and favoured close of dear Sylvanus Bevan, the son of my late precious niece. O! the mercy which, in youthful days, as in old age, is the crown at the end. Who can desire human life, when redemption is complete? My accommodations, I know, are not altogether what some of my liberal friends desire; and some things there are, not very agreeable; but my dear niece, here I am, with food and raiment, a faithful servant, etc. etc. quietness within my walls! and what can I expect better, should I attempt, in my own will, to make a change? Such things as are not to my mind, I desire my mind may be brought to bear, and that I may be thankful.

—MARY CAPPER.

#### TO HANNAH EVANS.

*Birmingham, Third month 26th, 1826.*

My endeared Friend,

It is a precious privilege to have spiritual unity, and secret fellowship, in hidden trials and provings of faith. Christian pilgrims have their sufferings; how else should they be disciples of a crucified Lord? and if we look around, on those who turn their back upon spiritual sorrows, is there any trouble like unto worldly sorrow? wave upon wave, a troubled sea! and no powerful Word, to speak. Peace, be still! Every tender feeling within us may compassionate the various sufferers of this day; the monied men, the manufacturer, and the labourer, are all involved in the present far-spreading dismay.

—MARY CAPPER.

1826. Fourth month 15th. Arrived at Sarah Fox's, Nottingham.

18th. The quarterly meeting large; a considerable number of serious Friends; though, as in other places, the deeply experienced fathers and mothers are but few. A rising generation must learn for themselves to sit at the feet of Jesus, and be taught in the way of the cross.

20th. My very kind friend, E. Cadbury, left me; I feel the privation, being now alone, among almost strangers, though friends are very kind. Sarah Fox, the mistress of this family, is very delicate, and mostly confined up stairs just now; but there are young persons in the household, who are very active

and affectionate.

26th. Privileged with a shelter within doors, from the rain. Those who are to be visited are so kind as to come to me. I feel weak and poorly; but wonderful in my view, is the daily covering of Christian good-will, which condescending mercy spreads abroad, in the midst of my poverty of spirit. I hope I am in my right allotment in this place, and that I may be, in my measure, instrumental to stir up the pure mind in the followers of Jesus. Took tea with J. Armitage and his wife; surely it is for my own instruction that I am brought among these friends.

29th. Sat with two sisters in declining years; I thought the quickening life or power seemed at the lowest ebb that I had known, in retirement of this kind, since I came here. A young man afterwards sat down with me, and I believe something arose like life answering to life. This is marvellous! when light is thus permitted to shine out of darkness. In the evening, sat with a family, in solemn, quiet waiting for the renewed revelation of the light and life of Christ in the soul. O! how different this from lifeless form, or any outward dependence! how pure the desire to acquaint ourselves with that great and glorious Power that worked out our salvation, in us and for us! Yea! how chastened are our sorrows, how subdued our anxieties, our every trouble and care, when we can be truly resigned to the will of Him who ruleth over all, and doeth all things well! This little season has left a sweet savour.

30th. First-day. Before I rose, a grateful sense of past favours contrited my spirit, and raised the secret prayer, that the unseen but sustaining Arm may continue to direct my steps; that no presumption, no unwatchfulness, no neglect of prayer, may be permitted to misguide or delude me. When we met, in our little circle, to breakfast, there seemed a remaining dew, after a time of refreshing; and we had again a sweet token that the Lord's mercies are new, every morning. Our more public gathering for worship was, I hope, a spiritual benefit to some; but the want of united diligence, and inward watchfulness, for the arising of light, of life, and of prayer, is surely a hindrance from that approach unto God, which the quickened soul thirsts after.

## TO E. L.

*Fifth month, 1826.*

“O! Thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come!” All have need of prayer. “If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, I will hear from heaven and forgive!”

Jesus, the Saviour, though without sin, prayed oft-times, as we read in the Scriptures; He enjoined his disciples, and all that believe in, and follow Him, to watch and pray, that they enter not into temptation. The Spirit of the Lord teacheth us to pray as we ought, though words may not be spoken.

Fifth month 7th. First-day. At both meetings. With reverence I record it! my spirit was clothed with lowly dependence on that Power whence all our sure mercies come; and again I thought a ray of light mildly shone out of darkness, and I saw that it was good to be patient under humiliation, wherein a willingness is wrought in us to suffer with those, who, in their several stations in the spiritual family, are labouring for the fresh arising of life and power in our meetings. As we are a people who profess to have no dependence on outward ministrations, we, above all other Christians, have need to cherish the spirit of prayer, and an inward, reverent waiting for the renewal of our faith, and for ability to worship aright, and to walk worthy of our profession from day to day; otherwise our meetings are dull, heavy and vain pretensions.

11th. I thought the meeting was favoured with the overshadowing of that mercy which is ancient and new; but here, as in other places, there are comparatively few who make the necessary sacrifices to attend these religious meetings in the middle of the week; of course, there is a great individual loss of that spiritual consolation which would renew the best.

13th. Fervently prayed to be kept in the path of duty, humble and simple-hearted, in no way presuming upon what I may think I know, or ever have known.—Paid a visit to an aged man, in very precarious health, yet cleaving to life; his earthly possessions, it is to be feared, are somewhat like chains, which fetter the spirit. O! I hope these bonds may be loosed.

15th. As my weak frame needs rest, I was conveyed about three miles, to S. R.'s, in a small, quiet village. The country is beautiful, but it is a cold, backward spring.

17th. Surrounded, in this peaceful spot, with rural sounds, and simple variety, my health seems to recruit a little.

19th. Having had about sixty sittings, it presses upon my mind to have a meeting with servants who live in Friends' families.

20th. Mentioned the subject to some friends, and nothing discouraging arose; but it ever seems a serious thing to gather an assemblage together. I desire to keep lowly, and fearful, lest in any wise, I should do evil. Surely I do wrestle in prayer, as far as I can understand what this means; I do supplicate, on the bended knees of my body, and in prostration of all within me, that fatherly compassion and mercy may keep me from error, and presumption, in thought, word and deed! I have no might or wisdom of my own.

21st. First-day. A large gathering. Love to souls, in the offers of redemption from the bondage of sin, and of sanctification, with access to the Throne of Mercy, by Christ, the new and living Way to the Father, was a little opened; and counsel given to servants to be faithful in their different stations, not as eye-servants; with some encouragement, to the sufferers in the troubles of the present times, to endeavour after patient

submission; and that there may be a serious search, how far any had lightly esteemed the Lord's mercies, in a day of comparative prosperity. It may be, these very things which seem against us, may eventually work for good. I thought the meeting closed with solemnity.

23rd. Walked a considerable distance, to visit a poor family; I found the mother, an aged Friend, with two daughters, in a small room, all that they had, except a shop below it; they were washing. On entering this little dwelling, I thought there was a sweet consoling evidence that the Son of Peace was there; more precious than the odour of rich perfumes, or than the rare curiosities which adorn the apartments of the affluent. I was thankful, and well repaid for bodily toil.

24th. Early occupied in serious consideration. O! who can set forth the secret ponderings of a heart, quickened with desire to know God, and to obey his will, concerning the rational creation which He has formed, to fill the right place and allotted station therein! May the Spirit help my infirmities! that I may ask aright for wisdom and understanding in the things belonging to salvation. Surely I do wrestle for the heavenly Gift, that leadeth into all truth, as it is in Jesus! not trusting to my own poor comprehension, which sometimes troubles and perplexes me, with what comes to the outward ear; nevertheless I dare not but rely on the mercy which kept me in my youthful days, from time to time manifesting a glimpse of the incomparable beauty of holiness; I dare not doubt the gracious design to complete the work of sanctification and redemption.

29th. First-day. At the morning meeting, my mind was under an unusual sense of distress, comparable to a thick dark cloud, obstructing the strong consolations that are in the faith, and the truth, as it is in Jesus the Redeemer, the atoning sacrifice, according to the Scriptures, which record my heart believes in and I can, at times, joy and rejoice with full confidence in this salvation, for my own soul and for the souls of all who are reconciled to God the Father, through the mediatorial offering of Christ Jesus, his Son. This dark and distressing feeling in measure passed by, as in much brokenness of spirit, and in the ability given, I spread it before those present; expressing my desire that, if any tender mind might be thus tried by the assaults of Satan, such might, with me, be fervent in prayer, until we had an evidence that our Lord rebuked the evil spirit, and in mercy, strengthened and increased our faith. In the evening, at the house of a friend, the same subject presented itself; my mind was brought into deep sympathy with the inexperienced who might be so tried; and counsel was given to be still, and to wait in humility and reverent silence, upon God, that He might be pleased more fully to open the spiritual understanding; that He might reveal his will in us, and give us the knowledge of the Son, by whom we have access to the throne of Grace, with Christian boldness. I have a lowly confidence that God the Father does and will teach his humble obedient, praying children, by his Spirit in their hearts; that He will deliver out of spiritual distress, when we are simple enough to trust in Him, without bewildering ourselves with the notions and opinions that are abroad in the world; and if we cannot contend, or give strong reasons, for our faith in Christ, I believe, that if we are willing in our measure to suffer for him, we shall in due time reign or triumph over his enemies and ours.

I accompanied a religious neighbour this day, to visit the poor women in the House of Correction; about twenty sat down with us. I was affected at the youthful appearance of some; their indiscretion, with its consequences, was set before them, and supplication offered on their behalf. We afterwards went in the town jail; I only saw the women, and I thought they were not past feeling. We returned from this little visit of Christian charity, not dissatisfied. There is a committee of females who visit these houses of confinement, to read the Scriptures, etc.

30th. At the monthly meeting, I was engaged to set forth what had appeared to me comparable to bonds and fetters, keeping the pure Spirit from arising into dominion. My spirits remain oppressed, and lowliness of mind is my portion; though I feel no condemnation, which I consider a special favour. All I ask is a peaceful acquittal, in having endeavoured to do what I could; the effect I would humbly leave, even when sadness may be my portion.

31st. Took leave of this kind family, from whose servants, as well as themselves, I have received much attention. Mary Armitage accompanied me to Mansfield, where I was kindly received.

Sixth month 2nd. One of my young friends accompanied me to the almshouses; six occupied by Friends, and six by females not of our Society. "A place for everything, and everything in its place" seems here exemplified; and that but little room is actually needful, where there is good order. All was neat and clean; and I thought I could live, content and thankful, in such a spot, with the love of God, and a sense of his mercy in Christ Jesus.

4th. First-day. In the meetings, painful apprehensions arose that some were not humble enough; that they had notions and ways of their own choosing; disputations and cavils about Scripture doctrines, and the simple testimonies of experienced Christians, who declare the Truth as it is in Jesus, When thus tried, it is well to wait till discernment is granted, so as to divide the word aright. I hope seasonable caution and counsel were feelingly delivered. I took tea with a dear old Friend, and we had a refreshing time together. The spirit of prayer seemed to be poured forth; now that I am retired to my chamber, the close of the evening, in the outward, appears beautiful; the setting sun is bright, and all around is calm; nature is clothed in tints of glory and loveliness. O! for such a final close, spiritually, when the soul shall quit these changing scenes.

6th. The monthly meeting was a time of favour; we should learn to be humble and patient in times of distress, for such times are occasionally brought upon the Christian.

7th. Had the gratification of seeing my nephew and niece Backhouse, on their way from the yearly meeting, with their daughters, the interview was precious though short.

8th. Took tea with one of the Friends at the almshouses; these little, neat, quiet dwellings and humble inhabitants, seem peculiarly suited to my present frame of spirit. Godliness with contentment truly is great gain. Most of the inmates appear to prize their happy lot, and to live in peace and good will,

assisting one another, as need requires, in sickness, etc. I called on two infirm, afflicted women, not members of our Society; one of them had kept her bed for two years. This dear old disciple spoke, with tenderness of spirit, of mercies in the midst of long continued helplessness and pain, and said she would not exchange her situation with the young, the healthy, and the thoughtless; her firm belief was, that when the right time came, her Lord would take her unto Himself. Another poor woman appeared patient under much suffering, and expressed her desire to be resigned to her good Master's will. He being very merciful, and comforting her. This confirmed me in the belief that the God of consolation is with the poor, in their solitary dwellings. This charitable institution is a noble instance of liberality; having been built and endowed by a townswoman, who had accumulated property by keeping an inn, and having often entertained Quakers at her house, she generously provided for some of the poor among them; she likewise appointed members of our Society as Trustees.

13th. Sat with this interesting family. A caution to avoid disputation on Scripture doctrines was affectionately expressed. This caution has arisen in my mind from place to place, and I have no reason to think that my plain admonitions have given offence; whatever may be the notions which prevail, or may in future prevail, this must be left to a superior controlling Power.

14th. I think I have endeavoured to fill up my little services here, and that I may be favoured to depart in peace; a reward sufficient to satisfy.

15th. My kind friends conveyed me to Chesterfield, and left me under the kind care of A. Storrs.

18th. First-day. Scarcely twenty at meeting. It is consoling to have the gracious promise fulfilled that, where two or three are gathered in the name of Jesus, they witness Him to be in the midst, as their Teacher.

20th. The quarterly meeting fully attended, and much seriousness prevailed. After parting with our friends, I felt desirous of proceeding with the family-visit, and I went to dine with two valuable Friends, William and Rachel Brantingham, who are in the station of elders. We took tea at their married daughter's. I hope there are good desires in their hearts; with the young, there must be time for the bud, the blossom and the fruit. With watchfulness and prayer the work will go forward.

22nd. The few who did not neglect the usual meeting were refreshed; to me it was comparable to a cordial drop of Gilead's balm; a short but precious time!

23rd. Had an opportunity of communicating some caution and encouragement, from my own experience, to a young man who has joined our Society. After we have tasted that the Lord is gracious, the injunction remains. Watch and pray!—I was favoured with ability, this evening, vocally to ask for preservation from all that can harm, in declining years, when weakness and infirmity may increase. I asked not from a sense of desert or worthiness, but that fatherly compassion and mercy might crown our last days.

25th. First-day. William and Martha Smith, who arrived yesterday, expressed their grateful sense that heavenly Goodness was near, in our little gathering, this morning. In the afternoon, we had the company of a considerable number of serious persons, who had been invited to sit with us. Strength was given to point out the difference between mere profession with the lip and tongue, and that conversion or change of heart, wrought by the Holy Spirit revealed in the soul. It is not enough to confess that Christ died for sinners; we must receive Him, and own Him by obedience, as a Saviour, a Redeemer from sin, and a Leader into all righteousness.

27th. Arrived at the house of Joseph Wooley, a pleasant situation at the extremity of the extensive village of Blyth.

28th. A long dry season, and a fervid sun, seem to cause considerable languor in animal and vegetable nature. I walked into the village, and sat down with a widow and her son, in a cool, retired room. I felt comforted in the time of waiting on the Lord together; and again I am confirmed in the belief, that it is good for us thus to visit one another, under the gently constraining influence of Christian love, something like iron sharpening iron.

30th. Mary Dudley mentions, in her journal, a medical man who behaved with great kindness; he sent a post-chaise four miles for us, and received us very hospitably at Bawtry. On my intimating a desire to sit down with the family, every arrangement was willingly made. Servants and inmates came, and all seemed serious. The landlady of the Crown, who gratefully remembered Mary Dudley, also joined us; and I believe the sweet influence of our Heavenly Father's love was felt among us. It is this alone that can do us any abiding good! it is the fresh sense of this that comforts my heart, renews my faith, and encourages me to hold on my way.

Seventh month 1st. A day of some rest, grateful to body and mind. My lot is in a kind, amiable family; the daily care of little children, and the well-regulated exertions of parents, may evidently be so ordered as to harmonise a whole family, and to cultivate that watchful frame of spirit which manifests our dependence on a superior Power to teach and guide us; a Power that keeps us from evil, and promotes a sweet union and affectionate accordance, when met in families or social companies.

2nd. First-day. In the evening, the neighbours having been invited, a large number came. I was particularly impressed with the serious countenances of the men, who mostly seemed of the class of labourers. Help was given to declare our belief in the doctrines and testimonies of Holy Scripture, concerning the birth, crucifixion, and resurrection of the promised Messiah, the Saviour, and the propitiation for the sins of the world, the Sent of the Father, to redeem those who believe in Him, and who, through his grace, forsake their sins. The gathering separated seriously, and thus, once more, my spirit was relieved.

4th. At the monthly meeting it was a satisfaction to see the discipline of the Society conducted with so much good order, where there were so few.

6th. At meeting, at Chesterfield, I thought a sweet refreshing silence did us good.

7th. William and Rachel Brantingham accompanied me to Ebenezer Bowman's, at One Ash, a remarkably secluded spot, surrounded by the diversified wonders of nature; the hills, the dales, and the caverns afford ample scope for entertainment and instruction; this is in what is called the Peak country. Although other views occupy my mind, I cannot but see and admire the beauties of nature.

8th. Another day brings fresh desire to proceed in my engagement. Some of the more remote places, and difficult of access, seem to remain, and my strength is small; but I hope for renewed help.

9th. First-day. Attended the meeting at Mony-ash. The villagers having been invited to come in the evening, the meetinghouse was filled with a quiet company. I felt thankful in believing that there was a right sense of that which alone can do our immortal spirits good,—the love of God in Christ.

10th. The Friends here are very tenderly considerate and kind. In the afternoon, Ebenezer Bowman conveyed me to Bakewell.

11th. Friends rose early, and we set out, some on horseback, and others in carriages, to attend the monthly meeting, held at the Bridge Inn, Matlock, about eight miles off; the road is fine and the country beautiful. I thought the meeting was a time of encouragement, and of tender feeling with one another, in our different allotments. If I am but kept in reverence and godly fear, filling up my appointed duties, doing neither more nor less than is required, and acting under Divine teaching and power, it is enough; this is the daily concern of my heart, at home and abroad.

We were somewhat disturbed by a noisy, indecorous party of young people; and as they sat with the door open, I just stepped in and civilly asked if they would give me leave to offer a few tracts. They were civil in return, answering, "Yes! surely;" but they appeared young and thoughtless. I spoke a few words seriously to them, to which they listened with attention, and they were afterwards more quiet in their behaviour. On our leaving the inn, I observed some of them reading; possibly a little hint dropped, even to the giddy, under feelings of tender compassion, may not be altogether lost.

12th. Visited a humble cottage, where a Friend keeps a little school for the village children, some miles from Bakewell. This Friend has made a large collection of the spars and minerals which abound in the neighbourhood, and he kindly gave me some specimens. I left this little solitary family with the conviction that heavenly kindness is spread abroad, in a way not to be circumscribed by our limited apprehension. Came to One Ash, in what seemed to me a boisterous blast, but what is here considered a refreshing breeze. Very diversified are our local situations and our habits. There is instruction in all.

13th. Two female Friends, travelling with certificates, arrived late, with their guides; an addition of four, besides their horses.

15th. After the Scripture reading this morning, a reviving sense of mercy and goodness being near, shed a precious feeling over us, to which L. S. bore her testimony. I ventured to inform E. Bowman that a tender feeling toward the servants employed both in in-door and outdoor business, induced me to inquire if it would be easy to collect them, which I left under his consideration. A poor woman walked five miles, in order to have an opportunity of sitting in religious retirement with us.

16th. First-day. This morning the servants were collected, and we sat down about fourteen in number. The universal love of our heavenly Father, who created all for glory, and is calling to virtue, revealing the Spirit of Christ, as a light, and a leader out of darkness and ignorance, was spoken of. After attending meeting, on my preparing to leave this kind family, I was peculiarly comforted, cheered and encouraged, by E. Bowman and his wife proposing to accompany and convey me, from place to place, through their borders.—We travelled slowly along together, making divers visits, till we came to Thomas Howitt's, at Heanor.

21st. The chapter in the Scriptures which was read in the morning, was succeeded by a solemn pause, during which the truths that we had heard seemed to open a view of the awful effects of disobedience, hardness of heart, and unbelief, from whence proceed all imaginable wickedness and deeds of darkness; turning from this dismaying scene to where Light, Life, and Mercy shine, and are followed by acts of obedience, how cheering, how consoling is the hope set before us! We came on to Derby, having visited the scattered families of Friends, upon the way from One Ash, in their solitary dwellings.

22nd. A day of weakness, but I cherish the hope that all which may seem against us, may work together for the furtherance of our faith, etc. Just now, I seem entirely ignorant as to my future movements, though I can see no way of escape without going into the families of Friends here.

24th. I have an affectionate invitation from Susan Greaves, of Stanton; also one from S. F. Church, teacher in the Moravian Congregation at Ockbrook. I feel grateful for this Christian attention, and disposed to accede to their wishes; but other engagements are now in view. Came to Castle Donington,

25th. Several Friends came from Nottingham to the monthly meeting. I believe it was mutually gratifying to see each other; and it was a yet greater favour to experience the renewed evidence of a Redeemer's love, by which the lowly-minded were refreshed and comforted, on their pilgrimage to the promised land.

29th. I may thankfully say, I have been helped every way, as occasion required; and I consider as a peculiar favour, the calmness which clothes my mind. There is much instruction in the various dealings of our heavenly Father, in order to convince us of our sinfulness, and of our need of redemption through the atoning sacrifice. How variously and how wonderfully, the work of repentance and faith is begun and carried on, if not willfully rejected, even in the heart of the poor, the solitary, and the unlearned in this world's wisdom! Up and down, where I have been, sickness, affliction and trouble seem to have been the means of spiritual instruction, by loosening the strong bond of natural attachment to earthly things.

Eighth month 2nd. In a solid meeting for worship, I took a Christian farewell of my friends, in much tenderness. In the evening, came about six miles, to a place where I was cordially received, into a large family of children and grandchildren.

3rd. Accompanied my friend to the village, to make calls on the sick and poor. I thought, as we sat to wait upon the Lord with a poor cottager, that there was a heart-humblng sense of heavenly kindness, as a token of acceptance of this almost solitary, and in the view of high professors, this despicable way of seeking the Lord.

4th. The morning chiefly occupied in private retirement, and serious conversation. This was succeeded by some trial; there being a large mixed company at dinner. It was rather a thoughtless assemblage; and although not designedly indecorous, mirth and levity became irksome to some of us. I ventured, with deference to the master of the house, to ask leave to make a few observations, and a becoming quietness ensued. I then expressed my ideas of rational cheerfulness, and of a grateful participation of the bounties liberally bestowed for our bodily refreshment, which no human skill could produce, seeing that no man can cause a grain of wheat to grow and fructify; shall we then eat and drink, and forget the Power that supplies our need? Something of this sort was said, and listened to with a degree of attention; and possibly it may recur at a future day. I felt much for my kind friend, whose situation appeared to me very trying. In the evening we went together to the village and sat down in a cottage; many came in and behaved quietly, and I felt an openness for expressing something on the faith and practice of our Society. We parted in cordial good will.

5th. After an opportunity of religious retirement with my dear friend and some of the servants, I took my leave and returned to Derby.

6th. First-day. Some strangers were at the meetings. Our simple manner of worship having nothing of external attraction, and reverent waiting on the Lord in silence being little understood, those who come among us from curiosity, or in order to hear, are likely to be disappointed.

7th. Commenced visiting the families.

10th. I felt very low, and unfit to minister to others; but in sitting with a poor, working man this evening, the liveliness and tenderness of his spirit were a help and comfort to me. The day closed in a thankful calm.

14th. First-day. Sat with a pious poor man from the country; there are several of this class who attend our meetings, and I think they help to keep alive the sacred flame of devotion among us.

16th. Went six miles to visit the Moravian settlement at Ockbrook. S. F. Church is connected with our family through my aunt Chase; he and his wife were truly kind, and I felt a secret unity of spirit with them, which is beyond names and forms. We separated in love, and a sweetness, best known to Christian

believers, as being one in heart, seeking the Lord Jesus.

17th. The meeting at Derby proved a time of solemn parting; my heart was contrited in a view of the steps that I had been led to take. Goodness and mercy have kept me stayed upon my best Helper, eternal in the heavens; and my spirit bows, in reverence and thankfulness, as with my mouth in the dust; believing that it is of the Lord that no condemnation disturbs my lowly peace.

20th. First-day. Loughborough. The neighbours being invited, a large number came to meeting in the evening. I was surprised at the extension of condescending mercy, in opening gospel doctrine, and Scripture testimony, respecting the consolations which are in Jesus, his redeeming love, and his atoning sacrifice, as well as his light, life and power, now revealed in the hearts of the children of men, to turn them from darkness unto light, to create a clean heart and renew a right spirit within them. This is the religion we profess; if we walk inconsistently, unmindful of prayer and watchfulness, condemnation must rest upon us.

21st. Took tea with a poor family; I believe the life of pure religion binds them together; and we were refreshed in the sense hereof, though they are among the lowly ones, having little of this world's goods.

22nd. Received the affecting account of the death of dear Mary Lloyd, formerly Dearman. A short time ago, she was young and lovely, gentle and engaging. Her spirit, I consolingly hope, is now clothed with purity, and admitted into the kingdom of rest, to join the redeemed. Occupied in visiting several poor families, some of whom occasionally attended our meetings; among them is a tenderness of spirit worth cherishing. I wish this care may ever be observed among us, as a people professing goodwill to all.

26th. The time being come when I apprehended myself at liberty to leave this place, I proceeded to Leicester. It is not easy to set forth the thankfulness of my mind in being thus brought in safety, and without a painful feeling of wilful omission or commission, throughout my many weary steppings, and my long absence from home. Though in a weak state of body, my mind seems to be resigned to enter into farther exercises, if such be the will of Him whose servant I desire to be; His will being my sanctification.

29th. Entered on a visit to the families at Leicester. I am well aware that there is no advantage in dwelling with or upon my own weakness, or surely I feel unfit again to enter on such an arduous duty; but the welfare of my Christian fellow travellers is more important than my own ease, my health or my natural life, if I may only be enabled to hand a little help.

31st. We read that our Lord and Saviour often withdrew from the multitude and prayed; and that He condescended to teach his disciples how to pray. Why is it,—how is it, that we live so little in the spirit of prayer?

Ninth month 3rd. First-day. A day of much exertion. In the morning meeting there was an earnest pleading with those of our religious Society, that the light, the life, and the power of godliness might

shine, with increasing brightness, among us; that our upright, conscientious dealing in all our concerns, our consistency and genuine plainness, throughout our life and manners, might show forth to others that we were taught in the school of Christ. In the afternoon, many of the neighbours sat with us, when the universality of the mercy and love of our Almighty Father was feebly set forth.

11th. Preparing to leave my kind friends here, with the intention of holding a meeting, at Hinckley. I was favoured with an opportunity for freely communicating, to a young medical man, some impressions on my mind, which appeared to be well received; this was an unexpected relief, and confirmed me in the persuasion that it is well to wait, in the patient belief, that for every right thing, there is a right time.

12th. Favoured with quietness, in looking towards my departure hence; and before leaving had an opportunity of religious retirement with the servants, to my satisfaction. I feel for servants.

13th. Ann Heaford kindly accompanied me to the Crown, at Hinckley. She has long been acquainted with the landlady of this large, well regulated establishment, who seemed to consider it a privilege to spend part of the evening with us, 14th. We also had her company at our Scripture reading, after breakfast, to our comfort. Some sober people attended the meeting, and our religious principles, as founded on the gospel tidings of life and salvation, through Jesus Christ, were in measure set forth. After parting from my friends in tenderness of spirit, I came to Coventry, having accomplished my engagement.

\* \* \*

[Thus closed the labours of this devoted servant, as far as regards travelling in the work of the ministry; and here also ends her own diary; but, as long as she was able to pen an occasional memorandum, and to correspond with her friends, the effusions of her heart and pen gave undoubted proof of her growth in grace, while the genuine fruits of the Spirit were abundantly brought forth in her consistent, humble, daily walk.

The reader is now presented with such extracts from her letters, etc., as appears best calculated to demonstrate her progress in that path which shineth more and more unto the perfect day. The first extract is from a letter to one of her nieces, written before she reached her home, from the journey, the particulars of which have just been given.]

*Warwick, Ninth month 24th, 1826.*

Thou mayst surely think that I have lingered on my way, when thou seest this date; but I believe I may venture to say, I could not make haste. My attention was turned to the poor, and almost unknown ones, in solitary dwellings and lonely cottages. O! how condescending Goodness shines, at times, like the enlivening sun, upon the penitent, humble, hidden Christian believer! The retrospect of such times as these, during my journey, is consoling and encouraging; and now, at the close of this engagement, reverence, tenderness and lowliness of mind, are the sweet reward of this little dedication. It is enough! I ask no more.

## Chapter XII

*Memoranda—Extracts of letters, etc.—Death of her friend Hannah Evans, and of Mary Capper's only sister.*

TO M. S.

*14, Dale End, Birmingham, First month 3rd. 1827.*

My long loved Friend,

We live to see various events and changes, but we do not forget our dear, unseen fellow-sojourners in a state of probation, and in what is at times a weary pilgrimage. Although it is ordered by our heavenly Leader, that our path through the wilderness lies hidden from each other, surely there are favoured seasons of sweet union in spirit. While each is pursuing the manifested way of duty, the port, the haven of rest, ever aimed at, and sometimes in marvellous mercy opened to our view, seems to bind together the disciples of the one Lord. My mental feelings have of late been various; I desire to bear, with patient, humble submission, the purifying fire, though I may be again and again cast into the furnace. I am satisfied that my Redeemer, the Son of God, liveth, and that, through Him, my soul will live also.

—MARY CAPPER.

TO KATHARINE BACKHOUSE

*Dale End, Second month 5th, 1827.*

Many are the ponderings of my mind, on the important and deeply interesting subject of the hidden evils of the heart. My late reflections have been, that the subjugating power of Divine Grace, as it does much for the obedient soul, gives a quick sense of evil; manifesting the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and separating the precious from the vile.

8th. I have been prevented from following the train of my thoughts, so as to communicate them to thee, yet I desire to tell thee a little of the path I now tread. Self-reduction is a hard lesson to most of us; after years of religious profession, and even sacrifices not a few, some natural propensities still cleave close; and we may not be fully aware of their power unless occasion stirs them up. It is easy to conclude that all is well, when no temptation presents,—no provocation of temper arises; but I hope my late meditations have tended to increase

my faith, my reverent, humble confidence, in the mediatorial sacrifice of redeeming love. The unfathomable mystery I willingly leave; and with thankfulness, cling to the things revealed to my understanding.

I think I have even recently seen, that when we are exercised in our Christian warfare, with deep humiliations, in the conflict of nature with Grace, it is at times, a preparation for some unforeseen trial or privation. The spirit being hereby contrited, and the heart humbled, there is a submission wrought, a lowly bending under the hand that afflicts, and to the Power that forgiveth sins, that healeth all our mental diseases.

### TO M. S.

*Birmingham, Second month 27th, 1827.*

A short time back I had not a thought of so soon taking my seat by your fireside. I anticipate being in my old corner; bear in mind that I am not a stranger, nor a visiter for a day only. I hope it is not presumption, when I think that it is Christian love which gently constrains me to leave my home and my dear friends here, in order to manifest, in person, the best desires that I am capable of forming, for my young friends, that in their early steps, and in the progress of their pilgrimage, they may ever keep in view, the redeeming, the sanctifying power of God the Father, revealed through Christ Jesus the Son; as testified of in the Scriptures, from Genesis to Revelation.

—MARY CAPPER.

### TO THE SAME.

*Birmingham, Fifth month 18th, 1827.*

My dear Friend,

I have not forgotten you; I have a pleasing recollection of the afternoon spent, under your roof, with T. D. etc. 'Tis sweet; yea! like unto precious oil, which gently flows over all, and smooths the rough surface, when we are favoured to feel the influence of Christian love, that love which thinketh no evil, but hopeth all things, even in dark and gloomy days, looking with an eye of faith, beyond those troubles and offences that do come, and will come upon us in this world. I much wish to know how dear Candia Burlingham is; she is a patient sufferer, and I have no doubt but that her Lord is purifying her immortal spirit, for an admittance into his glorious kingdom, where nothing shall any more offend. My dear love to them all. To thy husband, thyself, and the dear children, with their kind governess; I think I need not say much in order to assure you of my love unfeigned. While I write and think of you, my spirit breathes the petition, to the Father of Mercies, that He would never forsake you, but lead you in a plain path, keep you, with my own soul, from evil, sanctify us throughout, and clothe our spirits with the fine linen, clean and white, that we may be fit companions for the redeemed. My soul longs for this complete work. Farewell,

**TO A FRIEND IN AMERICA.**

*Birmingham, Twelfth month, 1827.*

Dear J.,

As a friend long interested in what concerns the best interests of thy parents and their children, yea, reaching to the children's children, the warm glow of my love spreads as a widely unfolding mantle over them, encircling parents and relatives, your grand parents, the dear friends I have abundant cause to remember in this my native country—they stand not on the back ground, in my present view of years passed by. Well and gratefully I recollect their kindness, when I was as one desolate, and in manner forsaken by father and mother.

These are times to be remembered when friends were raised up to feel with and for me in my mournful walk. Indeed, with reverence, and I hope in true deep humility, I may testify, our redeeming Lord, the Sent of the Father, the Reconciler, the Mediator and Saviour, has been my guide, my helper, to this day; and my only consoling hope is that Jesus the Son of God, according to Scripture, without note or comment, will finally be my soul's salvation. Unspeakable I consider, and I hope with unfeigned gratitude I oft in my silent retirements contemplate,—the favour of a calm, steady conviction, and firm unwavering adherence to those principles of Friends which first humbled my heart under a sense of my need of purification, yea, redeeming from the sins of thought, word and deed. Oh, who is there can purify his own heart, and make it clean in every part? Suppose we admit the Spirit worketh in us and for us—who and what is this Spirit, by and through whom was Grace and Truth brought to light? I joined you as a religious Society, surely believing that you not only professed, but truly believed and cleaved close to a crucified Saviour, and this is my abiding faith.

Desiring that the Lord may direct your steps and hide you from the strife of tongues, I remain with a sweet overshadowing sense of that love which is ancient and new, the affectionate well wishing friend of thyself and wife and children—it matters little what we have known, or what we have suffered, if so be that through sanctification, all things work together for good.

Thy sincere friend as heretofore,

—MARY CAPPER.

[In the Twelfth month Mary Capper attended the quarterly meeting held at Coventry, and went to Warwick, where she writes:]

Twelfth month 24th, 1827. Found my dear friend, Hannah Evans, recovering from some alarming symptoms of apoplexy; we secretly enjoyed our mutual intercourse, in precious unity of spirit.

[On the last day of the year, Mary Capper wrote thus:]

**TO HER NIECE KATHARINE BACKHOUSE**

*Twelfth month 31st, 1827.*

My beloved Niece,

I am inclined to believe that we both accede to the truth that it is well for those who can look back, uncondemned, on the past year, and recount their mercies. With humility and contrition we may see, and mourn over our omissions and commissions, our defects and infirmities; to this very day I am as weak, of myself, as the least babe; by watching unto prayer, is my faith renewed, my hope of entire sanctification, and of salvation.

I dare not cherish dismay or discouragement, though I secretly mourn, in times of deep humiliation; but with reverence and thankfulness, my heart owns the mercies of God in Christ Jesus. O! how unspeakable is the favour when we stumble not at those things, which, as yet, we do not comprehend, but with reverent fear, keep low, and patiently wait for farther illumination. May presumptuous disputation ever be kept from us, and from entering the thoughts of a rising generation!

[In the early part of 1828, Mary Capper visited her friend Sarah Lamley, at Tredington; and about the 14th of first month, went to Warwick, where she found her long-loved friend Hannah Evans much indisposed, and concluded to remain with her for a time. It proved to be to the conclusion of her course. They were permitted many times of much enjoyment together, during Hannah Evans' decline, partaking of the sweets of true Christian friendship and love. While there Mary Capper heard of the death of a friend to whom she was much attached, respecting which event she wrote to Richard and Elizabeth Cadbury as follows.]

**TO RICHARD AND ELIZABETH CADBURY**

*Warwick, First month 25th, 1828.*

My kind Friends,

On all occasions I witness your prompt exertions and affectionate desires to serve and gratify me. What shall I render for the continuation of mercies which I consider as flowing from a far purer source than any good in me! I wrestle in the spirit of prayer, that a thankful heart may crown every blessing so graciously bestowed. The details respecting our late endeared friend have been perused with no common feelings, the thoughts of my heart have been night and day occupied on the solemn subject. O! that ten thousand times ten thousand may be gathered to the standard of the Christian faith, the faith in which this, our highly favoured friend, lived and died; in the glorious hope of salvation, through Christ Jesus, who shed his blood for sinners! To see how a Christian can die is a privilege; but to die the death of a Christian, clothed with the light, and life of our Mediator and

Advocate with the Father, O how glorious!

[In a memorandum made at Warwick, Mary Capper says, respecting Hannah Evans, "I was favoured with strength to attend my beloved friend in the last conflict of nature, which was suffering in the extreme, from sickness, etc. so that I was thankful when it ceased. She died on the 13th of second month, 1828; and although I have to mourn the painful void, I am thankful too for the retrospect of our precious union and fellowship."

Mary Capper attended the yearly meeting this year, and remained in and about London till the seventh month, visiting her friends and relations. Her only sister, Rebecca Tibbatts, was then in poor health; and on the 5th of the seventh month, she departed this life, at the house of one of her sons, who had long made her a comfortable home, and been affectionately attentive to her. Mary Capper was much gratified in being occasionally with them, and witnessing their mutual attachment; she also was comforted in the belief, that it might be said of her dear sister, who had had many sore tribulations, that her last days were her best days. She died meekly confiding in her Saviour, and exclaiming, "Happy, happy, happy!"

Thus rapidly was Mary Capper stripped of her near relations and friends; but through all, she was enabled to confide, and to rejoice, in Him who had attracted her to Himself in early life, and for whom she had been enabled to give up all. He proved Himself to be to her a never-failing friend, almighty to console and support.

She was much tried, while in London, by the serious illness of her faithful servant, Hannah Simms, who had lived with her eight years, and whom she had taken to town with her as her attendant. Hannah Simms was, with difficulty conveyed back to Birmingham, to which place Mary Capper also returned in the eighth month; on the 23rd of that month, Hannah Simms breathed her last; much regretted by her affectionate mistress, though she writes on the subject, "I was favoured with a calm, lowly resignation of my will to that Divine Power who reigns over all, and who orders all things well. My kind and attentive friends, Richard and Elizabeth Cadbury propose my being their inmate for a few days, and E. C. with the affection of a relative, came for me. I have some consoling ground to believe that dear Hannah Simms has, for some time past, been under the refining hand and power of the Redeemer, who prepares a place for all those that patiently abide the fire and sword, sent to separate the precious from the vile. Her hope of salvation was fixed on the immutable Rock of Ages, and this Rock is Christ."

An awful visitation of fever was permitted this year at Ackworth School, and many who attended the general meeting, were made partakers of the affliction. Rebecca Dickenson, a lovely young woman, the daughter of Barnard Dickenson, of Coalbrookdale, took the fever there, and died, after about twelve days' illness, at Darlington, where she had gone on a visit to the house of John Backhouse, whose young people also took the same complaint at Ackworth. While they continued struggling with the fever, Mary Capper wrote to her niece Katharine Backhouse as follows:]

*Birmingham, Ninth month 5th, 1828.*

My dear Niece,

Yesterday I received the affecting account of your trials; my own sink in the scale, as of minor weight, save only, as in some sort, they fit my heart and spirit to enter into sympathy with the afflicted. O! how sweet and confirming when the young Christian believer, thus called away by the Lord at the early dawn of the day, can emphatically testify her only trust, her hope and her joy, to be in a Redeemer, a Saviour from sin and its condemnation; how this encourages us to press forward, though we may mourn the privation! The dear friends who have been bereaved may allowably indulge a tender sorrow, but I hope they will be comforted by the evidence of their dear child being safely landed. For you and your children, affecting as the event has been, and painful as is the uncertainty which still rests on the future, my faith points to the Rock of our salvation, trusting that the sustaining arm of Divine help will be underneath, in the trials of each succeeding day. Your dear Ann, in her weak, low and suffering state, with sorrow around, may prove a favoured scholar in the school of Christ, her Redeemer. This sickness, not being unto death, may be to the manifestation of the power and glory of God.

#### **TO A FRIEND IN AMERICA.**

*Birmingham, Twelfth month, 1828.*

Dear J. and C.,

Accept my little offerings; though trifling, they are tokens of my affection towards you, and” your dear rising children. It cheers some of our hearts, yea, those who are not parents can rejoice in believing, that in these days of deep trial and sadness, there is an unchangeable power, sparkling and more powerful than the vivifying outward sunbeams, in fructifying the seed of the kingdom of heaven, although the storm and the blast beat terribly. In deep reverence and Christian humility may we cherish the hope sure and steadfast, that the dark days will pass away, the winter be over, the voice of the turtle, the singing of the birds, will be heard in different dwelling places. Hold fast your integrity my Christian fellow believers of the mercies of God in Christ Jesus. Train up the lambs as of the flock of Christ committed to your charge in the wilderness. Suffer not the dear children to gain dominion over parental authority.

My love, please to express impressively to your mother W., she is very affectionately in my remembrance. It is unnecessary I should enter into domestic details. I hope we are each desirous to be found in the right path, whether in the commencement, or drawing to the close of time. I subscribe sincerely your friend,

—MARY CAPPER.

[Ann Backhouse, did apparently recover from the fever, but symptoms of consumption showed themselves early in the following year; and Mary Capper thus writes to her afflicted parents:]

*Third month 11th, 1829.*

Very many are the trials, and various the provings of faith and resignation at this day; but shall we call in question the dealings of Omnipotence, in whatever is brought upon his servants? Rather may we unite in prostration at his footstool, supplicating that neither things present nor yet to come may shake our Christian confidence. Entire reduction, perfect submission to the Refiner's power, seems in my view a great work, a work of wonder, but a needful work; for here indeed, no flesh can glory. My kind nephew! thy communication of affection and unity is truly acceptable; surely it is well thus to encourage one another. The declining health of your endeared child is indeed affecting; a rose in the bud is no small sacrifice; but to bloom in perfect beauty sheltered from the storm and blast, O! how cheering to the Christian believer is the prospect. We may weep, but there is a balm to mollify our wounds. Your precious child is gently dealt with, to be thus kept, by the power of redeeming love, patient and calm, and no way dismayed at the apprehension of an early dismissal from the world, "with life's bitterness untried." The God of all consolation, who comforteth those that are cast down, be with you, and manifest his power, in a day of trouble.

**TO M. S.**

*Birmingham, Fifth month 11th. 1829.*

My kindly partial Friend,

I would relieve thee from thy solicitude as to my health, which is improving. O! for sanctification of spirit; I feel far short of this; and no doubt it is safe to be humbled at the Redeemer's feet; what else can keep us from falling, through the power of temptation suited to our various temperaments. Let us pity the fallen, and fear for ourselves. To thy dear husband's sister, under solicitude for the sight of her eyes, so precious a gift, I wish to express the love and sympathy of a fellow pilgrim toward the Celestial City, where there is no darkness at all!

—MARY CAPPER.

**TO B. C. AND M. C. IN LONDON AT THE YEARLY MEETING.**

*Warwick, Fifth month 28th, 1829.*

My kindly interested Friends,

Whilst you are met in a large number, for the help and strengthening of the different members, imploring that healing balm, which can comfort the mourners and cure the wounded, the solitary ones may also have their portion of exercise in spirit. I believe my right place was with those left at home, stripped of many, whose countenances and help are missed; however, it is perhaps wisely ordered, as it breaks our dependence upon human aid, that our faith may be increased. It is likely that you would hear of the death of John Whitehead. I

felt bound to attend the interment, for which purpose I came to Warwick; you, my dear friends, may judge that it was no light matter to me, to sit as one alone, to be gazed at by a very large concourse, but my mind was kept calm. O! how condescending is our heavenly Father. Can we, his poor children, be too humble, too watchful! I hope what was spoken was right; no condemnation rests upon my spirit, which I consider a great favour.

—MARY CAPPER.

### TO C. B. C.

*Leicester, Seventh month, 1829.*

I have abundant cause, with reverence, to acknowledge that all things needful to my comfort are provided for me; living as in the bosom of affectionately attached friends, what can I desire more, but an increase of humility and of thankfulness, and of watchful obedience to the beneficent author of all our mercies. Thy love is very precious to me; it is a sweet cordial, in lengthened years, to love and be beloved. May we continue to look straight on, toward the mark for the prize of our high calling, undismayed by those things that are brought upon us, in our pilgrimage journey.

### TO A FRIEND IN AMERICA.

*Warwick, Ninth month 28th, 1829.*

My well esteemed Friends, and endeared by long continued family attachment, and repeated acts of kindness and attention to me in particular, still manifested by parents and children; 'tis my wish to cherish the union. I hope that with true thankfulness of heart, I may on my part acknowledge the mercy and heavenly favour, that like the knot more and more closely tied by receding in opposite directions, we are strongly bound in spirit and fellowship by the safe immutable guide of salvation; though sea and land may separate us from personal intercourse, and the time draws nigh when present scenes will be changed, and an eternity open to our view; oh, 'tis a mercy not to be set forth, to contemplate a Saviour—to know that our Redeemer liveth, and that in him we shall see God. I enter not into the disputations of the present day; notions, differing opinions, and futile arguments upon subjects too high for human capacity, are no new thing; they had early place in the wise and learned of this world, who are recorded, and may yet be reputed, as wiser in their generation than the children of Light; the God of pity and of mercy, past our finding out, may open the blind eye, and unstop the deaf ear of those who as yet do not see aright. 'Tis a mercy when a plain path is set before us, and experience confirms our confidence, that in watching unto prayer and simple obedience to manifested duties, is our safety, and keeps the host of enemies within and without, so far in subjection to the power of the truth as it is in Jesus, that we hold no parley with them. This, dear friend, is the path of my religious experience, and I find nothing in my advanced years (74,) that induces me to let go my humble, yet confirmed confidence in the propitiation, the redemption, the purifying spirit and reconciliation to God the Father, by the mediation of Jesus the Sent of the Father, as set

forth in the Scriptures, preserved from generations for instruction, or reproof, or consolation, unto this day. The doubting, disputing mind, claims pity; 'tis a sad unsettlement; why should we pry into secret things that belong unto the Lord? Enough is revealed to satisfy a humbled obedient heart. What is now hard to be understood, it may be because we are not prepared to receive it whilst clothed with infirmities of flesh and blood, is it not safest and best to leave in the hand of that gracious creative Power, who has formed man for glory and for virtue? Oh! it is good to feel submissive lowliness and godly fear, that no presumption get dominion over us.

I would still in much sincerity express my Christian love and unfeigned good will to every branch of your family, known and unknown, and subscribe, as in days past,

Your real friend,

—MARY CAPPER.

### TO C. B. C.

*Dudley, Eleventh month 4th, 1829.*

The report from your dear parents is truly acceptable; the retrospect of years gone by, when, in our youthful vigour, we joyed together, and exchanged lively tokens of affection, seems to touch a tender chord yet in tune, and raises tears; not tears of murmur or regret, ah no! but of grateful recollection, that enduring Mercy has kept us from the broad way of destruction, and in adorable compassion, forsakes not in old age. In sickness, weakness and suffering, when mental and bodily powers fail, O! how consoling is the belief that the arm of Omnipotence sustains us, sanctifies every dispensation, and prepares his children for a glorious immortality; a purchased possession for the ransomed and redeemed of the Lord.

—MARY CAPPER.

[Early in the year 1830, Mary Capper went to Coventry, where she was detained by a lingering illness, the effect of a cold. While there she wrote:]

### TO J. AND KATHARINE BACKHOUSE

*Coventry, Second month 4th, 1830.*

I should not now, perhaps, call to mind your days of sorrow, in the bereavement, and in the deposit of the remains of your beloved child among strangers; but, with you my dear relatives, I have a grateful remembrance of the mercy mixed with the dispensation, by that gracious Being who fitted and emancipated the soul of the young Christian for heaven. I seem gently impressed to communicate the language which arose in my heart, on reading thy testimony, my dear niece, corroborated by others who knew something of the life and manners

of your precious child; the language still arises with freshness, Happy, happy spirit! so early released from a mortal tabernacle. May we not say, favoured to know comparatively little of life's bitters, and spared the many conflicts which, in the allotment of unerring Wisdom, the wrestling spirit has to endure, in life's protracted, lengthened span. But who shall say to the righteous Judge of the whole earth. What doest Thou? O! for a calm and quiet mind, to live by faith, a simple faith that asks not why or wherefore, nor requires sensible tokens, but receives the transient gleams of good, from the most excellent Glory, with deep reverence and gratitude. This is what my spirit presses after, not as having attained, but I dare not halt, through unbelief. Your lonely situation, in a foreign land, may be blessed; you and your dear children may seek and find, by patient waiting for it, the refreshment which cometh from the presence of the Lord.<sup>1</sup>

I am almost weary with writing, and have not yet noticed your pleasant prospects, myrtles, orange trees, etc. the snow-girt mountains, and the volcano. Admirable I doubt not; but my little home in Dale End suits me better. I hope you may be favoured in due time to return in peace to your own country and endeared friends.

[On the 29th of the third month, Mary Capper made the following memorandum: "I have had so much fever as greatly to reduce my strength, and am still nearly confined to my bed and chamber. This is a trying dispensation, though made comparatively easy by many mercies; let me gratefully acknowledge favours received!"]

About this time she addressed these lines to the friends where she was staying:]

**TO J. AND S. C. WHILE RESIDENT UNDER THEIR ROOF, IN MUCH BODILY WEAKNESS.**

*Coventry, Third month, 1830.*

As an individual incorporated into the Society of Christian believers, denominated Quakers, not by education nor much familiar intercourse with any of them, not in my minority, but in more advanced years of my life; and having seen, with serious observation, it may be rather more variety of scenes and manners than falls to the lot of every private person, I may say, that although I was ignorant and as easily led into folly as my associates, brought up in the same habits and dissipations, there were times when I was led, in deep thoughtfulness, to query with myself, What is a profession of religion? Having, at an early age, gone through the forms of what is called our National Church, and with reverence partaken of the outward and visible sign of faith in the blood of Christ, as an atoning sacrifice, oftentimes it arose in my mind, What has this done for me? Does the inward and spiritual grace subdue my evil propensities, and direct my steps into a path of circumspection and self-denial, consistent with the promises made for me in my unconscious infancy, and afterwards made binding, on my own responsibility, as I came of age to understand the nature and import of the engagement? I was aware that the ceremony was but a shadow of the substantial good.

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<sup>1</sup> See notice of Ann Backhouse, in Memorials of deceased Friends, by S. Corder.

I simply relate my own experience, implicating none; “to our own master, we must stand or fall.” Without a laborious investigation of the opinions of the various denominations of Christians, but not without sacrifices, hindrances and discouragements, by little and little, not rashly, but after mature deliberation, in simple obedience to apprehended duty, I attended the religious meetings of Friends. To me, solemn and reverential was that stillness, that silence, which seemed to hush every thought. I believe, that in this still calm, there is a renewal of spiritual strength to be known; yea! an enlargement of spiritual understanding, in communion with the Father of Spirits, which surely is true, spiritual worship. Thus, as an individual, I was led step by step, and found no difficulty in comprehending the ground and consistency of adopting plainness of speech, behaviour and apparel; all seemed consonant with apostolic counsel, evangelic doctrine, and the example of the early Christian converts. A corruption of language and of manners has crept in, and is adopted by many Christian professors, in the present day.

The Society of Friends having seen this, and being gathered in early times as a ‘people turned to a pure language,’ I marvel not at their setting a cautious guard against innovations.

A friend to consistency though no dictator,

—MARY CAPPER.

*N. B.* It has been remarked that the Romans were particularly careful to preserve the purity of their language. The state itself, it seems, thought it a subject so worthy of attention, that no innovation was allowed, in their public acts, without permission. Seneca gives it as a certain maxim, that when a false taste in style or expression prevail, it is a sign of corruption of morals in the people. (See Pliny’s Letters, Book the First.) Why not apply this to our present instructions?

[Mary Capper appears to have returned home in the fourth month, whence she writes:

**TO M. S.**

*Birmingham, Fourth month 30th, 1830.*

Express my affectionate remembrance to A. F. To her this is a mournful bereavement; but what can we do better for ourselves and others, in the day of trouble, than in the exercise of humble, though firm confidence in prayer, to cherish hope! O! had we been a rightly praying people, surely so much declension had not spread among us. May there be, through a rising generation, a revival of true spiritual mindedness.

My long confinement, at Coventry, under the kindest possible care, has left me somewhat reduced; but, through all, I was passive like a weaned child, and even cheerful and thankful. Ah! dear M. this was nature subdued; and now, at a lengthened out day, my heart’s most earnest desire is to live near to the subjecting power by which this is effected; the power, if I understand aright, of the cross of Christ.

—MARY CAPPER.

## TO A FRIEND IN AMERICA.

*Birmingham, Fifth month 25th, 1830.*

Dear J. and C,

This is a day and time of important serious interest, yet I do not,—as a poor, short-sighted individual, measurably quickened and made alive as I humbly hope by Divine grace,—I dare not cherish dark, gloomy, dismaying views, though I hear sad tidings of pernicious principles, and I am well aware of bad practices. Alas! for the poor hearts, that are not changed,—sanctified by a new and spiritual birth in Christ Jesus, the Light, the saving Life in man! If we can feel pity and compassion one for another, oh! how short, how imperfect our comprehension of that love, that tendering mercy which brought a Saviour down to suffer for sin and sinners,—’tis a glorious, marvellous theme! and sometimes put to silence, solemn silence, all that would rise in judgment within me, either as to the dead or the living. My solemn interest is to know more fully than I yet know, Christ my Redeemer, as my perfect reconciler to God the Father, being cleansed from the guilt of all sin, by the atoning sacrifice of the Son of God, as testified in the Scriptures, and opened to the understanding of my humbled praying spirit, I never felt these Divine truths more consolingly than in the time of a late reduction of bodily strength and deep humiliation of mind, wherein I had no high or luminous thoughts; but as a poor dependent child, my views of a Saviour’s compassion and power, were very, very sweet, calming every fear, and putting to silence doubt.

I have scribbled this whilst an inmate in thy father’s house—as I was left alone, and a clothing of peaceful serenity around me, it came into my mind to acknowledge, that your conjoint messages of affectionate remembrance are cordially accepted.

May lowly peace in the love of a reconciled God through Christ Jesus our Redeemer, be the blessed portion of you, of your children, and of all those who are near and dear unto you, is the unfeigned affectionate desire of your Christian probationer and friend,

—MARY CAPPER.

## TO M. S.

*Seventh month 26th, 1830.*

My very dear Friend,

Do accept a short but grateful acknowledgement of thy friendly communication, with the instructive memoir accompanying it. O! that I may die the death of the faithful, and that my end may be like his; may my close be calm, lowly and peaceful; but even this it is best to leave to a faithful, just and wise Creator. Death has not always been disarmed of terrors, even to the upright, and I wish to leave it to the Lord; to whom I desire to resign soul and body, with all that I have and all that I am. Lowly obedience has consolations in this life, and

the bright beams of hope sometimes break forth out of darkness; so the safe path is perseverance. Dear John Pumphrey called this morning; he is a pleasant picture of old age.

### TO KATHARINE BACKHOUSE

*Birmingham, Ninth month 14th, 1830.*

In these places there has been great stripping; elders and standard-bearers have been taken from this scene of trial and probation; some of their successors have turned from the narrow path, and by imprudent marriages and other deviations, have defrauded their own souls, and mingled their cup of life with many bitters; added to which, I consider it a serious wrong to children's children.

If the Good Shepherd were not enduringly merciful, what indeed should we do? but when the sorrowing heart is humbled, in the house of sore bondage and in the land of captivity, where the cruel enemy of all good has carried them, then if they cry unto the Lord like captive Israel, O! then, in pity, heavenly mercy delivereth them out of their distresses. Some circumstances have very seriously affected me; for although my view of mercy is large, yet it bows down my soul to see mercies received and lightly esteemed. But let me turn to a brighter prospect. There are, I hope, not a few, within the borders of our own religious Society, who prize their privileges, and who have the heart-humbling, tendering belief of the forgiveness of sins, and sanctification from sin, through the mercy of God in Christ Jesus. These, with my own soul, watch unto prayer, enduring hardship, as soldiers engaged in combat.

—MARY CAPPER,

### TO THE SAME.

*Birmingham, Second month 14th, 1831.*

My much-loved niece! perhaps never being in more sweet union than at this day; having our senses exercised to discern good and evil, through that measure of mercy which has not left us to perish in ignorance or unbelief. Since I last wrote to thee, I have been almost a prisoner, from debility and loss of appetite. I was nearly ready to conclude that the remaining springs of natural life were gently wearing away; but a childlike, cheerful confidence kept my spirit calm and undisturbed. O! what shall I say of the free mercy that thus sustains me in lively faith and hope; not for any dedication or faithfulness in me. Ah! no; I am a poor weak child, an unprofitable servant, if ever I have done ought of service in our holy Saviour's house. Mercy is my only plea for favour here, and for acceptance hereafter. Again my bodily vigour is a little revived; it is the great Creator's will, so may it be to his gracious purpose. I dare not foster a will of my own, knowing that I am weak and blind. The religious prospect of your kinsman James Backhouse, his affectionate mother, his dear bereft children, are subjects of much interest; but all centers in the will of God. We may rest in gospel promises, whatever is given up for the sake of fulfilling this requiring; but what could be the happiness of a Christian in disobedience,

though possessed of houses, lands and kindred; yea, of all that this world could give?

### TO A FRIEND IN AMERICA.

*Coventry, Tenth month, 1831.*

My oft remembered friends and tenderly beloved members of kind and dear connections round about me, whose kindness is of so long continuance from parents and children, that it is no marvel that I feel some affectionate interest in the well-being of children's children, which seem to multiply and spread as in my own family like olive branches; and though a young scion is sometimes taken off, in its early tender state, to ripen and mature in a better clime, sheltered from every possible blight or chilling blast, may we be grateful, and acknowledge the gracious Power that cultivates the yet live branches, watering, pruning, fitting these to bring forth good fruit in due season.

I am now permitted to enjoy the fine fresh breezes of this pleasant autumnal season, congenial to invigorate with the gratifying society of long known friends.

To you dear friends, what can I say more than I have in time past expressed. May uprightness and integrity guide you and all yours; may the balmy breath of a Saviour's peace be the clothing of our spirits in time and in eternity, in life and in death! So craves the heart of your fellow probationer and affectionate interested friend,

—MARY CAPPER.

Old England preferred with all her faults and commotions. Nations, kingdoms, tongues and people, will have an end, but heavenly power and mercy endure forever and forever.

### TO KATHARINE BACKHOUSE

*Birmingham, Fourth month 7th, 1832.*

On the eleventh of this month, if my life be lengthened to that morning, I shall have seen the end of seventy seven years. I still feel as a child, depending upon a tender Father's daily mercies; upon Him who has taken my earthly parents to Himself, I assuredly believe. O! the goodness and mercy that follows their children, yea, I doubt not their children's children. My dear mother was a woman of prayer, private prayer; the remembrance is precious to this day; in my early days her influence led me to bow at the footstool of mercy, at least often to retire in secret; and in some favoured seasons, I had to shed sweet tears of tenderness, arising from the desire to be good, for I was aware of evil in my heart. Who can set forth the compassion which has followed me, and does yet help, teach and comfort me! that has united me to a people whose genuine religious principles satisfy every faculty of my soul, and are my strong consolation, with hope in a Redeemer's love and power; even that He will complete his glorious work, and own me among his ransomed ones.

—MARY CAPPER.

## TO JOHN AND SARAH GRUBB.

*Birmingham, Fifth month 25th, 1832.*

Dear John and Sarah Grubb,

The salutation of an old friend, if in any sort it may be in the newness of life, I seem constrained to believe, you will not reject. Many years and many events have passed, dear Sarah, since our personal intercourse with each other, and with dear friends in this place, now gathered to their rest; the remembrance arises in liveliness before me—no bitterness mingled therewith. Thou wast then engaged with dear, faithful, lowly-minded Ann Baker. In my little measure I loved you then; and I cherish the hope that, in the school of experience, my best love increases, with the increase of my union and fellowship with the long-tried, faithful labourers, in the present day of sifting, and of deep plunges, even as in the pit of darkness, tumult and dismay. Well, dear John and Sarah Grubb, is it not a marvellous mercy, that, as a people, we are not forsaken! Prophets and prophetesses are yet raised up among us. May these go on in the strength of the Lord. Accept this my poor offering of affection in the seventy-eighth year of my pilgrimage, and permit me to add, that with reverence and heart-contriting thankfulness, I acknowledge the mercy that united me to a religious people, whose genuine principles of faith in Christ Jesus, as a Mediator, a sacrifice for sin, and reconciler to God the Father, through justification and sanctification, is fully satisfying to every faculty of my soul, as the glad tidings of salvation.

Farewell, friends beloved in the fellowship of the Gospel,

—MARY CAPPER.

## TO M. S.

*Birmingham, Sixth month 7th, 1832.*

My kind Friend,

How inexpressible is the privilege of a retired apartment, in the very midst of contention; how privileged we, as a Society are, if we keep within the limits of our religious profession.

I think that “Hancock’s Principles of Peace,” exemplified in the conduct of the Society in Ireland, in 1798, cannot be too attentively and generally read. Whatever may be the result of the unsettled state of nations, kings and kingdoms, there is a ruling Power, above every other power. May this be our help and our shield. Poor devoted Paris! after the destructive pestilence, follows the more destructive desolation of sword and bloodshed. O! for an interceding, praying spirit, for ourselves and for others, that a sure place of refuge may be known.

## TO THE SAME.

*Birmingham, Eighth month 16th, 1832.*

I attended our quarterly meeting held at Shipstone; we were favoured with the company of some choice, ministering friends; John Dymond and wife, etc. etc. Shipstone is a small meeting; I profess myself a lover of society, and I think there is an advantage, especially to the young, in living more in a body together; though no earthly situation is secure from the venom of sin; nor is there a solitude which excludes a Saviour's redeeming love. I was absent longer than I had anticipated, as I felt a little bound, if I may so say, to attend the meeting still annually held at Armscot, a village not far from Tredington. I accompanied dear Sarah Lamley; she is well-known and highly esteemed among the villagers thereaway; and she seems peculiarly qualified to preach in plain, searching language to them. A very large crowded meeting there was. I was also at the small meetings at Camden, Brails, etc. The overshadowing of mercy is to be experienced everywhere. O! how it would flow, did every heart watch and pray.

—MARY CAPPER.

### TO C. C.

*Birmingham, Tenth month 2nd, 1832.*

My dear Friend,

I am concerned to hear that thou art suffering, and I believe it will interest thy affectionate feelings, to learn, that I am again in the school of reduction, I hope not in displeasure, but for my profit and purification. What can we do better, my precious friend, than resign body, soul and spirit to the Power that formed us, and who best knows how to fit and prepare us for a glorious inheritance.

Cloudy days and an oppressive atmosphere may be our portion, in our pilgrimage journey, and I was thinking that we may even look for boisterous gales at times; but in our case, they may only be permitted, I trust, to sweep away the chaff, leaving the substantial grain to be gathered in security.

Accept the unfeigned love of,

—MARY CAPPER.

### TO SAMUEL H.

*Twelfth month 18th, 1832.*

Dear S. H.

Thou art very often in my affectionate thoughts; and this morning more especially, as my heart was tendered before the Lord, I thought of thee, with something like the interest of a Christian mother. It is obvious that thy health is precarious, a consideration that must be trying to a young man, in the opening day of human life, with the prospect of a settlement, as to a maintenance. But, dear Samuel, the Power that mars these prospects,

can provide better things, for his children and people, though seen through a glass darkly. Bear in mind, that however kind, and even amiable, any may be by nature, there must be a change of heart experienced, termed in Scripture a new birth, or new spiritual creation, through the secret operation of Divine Grace in the soul. My measure of experience disposes me to feel tenderly for those in whom this work is begun, because I am aware that it must be carried forward through humiliations and close provings and searchings of heart. Nature has her strong holds; but be not discouraged though the triumph of Grace be a great work. The Divine Power is above every other power, and can complete as well as begin that which is our sanctification. I know there are times when our faith is so weak that we can scarcely read and understand the Scriptures; this is no new thing; our prayers too may seem unavailing, and clouds of thick darkness may appear to envelope us; but we must persevere in earnest, wrestling prayer, though it may only be with sighs, and conflict unutterable. And dear Samuel, I would say, enter into no disputations.

Your affectionate friend,

—MARY CAPPER.

TO \_\_\_\_\_.

*Twelfth month 26th. 1832.*

I seem gratefully constrained to acknowledge thy cordial Christian salutation; how inexpressibly precious is Christian fellowship! it is a feeling which has no fellow. My heart was tendered in reading thy lines, at a time when the pure life was low, though I may thankfully say it is yet preserved. No marvel if there is a secret sense of sorrow for the too general prevalence of spiritual deadness, and for our own imperfect views of heavenly things, the ways of our God being past our finding out.

But when the redeemed, sanctified soul shall be unclothed of the frail body, then shall we know as we are known, of Him who purchased salvation for us. Great and glorious is the new and living way which he has cast up for faithful believers to walk in. When pondering these things, all that is spiritually alive within me seems to be humbled and contrited, under a sense of the infinite condescension that has turned my feet into this blessed way.

—MARY CAPPER.

**TO KATHARINE BACKHOUSE**

*Birmingham, Fourth month 4th, 1833.*

I do not say short and evil have been the days of my sojourn, though ignorance and folly have had their share therein. Never did I view heavenly mercy, free and pardoning Grace, brought to light by our Redeemer and Saviour, more clearly, more consolingly, than in these times of stripping, when self has not a rag to clothe itself

with. I believe that those are not our most favoured moments wherein the subtlety of self can take a part; but that when the good leaven is deeply hidden, it works the designed end.

### TO JOHN AND SARAH GRUBB.

*Birmingham, Fifth month 24th, 1833.*

My dear Christian Friends,

Contenders for the faith, or the Truth, as it is in Jesus! Still ye are called to labour, the end not being yet, when the faithful shall receive their full hire. At this time of renewed exercise, you are again fresh in my remembrance; there is fellowship in the lowly valley of humiliation, however differing in degree and circumstances.

In my solitude, may I say it with reverence, a spark of spiritual life is mercifully kept from total obscurity, though death and darkness seem, at times, to hover round me. O! the mercy that glimmers, or arises out of darkness. Surely our Heavenly Father deals gently with the feeble of the flock. I can bear my testimony to his protecting power, the internal evidence, manifested in the soul. O! how it checks, how it teaches, how it guides from childhood to the oldest age, just according to our state, obedience opening the way to an enlargement of spiritual understanding. Marvellous are the Lord's dealings with his humbled, patient, believing children. O! that there was a believing heart in every child of man; there would be no need to puzzle and bewilder the mind, in things too high for us; secret things would be left to the Lord. I am set much as a solitary one, though in the bosom of kind friends. Shall I be presumptuous if I record, with feelings of great seriousness, that my prevailing exercise in this my latter day, is secret, wrestling prayer, oft on the bended knees, in my quiet, secluded chamber. My spirit craves for more evident marks of godly simplicity among the Quakers, so called. I am one of those who mark the boasted "march of intellect" with a jealous fear. The refinements of our day seem, in my view, to draw the mind from under the cross of Christ. According to my observation, we are not the plain, unfashionable people that, if faithful, we should be. We are too generally intermingled with the manners and maxims of the times. Everlasting Mercy can yet turn and overturn, and settle a faithful people.

Farewell, dear friends, subjoins,

—MARY CAPPER.

### TO C. B. C.

*Birmingham, Fifth month 31st, 1833.*

My kindly affectionate Friend,

As I sit solitary, and contemplate the close of time, the mind being measurably free from care as to this life (which with thankfulness I may record is mercifully my allotment) the thoughts of the heart take a wide range, and I think of my fellow-probationers, in their diversified circumstances. If there were not a heavenly pilot,

through storms and clouds, what should we do? The most skilful human mariner could not steer the vessel aright, nor save her from wreck.

I think, with tender sympathy of thee, and of thy dear parents in their suffering; but there is the consoling evidence of the building being on the sure foundation, the Rock of Salvation, that cannot fail; though the body be dissolved, the redeemed soul will return to God, as a glorified spirit. There is strong consolation for the humble believer, in the unalterable mercies which are in Christ Jesus; though bereavements are permitted, and we are left to mourn, but not without hope, nor even without, at seasons, a transient view, as it were, of the glorious mansions prepared for those who have held fast their confidence in redeeming love and power, unto the end of the Christian warfare. Accept the grateful acknowledgement of the love of

Thy oft-obliged friend,

—MARY CAPPER.

#### **FROM SARAH GRUBB TO MARY CAPPER.**

*Stoke Newington, Sixth month 10th, 1833.*

My dear Friend,

Thy salutation of love by letter is precious to us, as the long-continued friendship thou hast evinced has always been. How encouraging it is to see those who made many sacrifices in early life, for the Truth's sake, not satisfied to rest in past experience even of the Lord's goodness, but as those who remember that "He that thinketh he knoweth anything, knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know;" and even in old age, are concerned to go on learning of Him who said, "I am meek and lowly in heart." I am glad that thou canst so fully subscribe to the "Anointing, which is truth and no lie;" the Unction from the Holy One, as an internal evidence, manifested in the soul. What shall we do if we suffer ourselves to be drawn from this blessed Spirit of the Saviour of men, or from the measure thereof, which is given to all for our profit! Where, but within our own hearts shall we find the Comforter and the safe Guide? Surely the Holy Scriptures direct us to Christ! Surely the holy Scriptures direct us to Christ within, the hope of glory; but now we are told, that in looking for inward direction, we subject ourselves to error; and that the Gospel is to be found in the scriptures, where there is "clear, comprehensible truth," and "a direct message from God." True, the Scriptures came by inspiration of God; yet, in my view, the same inspiration must be with us, to give us to comprehend their spiritual meaning and application; because the natural man, by all his head knowledge and finite capacity, even though he may compare scripture with scripture, and acknowledge to their harmony, is, nevertheless, the natural or unregenerate man still, without the operations of the Spirit in his soul; even that which is the Divine gift to all men, and which, I conceive, brings all who adhere to it, into a converted state, whether they be favored with the inspired writings, which tell of the blessed and holy Redeemer, or whether they be ignorant of them. Must it not be our experience, in order to partake of the benefit of the death and sufferings of Christ, to be brought into obedience unto righteousness? And what can do this for us, but the power of God, or name of Jesus, which is immediately made known to us

by inward revelation thereof?

In short, my dear friend, I feel alarmed in seeing that we, as a community, are in great danger of leaning to the understanding of man, in this day of the truly surprising “march of intellect;” and that, for want of trusting in the Lord with all the heart, we are going off greatly from first principles; intermingling indeed with that which is not distinguished by gospel simplicity, but which has a tendency to bring us to be satisfied with many things, out of which, as a people, we were brought by a strong hand and a stretched out arm, which delivered from the iron hand of cruel persecution, as well as from all false dependence in religion. All will not, however, thus return, either to the maxims and customs of the world, or to the beggarly elements, to be again brought into bondage; a precious seed remaineth, and will remain, however hidden, in which the real life of the crucified Immanuel will be found; and who will by and by come forth, and shine as the children of Him who is light, and in whom is no darkness at all. Yea, I believe it shall yet be the earnest inquiry, relative to such as abide in the truth through all, “Who is she that looketh forth as the morning; fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners?”

Ah! My long loved friend, I am persuaded that thou dost know what thou professest; and the possession of the truth as it is in Jesus, has been thy primary concern in the different stages of life: thou hast now, at times, the certain evidence of having been kept from following “cunningly devised fables;” and I humbly trust that the saying of Him who enabled thee to separate thyself unto Him, from all that is found in the apostacy, will be realized to thee— “Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.” Amen, saith thy ever affectionate friend,

—SARAH GRUBB.

### TO JOHN AND SARAH GRUBB.

*Birmingham, Seventh month 5th. 1833.*

My dear Friends,

I seem constrained to acknowledge the receipt of your interesting communication. My feeble faith still holds out, that the Lord’s own works will praise Him. O! He has done wonders, in generations that were before our days; that passed through the sea and through the cloud, and the Rock followed them, which Rock is Christ, revealed in the soul, believed and cherished, as a Leader and Teacher, made known to the simple, faithful humbled heart. Happy, they who cherish this belief, and truly desire to know the Lord to be their Teacher; for He leadeth gently along. He careth for the lambs, and He feedeth his own sheep, in pastures convenient for their growth; the herbage may be mingled with bitters, but this may prove a strengthening portion.

To you, my much-loved friends, I need not scribble thus; but allow me to say, do not be over much cast down; ’tis the childlike hint of simple childlike love. It is among the Lord’s merciful dealings, that this poor tabernacle has stood the wear and tear of seventy-seven years, without violent disease, though often shattered

and reduced. Through all, redeeming love and mercy lifts up a standard against the enemies of the soul, and my spirits are mostly cheerful. All the sacrifices made in obedience to gentle requireing, in the early part of my spiritual warfare of faith, O! they have been abundantly repaid; yea, seven fold! though it was to the giving up of father, mother and my father's house; with even the man I loved! I record not this to boast; O! no, but, if it might be so, I would encourage a rising generation to obey the "still small voice" manifested within, the Word nigh in the heart.

Accept my love, affectionately,

—MARY CAPPER.

### TO KATHARINE BACKHOUSE

*Seventh month 9th, 1833.*

I was gratified with the short visit of my nephew and niece; their appearance and manners indicating that they are learners in the school of Christ, the good old way. O! it comforteth me. I think I am not quite ignorantly prejudiced against intellectual progress; but I am jealous lest any should depart from under the yoke and cross of Christ; for what would then be the final event! I long for Christian believers, in and out of our own Society, to be more spiritually minded, bound together in true unity, and in the peaceable fellowship of the gospel, in the holy Head. Every sacrifice of self-love and self-will, of the unsanctified part in us, will have an abundant reward.

—MARY CAPPER.

### TO A FRIEND IN AMERICA.

*Birmingham, Seventh month, 1833.*

A fresh spring of tenderness and Christian love seems to flow from the fount new and old, towards the offspring and descendants of those dear well-known kind friends, thy father and mother, who were in kindness as nursing parents in my early entrance into the field of Christian faith, as in that day many sacrifices were called for, and my mental conflicts were not small. With reverence let me record the mercies that have followed me hitherto, and crown my present declining years with a childlike peaceful simplicity. Go on, dear friends, ye rising generation; mind not the lo! here, or lo! there; continue humble learners in the school of Christ, the highest, best academy.

Oh, how sweet is the unity of the Spirit of Jesus, in the bond of universal peace, or love without guile!

—MARY CAPPER.

*In the 79th year of her pilgrimage.*

**TO M. S.**

*Birmingham, Tenth month 14th, 1833.*

My partial Friend,

I am not what I was, previous to the late severe attack, nor do I anticipate full restoration; surely my views rise upward, I hope not presumptuously, but with entire trust, reverent, humble confidence in redeeming mercy, in the atoning sacrifice for sin, whereby the believing heart cries, Abba! my reconciled Father! Ah! my beloved friends, what is there so consoling? And it is sweet to love our fellow-pilgrims through this our wilderness journey; but how far beyond our present feeble conceptions is the view, that when unclothed of these mortal bodies, we shall be translated to the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, and join the church triumphant!

—MARY CAPPER.

**TO SARAH LAMLEY, JR.**

*Birmingham, Third month 30th, 1834.*

Dear Sarah,

You are all often in my thoughts, with the recollection of events and of years passed by, as one of the first interesting “Quaker” families, with whom I was familiar. I have a lively remembrance of early impressions, and my spirit longs, at this day, for a more prevailing sense of what I then felt; but dear S. we must be willing to walk by faith and not by sight, that patience may have her perfect work, I have satisfactory information from Worcester; dear Candia and Sarah Burlingham submit with Christian resignation to their loss of a dear sister. Maria was meek and lowly; a patient, silent sufferer from early years; the close exceedingly sudden, and so calm as to be almost unperceived. I was particularly interested in the long confinement of Dr. \_\_\_\_\_. I believe his views of salvation in Jesus were correct; but O! how a deathbed view, with eternity before us, shows the wood, hay and stubble which must be consumed by fire—the fiery baptism of the Holy Ghost!

—MARY CAPPER.

**TO \_\_\_\_\_.**

*Fourth month 18th, 1834.*

I do very tenderly sympathize with your deeply-trying relative, but there is one unfailing remedy, viz. resignation to whatever a God of mercy and compassion pleases to lay upon us. Surely it is unavailing to struggle with ourselves about sins that we cannot blot out. We should rather bear the condemnation, and sit at the footstool of mercy, with our mouths in the dust. O! this entire, this silent resignation; I believe the evil spirit opposes it, and self-will opposes it, because it proceeds from simple, pure naked faith in the redeeming power of Jesus, the friend and Saviour of sinners, who gave his life a ransom for us, to deliver us from sin. Here the vilest sinner

may take refuge, and be safe.

—MARY CAPPER.

**TO JOHN AND SARAH GRUBB.**

*Birmingham, Fifth month 18th, 1834.*

Dear Friends,

Be not dismayed; the spiritual Head of his own church worketh, and will work, in a way that human wisdom and foresight knoweth not; He will bring his own glorious work to pass, though He leads his faithful servants in a way they know not. You, dear friends, are again entering the field of Christian warfare; bear in mind you are one year nearer the end that crowns all, than you were twelve months gone by. Let not go the right shield, and the battle axe. Everlasting mercy and help is on the side of the humble and devoted, though they have to pass through many tribulations.

As far as condescending favour has led me to discern the work of Divine Grace in the soul, the internal evidences of Christ revealed as the true Light, the Life, the Way to God the Father, O! I dare not enter into doubtful disputation. Often in the day my prayer is to be kept lowly, simple, dependent as a helpless child. My old age, now in my eightieth year, is calm, with abundant cause to be content; yea, very thankful, for innumerable blessings. I lack no earthly accommodation.

Ye dear labourers who have yet to bear the heat and burden of the day, surely your rest will be glorious! This is the view rising before me.

Affectionately,

—MARY CAPPER.

**SARAH GRUBB TO M. CAPPER.**

*London, Fifth month 27th, 1834.*

Dear And Precious Friend,

Thy lively communication, received a few days since, has done me good. How sweet is the sympathy of a mind regulated by the pure principle of Divine grace placed in our hearts! Few letters that come to my hand are fraught with so much encouragement as thine; so genuine is the desire breathed by thy expressions for our preservation every way, and that the good cause may prosper in, by, and through us; and so evident is it, that He who was thy morning light is now thy evening song; as well as that He remains to be like dew which keeps thee fresh and fruitful still.

Yes, thy address to my dear husband and me seems to invite us forward in the race set before us, while we often feel far from either swift or strong. Sometimes I cannot run, only wade through difficulty and much impediment; yet so far my poor mind can acknowledge that they who wait upon the Lord renew their strength; that herein ability is received to mount upward too at seasons, even with wings as eagles; to run, and not be weary; to walk, and not utterly faint. The present is a time peculiarly calculated to depress some of our souls; for yet, within the borders of our religious Society, we find there is too generally a sliding from that situation in which Infinite Wisdom and Power placed our early predecessors; when their light shone as from the hill of the Lord, and men, seeing their good works, were induced to glorify our Heavenly Father. Oh! we are indeed sadly mingled as with the crowd, and it looks as if this might be more the case.

We have heard a great deal of preaching already during this Yearly Meeting, but really we can select but little that has been like the old sort; even as an Apostle spoke of the true gospel ministry, when he said, “Not with enticing words of man’s wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power.”

I could say much more in a plaintive strain, but forbear—let me watch well over my own heart. Besides there is room, amidst all our occasions of sadness, to be humbly thankful that the sure foundation is kept to by a living remnant, and also that a little, yet firm faith is vouchsafed, that the ancient testimonies of the immutable truth will continue to be upheld by at least a few, and the standard raised in its own dignity and simplicity; for let the great and the learned among us say what they will, of further light being manifested to them on gospel truths, than was known in former days, surely, as there is nothing beyond the meridian brightness of the Gospel, and that it was long since proved the sons of the morning of our day as a people, were brought to this, that which has stood the test of ages will stand through all, being truth and righteousness unfailingly; and it requires not the torch of human reason to search it out.

I remain, I trust in that which knows no change,

Thy affectionate friend,

—SARAH GRUBB.

**TO JAMES BACKHOUSE, THEN IN AUSTRALIA.**

*Birmingham, Fifth month 30th, 1834.*

My valued Friend J. B.,

I have sometimes been privileged to see extracts from thy letters to thy dear relatives, etc.

The Good Shepherd knoweth the right time and place, when and how, to feed the scattered flock. He goeth before, and leadeth the blind in a way they knew not, but of his own preparing.

All this, and much more, is well known to thee; I may add to you, dear dedicated servants! I am personally a

stranger to thy companion George W. Walker, but I feel no separation in the best desires of my heart, that the universal Father of mankind, to whom we are reconciled through faith in Jesus Christ, the atonement for sin, the Saviour of the poor contrite sinner, who has no other hope of salvation, may continue to bless you. May He increase our true faith, so that we may avoid all doubts and vain wranglings; simple obedience seems to me much wanting among religious professors.

It is very gratifying that thou rememberest me in the bond of Christian affection; often, very often, do I think of thee, especially in my solitary sitting, in my own apartment. When I call to mind thy report of your favoured retirements, I seem in some imperfect measure, gathered by the One, eternal Power, to the same footstool of Mercy where you are so eminently favoured and comforted,—brought as it were, into the bosom of your own dear absent friends,—pouring forth the spirit of prayer, renewing your spiritual confidence, and afresh resigning all! This is the Lord's doing, and He is greatly to be praised.

I cannot but smile, my Christian brother, when thou designates me “The ancient friend;” though it is true I have lived days and years not a few (fourscore years!), yet, believe me, I feel myself a very child; having to learn a new lesson every day, and to be thankful if the evening bring no condemnation for wilful omission, or any other cause; also that the morning light again arises with renewed mercies.

My health, though never robust, is sufficient for the exertions required; my spirits cheerful; all my wants supplied, and crowned with calm content. What can a Christian, drawing to the close of time, desire more; save to press forward, to the mark for the prize at the end of the race! Accept the simple, sincere love of

—MARY CAPPER.

*In Old England; loved, though not faultless.*

### TO M. S.

*Birmingham, Sixth month 22nd, 1834.*

Thy affectionate partiality will peruse what is now sent with indulgence. I have not made any particular remark respecting joining the Society unto which I at this day consider it an unspeakable favour to be united. The religious principles professed by us, in their purity, as set forth in the Scriptures, which testify of Jesus, born of a virgin, as foretold, to bruise the head of the serpent, yea, manifested in the flesh, and dying to redeem the fallen race of Adam, and to cast up a new and holy way of access to God the Father—these principles have been, and are still from time to time, so far opened to my spiritual understanding, that my heart is at rest. As to the result of what conviction has wrought in my life and manners, since united in your favoured fellowship, my familiar friends must testify. I can only add, that I am bound in gratitude to acknowledge the gentle hand of Mercy that has guided me hitherto, and joined me in strong affection to the Society, and satisfied my seeking mind as to the genuine gospel principles of salvation.

—MARY CAPPER.

[It is probably the following series of reflections to which Mary Capper alludes in the foregoing letter; as they bear date about this time.]

*Birmingham, Sixth month, 1834.*

After a considerable lapse of time, now in the eightieth year of my age, yet a sojourner and a pilgrim, pressing forward as not having attained all that my soul longeth after, I have this testimony to bear. Being lively, active and volatile in my early years, I account it not one of the least of many mercies that my natural frame was feeble, and that sometimes I was much reduced by sickness. At these seasons, O! marvellous mercy! I was favoured with much tenderness of spirit, and shed secret, soothing, precious tears, in an indescribable sense that God was very good, and that He saw me; and I think I did breathe the prayer that I might not be left to my own guidance.

When sin and sinfulness were set before me, in the times of my folly, and I felt not the sweet, gentle balm of our Heavenly Father's favour, I did inwardly mourn, and did ignorantly, if not sinfully, wish that I had never been born. For many years, under a variety of outward changes or events, the secret, progressive work (may I not say, the genuine power of pure religion) was preparing the way for clearer views respecting the soul's salvation. In these babe-like days, whatever I found to obstruct daily prayer—lowly supplication at the throne of mercy, seemed in my view sinful, and must be overcome. Verily I have found it, and I do still find it, a wrestling warfare! The new birth is a marvellous work; a complete spiritual creation, with all things new, is not wrought by the reasoning powers of the natural man. God the Father reveals the Son in us, as the Light, the Life and the Way; and gives us power to believe in Him also as the atoning sacrifice for sin, whereby we have access to a reconciled God and universal Father. This spiritual view of salvation, as set forth in the Scriptures, and abundantly testified by the faithful of former generations,—this atoning Sacrifice, this Way of redemption, (begun, carried on and perfected for me and in me,) is the rock and ground of my Christian faith, and of my hope of acceptance, when this mortal shall put on immortality.

My simple, yet reverent testimony is to the marvellous love of God, in Christ Jesus, as the guide of youth, and the staff of lengthened years, to those who acknowledge Him in all their ways. My heart rests in the belief that these will not be left to perish through ignorance. Obedience is the test of our sincerity. Acknowledge God in all thy ways, and He will direct thy steps aright, from youth to old age.

—MARY CAPPER.

#### **TO KATHARINE BACKHOUSE**

*Birmingham, Eighth month 27th, 1834.*

My much loved Niece and Relatives.

Shall I meet you with this letter, in the favoured shades of a father's planting! as I have understood that your annual retreat is among trees cultivated by a parent's hand. Whether this may reach you there or not, something alive within me, better than naughty self, seems as it were to unite with your contrited spirits. The Saviour's gentle, sweet, marvellously kind, and feeling language of invitation to his faithful followers, presents, as so beautifully applicable, encouraging and consoling, that I think I must refer to it, namely, "Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest awhile!" I can hardly forbear to copy a few lines from a beautiful comment on these words;

*Gladly we catch the tender sound,  
Which bids us come and rest awhile;  
Come, breathe with me the desert air!  
Come, breathe to God the secret prayer!  
We come! we come!—the harassed soul  
Longs to escape this war of words,  
The clouds of care which round us roll,  
And rest with thee, thou Lord of lords!  
And once again, the bark refit.  
Ere we the quiet haven quit!*

My own "dear little home," as thou so justly termest it, is a prepared place of rest for me. No human contrivance or foresight could have so provided for my ease and accommodation; no anxious cares, no daily solitudes, which press with even lawful weight, in many situations; and what shall I say? reverence and humbling contrition clothe my spirit. Language would fail me to tell of the lowly calm, wherein my thoughts are fixed on the mercy which has followed me from my childhood to this day. In my lowest estate I have the anchor of hope, and dare not cherish unbelief, nor unprofitably dwell on things too high for my present comprehension. Even my very weakness proves an exercise of faith and patience. These things I write, not so much for your instruction, as to signify that we are fellow-contenders for the end of our faith—the salvation of our souls.

I mark thy observation on the too frequent and familiar mention of the name of the blessed Saviour, both in public and private. Through faith in this name, my belief is that we shall be saved; but the solemn admonition sometimes rises before me, "Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." O! I long to depart from all iniquity; this is a marvellous work of the Lord's beginning, carrying on, and perfecting.

—MARY CAPPER.

## Chapter XIII

*Death of her brothers John and James—Reflections—Extracts from letters, etc., from 1835 to 1838—Deep spiritual conflict—Relief therefrom*

*Reflections On the Fluctuation of Thoughts.* First month, 1835. It has a little opened to my understanding, that as involuntary thoughts are not at our command, we are only responsible as we willingly cherish, and bring them into action. Secret evil suggestions, which we cannot prevent, arising probably from the yet-permitted power of an unsanctified spirit, are not our thoughts, so long as they are a grief and burden to our hearts; and truly they are humiliating, permitted doubtless in order to humble us, and to shew us what yet remains of the unrenewed, evil nature, or it is possible, that after having measurably experienced, yea! testified, to the power and efficacy of redeeming Love, we might be tempted to conclude that the great work of sanctification was complete, and thus be lulled into a false rest, and forget, or neglect, the important injunction, "Watch and pray!"

*Memorandum.* Third month 4th, 1835. This morning's post brought the affecting tidings, that my dear brother James Capper died in London; he was a dearly loved kind brother.

TO M. S.

*Birmingham, Third month 12th, 1835.*

My kind Friend,

Thy unfeigned sympathy is truly cordial to me; also thy kindness in sending the lovely harbingers of spring, which now adorn my apartment and cheer me. I thought, as I separated them, (and now think with a sigh of tender sadness) could my beloved brother James have entered my room, he would have admired their beauties, and said, with his usual courtesy, "And how nicely sister Mary has arranged them!" Ah! how memory brings to mind his gentleness in early life, his patience with my untowardness; and in maturer days, his liberality in pleading my cause, as being of an age to judge for myself respecting the most acceptable way of worshipping God. I do not remember ever to have heard an unkind word from his lips, or a harsh censure, on any occasion. My precious brother was, for a season, deeply humbled under a sense of his unworthiness; although he had preached Christ, as the Saviour of sinners, he feared that he had not done all that he might have done for those under his care. I have not yet received full particulars, as the survivors have been occupied in the removal of the body to Wilmington, where he had long been known as a father and a Christian counsellor. But I have not a doubt regarding the spirit, redeemed and sanctified by a Saviour's love and power; being stripped of every rag of self-righteousness, it will be clothed in the fine linen, clean and white. This is my hope and consolation for myself and my dear friends, I do feel these privations, in my lengthened life; yet I should be an ungrateful

receiver of continued mercies and privileges, if a murmuring or discontented thought were cherished in my heart. Thy kind correspondent brings my mouth to the dust, so to speak, O! if a spark of genuine good desire has ever been kindled, through so weak an instrument, the praise belongs to a higher Power. Farewell, my dear friend! with all whom the Father of mercies has given thee.

Thus subscribes thy affectionate friend,

—MARY CAPPER.

### TO THE SAME.

*Fourth month 17th, 1835.*

The changeable weather is unfavourable to my frail tabernacle; fourscore years is no short period, but marvellous are the gentle dealings; the wearing down is gradual, without any violent dilapidation; but with mild warnings, the great and merciful Lord of all is pleased to instruct me. My prayer is, "Teach me Thyself." Yea, Lord! permit me to be numbered with the children who are taught of Thee, as an aged disciple, sitting at thy feet, with my mouth in the dust; only in favoured times, if it may so be, in my feeble way, setting forth thy condescending goodness toward thy rational creation, formed for immortality and glory. Thus my long-valued friend, I have desired to be led in a plain path, from my early years; far from disputation, or speculation on things too high for me, but in simple obedience; and through the vicissitudes of my long life, I have been favoured with a measure of inward tranquillity, a little foretaste of that peace which this world cannot give, but which is all of mercy.

—MARY CAPPER.

*Memorandum.* Received intelligence of the final close of my dear brother, John Capper, the eldest of our large family; the remaining links of the chain are now only two; my youngest brother and myself. My dear brother John died on the 26th of the fourth month, 1835.

### TO E. S.

*Fifth month 9th, 1835.*

My oft-remembered young friend, and fellow-probationer, in a land of pits and snares! I wish to give thee a prompt assurance that I have read thy last communication with very tender feeling and interest. If my experience can avail anything for thy help and encouragement, I would say, fret not thyself at the present strife of words! It is nothing new. Controversies and strange voices have existed ever since the fall of man, disobedience having marred the divine image. Enduring mercy, in tender compassion, made a new covenant, in order to redeem mankind, according to the Scriptures, which testify that the Son of God was manifested in the flesh,—a body prepared of the Father; this he laid down, as a sacrifice for the sins of the world; suffering, the Just for the

unjust, that He might bring us to God. And in his spiritual appearance. He is made known to the simple, obedient believer, who will not follow the voice of the stranger; for the voice of the stranger he knows not.

As sheep then of the Good Shepherd's fold, may we, my beloved young friend, press into this safe enclosure, and quietly leave all controversy to those whose food it is. Cultivate inward stillness, that thou mayst be favoured to know the secret teaching of the Holy Spirit. Meddle not with argument. What comes to thy ear, unsought, bear patiently; guard against excitement; wrestle in prayer, both for thyself and others, for strength, if in the right, still in the right to stay; if not, that heavenly Wisdom may teach the better way.

—MARY CAPPER.

### TO JOHN AND SARAH GRUBB.

*Fifth month 15th, 1835.*

Ye dear Labourers,

Be faithful unto death! There is a rest, unpolluted by the strife of words. Controversy has no place in the heavenly city. As one drawing nigh to the end of time, who has indeed been tenderly dealt with, I turn from the strange voices of the present day, and intermeddle not. Yet I think I do a little enter into feeling, and Christian sympathy with the faithful, exercised servants, who have to preach the cross of Christ. O! may a Redeemer's love and power keep you, dear friends, and every deeply proved, tried mind, from the tender youth to the aged sojourner on this side the promised land, that ye faint not, nor grow weary in the Lord's work.

—MARY CAPPER.

### TO J. AND KATHARINE BACKHOUSE

*Birmingham, Fifth month, 1835.*

My beloved Relatives,

I contemplate you in London, with divers others, as disciples, or learners from day to day at the feet of Jesus, in the good old school, with your mouths in the dust, while some maybe busy around you, with a zeal to do well, and to serve the Lord. Gentle, yet impressive was the Saviour's rebuke, "Martha! Martha! one thing is needful!" O! blessed privilege, to sit at the Redeemer's feet, to know his voice, to learn of him, in the depth of humiliation, to come unto Him of whom the inspired Scriptures do amply testify. My faith increases in the promises as they stand recorded there; and in the gracious influence of the Holy Spirit, to lead out of all error and into all truth. O! if we had not a merciful High Priest, touched with a feeling of our infirmities, and acquainted with our temptations, what indeed should we do! My spirit is revived by a consoling hope that these clouds and storms, by shaking, to the very foundation, all that can be shaken, will work together for a good end, yet but dimly seen. And I do hope that no unprofitable dismay will obstruct, in any heart, the benefit of

the yearly meeting. Of course it is not for me, a solitary one, to presume upon my feelings; nevertheless I may state, that in some favoured moments of stillness,—in a quiet not to be formed by human skill, and under a secret sense of that Power that brought me among you as a religious body, and that is still the mercy of the present hour, I have had a belief granted me, that this annual gathering will, at times, be favoured with the overshadowing of divine love and mercy.

—MARY CAPPER.

*Seventh month, 1835.*

Marvellous is the condescending mercy that has brought me hitherto, through a wilderness of pits and snares; and in my old age, provided all things for my comfort; and above all, settled my heart in a peaceful state; no more tossed with floating opinions, but watching, waiting and praying to be perfected and fitted for the kingdom of heaven. The Lord's own works can alone praise him!

Had I the pen of a ready writer, or the gift of an evangelist, what could I write more impressive than what has been already written and stands upon sacred record! viz. "Do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with thy God. Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation." All the wit and learning of the most learned men, can never equal the precepts of Scripture.

#### TO SARAH LAMLEY, JR.

*Birmingham, Ninth month 21st, 1835.*

Dear Sarah,

It seems long since we had any communication. Months have passed away, not without solemn events and changes, within the circle of our own kindred; so at least it has been permitted to me, to experience link after link to be broken.

My eldest brother died a few weeks after the decease of my dear brother James, who was educated for a preacher in the established mode of worship, and lived, as a pastor, fifty years at Wilmington in Sussex, where he was beloved and lamented. In life and in death, all his hope of salvation rested on the Rock of Ages, which Rock is Christ: his language in his illness, was, "None but Christ! none but Christ! I wish to embrace Him in all his fulness, to be swallowed up in his love!" The enemy of souls endeavoured to persuade him (says his watchful, affectionate daughter) that he would never attain to what he so earnestly desired, viz. a fitness to meet Christ; but he said, "The waves of the sea are mighty, but the Lord on high is mightier!" and at times, after a sore conflict, he would break forth into praises. He was much in prayer for himself and for others; petitioning his heavenly Father to look upon him, and to have pity; often repeating, "Mercy is all my plea." In his dying moments, being asked if he was comfortable in the assurance that Jesus would receive him, he replied "Yes;"

and with his usual tenderness, added, “and you too!” These were his last words.

I hope this little extract, so interesting to me, will not be intrusive. I wish to convey, as far as expression can do it, my very dear love to thy mother, who, with my own soul, longs to be found at the mercy seat, waiting for the fulness of redeeming love and power.

—MARY CAPPER.

### TO E. C.

*Dale End, Ninth month 29th, 1835.*

Dear absent Friends,

Oft-times present in mental view—it is pleasant to hear of your rational enjoyments, surrounded by a part of your family—permitted to leave lawful and domestic cares in their lawful places for awhile. Surely this is a privilege, best and rightly appreciated by the grateful thankful heart, that traces all our blessings, all our genuine gratifications, temporal and spiritual, to their marvellous, inexhaustible Source, the one true spring of mercy to the soul of man, which includes the rational creation, the world over.

I think we had a sweet, short little meeting in our reduced number this morning. We had the company of the dear aged Christian minister, William Rickman, His meek and humble testimony, to that portion of peace which is the fruit or reward of faithful dedication, was precious indeed—and to my thoughts seemed to flow like sweet odour, or Gilead’s balm—a short impressive address to the school boys, was also instructive. The report of the dear man’s kind reception by divers Friends, with his public services, as mentioned by his companion, and his own grateful acknowledgement, are particularly consoling.

I shall send you a poor scrawl, as the shades of the evening now seem to come over us almost unawares. I wish you at any rate to be assured, that your kind tokens of affectionate remembrance in the repeated messages of love, are very cordial, and the response is centered in that one emphatic word—Love.

Including you all, parents and kind children, in the precious bond of union, I subscribe affectionately,

—MARY CAPPER.

### FRAGMENT ON PRAYER; ADDRESSED TO A FRIEND.

*Eleventh month, 1835.*

With diffidence, as ever becomes me, I am willing to attempt expressing my ideas on the subject alluded to in our late conversation. I am aware that my understanding is very limited, but I think my simple views are not irreconcilable with precept and example in the inspired records. Can there be anything more imperative than

the command, "Watch and pray!" or any language more sweet and encouraging than "Pray unto thy Father, who seeth in secret?"

Doubtless Christians should live in the spirit of prayer. "It is the Christian's vital breath;" and marvellous is the privilege, unto this day and hour, of communion with the Almighty Power, God over all, who breathed that breath of life whereby we became living souls! By the same Almighty Power, we are kept from the path of destruction. Sweet is the inviting language of our Redeemer, who has cast up a new and consecrated way, by which we have access to the mercy seat. "When ye pray," said He, "say, Our Father!" Glorious privilege! that while clothed with human nature, feeling and mourning; our omissions and our commissions, we may "kneel before the Lord our Maker," in prostration of body, soul and spirit! Although utterance may fail, there is an availing sigh, a tear of contrition, and a Spirit, better than our own, helping our infirmities! I allude not to any forms, but to the real, humble breathings of the soul, athirst for the living God.

—MARY CAPPER.

[On the 26th of the first month, 1836, died Sarah Lamley, of Tredington, after a short and suffering illness; this event was much felt by Mary Capper. In allusion to it, and also to a recent illness with which she had herself been tried, she thus writes:]

**TO SARAH LAMLEY, JR.**

*Birmingham, Third month 1st, 1836.*

Dear Sarah,

I have abundant cause for thankfulness, having been tenderly cared for in my weak state, and supplied with all the comforts that I needed. Above all, I hope I write it with reverence, my mind was mercifully kept in peace; no doubts troubled me; but, marvellous condescension! the spiritual Guide of my youth (so far as I have been an obedient learner in the best of schools) has brought me hitherto; and with my whole heart, I trust He will be my Guide all my journey through; the staff and stay of my lengthened day!

Very often do I think of your dear valued mother; memory retraces the many calm and peaceful hours in your little circle, the pleasant steps in your garden, when your precious mother examined and admired the opening buds and flowers. These liberal gifts we contemplated as coming from Him who adorns this lower world, and who cheers the grateful mind upon the way to that glorious city, where anticipation shall be lost in fruition. May your Christian mother's blessing rest upon her children's children! Express my love to thy sister, etc. Farewell, my dear friend.

Affectionately I subscribe,

—MARY CAPPER

## TO KATHARINE BACKHOUSE

*Birmingham, Third month 3rd, 1836.*

I lament the separation of some promising ones; their being driven by strange voices and tumults from attention to the still, small voice of the Good Shepherd. O! my heart pities, and when enabled, breathes the secret prayer for the sheep scattered from the true fold—the quiet habitation. Never, my dear relatives, did I more appreciate the privilege of being joined to a Christian people,—to the Society to which I am favoured to be united by increasing conviction at this day, of its pure, unsophisticated, gospel principles. The Shepherd of the sheep is indeed good. O! how gently He leads the simple, as the flock and the children can bear it.

—MARY CAPPER.

## TO A RELATION.

*Third month 4th, 1836.*

The secret language and aspiration of my spirit is, O! that our youth, entering the field of faith and of responsibility, O! that they may be kept from the strange disputations of this day. But why think it strange? Look at the history of mankind from the fall of Adam; disobedience has marked every succeeding generation; subtle device or open rebellion has drawn aside thousands, and continues, in various ways, to allure and deceive the children of men. The natural, uncontrolled, active mind delights in doing something that shall appear goodly; yea, can make sacrifices in its own will and way, and is gratified in self-complacency, and it may be applause; yea, in external acts of religious worship. My long life and observation, tossed and sifted as I have been, have given me a measure of experience in the delusions of self. O! how different, how widely different, from the lowly, humble waiting at the feet of Jesus, the highest Teacher, as with our mouths in the dust; feeling our own impotency, our own blindness! Here is subjugation indeed, bearing the true cross. Ah! my dear, say not in thine heart, "Who shall show us any good?" who shall ascend, or who shall descend, to bring our best Teacher? Believe me. He is nigh thee; the living Word! writing the new covenant on the tablet of thy heart. Believe and obey this, and thou wilt be led gently along, as thou canst bear it. When we are faithful in the little, the way is made for farther manifestations of the Divine will concerning us. Avoid speculations, and vainly exercising thyself in things too high for thee. If I know anything of true peace, it is in simple, childlike obedience to the still, small voice of the Good Shepherd, who instructs the lambs and sheep of his fold; a stranger's voice they will not know nor follow.

This gracious, enduring mercy was the Guide of my youth, turning my steps into the narrow way; and it is the stay and the staff of my old age; and never did I more fully appreciate what I believe to be the genuine principles of the Society to which I am conscientiously united, than at this day.

Sacrifices not a few have been called for, but not one which is not doubly repaid by sweet peace. Not one painful accusation is permitted to trouble me; thankfulness and cheerfulness clothing my spirit, in the midst of

great reduction of bodily strength.

Though I know not the heart of a parent, I feel much for the rising generation; if there was not faith in an over-ruling Power, our poor thoughts might trouble, if not overwhelm us; for what a sifting day is this, among professors of religion! our own little favoured band not exempt. There seems a prevailing mania, a strife of words and of strange voices! But the Good Shepherd knoweth his own sheep, and they follow Him.

### TO M. S.

*Birmingham, Third month 12th, 1836.*

My kind Friend,

Little less than miraculous is the restoration of this poor body! it is marvellous in my view, and I believe in the view of those who witnessed the almost suspension of animal life. For what end thus re-animated, I know not; it is enough for me to know that the Giver of life is good, though I am blind. I am still weak, though I can walk alone from my easy chair to my desk, use my pen as thou mayst perceive, and value the privilege, as I can relieve my affectionate friends from anxiety on my account. I have been very tenderly cared for; indeed the friends of my youth have been more than replaced. Wonderful favours and mercies have been added to my lengthened days. Time would fail, and language be insufficient, to set forth the mercy that keeps my mind calm, lowly, dependent as a child, disposed to learn at the feet of a crucified Lord. My heart compassionates those who have left the Guide of their youth, or who have not yet known the witness for God in themselves, the Spirit that leadeth out of error into the plain path of duty. O! my precious friend, if we were faithful to the dictates of this Spirit, how many snares and entanglements we should escape; and how would the bitters, mingled by a Sovereign hand, be sweetened!

—MARY CAPPER.

### TO J. AND KATHARINE BACKHOUSE

*Birmingham, Fourth month 5th, 1836.*

The recent intelligence of your devoted kinsman James Backhouse, and his companion, with satisfactory accounts from Daniel Wheeler, are consoling evidences that the universal Father still regards his rational creation as one family, however circumstances may differ; our limited capacities see dimly, and we too often lightly esteem our own mercies. With reverence, at this day, I am ready to testify, that although the surrender of dear very dear parents (for I was prohibited the paternal roof,) and of a strong, heart-engaged attachment, led me indeed in a way that I knew not, yet I was favoured with an internal calm that could not argue the matter; to all enquiries, I could only answer, that my peace of mind seemed to depend upon simple obedience. And still, in this dependent, childlike state, humbled by a sense of my evil propensities, which brings me to the foot of

the cross, I can now say that every sacrifice made in obedience, is rewarded an hundred fold; infinite adorable mercy crowning the poor worthless offerings of his children, with the assurance that He accepts them, and that Divine Grace shall be with them, in life and in death.

It seems to me of great importance that there should be no self-complacency, nor creaturely glorying, but true self-reduction, bearing the cross.

—MARY CAPPER.

### TO M. S.

*Fourth month 12th, 1836.*

A bountiful creator continues to allure us to love, obey and praise him. Had I the pen of a ready writer, had I the gift of an evangelist, my theme should be, Praise the Lord! Let everything that hath breath praise Him! The way to praise that Almighty Power, who has formed his rational creation for immortality and glory, is obedience. He has not left us without an internal witness, to manifest our errors and our sins, and to point and to lead into safe paths. I assuredly believe that there was a consciousness of good and evil, even before the Gospel dispensation, which is the fulfilment of prophecy in a Saviour incarnate. Glad tidings indeed! Glory to God in the highest! Peace on earth; good will to men! ratified by a new covenant, written in the heart, and confirmed by Scripture testimony, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save us from our sins,—to redeem us from all iniquity. What can be more convincing? Our restless wanderings arise from the neglect of watching unto prayer, and daily bearing the subduing cross.

—MARY CAPPER,

### TO KATHARINE BACKHOUSE

*Birmingham, Fourth month 30th, 1836.*

My very dear Niece,

This doubtless is a time of mourning, and of tenderly sympathizing in the bereavement of thy dear relations; there are other causes for mourning also, of which I doubt not thou art sensible. I would that I could comfort thee, but thou hast a better Comforter. The spirit and power of true consolation is nigh, though it may not always be discerned by those who are cast down. O! how sweet is the belief that they who are kept through tribulation, at the foot of the cross, are in safe keeping! It is my desire that we may not cherish anxiety with regard to the things which are brought upon us, in this our day. Old things revived, as respects our Society. Misapprehension or misrepresentation, and want of faithfulness among ourselves, have assuredly brought about a Babel confusion; but there is no diminution of that Power which can bring good out of evil, and cause the vain efforts of his creatures to promote his own gracious purposes.

I am endeavouring to look beyond the cloud, when (if my natural day be not so prolonged) others may be favoured to see the Sun of Righteousness shine gloriously.

I remain affectionately, thy aunt,

—MARY CAPPER.

### TO JOHN AND SARAH GRUBB.

*Birmingham, Fifth month 13th, 1836.*

My beloved Friends,

Shall I once more greet you with the language of affectionate encouragement? Though the sun, in the visible firmament be in eclipse, it is not lost. The creative Power that gave it for an external light remains the same; even the universal Father of mankind, good, very good to all who seek aright to know and to obey Him, as his truly dependent children. He who set the visible sun in the sky, has not left his rational creation, formed for immortality, without a witness in the heart, as the Scriptures amply testify. What indeed should we do, if left to doubtful disputation! If the true light in the soul become darkness, how great is that darkness! Watch and pray that the day-spring from on high may again arise upon us as a religious Society, somewhat scattered and shaken. Possessing our souls in patience, may we have compassion one for another! The foundation standeth sure, though there may be builders thereon of wood, hay and stubble.

Well, my dear friends, after this unpremeditated introduction, I recur to what first arose in my thoughts, in viewing you as contending, again and again, for the faith, or unchanged Truth, with fidelity and unwearied diligence. The Spirit of Truth will guide into all truth. O! it is a blessed thing to be docile, humble learners at the foot of the cross.

14th. This is the third or fourth time that I have taken the pen, for I have been cheered by some kind calls from dear labourers, on their way to the yearly meeting. Sadness clothes the spirit as we commune together on the things which are brought upon us. Nothing new! old revilings! After a time of lukewarmness, or living too much at ease, may it not be said, a woe is brought upon us, that availing, spiritual sorrow may spread, and may arouse the dormant faculties to a right and true exercise; and that babes may be fed with the pure milk, prepared for their nourishment, that they may grow thereby, and be able to bear stronger meat, so that they may endure to the end that crowns all, and experience the salvation of the soul, through Him who was crucified for the sin of the world,—the Son of God? “Flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee,” etc. May I not reverently say, the spirit within me prays, with increasing fervency that revealed truth may work the work of righteousness, to the praise and glory of the Holy One.

I think I must conclude with what was in my mind as a beginning; thinking of you, dear friends, there was a sweet, abiding impression that there is a rest, an undefiled everlasting rest, prepared for the patient, faithful

labourer, in the Lord's vineyard. Your work, my precious friends, may not be finished; this glorious rest awaits you, and every true labourer, so believes,

—MARY CAPPER.

#### FROM SARAH GRUBB TO MARY CAPPER.

My Dearly Beloved Friend,

This day thy precious, sweet letter, was handed me. Oh! how truly cheering it is to witness and contemplate the state in which Divine Goodness has kept thee to this day! I can look back to my childhood, when I first saw with wonder the tears flowing from thy eyes in meetings; when thou wast an example to many, of nobly denying self, taking up the cross, and following Him "that endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself," and who has been pleased to lead about and instruct thee ever since; yea, He has kept thee as the apple of His eye; and so I humbly believe He will keep thee to the end; guiding thy feet, the few steps which remain, and ultimately granting an entrance into those blessed regions where none can say, "I am sick;" where there is no more pain, neither any more sorrow; but the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne doth lead to living fountains of water, and all tears are wiped from the eyes forever and ever!

Some, in this our day, are almost ready to adopt the language, "Oh! that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people;" for truly there is amongst us that which lays low the pure, innocent life, that ought to be in the ascendancy; yet my faith is that better times will come, even to this religious Society. There is, I do believe, a living remnant left, who, in being preserved through the shaking which has come terribly upon us, will shine forth by and by, even as the light, and many will come to its brightness, so that there will be Quakers still; those who hold the precious testimonies of the everlasting Gospel in their primitive simplicity and unmixed purity. And surely it is unto the truth as it is in Jesus, that the nations must come, in the fulfilment of the prophecy, "The kingdoms of this world shall be the kingdoms of God, and of His Christ."

We have had some favoured meetings, amidst the opposition to the first principles of Friends, at this our annual gathering. Yes, at seasons, the Lord's own blessed presence and power has been over all, to His own praise; to whom all honour and glory belongs, now and ever. Amen!

My husband sends thee much unfeigned christian love, in which I tenderly unite, and remain

Your ever attached friend,

—SARAH GRUBB.

#### TO HANNAH WATKIN.

*Birmingham, Seventh month 1st, 1836.*

My very dear Friend,

It sometimes seems marvellous in my view that our natural life is lengthened for weeks, months, and it may be years, after being brought as it were to the brink of the grave, looking for the salvation of the soul, through the redeeming love and power of the Saviour, who was crucified for sinners. No other name do we own, or profess to believe, can save us. This I consider as the unchangeable foundation of genuine Quakerism; and it is to be accompanied by a consistency of conduct, not to be controverted, agreeably to the Scriptural doctrine and precepts left upon record by the Highest Teacher, and to the example and testimony of holy men of old. As far as my spiritual understanding has been enlightened, this is what I apprehend to be Truth. Secret things belong to the Lord. My belief is, that sufficient is revealed for our instruction, and that, while persevering, in faithful obedience, we shall find that lowly, peaceful, spiritual poverty is a soul-satisfying reward. I believe it is safe, and best in the present times, to leave judgment unto the righteous Judge, as to this or that; and to take the impressive counsel, "What is that to thee? Follow thou Me!" I hope not to weary thee, dear friend. I think only to add, that Christian union, love and fellowship, were never more precious, nor more binding to my fellow-professors in the Society to which I have been conscientiously united for upwards of fifty years; and I am so far from being dissatisfied, that in my most favoured seasons, I daily contemplate it as a mercy. Farewell affectionately,

—MARY CAPPER.

#### **FROM S. K. A CHILD FIVE YEARS OLD, TO MARY CAPPER.**

My dear Friend,

I should like to hear thee talk to me about heaven, where dear little children go when they are good; and if thou wilt be pleased to see me, I shall be glad to see thee; please, when will it be a suitable time?

I love thee, and am thy friend,

—S. K.

#### **ANSWER FROM MARY CAPPER**

*Dale End, Eighth month 14th, 1836.*

Dear little Friend,

I am quite pleased with thy little letter, and I am glad that thou lovest me, for I have much love for children; and I am glad when they wish to be good, and to know something about that Saviour, Jesus, of whom we read in the Bible.

When I was a little girl, I had naughty tempers. I wished to be good, and I often cried when I was alone, because

I wanted to be good all at once. I was like thee, dear child, too young to understand that I must be patient and humble, and learn that Jesus Christ came into the world to save us from our sins, and our naughty tempers, and to make us gentle, patient and obedient. We cannot see the blessed Jesus as He appeared in this world in time past; yet his mercy, love and power are over us all; to take away our perverse dispositions, and to prepare us for heaven, that happy place, where all are good, happy, and blessed forever. That thou, dear S. mayst be one of those who are eternally blessed, is the affectionate desire of

Thy friend,

—MARY CAPPER.

### TO C. B. C.

*Birmingham, Ninth month 21st, 1836.*

My kind and dear Friend,

Thy affectionate communication was, as ever, very cordially accepted. That thy precious mother will witness the best of Comforters to be near, through all bereavements and trials, I doubt not. My best love is to her. The foundation stands sure that unites the humble followers of the Redeemer. This is my hope and my anchor. My soul longs and breathes, in the spirit of prayer, for preservation, in this day of sifting. Sometimes I think in my solitude, that perhaps I enter, in proportion to what I can bear, into what some dear fellow-probationers have to sustain, in the present state of our religious Society. My heart mourns; but I know not what to do better than to leave all unto that Wisdom that ruleth over all. In our deep humiliation, we may be dumb with silence; but O! if we can trace the hand of the Lord in it, we may take courage, and hold on our lowly way, as disciples of a crucified Saviour, bearing his cross from day to day, until we put off these corruptible bodies, and rise triumphant over all opposition, through that Power that conquers death, hell and the grave. That I may really be a humble waiter, in patience, at my Saviour's feet, is daily the petition of my soul, and that I may tenderly feel for, and with my conflicting friends.

—MARY CAPPER.

### TO KATHARINE BACKHOUSE

*Tenth month 21st, 1836.*

If it be from the Lord, doubtless his tender compassion will bring me through the searching trial which has brought me very low, in mind and body, and yet keeps me so. As I write, I feel a fear of taking myself out of the Lord's hand; for he alone can perfect his own work,—the great work of entire sanctification. On the receipt of thy letter, O! how I wished that I were worthy to mourn with those who mourn for the state of things among us. To bear a part in the sufferings and afflictions of the true disciples of a crucified Saviour, seems indeed

a privilege.

—MARY CAPPER.

### TO THE SAME.

*Birmingham, Eleventh month 15th, 1836.*

My dear brother James used to say of his wife, that she remained as a bruised reed; so I think I may say it is with me; but with the cheering hope, if not the abiding belief, that enduring mercy will not break that which is bruised, nor quench the smoking flax. My soul longs for an increase of faith, patience and resignation. If the tender sympathy, and I believe I may add, the prayers, of dear affectionate friends are availing, surely I may be encouraged. I am greatly surprised at the interest manifested on my behalf; it excites the strong cry at the mercy-seat, that I may not be permitted to bring sorrow or dismay upon the Christian believers, nor dishonour upon the glorious cause of the Redeemer.

—MARY CAPPER.

[About this period Mary Capper had to pass through much distress of mind, in consequence of the departure of some whom she dearly loved, from that path of simplicity and self-denial into which her own feet had been turned, in early life, and which she still considered “the more excellent way.” Her sorrow on observing that some of these were counting light of those views and practices, which it had cost her much to adopt, was so deep that it materially affected her health and spirits for a time; but He who saw the integrity of her heart, and who watched over her with a Father’s love, was pleased, after a season of proving, to remove the burden, and to grant her a renewal of faith and of confidence, enabling her again to go on her way rejoicing. She thus describes her state in a letter.]

### TO KATHARINE BACKHOUSE

*Birmingham, Third month 15th, 1837.*

I have abundant cause to take fresh courage and be thankful; for a consoling hope, and lowly Confidence in redeeming, sanctifying Power, cheers the path-way before me. My general health gradually improves, and my cough is abated; and how shall I describe the favour of being permitted to lie down in peace, and to take rest in safety, under a protecting Power! Thus, my dear niece, I am tenderly dealt with. I go to our religious meetings once in the day; and though faith and patience be tried, the hope of finally reaping the rich harvest of promise, urges my spirit to press onward, through all that may at times cloud the beatific vision. I walk out most mornings, rising about seven o’clock; my faithful, valued handmaiden reads portions of Scripture to me; the day is spent mostly in solitude, and closes with reading a chapter or two in the Bible, when I am early ready and thankful to retire.

[About the same date, she thus writes:]

### TO A FRIEND.

Thou wouldst no doubt hear, from time to time, of the state of my health as precarious; indeed I was much confined to my apartments, and yet remain very feeble. But my spirit is relieved, in mercy, from a distressing exercise, which almost seemed to separate from the consolations of adoption through the Saviour. Now, in a humble, lowly calm, with watchfulness unto prayer, and that continually, a plain path in the strait and narrow way seems set before me; turning neither to the right nor to the left, to hear what others may say, but keeping in view what first brought my wandering feet from the broad way.

### TO JOHN AND SARAH GRUBB.

*Fifth month, 1837.*

Ye dear Labourers,

As ambassadors it may be, oft-times in bonds, it is in my heart once more to attempt to greet you, in a measure of that love which, I cherish the hope, is a badge of discipleship.

I cannot say that none of the things, brought upon us at the present day, move me; in measure I think I participate in the clothing of sackcloth and mourning; perhaps it is a sign of life, to mourn with those who rightly mourn for the desolation spread among us. For my own part, I dare not step out of the strait and narrow way, which I believe is cast up as a safe path for me to walk in, by faith in the redeeming Power of a crucified, glorified Saviour, manifested in the humbled soul, as the true light and life, which opens the blind eye, and leads in the way of salvation. I am sensible that consoling evidences may be veiled; that bright vision may fail, in a long, dark and gloomy day; the cloud resting upon the tabernacle. Is not this the trial and proving of our faith even at the present time? But with thee and thy dear husband and family, I look forward with cheering hope that brighter days are in store for those, who in faithfulness, hold fast their confidence in the mercy and love of our Heavenly Father, as a reconciled God. Divine compassion can alone begin, carry on, and perfect his own glorious work; my impotence and ignorance keep me, as I think, at the Saviour's feet.

—MARY CAPPER.

### TO KATHARINE BACKHOUSE

*Fifth month 29th, 1837.*

My beloved Niece,

Morning by morning my thoughts seem to bring to my view the dear exercised labourers of the present day. Solitary and useless as I apprehend myself to be, my best desires, in favoured seasons, are earnest, in the

spirit of supplication, that heavenly mercy may be manifested to heal the wounded spirit, to strengthen the feeble-minded, and to confirm our faith in the one sacrifice for sin; that we may know the effect of sanctifying Power, while passing through this time of probation. My heart seems to press after the experience of a prepared state for a prepared place.

—MARY CAPPER.

#### TO THE SAME.

*Birmingham, Twelfth month 14th, 1837.*

Cough and debility keep me much confined, though I am favoured to attend most of our religious meetings; and with the ability given, I think my heart has united with those who are exercised in desire that we may experience a revival of spirituality, with that faith which produces a right preparation to worship in spirit and truth. O! for a more powerful sense of this in all our religious assemblies. Lowly, persevering waiting at the Redeemer's feet, seems to me the watchword for the present time. My dear niece, may Israel's Shepherd keep thee, and all who are dear to thee, with my own soul, nigh to the mercy-seat, and finally complete his own glorious work of salvation!

Thy aunt,

—MARY CAPPER.

#### TO B. AND C. C.

*Second month 22nd, 1838.*

Much loved Friends,

There never was a day in which I so fully entered into sympathy with my fellow believers in the sure mercies of God in Christ Jesus. Though these may have received, in favoured seasons past, sweet evidences of walking acceptably in the Divine presence, yet at the present time (it may be for the accomplishment of the Lord's purposes,—for the completion of his own work) the poor, disconsolate traveller may seem to be forsaken. I do know something of this continued warfare; but in adorable mercy, the wrestling soul can hear the cheering language, "All is not lost that is out of sight."

With you, my precious friends, my desire and prayer is, to look, beyond all doubts and fears, to a gracious Redeemer, whose power is above all; for we may feelingly adopt the language, "This is mine infirmity!"

Very affectionately,

—MARY CAPPER.

TO \_\_\_\_\_,

*Birmingham, Second month 29th, 1838.*

My fellow-probationer,

For whom I continue to feel an affectionate Christian interest. I think thy letter would not have lain so long unacknowledged, had I anything to offer that could minister availing instruction. My limited experience however, leads me to cherish tender sympathy with every one who is convinced of the sinfulness of sin, and of our depravity by nature.

It is recorded in Scripture, from the Highest authority, "A man must be born again, or he cannot see, or enter, the kingdom of heaven." This new birth, or new creation, is a blessed change of heart; all things become new; new thoughts, new desires, and new views of ourselves. I may venture to say, that it appears to me, that thy present humiliating sense of gross commissions, with thy mournful retrospect thereof, and thy turning from thy unrighteous ways, are tokens of mercy, that thou art not forsaken, or given up to hardness of heart, so long as a secret spirit of prayer, or good desire, is raised, and kept alive in thee.

Although, as yet, thou art tossed and not comforted, remember, there must be a time of trial, ere the soul can come to rest on the Rock of salvation. We are assured, that "To know the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent, is life eternal." This is a knowledge too high for the natural comprehension; but we are also assured, that the grace of God, or the Holy Spirit, is given unto us to profit withal, as testified by holy men of old, and by faithful Christians, from generation to generation. The Holy Spirit, the Saviour's gift, is to this day my Comforter, carrying on, as I humbly hope, the great work of sanctification throughout, in body, soul and spirit. From my early years, I had a secret belief that religion was pure and holy, and that it led to purity and holiness of life; and I was induced to consider that the Society of Friends manifested more consistency of manners and conduct, than was discoverable among others.

The fundamental faith of the Society in a crucified Saviour, as a Redeemer, and a reconciler to God the Father, I have never doubted; and had there been more faithful obedience to that Spirit which leads out of error, I am inclined to believe we had not been so scattered a people as we are at this day. My enfeebled state of body and mind disqualifies me from entering into argument. My peace seems to be in quietness, and in holding fast my confidence; taking a retrospective view of the way in which I have been kept and led hitherto. With an earnest desire for the welfare of souls, for thee and thy dear family, I remain affectionately thy friend,

—MARY CAPPER.

**TO JOHN AND SARAH GRUBB.**

*Birmingham, Fifth month 19th, 1838.*

My precious Friends,

Although my powers of communication are at a low ebb, I would most willingly, with unfeigned, uniting love, again greet you. Your dear children also seem to have place in my best desires, that they may be safely kept in the lowly valley, and patiently abide the sittings and provings of this day. I think I do enter into tender sympathy with a rising generation, and with my fellow pilgrims, who may be, at seasons, tossed and not comforted. Nothing less than enduring mercy and goodness can keep alive an availing faith in the Rock of ages,—the Light, the Life, the Power that leads to a life of holiness. My soul presses after this in my present weak estate. Ye dear labourers and faithful servants, may the hope set before you be clear and steadfast. To be willing to bear one another's burdens, to suffer with those who are tempted, buffeted and grievously tried, is the work of the good Spirit, that clothes the Christian believer with the mind that was in Christ, so far as seems meet to perfect wisdom: so that my endeared S. G., I notice, with a measure of grateful admiration, thy willing submission to a restoration of health, and renewed power to be helpful in thy own dear family and to others, by encouragement and example, that they faint not by the way, though it seems rough and thorny. Thy affectionate communications are very welcome and cheering to me.

I was favoured to pass through the protracted winter with as little ailment as the generality of my aged fellow pilgrims, and have been privileged to get to our meetings for worship, almost constantly, having the free use of my limbs at the lengthened period of eighty-three revolving years! But a recent attack of erysipelas has much reduced my mental and bodily powers.

With all my infirmities, the good Spirit is not wholly withdrawn, and I wrestle in prayer for resignation, faith and patience. Accept my imperfect offering, in the love I bear to thee and those most dear to thee.

Affectionately,

—MARY CAPPER.

#### **SARAH GRUBB TO MARY CAPPER.**

*Clapham, Fifth month, 1838.*

Dearly beloved Friend,

Thy sweet and precious letter has done me good. O! how delightful it is to see that some hold on their way, in this day of backsliding. This yearly meeting convinces us that we are still, too generally, a revolting people, and my portion of labour has been much in the line of laying open our condition, and calling back the wanderers; for it seems to me to be a day of renewed visitation. The heavenly Wing is extended to gather into safety; while yet many are not prepared to come under it, for want of being sensible of their danger and of their own helplessness.

There is nevertheless a little band of humble, simple ones, who feel their entire dependence upon the Almighty Helper, and these are very near and dear one unto another, wherever they are, and however circumstanced;

among such is thyself; kept, through Divine mercy, in the holy oneness, maintaining the unity of the Spirit, in the bond of peace; and although some of thy steps, now late in the race, may be painful, I do believe thou wilt find the end to be crowned with peace and satisfaction forever. My dear husband let me come alone this time, he not being vigorous enough to make his coming prudent.

My children feel the tender regard expressed for them in thy letters to me. We seek not great things for them, any more than for ourselves, either as to temporals or spirituals, but true Wisdom, whose ways are pleasantness, and her paths peace. Many are the baptisms, even in youth, known by such as yield to the preparing power, which brings to a holy settlement, on the sure foundation.

It is very sweet, and confirming to some of us, to see Daniel Wheeler return safe and sound, in every sense; and to hear him tell, in a few sentences, of what he has seen of the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deeps, and testify to the sufficiency of Divine Grace, as he has witnessed it in himself and others. He says that if he had entertained any doubts before (which was not the case) concerning a measure and manifestation of the Spirit being granted to all men, they would have been removed by what he has seen among those whose situation in the world left them in ignorance as to the outward, yet who acknowledged to being sensible of the reproofs of the great and good Spirit in their own hearts. Daniel is as tender and as humble as a child, after all that the Lord has wrought by him, as well as for him. I may now take leave of thee, my very dear friend, and remain, I humbly trust, in the fellowship of the gospel, and also a partaker with thee in tribulation.

Thy affectionate friend,

—SARAH GRUBB.

### MARY CAPPER TO KATHARINE BACKHOUSE

*Birmingham, Fifth month 22nd, 1838.*

My spirit does hunger and thirst for an increase of holiness,—for complete sanctification. We seem very much stripped in our religious gatherings; may we cherish the hope that spiritual strength and confidence may be renewed! This is not a day with us as a Society, to proclaim that our cup runneth over with heavenly consolation; nevertheless my earnest prayer is, that I may be kept from turning aside, and that mercy may crown all with the everlasting anthem of thanksgiving.

### TO THE SAME.

*Birmingham, Sixth month 10th, 1838.*

I have had satisfactory reports of the yearly meeting, and Elizabeth Robson called upon me, and confirmed the encouraging intelligence, that we are not a forsaken people. I believe that if there was more individual faithfulness, we should be more conspicuously favoured with light, life and power, as a spiritually minded

people, who having left the shadow, are pressing after the substance.

Second-day. I have now had the gratification of seeing my dear nephew and niece Mounsey, and I hope we were mutually refreshed with something better than the wine of the best grapes of Canaan.

—MARY CAPPER.

### TO SARAH LAMLEY

*Birmingham, Sixth month 22nd, 1838.*

Dear S. L.,

Although a considerable lapse of time may occur between our communications, I am satisfied it enters not our thoughts, that we are forgotten by each other. Many a sweet and uniting recollection arises in the retrospect of days past, when we were favoured to participate in that refreshment, which renews our faith and our confidence in redeeming love and power, which is unalterable, though we may witness so many changes, that we may seem comparable to the solitary in a family. I am not a stranger to a feeling something like this; but the spirit of prayer earnestly breathes in secret for patient submission to the preparing hand of our Lord; and while thus enduring the separation of the precious from the vile, we may truly, and very tenderly, feel with and for one another; and when so favoured, rejoice together in a grateful sense of continued mercies. I understand that at the yearly meeting, condescending goodness and mercy were measurably experienced; so I was informed by a dear aged friend, Alexander Cruikshank, of Scotland, humble and tender in spirit. O! that there were more, of such consistency of life, and circumspect conversation, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit; then I do believe the genuine foundation of our faith and hope of salvation would be more manifest. The savour of this dear friend's spirit seems to remain as precious odour spread around. I understand that dear, aged William Rickman was a faithful testimony bearer, in London this year, being upwards of ninety-two.

—MARY CAPPER.

### TO KATHARINE BACKHOUSE

Most likely thou hast been informed that thy dear brother is in London, in obedience to his religious duty. O! what a favour that there are those yet to be found among us, to preach the gospel to the poor, the wretched; yea! the most degraded of the human race. I can scarcely credit the result of thy patience, in arranging the almost voluminous scribbling consigned to thy care. If aught of interest or usefulness can be found, I am most willing that thou shouldst have the selection, and consider it very kind that thou art willing to take the encumbrance. In concluding these words, my dear niece, I am reverently conscious that it would be ungrateful not to acknowledge the tender mercy of our Heavenly Father, which has kept me, from my youth to this day, from following on in the broad way that leads to destruction. For this, his revealed power, and redeeming love, be rendered glory and praise!

[In explanation of the foregoing remark, it may be proper to observe, that Mary Capper entrusted her journals, etc. to the editor, some years before her decease; and then supplied some of the earlier pages of this memoir; but it is to be regretted that her memory could not then furnish some connecting links which would have been desirable and useful. It is hoped, however, that the pious walk of this lowly-minded hand-maiden of the Lord, is sufficiently manifest in these pages, to add one more to the many inducements which are held forth, to follow in the footsteps of the flock of Christ,—even of those who obey the voice of the good Shepherd, and walk in his paths.]

### TO KATHARINE BACKHOUSE

*Birmingham, Tenth month 25th, 1838.*

In my eighty-fourth year, I seem but as a child; the sustaining arm of mercy is still underneath, or faith and hope would fail, as I am in some measure alive to the exercises brought upon us, as a religious body, at this day. Surely there must be a backsliding from our genuine principles,—a departure from the faith, that Jesus Christ, the Son and Sent of the Father, died for sinners; that his atoning sacrifice, with all its wonder-working effects, too high for human comprehension, brought light and life, or grace into the dark heart of our fallen race, and most mercifully put us into a capacity to experience salvation. O! how superior is this dispensation to the Mosaic, with its types and figurative ceremonies.

How is it, my dear niece, that I have ventured thus to pen my views? My heart, in unison, with every humble believer, longs and presses after the knowledge of God our Saviour; whom truly to know is life eternal; and as a weaned child I am, at times, quieted. May I be thankful for countless favours daily bestowed!

### TO THE SAME.

*Birmingham, Twelfth month 4th, 1838.*

As the end of my lengthened life draws nigh, my hope of salvation is still in the Saviour. Thy retrospect of the close of time to thy precious parents is very impressive; it is consoling to contemplate the mercy which we have good ground to believe, prepared, and has gathered their sanctified souls into the kingdom where sin, the root and germ of sorrow, can no more disturb, neither interrupt the undefiled rest of the ransomed of the Lord! I cherish it as a token for good, that we are brought to each other's particular remembrance in our most favoured times. May we not accept it as a sweet, encouraging evidence of the power that baptizes into one Spirit, by the "one baptism," which is beyond elementary washing or dipping, or any thing perishable?

10th. Our quarterly meeting has appointed a committee, in concurrence with the advice of the yearly meeting, to

visit friends in their families, and to offer affectionate counsel, in that wisdom and discernment which may be granted, that all may be induced to press after holiness and godly simplicity. It is well to be stirred up to enter into self-examination. I think my confidence was somewhat renewed by the visit of four friends to myself.

—MARY CAPPER.

## Chapter XIV

*Extracts from, her last letters, and from some of those of her friends respecting her—Last illness  
—Death*

### TO J. AND KATHARINE BACKHOUSE

*Birlingham, First month 21st, 1839.*

My very dear Relatives,

From day to day I think of your kindness toward me, and my spirit is bowed before the Source from whence all our reciprocal Christian good-will must flow. Something like a glance of a precious future union seems to enliven the present moment, as I pen this, though my body and mind are in a weak state; but I think it is ungrateful to intrude my infirmities on your tender sympathy; rather, with reverence, may I acknowledge a sustaining Power, that keeps the spirit of prayer alive through all. There is much to humble us, and to mourn over; yet there is encouragement for the faithful. Press forward!

### TO T. AND M. S.

*Dale End, Third month 6th, 1839.*

My very kind Friends,

I cannot rest satisfied without attempting some acknowledgment of my grateful acceptance of a gift, so instructively interesting as the life of your truly valuable relative Thomas Shillitoe, with whom I was favoured to be somewhat familiarly acquainted, in the early days of my attachment to a religious Society, unto which, after upwards of fifty years experience, I am still conscientiously bound; not as having attained, but as earnestly pressing after the mark, for the prize of our high calling. I am well aware that consistency with our profession leads to much self-humiliation, and may emphatically be designated the strait and narrow way; but my faith encourages me to believe that it will be crowned with enduring peace, when the redeemed spirit shall enter that undefiled rest which is prepared for the prepared soul.

Accept, dear friends, my affectionate goodwill, with my best desires for your present and eternal blessedness, in the path of obedience to the sanctifying power of a Saviour. With a very grateful sense of your liberality towards me, I subscribe,

—MARY CAPPER.

### TO KATHARINE BACKHOUSE

*Birmingham, Tenth month 4th, 1839.*

I have just parted with my endeared niece. I cherish the hope that we have been favoured to encourage each other, in our desire to be submissive learners in the school of the Redeemer, and to possess an increase of that availing faith which is the root of holiness in all its branches, working by love, to the purifying of the heart. I hope I do not presumptuously express my thoughts on this important subject, or on that of prayer. I have pondered it much, and this morning it has opened in my view, that to manifest by consistency of conduct, that we live in the spirit of prayer, may have an influence on those around us, which we are not conscious of, though our family and connections may not see us on our knees, nor witness our supplications in secret, when the door being shut, we bow low, at the feet of the Redeemer.

With regard to thy last communication, I have thought, when manifested duties succeed each other, how unspeakably great is the mercy that gives the willing mind in the day of power! In this the subjugated heart has nothing to boast, but may persevere, in lowly obedience, whether secret conflict be the allotted portion, or a chastened joy be permitted, in the promotion of the Gospel of peace and salvation. I am daily conscious of diminishing powers, but continue to wrestle for patience; and in unison with, or in answer to, the desires and prayers of my endeared relations, I experience the Comforter to be my help and my shield.

—MARY CAPPER.

### TO C. B. C.

*Eleventh month 3rd, 1839.*

My very dear Friend,

There is a little, all-important word of four letters, that when stamped on the tablet of the heart, is not easily effaced. This is love. This sweet token of union I believe we do gratefully accept and cherish as a precious boon, from the Author of all pure fellowship, I am aware of divers obstacles to our personal intercourse, and I consider, with much tender feeling, thy domestic occupations, which claim the sacrifice of some gratifications; but the place of duty is the place of safety, and will be blessed; so, my dear friend, we must not disturb ourselves, but rather be thankful. In much affection,

—MARY CAPPER.

## TO KATHARINE BACKHOUSE

*Birmingham, Twelfth month 10th, 1839.*

My very dear Niece,

Thy letters bring a grateful sweetness with them; it would be gratifying could I diffuse the same; but length of days, with natural decay, now claims a continuance of that affection which can yet discern a little life in the root. I think we may cherish the belief that a good work is begun in the heart of our dear kinsman; and I do believe there is also a willingness wrought by the same Power, that redeeming love and mercy may perfect the will of our Heavenly Father. As fellow-probationers, we have learned, in some measure, to sympathize with, and it may be in favoured seasons, to pray for one another; knowing that there are many lively enemies, seeking to mar the good work; many a strong hold to be pulled down, and many a dark and cloudy day, ere we obtain the blessing in store for those who hold out to the end.

My dear brother George's greeting, in my own apartment, was almost overwhelming, as I had no previous information of his visit; but we were soon affectionately clasped in each other's arms. I hope he is seriously disposed to look beyond the present scene. He visited the receptacle of the dead, where the bodies of our parents, etc. are deposited in a vault; but I have no desire that my poor body should be laid there. My soul rather aspires to be fitted to join the ransomed of the Lord in heaven.

I apprehend that B. S.'s labours among us are drawing to a conclusion; we have much bestowed upon us, in instruction, reproof, warning and encouragement. I am afraid of taking up a rest in consolations, as suffering seems the allotment of the present day; and I do petition for patient submission to whatever may be brought upon me, either by the conscious increase of mental and bodily weakness, or in a measure of Christian sympathy with my fellow travellers Zionward.

—MARY CAPPER.

## TO THE SAME.

*Birmingham, First month 18th, 1840.*

My affectionately kind Niece,

I do desire gratefully to acknowledge the mercy that produces so much interest in what concerns my welfare. It is marvellous in my view; and in my present weak estate, I cleave to the Power that thus condescends to uphold me, and to spread the feeling of sympathy far and wide. My bodily frame is in a very debilitated state; but when the cheering sun-beams break through the mist, I almost long to be in the air, and again to be privileged to meet my fellow-Christian professors, and unite in waiting upon the Lord.

—MARY CAPPER.

[Mary Capper did not again rise much out of the state of feebleness which she here describes; but she continued to enjoy, during the remaining years of her protracted life, a comfortable degree of health, and was capable, to the last, of enjoying the Society of her friends, to whom she ever continued to be affectionately attached. Some of her relations, who visited her in the spring of 1840, among whom was the editor of this volume, found her in a strikingly happy and holy state of mind,—a state which seems best described by the word, heavenly. She retained the power of epistolary correspondence for some time after this period, and continued to manifest her interest in the welfare of others, as the following extracts from her letters will testify. She thus addressed her niece Katharine Backhouse during the yearly meeting:]

*Birmingham, Fifth month 22nd, 1840.*

My endeared Niece,

My thoughts, with some of the best desires that I am favoured to feel in my solitude, seem to bring into mental view, the dear dedicated Friends, now sitting together; in reverence and lowliness of mind, waiting for a renewal of strength to press on, toward the unpolluted rest, prepared for the redeemed, sanctified soul; patience having her perfect work. Though my present ability is small, it is gratifying to myself, even thus imperfectly, to greet thee by the way. I hear thy dear brother is liberated to return home after his arduous engagement in the environs of London. I think it a privilege to feel tender sympathy with such labourers.

**TO THE SAME.**

*Birmingham, Eleventh month 28th. 1840.*

My affectionate Niece,

In reply to thy kind inquiries, my general health is better than it was, and I am favoured to have some relish for my food, and ability for calm repose, when I retire to my comfortable bed; favours indeed reverently to be acknowledged! Yet I mourn the low estate of my mental and spiritual powers, and I long to be more patient and resigned, trusting in the Rock of my salvation.

I take my little rambles most days, though we have fogs and rain. I am not so painfully sensible of the state of the atmosphere as some afflicted individuals, who find great difficulty in breathing. O! what tender dealings towards me, a poor helpless creature.

**TO THE SAME.**

*Birmingham, First month 9th, 1841.*

My beloved Niece,

Mercy sees fit to add another opening year to my long life. O! may the refining process go on, to perfect that which is still wanting. I crept out to meeting on first-day morning, and was not so faithful as I possibly ought to have been; not from actual unwillingness, but from very weakness; but with gratitude may I express it, enduring Goodness clothed my spirit with a lowly calm. What condescending tenderness and compassion!

**TO THE SAME.**

*Birmingham, Seventh month 20th, 1841.*

My dear Niece and Relations,

I would convey as impressively as I can, my affectionate thoughts toward you, in this time of anticipating a personal separation, mutually and deeply felt, though under circumstances the most favourable, sanctioned by deliberate consideration and prayer. I trust it is a movement under Divine direction. In this belief, may sweet peace clothe your spirits, and enduring Mercy crown all! This, in my enfeebled state, is the secret breathing of my soul for you. I feel an affectionate interest in your dear daughter's present and future prospects; with the consoling belief that He who has been her help and shield will continue so to be.

**TO THE SAME.**

*Birmingham, Ninth month 14th, 1841.*

My beloved Niece,

The affecting intelligence of my dear nephew's sudden illness is deeply impressive, though thy few lines are relieving. O! what a crown, on all the blessings and favours received, is it, when in the hour of deep affliction, every murmuring thought is subdued, and the accuser rebuked.

I think of you, my endeared relatives, as under the humbling hand of sorrow; and I endeavour to cherish the sustaining hope that thus the good Shepherd of the sheep is extending the crook of his love, to gather, and to prepare the immortal spirit for a place in the heavenly kingdom, to be forever with the Lord.

With sincere affection, I subscribe,

—MARY CAPPER.

**FROM JAMES BACKHOUSE TO J. AND KATHARINE BACKHOUSE**

*York, Second month 18th, 1842*

My dear Cousins,

I do not recollect, that in my last, I mentioned your aged relative Mary Capper, who appeared to me much

enfeebled. She spoke of the approach of her end, as feeling an earnest desire to depart and be with her Saviour, but said that she could nevertheless say, "Not my will, but Thine be done," and that she had many comforts to be thankful for, of the least of which she was unworthy. She feelingly expressed her sense of helplessness, and of dependence on Divine support; and her heart seemed overflowing with love to her friends. She is an encouraging example of the power of religion in old age; and while her heart expands in Christian love towards all, she retains a clear and strong attachment to those views, or rather, I might more properly say, to those experiences of Christianity to which true Friends through faith have attained. I thought this little notice of your honourable relation was due to you; and should I see her no more, to her memory.

Your affectionate cousin,

—JAMES BACKHOUSE.

[On a subsequent occasion, James Backhouse, in writing of a call made on Mary Capper, soon after his return from his labours abroad, makes the following observations:]

"In the course of conversation, she informed me, that she had adopted the principles of total abstinence as regards intoxicating liquors; that, though on the first mention of the subject, she had doubted its propriety, yet on reflecting upon it, and considering the numbers led away into inebriety, and that all these began their course of drunkenness by taking intoxicating liquors in what had been thought to be moderation, she came to the resolution, that no one should be able to plead her example for taking them at all. At the time she left them off, she was upwards of eighty years of age, and in the practice of taking a single glass of wine daily with her dinner; and having been for many years unable to take animal food, this glass of wine had been thought almost essential to her existence, especially as she had been accustomed to it from an early period of her life. She told me that she expected to have something to suffer, in making this change, and that she might probably have to endure a greater sense of feebleness during the remainder of her days; but the welfare of those by whom she was surrounded, and on whom her example might have some influence, she considered to be of much greater importance. On making the trial, she was however agreeably disappointed; for though she felt some languor for a few days, she soon became sensible of an increase of strength, and was more vigorous without the wine than she had been with it; so that she had cause to commemorate the goodness by which she had been enabled to make this little sacrifice. And I believe that her example in this respect, as well as her Christian practice exhibited in a great variety of other points, had a beneficial influence on many.

[Mary Capper, about this time, began to feel almost unequal to use her pen, in order to cheer and animate her friends to persevere in their Christian race; so that while her interest in the best welfare of all continued unabated, she could no longer testify it by her lively epistles. The following is believed to be one of the last that she was able to write; it was addressed:]

## TO HER NIECE KATHARINE BACKHOUSE

*Birmingham, Ninth month 16th, 1842.*

My beloved Niece,

Gratitude constrains me again to attempt to acknowledge the welcome reception of thy encouraging communication. It is an unspeakable favour that a time of rest is granted. My bodily health is measurably restored, yet increasing infirmities keep me much confined, though I do creep out a little, but have not, of late, ventured to attend our meetings for worship, which is a real trial; though I know I am not alone in trial, as you, my dear relations, can testify, in your deep sorrows. Your affectionate aunt,

—MARY CAPPER.

[From this time to the end of her days, she was most affectionately cared for, as she had long been, by the family of Richard Cadbury, to all of whom she was strongly attached, and who, in her enfeebled state, added to their former kindnesses, that of keeping her relations informed of her health, etc. A few extracts from these letters and from those of some other friends who visited her in her declining days, will give a better idea of the manner in which the remainder of her life glided away, than any other outline could do, and will doubtless be acceptable to the reader, who may have, thus far, traced her steps.]

## FROM E. CADBURY TO KATHARINE BACKHOUSE

*Edgbaston, Fourth month 20th, 1843.*

I have still to give thee as favourable an account of thy dear aunt, as at her time of life, can be expected. Last week was our monthly meeting, the whole of which she sat, and seemed less fatigued than some of her younger sisters. She felt a lively interest in the answers to the queries, and spoke feelingly upon several subjects.

Thy letter deeply interested her, respecting the proceedings of some dear friends; she truly rejoices in the enlargement of Zion's borders, and in the prosperity of her helpers.

## FROM R. F. TO KATHARINE BACKHOUSE

*York, Eighth month 9th. 1843.*

My dear Cousin,

We called upon thy dear aunt, who appeared feeble, but in comfortable health; and what gratified us most, was the sweetness and liveliness of her spirit. Her mind seemed clothed with love to all, and I thought I had seldom seen a more encouraging or animating example of a peaceful old age. She said that she felt herself to be a poor unworthy creature, and often wondered how it was that she was so mercifully dealt with and cared for; that

she was endeavouring patiently to wait her appointed time; and that, when her Master called, she thought she should thankfully receive the summons. It was an interview that we shall long remember.

### E. CADBURY TO KATHARINE BACKHOUSE

*Edgbaston, Second month 5th, 1844.*

My dear Cousin,

Thy dear aunt was at meeting yesterday morning, also on fourth-day, when she particularly wished to sit with those who had not gone to our quarterly meeting at Coventry; her company was very acceptable, and she expressed a few words, full of love to her Heavenly Father, and to all the human family. She is often favoured with ability to say a little to the dear children, of whom we have a large number in this place; and her affectionate kindness to them is such, that I think there is scarcely a child but will remember her as long as they live. As she was about to leave my son's yesterday, the three little ones followed her for the parting kiss, pulling her gown, as described by Goldsmith, "To share the good man's smile." Her servant continues as attentive as ever, and I believe she has every comfort.

[Mary Capper continued much in the same state during the remaining months of the year, and bore the winter's cold quite as well as her friends had anticipated, as she was now in her ninetieth year. In the fifth month, 1845, she had a troublesome cough, yet she continued to get out, and was able to attend meetings, in which she sometimes addressed her friends in encouraging language; and on first-day, the 18th, she especially noticed the dear children in her ministry. The next day her medical attendant requested that she would remain in bed, with which she reluctantly complied. In deed, so unconscious was she of the extent of her own feebleness, that on the 21st she wished to be allowed to rise and to go to meeting, that she might sit with the few who were gathered, many being absent at the yearly meeting. On the 22nd, fever increased, and her breathing became much affected, so as to alarm the kind friends who surrounded her; but, as one of them remarks, "She seemed peculiarly peaceful, and full of love and gratitude. The exclamation, 'Goodness, mercy and power!' was frequently on her lips. In the evening she took leave of the person under whose roof she resided, evidently under the idea that it might be a last farewell, expressing her desire that a blessing might attend the family for their kindness."

Previous to settling for the night, she requested her faithful attendant to read in the Scriptures to her, as usual. The 14th chapter of John came in course, which was very congenial to her feelings, and she said that she could not have heard a more beautiful chapter, exclaiming, 'O! how beautiful! to go to a mansion prepared for us!' and afterwards she appeared to be fervently engaged in silent prayer. She then spoke of her unworthiness; that she had no merit of her own, but that it was all of the Lord's mercy.

During the night she was much engaged in prayer, and the words 'O! Father!' often escaped her lips. She

remarked to her servant, that she would be rewarded, for her affectionate kindness to her, both here and in heaven.

About eight o'clock in the morning of the 23rd, she proposed having her knitting, and endeavoured to put on her spectacles, but the powers of the frail tabernacle were failing, and she speedily and gently passed away; to enter, as we reverently believe, into that mansion prepared for her by the Saviour; where, clothed in the spotless robe of his righteousness, we humbly trust she is uttering the anthem of praise.

To her last moments, love was the covering of her spirit, and she continued to recognize her friends, and to manifest it to them. A feeling of great solemnity was over those who were privileged to be present at the close of the life of this devoted servant of the Lord, which took place about eleven o'clock in the forenoon. Having done her day's work in the day time, she was ready to accept the gracious invitation, and to enter into the joy of her Lord.

Several of the poor to whom she had long been kind, desired to be allowed to visit the remains; and one of her great nephews, who was on the spot, and who had long been an attentive and kind helper to her, remarks, that the feeling shewn by these poor neighbours proved that she had been a Dorcas among them.

The interment took place on the 1st of the sixth month, 1845, and was a very solemn and instructive time.

In reviewing the long life of this dear friend, the mind is powerfully impressed with the truth of the Scripture declaration, "Him that honoureth me I will honour;" for how do we see it verified in every stage of her life! She sought to honour her Lord in all things, and He dignified her with his gifts and graces, and enabled her to glorify Him while on earth; preparing her, through his redeeming love and mercy to celebrate his praise forever in Heaven.]

### **A Testimony of Warwickshire North monthly meeting, concerning Mary Capper, deceased.**

Our late dear and valued friend Mary Capper was born in 1755, at Rugely, Staffordshire, In a letter written to a relation in 1835, from which most of the subsequent extracts have been taken, she commemorates the Divine grace by which she was preserved throughout the course of a long life, in the following language: "In the present day it seems as if all was swallowed up in mercy, and in the marvellous watchful care which kept me in the days of my ignorance from wandering far in the broad way, and has brought me hitherto, through a wilderness of pits and snares, and above all, has settled my heart in a calm, peaceful,

lowly state, no more tossed with floating opinions, but watching, waiting, and praying yet to be perfected and fitted for the kingdom of Heaven.” Her parents were members of the national establishment, and brought her up in the strict observance of its rites and ceremonies: she says “My dear and valued parents accustomed their children to read the Scriptures, my beloved mother especially, to whom I often read, and asked questions relative to some passages when I was about eight or ten years old.” Whilst quite young she spent a considerable time at Macclesfield, under the care of an aunt, where she was allowed to accompany her young companions to the theatre, and other places of amusement, nor was she at that time sensible of the evil tendency of such practices. The first impression of a contrary nature distinctly remembered, appears to have been during a residence at Birmingham, which she says “was whilst on my knees at my accustomed evening prayers: my thoughts being confused and dissipated, I lay down comfortless, believing that whatever distracted or hindered prayer must be wrong; this impression rested with me, and from time to time led to deep reflection and secret conflict; the witness for truth left me not, and as little sacrifices, such as declining gay parties, seemed to yield a peaceful calm, I was favoured with resolution to persevere.” She also says, “I was at times, and many times, in earlier life, very thoughtful as to the genuine effect of religion on the mind; my constitution was weak, which I have considered a favour (amongst others,) as my nature was volatile, and I was much left as to outward restraints.” She gradually became increasingly serious, but for several years made little alteration in her manners or personal appearance.

In 1776 she went to France, on account of the precarious state of her health, and that she might be qualified by education to obtain for herself, if needful, a respectable maintenance. Whilst there she was much exposed to dissipating company, but appears to have been remarkably preserved: soon after her return an obvious change took place in her religious views, and she remarks: “In process of time I could not conform to what I had been taught as being necessary to salvation; I kept much retired without attending any place of worship, or having a view to any, although I think I had been at a Friends’ meeting for worship at Birmingham, but do not call to mind any particular impression, saving a tenderness of spirit, I think to tears.” It appeal’s, however, from a manuscript journal kept by our dear friend, that whilst making a short stay in London on her way to France, she was introduced to several members of our Society, from whom she received considerable information relative to our principles, and in whose company she attended a meeting for worship in Gracechurch-street. She resided for some time with her brother, who was a minister of the Episcopal establishment: whilst under his roof, she was brought into very close exercise of mind respecting taking what is termed the sacrament, which she says “was administered by my brother with much solemnity;” but she adds, “The best of teachers was pleased to calm and quiet my mind on a subject so important, that I no more repeated the ceremony.”

About the year 1784 she went to reside with one of her brothers in London, and became a regular attender of our religious meetings. She says, “On my decidedly going to Friends’ meetings, my dear father, no doubt in faithfulness to his own religious views, and the desire to rescue a poor child from apprehended error, desired not my return to the parental roof, unless I could be satisfied with the religious education he had

conscientiously given me; this, with a tender heart-piercing remonstrance from my dear mother, was far more deeply felt than I can describe, and marvellous in my view, even to this day, was the settled, firm belief, that I must follow on to know the soul's salvation for myself, truly in a way, that I knew not."

Mary Capper was settled within the compass of Peel monthly meeting, and was admitted into membership by that meeting about the year 1788. Whilst residing in London she believed herself called upon to express a few words in our meetings for worship, which she thus describes. "I have no distinct recollection as to any serious thoughts of speaking in a religious meeting; it sometimes arose in my view, that possibly I might have to tell unto others how I had been taught and kept from the broad way of destruction, but a few words arising in my mind with something of unusual power, I think at the Peel meeting, I stood up and spoke them, and was very quiet, nor did I anticipate or foresee that such a thing might ever be again, and thus was I led on from time to time, not knowing but each time might be the last."

Our dear friend removed to Birmingham in 1789, and in 1794 she was recommended to the meeting of ministers and elders; in reference to which she remarks, "I know not that I ever questioned the propriety of such a step, yet really so simple, so like a childlike learner to this day, I know not that I can claim the awful, important character of a gospel minister." Her travels in the work of the ministry were a good deal confined to her own and the neighbouring quarterly meetings; in many of her religious visits she united with her friend, Mary Beesley, of Worcester.

In addition to several journeys nearer home, they visited in 1798, Friends of Bristol and Somersetshire, and in 1800 they united in a visit to the meetings and families of Friends in Oxfordshire. In 1803 she was liberated to unite with the same friend, then Mary Lewis, in a visit to Hampshire, Somersetshire, and Devonshire.

In 1811 Mary Capper removed to Leominster, and was recommended from thence back to Birmingham in 1816, where she resided until her death. In 1823 she was liberated for service in and about London, and in 1826 she visited the meetings and families of Friends in Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, and part of Leicestershire, which appears to have been her last engagement of this nature away from home.

Her ministry was sound and of a spiritual character; having herself largely partaken of the conflict between flesh and spirit, she was often concerned to encourage the sincere-hearted patiently to submit to these proving seasons, looking for effectual help to the light and power of our Lord Jesus Christ, and frequently whilst suffering from a sense of the low state of things amongst us, as a religious Society, she looked forward with encouragement and hope towards a brighter period. She was accustomed, both in her ministry and in conversation, to express the great objection she felt to a disputatious spirit, particularly when exercised in matters relating to doctrine, recommending her young friends, who were anxiously inquiring after truth, to wait for the unfoldings of Divine light, which in due time would make known all that was needful for their salvation, if they were faithful to that which was already manifested to them; and stating her belief that such would never be suffered to perish for lack of knowledge.

Our dear friend was very exemplary in the attendance of our meetings for worship and discipline, even in the latter part of her life, when her bodily powers were much weakened. She felt a lively interest in the spiritual and temporal welfare of her friends, was ever ready to afford advice or assistance to those who stood in need of it, and with very limited means was an example of contentment, and liberality to the poor. Her correspondence, until within a few years of her death, was extensive, and many of her letters were addressed to those who were in affliction, or who she thought in some way needed her affectionate remembrance or sympathy; and for usefulness in this way she appeared peculiarly qualified.

The natural cheerfulness of her disposition, and her uniform kindness and courtesy, endeared her to all who were acquainted with her, and rendered her society both pleasant and instructive. She was firmly attached to the principles of our religious Society, believing them to be in full accordance with the New Testament, but largely cherished Christian love and charity to all those who conscientiously differed from her. In a letter written to a friend in the eightieth year of her age, she says, "I am bound in gratitude to acknowledge the gentle hand of mercy which has guided me hitherto, and joined me in strong affection to the Society, and satisfied my seeking mind as to the genuine gospel principles of salvation." In a memorandum made about the same time, after referring to the earlier part of her Christian experience, she proceeds: "The sinfulness of sin in all its subtleties is not discovered all at once, neither is the efficacy of Divine grace manifested in its fulness, but as we can bear it, obedience keeping pace in deep abasement and humiliation with the Spirit revealed,—God the Father revealing the Son in us, the Light, the Life, the Way, wherein we come to a view, though yet faint and imperfect, of the atoning sacrifice for sin, with the new and living way cast up for the redeemed to walk in, and whereby we have access to a reconciled God and universal Father. My simple, yet reverent testimony is to the love, the marvellous love of God, as the guide of our youth, and the staff of lengthened years, to those who acknowledge Him in all their ways."

Our dear friend was at meeting on the morning of the first-day previous to her decease, and was enabled to address her friends in encouraging language, and spoke particularly to the dear children. The day following she was so unwell that it was thought desirable to send for her medical attendant, and on fourth-day morning, being hardly aware that her weakness rendered it impracticable, she wished to be dressed that she might go to meeting, remarking that many friends were absent attending the yearly meeting, and she wished to assemble with those who remained. To a friend who called upon her after meeting she said, she hoped she should not be cast off in her old age; the friend replied, she believed she would not, that she had done her work in the day. "Ah!" she remarked, addressing herself to those about her, "You will feel a comfort in such a day as this, that you have been engaged in His service."

On fifth-day she became much worse, several friends called to see her, with whom she conversed very cheerfully, and although she did not appear aware that she should see them no more, she parted from them very affectionately. Previous to settling for the night, she said to her attendant, "I think thou hast not read to me in the Bible today," and expressed a wish to hear a portion of it; the chapter in course was the 14th of John, beginning "Let not your heart be troubled," which seemed very consoling to her;

as the reading proceeded she responded to it, and spoke of the boundless goodness, mercy, and power of God, saying, "How beautiful to go to a mansion ready prepared for us, and if such should be my happy experience it will indeed be all of mercy, unmerited mercy." She appeared to be much engaged in prayer during the night. In the morning her bodily powers were evidently fast failing; after this she spoke but little, and about eleven o'clock in the forenoon her purified spirit gently passed away, exchanging, we doubt not, through the mercy and mediation of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, an earthly for a heavenly habitation.

She died on the 23rd of the fifth month, 1845, in the ninety-first year of her age, a minister about fifty-five years.