

Preface

Friendly Reader,

It has pleased Almighty God, in the riches of his love and mercy, from the time transgression first entered, whereby man lost his primitive state of felicity with his Creator in paradise, to give some manifestation of his good spirit, and revelation of the promised Seed; in order to man's restoration from death to life, whereby the serpent's head has been bruised in some, through faith therein, as by holy record does appear; of which number, in early time, righteous Abel was one, whose offering and person the Lord accepted, and had respect unto. There were also some others, in the succeeding generations before the flood, as Enoch, who walked with God in well-pleasing; and Noah, a preacher of righteousness; although the ungodly world in general rebelled against it, to their destruction and overthrow.

After the deluge, the holy patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph and others, by faith in this holy Seed, were sanctified, obtained a good report, and wrought righteousness in their generations, before the law was given from mount Sinai. And even in the time of the law, righteous men and prophets had faith therein, being inspired thereby; yet many of the Jews, who had the law, and were zealous in the outward performances thereof, not having a due regard to the Seed or Word nigh in their hearts, recommended by Moses, which would have sanctified them, and made their hearts contrite before the Lord, rebelled against him who gave them of his good spirit to instruct them; and though zealous for the ceremonies, yet rejecting their immediate Monitor, they neglected the weightier matters of the law, and leaned upon outward observations; wherefore their offerings, sacrifices, sabbaths, set feasts and solemn assemblies, although required and appointed in that dispensation, became loathsome and an abomination to the Lord; but such who in uprightness of heart observed the law, were accepted of God, yet looked for a more glorious dispensation to come.

The visible dispensations of God to men have been various, as by angels, the law from mount Sinai, the ministry of the prophets and John the Baptist, sent in the spirit and power of Elias, to prepare the way of the Lord. All which dispensations had a glory in them for their time, though but preparative to one more glorious yet to be revealed. Then, in the fulness of time, Christ Jesus, the Seed of the woman, the Messiah and hope of Israel, was manifested in the flesh, whose day many prophets and righteous men desired to see, and could not, only by faith at a distance, by reason of death.

Now was salvation brought nigh, the kingdom of heaven at hand, and the glad tidings of the Gospel preached to the seed of Abraham; the glory of former dispensations began to wax dim, to such as beheld his glory, which excelled, even the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth; yet many of the Jews could not see it so, nor understand his voice, preaching the kingdom of God in parables, and uttering things that had been kept secret from the foundation of the world; or believe on Him, concerning whom, Moses in the law and the prophets did write; but despised and rejected Him, although

the mighty works, and great miracles which he wrought among them, by the power of his Father, declared him to be the Son of God.

Howbeit, the most glorious Gospel-day was not yet fully revealed, at least with respect to the Gentiles, while our Saviour was in the prepared body, sent only to the house of Israel, in the form of a servant, to fulfill the law and prophets, and things that were written concerning him; but after he had done that work, which the Father had given him to do, in that holy body, and finished the same, by the offering up of himself unto God, as a lamb without spot, a propitiation for the sins of the whole world, he rose again from the dead, appeared to confirm his disciples, and ascended into glory, at the right hand of his Father. Then an open door was set before both Jews and Gentiles, by Jesus Christ, who had consecrated a new and living way through the veil, that is to say, his flesh, and abolished the old covenant, sacrifices, ceremonies, and hand-writing of ordinances, taking it out of the way, and nailing it to his cross, and openly triumphed over principalities and powers.

Now the old covenant was to pass away, and the new covenant to be established, and the priesthood changed, by the great High Priest without sin, and higher than the heavens; made not after the law of a carnal commandment, but by the power of an endless life, a priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek. The law was now to go forth of Zion, from the great Law-giver, and written in the heart, even the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, that sets free from the law of sin and death. Now was the spirit poured forth from on high, in a more plentiful manner upon mankind than in former dispensations, and eminently on believers; whereby many were qualified and anointed, both of Jews and Gentiles, as priests and ministers of the Lord, to attend at his holy altar, in his temple not made with hands, and to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. And the holy apostles, commissioned and endued with power from on high, were to teach all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Ghost, having assurance from Christ, of his being with them to the end of time. By their ministry, and others whom the Lord sent forth, many were converted to God, and added to the church, both of Jews, Greeks, and other nations; being all baptized by one spirit into one body, or church, which was glorious in that day, as a woman clothed with the sun, having the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars: and she brought forth a man-child, who was to rule all nations; but he was caught up unto God, and to his throne, from the great red dragon, that sought to devour him as soon as he was born.

Then the woman, or true church, left, her visible glory, and fled into the wilderness, or obscure place, from the face of the serpent, into a place prepared of God, where she was nourished for a time, times, and half a time, or a thousand two hundred and threescore days, which, in a prophetic sense, is taken to be so many years. And though the dragon sought to drown the woman, by casting waters out of his mouth as a flood after her, yet the earth helped her, and swallowed them up. But a third part of the stars of heaven, or such as had shined as stars in the church, were drawn to the earth by the dragon's tail. There was a great falling-away from the faith of Jesus, as had been foreseen and prophesied of by the holy apostles of the

Lamb; the light of Zion was eclipsed and much veiled, or withdrawn for a season; and a general apostasy came over professed Christians. The smoke of the bottomless pit arose, which darkened sun and air; and out of the smoke came locusts upon the earth, which tormented men. And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and made war with the remnant of her seed, that kept the commandments of God, and had the testimony of Jesus Christ. And he gave unto the monstrous beast, that arose out of the sea, or raging heathen world, his power and his seat, and great authority, who opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven; and those that dwelt on the earth worshipped him, whose names were not written in the Lamb's book of life.

Next arose out of the earth, a place more settled than the sea, a beast with two horns like a lamb, but spoke as a dragon, and exercised the power of the first beast, causing an image to be made for him, unto which he had power to give life, so as to speak, and cause as many as would not worship the image, to be killed: and both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads; and that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.

This beast appears in show somewhat Christian, and under pretence of the Lamb's authority, though acted by the dragon's power, derived from the first beast, compels men to comply with such traditions and ceremonies, for Christian duties, as resemble the customs of the heathen, in their idolatrous worship and superstition; for denying which, and testifying against the same, many faithful followers of Jesus suffered martyrdom, as their predecessors had done before, under the heathen power, or first beast.

Now mystery Babylon, the great, the mother of harlots, and abominations of the earth, was exalted and sat on the beast with ten horns, as queen and bride, pretending to be the true church, and spouse of Christ, decked with gold, precious stones, and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations, and filthiness of her fornications, being drunk with the blood of the saints and martyrs of Jesus. And all nations drank of the wine of her fornication, and the kings of the earth committed fornication with her; and the merchants of the earth waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies. But she shall fall, and become a habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and cage of every unclean and hateful bird. The Lord is calling his people out of her, that they be not partakers of her sins, and that they receive not of her plagues, which shall come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burnt with fire; for strong is the Lord God who judges her. And her merchants shall stand afar off, for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing. And as a millstone cast into the sea, so with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down.

And now the man-child, the Lord from heaven, is again revealed in many of his saints; who by the breath of his mouth, and brightness of his coming, shall destroy the man of sin, that has wrought with all deceivableness of unrighteousness, by signs and lying wonders in them that perish. And the true church is returning out of the wilderness, leaning on her beloved; and shall again appear in her comeliness

and beauty, as a bride adorned for her husband. To her light shall the Gentiles come, and kings to the brightness of her rising, for the glory of the Lord shall arise upon her, and his light shine therein forever. The glorious prophecies of the holy prophets, and servants of the Lord, concerning the latter days must be fulfilled. The knowledge of the Lord shall fill the earth, as the waters cover the sea. The abundance of the sea, or multitudes of people, shall be converted to Zion, the nations shall flow together to the goodness of the Lord, and be gathered to Jerusalem, that is from above, to worship the great King, the Lord of hosts, upon his holy mountain, that shall be established on the top of the mountains, and exalted above the hills, and no hurt or destruction shall be there. The Lamb shall lead his people, and feed them in the pastures of life, and bring them to living fountains of water. The Heir of all things shall inherit his right, and possess the gates of his enemies, who in due time shall all be put under his feet. He shall judge among the nations, and rebuke many people. They shall beat their swords into plow-shares, and spears into pruning-hooks, and come under the peaceable government of the Lamb. For he is King of kings, and Lord of lords, and of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end. And blessed be the Lord, many in this day have in measure witnessed the fulfilling of many of these prophecies, as they relate to particulars, and do know, that the Son of God is come, who has given them an understanding, whereby they know him that is true, and that they are in him that is true, even Jesus Christ, the true God and eternal life; in whom all the promises of God are and shall be fulfilled in their season.

And now the glorious Gospel is again preached, in and to them that dwell upon the earth, that all may fear God, and give glory to his name; and worship him who made heaven and earth, the seas and fountains of water; and no longer worship the beast, or his image, or receive his mark, lest they be cast into the lake that burns with fire forever. For the hour of God's judgments is come, both upon the beast, and all that worship him; and his wrath is revealed from heaven, against all unrighteousness and ungodliness of men, who hold a profession of the truth, or Christian religion, in an unrighteous conduct. For the night of apostasy is far spent, in these northern Islands especially, and the day of the Lord at hand; the gross darkness, which has covered the hearts of many, is in a great measure dispelled, and the true light again shines, that makes manifest and discovers whatsoever is reprobable in religious matters and conduct, in which light all the nations of them that are saved must walk.

And the Lord has endued many with power from on high, and sent them forth, as he did his messengers formerly, to direct and turn people's minds from darkness to light, and from Satan's power to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith in Christ Jesus. Many have received the glad tidings of peace and salvation, freely preached to them by the Lord's ministers, in the authority of the Spirit and power of God, in this mighty day of the Lord which is again revealed, wherein he is come nigh to judgment, that the prince of this world may be cast out of the temple, in which he had exalted himself, and been worshipped as God. The kingdom of God is come, and coming more and more; and the power of his Christ exalting, in the hearts of many, whose right it is to reign; and though the devil and his angels war against him, and for a season be allowed to prevail in dark places of

the earth, so as to destroy the bodies of some of the followers of Christ; yet the Lamb and his followers shall have the victory, and the devil and his angels must be cast into the lake that burns forever.

The Lamb's warfare is not for the destruction of men's lives, but of sin, the works of the devil in men, and the weapons of his followers are not carnal, but mighty through God, to the pulling down of strong holds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. Howbeit the Lamb, who is also the Lion of the tribe of Judah, has power to rule the nations with a rod of iron; therefore blessed are they that abide with and follow the Lamb through tribulations, in faith and patience, until they overcome and have their garments washed and made white in his blood; for they shall reign with him forever.

Of this number, we have cause to believe, this worthy servant of the Lord, William Edmundson, author of the ensuing journal, was one. He was early visited with the in-shinings of the glorious light of this Gospel-day in his own heart, whereby his state was often opened to him, though for a time he did not understand what it was that so enlightened him. He was left an orphan when young and thereby exposed to hardship; and after he grew up went into the army, and continued a soldier some time under the parliament, in the late civil wars in England and Scotland. Being religiously inclined, he grew weary of that manner of life; and delivered up his charge, returning towards his native place in England.

Having been before contracted to a young woman in Derbyshire, he married her, and soon after came into the nation of Ireland, with an intention to settle and trade, but was under inward affliction upon his soul's account. In a little time he went again to England to buy more goods, and being in the northern part among his relations, having an inclination in his mind, he went with two of them to a meeting of the people called Quakers, where, by the ministry of some of the said people, both he and his two relatives were convinced of the way of life. His understanding being opened by the truth, he then perceived that it was the Lord by his holy Spirit, who had been at work in his heart from his youth up. Wherefore he gave up to its manifestations, and loved the Lord's judgments, because of sin, until he was purified, and prepared thereby to be a partaker of mercy, and a chosen vessel for the Lord's service. Returning again to Ireland, and being made willing to bear the cross of Christ, he soon met with various trials for the truth's sake, and had the greater exercise, because there was not then any of the people called Quakers in that nation to have conversation with. His behaviour and deportment so reached both his wife and brother, that they were soon convinced of the truth, and willing to meet with him in his own house, to worship God in spirit, though in outward silence, having refreshing seasons together in the presence of the Lord; and in a little time four more joined with him. About this time John Tiffin, a servant of the Lord, came over from England, who was a strength and comfort to Friends; several were convinced and added to their number.

The Lord was pleased to open the mouth of our said Friend, William Edmundson, in the testimony of Jesus; and being faithful, his gift for the ministry was enlarged, so that he became an able minister of

Christ Jesus, skillful in dividing the word of righteousness, plain and powerful in preaching, sound in doctrine, and profound in the mysteries of God, which were largely communicated to him. As a faithful steward and good scribe instructed into the kingdom, he, by direction of his Lord and Master, brought out of his treasury, things new and old, suitable to the service required of him, for the glory of God and good of souls; being willing to spend and be spent in doing the will of him that called him, not counting his life dear to himself, that he might finish the service and charge committed to his trust with joy, but being sensible of the Lord's call thereunto, gave up cheerfully to follow the Lamb through many tribulations, which attended for his testimony's sake.

He preached the Gospel of Christ freely in this nation, in which he lived and suffered persecution, being often imprisoned in many places; once about fourteen weeks in a close nasty dungeon, among felons and malefactors, where he was almost stifled; frequently stocked, reviled, abused, and his goods made havoc of by covetous men. He also went many times into England, labouring in the work of the Gospel in several parts, and three times into the Islands, or English plantations in America, going the warfare at his own cost, that the Gospel might not be chargeable. He endured hardship as a good soldier of the Lamb, approving himself a faithful minister of Christ, in much patience in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses for the Gospel's sake, in watchings, in fastings, in weariness and painfulness; by pureness, by knowledge, and by the power of God in his ministry, of which he had many seals in this nation and England, and in the Islands of America, whom he had been instrumental in converting to God.

He was in journeyings often, in perils by sea and land, and in the wilderness, both by wild beasts and bloody men, in the time of the Indian wars in America, and by robbers, or rapparees in this nation, in the time of the late calamity, who burnt his house, and carried him away with his two sons, almost naked in the winter season, to kill them; but after much hard usage for several days, they were all three, by the good providence of God, delivered out of their hands.

This our ancient Friend had also exercise and grief by false brethren, that opposed the testimony given him of the Lord, to bear for his name, and was not without affliction from some of his own offspring; yet out of all the Lord delivered and preserved him faithful to a good old age, through good report and evil report; so that near the conclusion of his time he could say. The Lord was his song and his strength. He was strong and courageous in the Lord's work and service, even after a decay came upon the outward man, by reason of age and infirmities, being sound and clear in his understanding to the last.

As he had an excellent gift for the ministry, he was also endued with a large understanding and gift for government and religious discipline in the church of Christ; and having a discerning spirit, stood firm in his zeal against those things that opposed the good order into which the Lord had gathered his people, and such as under fair pretence would open a gap for false liberty. The care of the churches was upon him, especially in this nation, where he lived and laboured many years, both in doctrine and discipline; and as an elder that ruled well, was esteemed highly by the faithful for his work's sake. Temperate he

was in eating and drinking; decent and plain in apparel; in discourse weighty, being mostly concerning the things of God, tending to instruction and edification. His countenance and deportment were manly and grave, expressing a noble and religious disposition of mind; he was a loving husband; a careful and tender father; a firm friend and kind neighbour; given to hospitality; and though it was often his lot to be separated from his wife and children for the Gospel's sake, yet he ordered his affairs with discretion, that there might be no lack in his family, either of commendable employment or necessaries. But his greater concern and labour was for the public good of the churches, and promoting the government of Christ Jesus therein, for which he was zealous to the end, as appears by several expressions from him a little before his departure, some of which follow as a supplement to the ensuing journal. And when upon due consideration with reflection on past time, he was persuaded that his day's work was done, he humbly desired, in submission to the will of God, to be dissolved and be with Christ, to rest from his labour and affliction of body that attended; which in the Lord's time was granted him.

To conclude concerning this our well-beloved friend and elder, who by faith has obtained a good report, and whose memorial is and shall be blessed among the righteous, I refer the reader to a serious perusal of his following journal, and those testimonies given forth by faithful Friends and brethren concerning him, with sincere desire, that the blessing of God may so attend your reading, as to excite you to a faithful improvement of your time and the gift of grace bestowed on you through Christ Jesus, that your latter end may be peace, and your future state eternal happiness. So in Christian love remain your well-wishing friend,

—JOHN STODDART

Dublin, the 26th of the Eighth month, 1714

Chapter I

An Account of His Birth, Parentage, Trade, Marriage, Convincement, etc.

I was born at Little-Musgrove in Westmoreland, in the north of England, in the year 1627: my father's and mother's names were John and Grace Edmundson. My father was well esteemed among men who were acquainted with him, and religious in what he knew. I was the youngest child of six, and my mother died when I was about four years old, my father also when I was about eight years old. We were left to the care of an uncle, my mother's brother, who treated us poorly; and my brothers and sisters left him, but I stayed with him several years, being young. My eldest brother, who was heir to the estate my father left, when he came to the age of twenty-one years, with my eldest sister's husband, went to law with my uncle

about our portions, and other injuries and wrongs, and they spent much money.

In those times I went through many hardships and exercises of various kinds. After some time I was bound apprentice in York, to the trade of a carpenter and joiner, where I lived some years. In this time the Lord began to work in the hearts of many people in that city, so that there were great openings in the things of God, both in preachers and hearers. Then the Lord began to visit me with his judgments, and to set my sins before me: many times I was under great exercises concerning my salvation, and also about election and reprobation. So many things wrought mightily in my mind about religion, that I was often brought very low in my spirit, and at public worship in the steeple-house, at times, the Lord's judgments would seize upon me heavily. One time, in the public worship, the hand of the Lord was so upon me, that I shed abundance of tears in weeping and bewailing my wretched state; and the priest and congregation took notice of me, but none directed me aright to the Physician who could heal my wounded spirit.

About this time I went into the parliament's army, and there continued part of the war between the king and parliament; and when that was over I went into Scotland under Oliver Cromwell in the year 1650. The Lord began afresh with me, and many times his heavy judgments would seize upon me, and bring me low in a consideration of the life I lived in, and what the end would be; and sometimes his mercies would spring in my heart to my great refreshment, and cause tears of joy and gladness. But I knew not the secret hand that was dealing with me, neither met I with any who informed me, although in the army we had many high professors of religion. Sometimes when I had been on service most of the day, and was lying down in my tent at night, then would arise in my mind the imminent dangers I had passed that day, and the narrow escapes my life had, and what would have become of my soul, if I had fallen while in uncertainty of my future happiness; with resolutions to turn to the Lord by repentance and amendment of life; but when action presented, which I was active in at that time, I got over it again in my vanity.

In the year 1651, the Scotch army marched for England; we followed and engaged them at Worcester, and overthrew their army. After the fight I was troubled in mind for my vanity, for the Lord preserved my life still; but I fled from judgment, and made merry over God's witness in my conscience, which testified against me. From there we were commanded to the Isle of Man, which was delivered to us, and in two weeks time returned to England and quartered in Derbyshire, at Chesterfield and the towns thereabout. At this time the common discourse of all sorts of people was of the Quakers, and various reports were of them; the priests everywhere were angry against them, and the baser sort of people spared not to tell strange stories of them; but the more I heard of them, the more I loved them, yet had not the opportunity to speak with any of them.

One market-day at Chesterfield, I was in a tavern with others of my companions, and two women of the people called Quakers, spoke of the things of God to the people in the market. I did not hear of them until they were gone, but the priest of the town, and several with him, abused them. When they had done, they came to the tavern, into the room where I and my companions were, it being a large dining room, where

the priest boasted of what he had done to the two women, thinking we would praise him, but I loved to hear of the women, and hated his behaviour towards them.

A young man, a merchant, then present, who frequented my company, and would often speak of the people called Quakers, and say their principles were the truth, hearing the priest boast of his abusive behaviour to the said two women, answered and said, "It is a poor victory you have gotten over two poor women;" at which the priest was very angry, and began to storm. My spirit rose against him; I started up from my seat, and asked the priest and them with him, if they came to quarrel, saying, if they did, they should have enough. The priest answered, "No, not with you sir." I bid them leave the room, which they presently did; but these things came close to me, and the more I heard of this people the better I loved them, and earnest desires sprung afresh in my heart that the Lord would show me the way of truth.

After some time spent in various exercises, we marched again for Scotland, at which time I had charge of some men for recruiting other companies then in Scotland. I marched them with our regiment, and delivered up my charge in Scotland; then left the army, came back for England, and visited my relations in the north; from there rode into Derbyshire, and married a young woman, to whom I was contracted before. After some time I was about to settle in Derbyshire in the way of shop-keeping, when my brother, who was a soldier in Ireland, came into England to see his relations, and highly commending Ireland, persuaded me to go and live there, which I with my wife concluded to do. The troop my brother served in quartered near Waterford; we proposed to ourselves to settle a trade of merchandize in Waterford, and to live at a place two miles from it, where we could pass and repass in our boat; promising great matters to ourselves and religion besides. So with this resolution, when my brother returned, I sent with him a little parcel of merchant goods, and not long after, I, my wife and servant went for Ireland, with a larger quantity of merchant goods. We came through Westmoreland to take leave of our relations, and some of them went with us to Whitehaven, where we took shipping, and landed at Dublin.

All our great promises, however, came to nothing; the Lord, who had been often striving with me both in mercy and judgment, had other service for me, which I knew not of and was a stranger to. At Dublin I expected my brother had made some preparations for us and our trade, but instead thereof the troop and he with it were marched into the north. I wrote to him, and gave him an account that we were landed; in the mean time I was strongly importuned to settle in Dublin, trading being then very brisk, and houses on easy terms, it being not long after the plague. But I was prevented by a secret hand that I did not then know, which preserved me from the deceitfulness of riches, which according to all probability I should have been laden with, as with thick clay, and thereby been hindered from the Lord's service, as some others are.

When my brother had received my letter, he came to Dublin, with horses to take us into the north to Antrim, where their troop was to quarter; there I took a house, and my brother dwelt with me. The officers of the troop were very kind, they would have had me ride in the troop, and receive constant pay,

yet might follow my own business and be duty free; for they would procure an order on their own account, none being then admitted into troops without the general's order. I refused, and would not accept of their kind offers; for my inclinations were after religion, and my conscience began to be awakened by the Lord's judgments mixed with mercy, which preserved me.

I soon sold the goods I brought over, and forthwith went for England to buy more; and coming into the north of England among my relations, at the time George Fox and James Nayler were in that country, James Nayler having a meeting about three miles from where I was, I went to it with my eldest brother Thomas, and another kinsman, having an earnest desire to converse with some of that people, retaining a love for, and believing well of them from the first hearing the report of them; and I was glad of this opportunity. We were all three convinced of the Lord's blessed truth; for God's witness in our hearts answered to the truth of what was spoken, and the Lord's former dealings with me came fresh into my remembrance. Then I knew it was the Lord's hand that had been striving with me for a long time. This was in the year 1653.

Then my understanding began to be opened, and many Scriptures were brought to my remembrance, which I had often read, yet understood not; but now being turned to a measure of the Lord's spirit manifested in my heart, which often had reprov'd me for evil in my ignorance, I knew it was the truth which led into all truth, agreeably to the holy Scriptures of the law and prophets, Christ and his apostles, and I thought all that heard it declared must own it, it was so plain to me. A few days after I was thus far convinced of the blessed truth, the Lord's power seized upon me through his Spirit, whereby I was brought under great exercises of mind; yes, all my parts came under this exercise, for the Lord's hand was mighty upon me, in judgments mixed with mercies; so that my former ways were hedged up. But I loved the Lord's judgments, for I knew I had sinned against him, and must be purged through judgment. And though under this exercise of conscience towards God, yet I did my business in England, and shipped my goods to be landed at Carrickfergus or Belfast.

Section II

Several Difficult Exercises He Went Through, both Inwardly and Outwardly, between His Convincement and the Setting Up of a Public Meeting at Lurgan

While I was at sea, self reasoned strongly to save the duty on my goods, for I had an opportunity to do it, the troop my brother belonged to quartering at Carrickfergus and Belfast, who would have helped me night or day. But I dared not do it, my conscience being awakened to plead for truth, justice and equity;

yet there was a great contest between conscience and self, and in this conflict many Scriptures were opened in my understanding, that duties and customs ought to be paid; and though self struggled hard for mastery, yet at last was overthrown, and the judgment of truth prevailed.

I landed at Carrickfergus, where a trooper readily lent me his horse, and I rode that evening home to Antrim, where my wife lived. When I came to the door, my brother came forth to salute me with his usual compliments; but the Lord's power seized upon me at that instant, he was struck amazed, went in and sat down silent. I was much broken in the power of the Lord before them, and my brother made no opposition, but received the truth and joined with it.

I returned to Carrickfergus to bring my goods ashore, but the officers required an oath to the truth of my bills of parcels, and not allowing them to come ashore without it, would have seized upon my goods. I told them, I could not swear, for it was contrary to Christ's command, which seemed a strange thing to them, not having met with the like before; but the Lord's truth and testimony was precious to me, and after some time, with much difficulty, I got an order to bring my goods to the custom-house. My deportment to the officers and others herein was a wonder to them, and caused much discourse and various rumours to be spread of the Quakers, and of me in particular.

After I came home with my goods, the Lord's hand was heavy upon me day and night, so that I travailed under a great conflict between flesh and spirit, and was much cast down with sorrow and trouble of mind; but none there understood the cause of my sorrow and trouble, or gave a word of comfort to ease me. I would have gone far for the company of an experienced Friend. My sleep departed from me, and many times in the night in great trouble of mind, crying and weeping, I wished for day, and when day came my sorrows remaining, I wished again for night. In this restless state I had none who had trod this path to converse with; so that the rumour of my condition spread abroad among the professors; many would come to gaze on me, jangle and contend against truth, and some would say, I was bewitched; others, I was going mad. So talk and rumour concerning me spread a great way among people.

About this time one Miles Bousfield came from England to Ireland, at whose house George Fox had been. He had been in some degree convinced of the truth, and came away upon it; he was a great talker of religion, but an enemy and a stranger to the cross of Christ. Hearing of me, and of the exercise I was in, he came to see me. I was not at home when he came, but he talked to my wife, and spoke well of the Quakers and their principles, seeming to be glad that he had found such a companion in this nation as I was, and the comfort we should have of one another.

When I came home, my wife told me of his having been there, and the discourse he had with her, of which I was glad to hear, and soon took my horse and rode twelve miles to see him, and stayed with him all night. He talked abundance of religion, and of the inward work of God in man by his spirit, and spoke well of George Fox and James Nayler, and of their doctrine, which I liked well; but said, he knew those things

before he saw or heard them; and spoke much of his knowledge of God and Christ. I sat in silence with attention to hear him; for I was cast down, poor and low in my spirit, yet glad that I had met with such a knowing man in the things of God, and his work in man by his spirit, to advise me in my great troubles of a wounded spirit. He advised me to be cheerful and merry, and not to look at those inward troubles, that bowed me down; which was the enemy's work to lead me into despair, and destroy me, by swallowing me up in much trouble; and as it was plainly manifest, that God had a love for me, to make me a chosen vessel of mercy, he would love me to the end; and nothing in me could hinder his love, or frustrate his will.

This doctrine healed me without the cross of Christ, or self-denial; which answered my will and carnal desires; for I loved the truth which I was convinced of, and would have had it, together with my carnalities, fleshly liberties, worldly pleasures and profits; so when the Lord's power would rise to bow me down under his cross, I would reason against it with those arguments aforementioned, and thereby would get from under judgment. But this ease and slight healing lasted only about a week; for the Lord would not leave me so, praised be his name forever, whose merciful hand preserved me, and his power took fresh hold of my heart and inward parts, which bowed me under his judgments, and opened the eye of my understanding, plainly showing me there was that alive in me that must be crucified, which opposed the will of God.

Then I saw where Bousfield was, and all of his spirit, and the wounds of my restless spirit were opened wider than before, and Major Bousfield's slight cure was all marred, and the false rest he set me in taken away. I had none now to trust to but the Lord, for counsel and information, whose care was greatly manifested for my preservation, redemption and information, through many temptations and deep afflictions that did attend me many ways, with many opposers and contenders. I was weak, but the Lord's strength was perfect in weakness, and his spirit and power increased in me through obedience to the cross of Christ, wherein I was daily exercised, and thereby grew into acquaintance with the Lord's work, to make me a vessel for his purpose.

In the spring following, I removed with my family from Antrim, to live in the county of Armagh; took a house and grazing for my cattle, and kept a shop of some merchant goods, where I became the talk and gazing-stock of the people. Professors watched me narrowly to get occasion against me, and the principles of truth I professed, but the Lord strengthened me in my watch over my words and deeds, and so cut off occasion from them that sought occasion against the truth and me.

In those days to use the plain and proper speech, as thee and thou to a single person, and keeping on the hat, were strange things to people, and few could tolerate them to be used; but would reflect in abusive words, and sometimes use blows, or throw stones.¹ Keeping to one price in selling goods, and to the first

¹ Most modern English speakers are unaware that the words "you" and "your" were originally plural pronouns used only to address two or more people, whereas "thee" and "thou" were used to address one person. In the 1600's, it became fashionable (again, as a means of showing honor or flattery) to use the plural "you" or "your" in addressing people of

asking without abatement, was a great stumbling-block to most sorts of people, and made them stand at a distance from buying for some time, until they saw further into the justice thereof. All things were rough and rugged in the world, and the cross of Christ was foolishness and a stumbling-block to them.

My exercises and trials both within and without were many, and of various sorts, beyond what I can express. The Lord's judgments clave close to me; I was made to love them, and willing to wait upon the Lord in the ways thereof. Sometimes when the Lord's hand would be easy with me, I would be afraid lest he should withdraw his hand; then my desires were to the Lord not to slacken his hand, but to search me thoroughly; for his judgments were become sweet to my taste, which he many times mixed with springs of mercy, to my joy and comfort. Business in the affairs of the world became a trouble to me, though there were presentations and opportunities to get riches, either by trading, taking land by lease, mortgage or purchase, which I was able to do.

My brother being convinced of the truth, my wife, he and I met together twice a week at my house; in a while after four more were convinced, and then we seven met together to wait upon God, and to worship him in spirit and truth. The Lord's mercy and goodness were often extended to us to our comfort and confirmation, in the appearance of his blessed truth received in our hearts.

Chapter III

His First Public Ministry—His Visit To George Fox in England—The Settling of a Meeting in Dublin—His Imprisonment at Armagh—A Dispute with a Priest and a Justice of the County

Some time after this, John Tiffin was moved of the Lord to come into Ireland in truth's service. He came to my house, abode a while, and sat with us in our meeting, sometimes speaking a few words, which were edifying. Then began a concern to come upon me to travel with him to some places, although he had but few words, yet very serviceable. Our going abroad to fairs and places of concourse, put many to inquire into the Quakers' principles and religion; and sometimes we had discourses with professors, but people in general were very shy and fearful of us, lest they should be deceived; for the priests persuaded the people against us, by telling them stories and lies which the priests in England had forged and sent abroad, too many to mention here, neither is it needful, being printed in several books with Friends'

higher social status, while "thee" and "thou" were reserved for servants, children, or people of lower social or economic position. Early Friends stuck to what was then considered "plain language" (using thee and thou to every single person, and you and your to two or more), rather than showing preferment by addressing certain individuals in the plural. These may seem like small matters to the 21st century reader, but it is remarkable how many thousands of Friends were insulted, beaten, imprisoned, and even hanged for refusing to conform to these outward customs.

answers to them.

At this time but few would lodge us in their houses. At Belfast, that town of great profession, there was but one of all the inns and public houses that would lodge any of our Friends, which was a widow Partridge, who kept a public house, and received us very kindly. There John Tiffin lodged, often endeavouring to get an entrance for truth in that town, but they resisted, shutting their ears, doors and hearts against it.

Near this town there dwelt one Laythes, who promised to let us meet in his house, and the day was appointed; accordingly we came there, that is, John Tiffin, my brother and I, but when we came, the man was gone from home, as they said; we supposed on purpose, that we might not meet at his house. His wife was a proud woman, and would not allow us to meet there. A little way from that house in the great road, three lanes' ends met; there we three sat down and kept our meeting. People came about us; we were a wonder to them, and something was spoken to direct their minds to God's spirit in their own hearts. These exercises, though in much weakness and fear, spread the name and fame of truth; the minds of many honest people began to inquire after it, and to see that the reports which the priests had told them of us, were false, which made them more desirous to hear us, and some were added to our meeting at Lurgan, then kept at my house.

Soon after John Tiffin went for England, but our meeting increased, and sometimes the Lord's power and spirit would move in me, to speak a few words in meetings; which I did in fear, being under a great concern, lest a wrong spirit should get entrance, and deceive me in the likeness of an angel of light; for I was sensible of my own weakness. Several gathered to our meeting, and were convinced and received the truth. So we got meetings in several places, there being a great openness among people.

About this time I had some drawings on my spirit, to go for England and to see George Fox, whom I had not yet seen. I went over and met with him at Badgley in Leicestershire, where there was a great meeting of Friends from several places. When the meeting ended I went to George Fox, and he took notice of me. We went into the orchard, and kneeling down he prayed. The Lord's heavenly power and presence were there; and he was tender over me. I told him where I lived, of several being convinced in Ireland, of the openness among people in the north of that nation, to hear the truth declared, and of the lack of ministering Friends in the Gospel there. He wrote the following epistle to Friends, which he sent with me:

Friends, in that which convinced you, wait, that you may have that removed you are convinced of; and all my dear Friends, dwell in the life, and love, and power and wisdom of God, in unity one with another, and with God; and the peace and wisdom of God fill all your hearts, that nothing may rule in you but the life, which stands in the Lord God.

—G. F.

He bid me, when I came to Ireland, go to Edward Burrough and Francis Howgill, for they were in the south of that kingdom in the service of truth. So, when I had been at Swarthmore, and some other places in England to visit Friends, I returned to Ireland, and read the foregoing epistle to Friends in the meeting; there the power of the Lord seized on us, whereby we were mightily shaken and broken into tears and weeping. The priests and professors in the south of Ireland, were so envious against truth, that they got an order from Henry Cromwell, then lord deputy of Ireland, to banish Edward Burrough and Francis Howgill out of the nation, and a guard of soldiers were ordered to conduct them from place to place, till they were shipped off. But the guards were loving to them, and allowed them to have meetings where they came; so that several received the truth, and small meetings were settled in several places, particularly one in Dublin.

About this time Richard Clayton was moved of the Lord to come for Ireland, in the service of the Gospel; he came by the Lord's directions straight to my house, as he himself told me; and stayed with us some meetings; then was moved of the Lord to travel to Colerain and Londonderry; I also was moved to go with him. He published the day of the Lord in Colerain in the street, warning all to repent. We put up papers which we had written, in several places; one we put on the worship house door; but the professors were highly offended, and banished us over the water, giving charge that no boat should bring us back. We travelled the road towards Londonderry, lodging that night in a cabin in the mountains; and next day came to Londonderry on foot, and got two meetings there, where several received the truth: the governor was at one meeting, where he was convinced, confessing it to be truth that we declared, and while we stayed he was very loving.

Then we travelled to Strabane, Clougher, Omagh, and six miles across to Dungannon; and to Kilmore in the county of Armagh; several honest tender-hearted people lived thereabouts, who had a desire to hear Friends. We came to Margery Atkinson's, a tender honest woman, whose house I had been at before: she was convinced of the truth and received us lovingly. We had a meeting there, and the tender people thereabouts generally came to it; most of whom received the truth in the love of it in much tenderness; for they were waiting for it. We settled a meeting there, which became large.

Richard Clayton went for England; and about this time there were two women Friends from London, Anne Gould and Julian Wastwood, who came to Dublin, and travelled to Londonderry, having some drawings to that place. After some service for the Lord there, they travelled to Colerain, so through the Scotch country to a place called Clough, all on foot in winter time, wading rivers and dirty miry ways. Anne Gould being a tender woman, was much spent, and stayed at Clough; the enemy persuading her, that God had forsaken her, and that she was there to be destroyed, so that she fell into despair; but I knew nothing of them.

At this time my brother and I were at a fair in Antrim; being late there, we proposed to lodge that night at Glenavy, six miles on our way homeward. Before we got to Glenavy I was under a great exercise of spirit,

and the word of the Lord came unto me, that my shop was in danger to be robbed that night. I told my brother of it; so we concluded to travel home, and went about a mile beyond Glenavy; but my spirit was still under a great exercise, the word of the Lord moving me to turn back towards Clough. I was brought under a great exercise between these two motions, to travel back and my service unknown; and my shop on the other hand in danger to be robbed, which brought me into a great strait, for fear of a wrong spirit. I cried to the Lord in much tenderness of spirit, and his word answered me, that which drew me back should preserve my shop; so we went back to Glenavy, and lodged there. That night I slept little, because of many doubts about the concern: on the other hand I dared not disobey, for I knew the terrors of God for disobedience.

The next morning my brother went home, but I rode back to Antrim. Towards evening I came to Clough, and took up my lodging at an inn, the country being generally inhabited by Scotch people and Presbyterians. When I came into the house I found Anne Gould in despair, and Julian Wastwood with her, but when they knew who I was and heard my name, for they had heard of me before, the poor disconsolate woman revived for joy and gladness, and got up, for she was in bed overwhelmed under trouble of mind. I saw then that my service of coming there was for her sake. When we came to discourse of matters, I told them how I was brought there by the good hand of God, led as a horse by the bridle, to the place where they were; they therefore greatly rejoiced and praised God, the tender woman was helped over her trouble, and she saw it was a trial of great temptations she had lain under.

They had a mind to go to Carrickfergus, to my house, and to Dublin to take shipping for England; but neither of them would undertake to ride single, therefore I was forced the next day to carry them behind me, first one and then the other. When we came in very foul way, I set them both on horseback, and waded myself through dirt and mire in my boots, holding them both on horseback with my hands. We came to Conyers that night and lodged there, the next day I got them to Carrickfergus, and there leaving them, rode home and sent my brother and two horses, to bring them to my house.

When I came home, I inquired about my shop, whether it had been in danger of robbing? They told me, the night I was under that exercise about it, the shop window was broken down and fell with such violence on the counter, that it awakened our people, and the thieves were affrighted and ran away. So I was confirmed it was the word of the Lord that said, that which drew me back should preserve my shop, and I was greatly strengthened in the word of life, to obey the Lord in what he required of me; for I was much afraid lest at any time my understanding should be betrayed by a wrong spirit, not fearing the loss of goods nor sufferings for truth, its testimony being more to me than all other things. When these two women had stayed some time at my house, and visited Friends, my brother sent them on horseback to Dublin, so they went for England.

At this time I travelled in truth's service, for the Lord had given me a testimony for his truth in meetings and public places, sometimes at worship houses, where I met with rough usage. Truth gained ground,

many received it and came to meetings, we having meetings in several places, and some meetings settled for the worship of God. About this time I was put in prison at Armagh for the testimony of truth, before the common jail was repaired, so I was prisoner in a little room in the jailer's house. Though I was weak and contemptible in my own eyes, yet the Lord was with me, and his power and dread was my strength and refuge. I was a terror to the jailer and his wife, for if I came out of my room to where the jailer was, he hung down his head, not looking me in the face. His wife would sometimes be tormented and cry out, for my presence was a torment to her, though I said nothing.

At this time there came a Presbyterian minister out of Scotland, pretending to visit the churches, and in his company was one Colonel Kerr; this priest came to the jailer's house to lodge, for he kept a public-house. It was on a seventh-day of the week he came; and I was then fallen sick, and in bed, and the priest lodged in the next room to me, so that I could hear what they said. Towards evening many Presbyterians came to visit their minister, and he read a chapter and expounded it to them, sung a psalm, and prayed; after which they left him that night.

The next morning early, being the first day of the week, Colonel Kerr came into the priest's room, and asked him, What was the meaning of the apostle John's speaking so much of abiding in Christ? And how we must abide in Christ? The priest did not answer him, therefore he was under trouble and dissatisfaction. At this the Lord moved me to rise, put on my clothes, and speak to the priest as he went to his worship, for they passed by the door of my room. I arose and put on my clothes, the Lord's power strengthening me: many of the chief of the Presbyterians came to accompany the priest to their place of worship. I stood in my room door, and as he went by I asked him, if he were a minister of Christ? He answered, yes. Then I asked, what was the reason he did not understand the doctrine of the former ministers of Christ? But he was smitten, and making me no answer got away.

I laid down again, being sick; the next morning early, Colonel Kerr came to my bedside, saying, he heard I was in restraint for my conscience, adding, he was a man of tender conscience and sympathized with my sufferings, therefore came to see me, desiring to have some discourse with me; but he heard I was not well; yet if I would arise he offered to help me on with my clothes. I told him, I would arise and put on my clothes, for I felt the Lord's power strengthening me.

So he went out of the room; and this was but an excuse to get an opportunity for the priest and several of their elders and disputants to run me down, and to glory over truth and Friends. I got up and dressed myself; and presently the priest, Colonel Kerr, Colonel Cunningham and a great many of their leading men came into the house, more than the room would hold. I was greatly afraid of my own weakness for truth's sake; therefore I prayed to the Lord in secret for his assistance, and he was pleased to fill me with his spirit, being mouth and wisdom to me; so that the Lord's power, and the testimony of his blessed truth was over them; the priest was confounded in himself, and being restless, went out and came in several times. When the priest had finished, Colonel Cunningham began with me; he was a justice of the

peace and a great disputant. We discoursed of several things, too tedious to mention the particulars; but the Lord's power foiled him, his mouth was stopped and he sat silent. Then was my heart and tongue full of the word of life, to declare the way of truth to them, and they went away quiet; the Lord's power and testimony were over them, everlasting praises to his great name.

In this morning's work the Lord healed me of my illness. Afterwards I was brought before the justices of the county at the sessions, where Justice Cunningham before-mentioned was chairman. He had a nimble tongue, but left the matter for which I suffered, and would dispute about religion, which I would have avoided, being unwilling to enter thereinto, knowing my own inability without the assistance of the Lord's spirit and power, but he urged the discourse. So we went close to it, and he was so pinched with his own argument, that he perceived the court took notice of it, wherefore he grew angry, threatening me with his authority; but one Justice Powel, a sober man upon the bench with him, stood up and told him, he did not do fairly with me; for, said he, if you will dispute of religion, you must come on equal terms, and lay aside your authority of a justice; and give liberty to be opposed as well as oppose. He commended what I had said, the people seemed to be satisfied, and there was a great appearance of the country at that sessions: after some more discourse, they set me at liberty, for they were ashamed of my commitment.

Chapter IV

His Leaving Shop-keeping to Take a Farm in the County of Cavan—Friends' Sufferings Increased—He Was Put in the Stocks at Belturbet—His Discourse with the Governor, etc.—A Baptist Preacher and Captain Morris Both Convinced

About this time it came weightily upon me to leave shop-keeping, and take a farm, to be an example in the testimony against tithes; for as yet that was not broken through, few, if any, stood in that testimony in this nation. There was one Colonel Kempston, who was convinced of the truth, though he did not join with Friends; he had a great deal of land in the county of Cavan, and other places, and was desirous to have Friends live on his land, promising he would build a meetinghouse, and do great matters to promote truth.

My brother and I rode to his house in the county of Cavan, and treated with him about taking several parcels of land for ourselves, and several other families of Friends who were willing to live near us; but for some time we could not close a bargain with him, for he was a hard man. After a while the Lord's power filled my heart; and I was moved in the word of life to tell him, I would take his land, let him take what he would for it, and make his own terms; at which he was amazed. Pausing a little, he desired half

an hour to consider. He walked into his orchard, and in a little time returned to us, and closed a bargain with us for the land, on such easy rent and terms as we could not have brought him to by arguments; whereupon several families of Friends came with us and settled on his land. We kept a meeting for the worship of God twice in the week, in which our hearts were tender before the Lord, and, in his love, near and dear one to another. Truth was much spread, and meetings settled in several places, and many being convinced and brought to the knowledge of God were added to Friends. But sufferings increased for not paying tithes, priests' maintenance, and towards repairing their worship houses, for not observing their holy days so called, and such like; they fleeced us in taking our goods, and imprisoned some of us.

In those days the world and the things of it were not near our hearts, but the love of God, his truth and testimony lived in our hearts; we were glad of one another's company, though sometimes our outward fare was very mean, and our lodging on straw; we did not mind high things, but were glad one of another's welfare in the Lord, and his love dwelt in us.

I was often abroad in truth's service, visiting Friends, and getting meetings in several places. I was moved to travel into Leinster province, and went from place to place, as the Lord's good spirit guided me. I came to Rossenallis, and there met with two families come out of England, convinced of the truth. From there I went to Nicholas Starkey's near Athlone, and had a meeting on a first-day, to which several sober people came, and the Lord's power and presence were with us.

From there I went to Mullingar, and lodged one night, where was a trooper that was convinced, who rode with me several miles the next day, and continued coming to meetings. I came that night to Finagh, but the innkeepers in the town refused me lodging, for that they knew I was a Quaker. It was in winter time and cold weather; upon which I inquired for the constable, and they showed me his house. I told him he must provide me a lodging, for I was a traveller, and had money to pay for what I should have, and had been at the inns, where they refused me lodging. He kept an ale-house, and had also refused me, but after much discourse with him, he told me I must be content with such lodging as he had for me. I told him to let me have a room with a fire to sit by, and hay for my horse, and I would be content. So I alighted, went into the house, and there were troopers drinking, who soon perceived what I was, and began to scoff and to ask me many questions, which I answered in my freedom. But when I thee'd and thou'd them in our discourse, they were very angry, and one of them swore, if I thou'd him again, he would cleave my head. In our discourse, when it came in its place I thou'd him again, and he starting up in anger drew his sword; but one of his corporals sitting by him stopped him, and commanded him to put up his sword, for there should be no cleaving of heads there. He caused the troopers to go to their quarters, but stayed with me discoursing until late in the night, and was convinced, being tender, received the truth, and came to meetings.

About this time we had a meeting at Belturbet, and the Lord's power and presence was with us; but the provost of the town was an envious man, who came with some rude people, broke up our meeting and

took us to prison, both men and women. We were all night in a very cold place, the women were mightily pinched with cold, it being frost and snow. The next morning he set all the other Friends at liberty, but he put me in the stocks in the market-place, and people gathered about me, where I had an opportunity to preach the truth to them, which they heard with soberness, were tender and reflected much upon the provost for abusing us.

Robert Wardell, being then but a boy, told the provost he had set a better man than himself in the stocks, and there was a time when such as he dared not have meddled with me. Wherefore the provost took him, and set him in the stocks by me; but his father soon heard of it, and threatened the provost with the law; for he was then master of the store, there being a garrison of soldiers there; so that Robert Wardell was soon taken out of the stocks, who being convinced, kept to truth and with Friends, afterwards became a serviceable man for truth, and a preacher of it.

The people were much dissatisfied with the provost; so he sent his officer to let me loose, who opened the stocks and bid me take out my leg, for I might go my way. I told him, I had been grossly abused, and made a public spectacle to the people, as though I had done some great offence, but was not convicted of the breach of any law; so let the provost come himself and take me out, for he put me in. The provost came and opened the stocks, bidding me take out my leg. I told him, no, for he had made me a spectacle to the people, and I knew no law that I had broken; but let him take out my leg that put it in. Upon which he opened the stocks with one hand, and took my leg out with the other. His name was Richard West.

At this time Oliver Cromwell had put forth a declaration, "That such should be protected in their religion, as owned God the Creator of all things, and Christ Jesus the Saviour of man, and the Scriptures," and several other things mentioned therein. So the governor of that garrison, with the officers and chief men in the town, and abundance of people with them, who filled the courthouse, would try us by the declaration, whether we and our religion were under Oliver's protection or not; the provost was there, and I was sent for. The clerk of the garrison, who was then a Baptist, but afterwards a Friend, read the declaration, and I was called to answer to the particulars. I answered them so, that the governor and they with him gave their judgment, that we were under protection, and our religion was to be protected.

Then I called aloud, that they would bear witness, how long we had been imprisoned illegally, and that I sat in the market-place in the stocks wrongfully, and that the law provided reparation in such cases. Several of the chief of them offered to be evidence, if we would take the advantage of the law against the provost. He was quite dashed and looked very pale. The governor came from his seat, and took me by the hand, saying, he was sorry that I and my Friends were so abused; and did assure me he had no hand in it. I asked him, who he was? He said he was the governor of that garrison. I asked him, where he had been those two days, that he did not appear with his band of soldiers to appease the uproar; for I had read in the Scriptures, that at Jerusalem, when there was an uproar on the like account, the governor came with a band of soldiers, and rescued Paul from them, and appeased the uproar; and was it not a shame for

him, that a heathen should outdo him who professed to be a Christian? He was a Baptist, and so were several who were in authority thereabouts. My spirit was borne up in the power of the Lord, as upon the wings of an eagle that day; truth's testimony was over all their heads, and my heart was filled with joy and praises to the Lord: many were convinced and several of them received the truth, and abode in it.

There was one William Parker, a preacher among the Baptists, who had opposed me strongly at a court a little before this; his wife was a Friend, convinced in England, and was a prisoner with us: they lived then in the country, and his wife not coming home, in the morning he came to look for her, and finding me sitting in the stocks in the cold winter, in the open market-place, he was smitten to the heart. After I had done with them all I was at liberty, and came to Friends with my heart full of joy. Parker was with Friends; so I asked him, what he thought of his brethren to allow us to be thus treated, and they chief in command in that place? He answered with tears in his eyes, he was ashamed of them, who had been so long professing and fighting for conscience, now to permit conscience to be trodden in the dirt. He went to them no more, but came to our meetings, taking up the cross of Christ: he became an honest, zealous man for the truth, having a public testimony in meetings, and died in the true faith of which Jesus is the Author.

There was also one William Morris, an elder among the Baptists in great repute, captain of a company, justice of the peace, commissioner of the revenues, chief treasurer in that quarter; also chief governor of three garrisons, to whom the news of this day's work was soon carried; whereat he was much troubled in mind, and told the messenger, who was a justice of peace, it was a shame for them to allow us to be so abused, saying, the time would come that they would be glad to take shelter under our wings. The rumour soon went among the Baptists, and also to the court at Dublin, that Captain Morris was turned Quaker: whereupon he was removed with his company southward. Not long after he was sent for to Dublin, to appear before the general and chief officers, many of whom were Baptists. He was examined about his being turned Quaker, which he did not deny, but confessed our faith and principles, and at that time was discharged from his command, because he was a Quaker. He was a worthy wise man, had a testimony in our meetings, and died in the faith of Jesus. I was at Dublin at the time when they took his command from him. He would often say, that I was a great help and strength to him in the truth.

Our meetings increased, and our sufferings also increased; but Friends being innocent, were careful to keep up truth's testimony punctually and faithfully; so that truth gained ground. Our landlord, Kempston, would not confirm our leases according to covenant, but would impose several things on us, which Friends would not submit to: so that several Friends left his lands, and removed with their families towards Mountmellick; but some abode there longer, and kept up a meeting for Divine worship twice in the week.

Chapter V

Hard Imprisonment at Cavan in a Nasty Dungeon—His Speech in Public Court—Release and Removal Afterwards to Rossenallis

I was then kept close prisoner in Cavan jail for the testimony of truth, in a nasty dungeon among thieves and robbers, which was very noisome, arched over head. In the day we had the benefit to look out through an iron grate; but at night the door was close shut, and then we were as if we had been in an oven. In the day the prisoners would beg turf, and at night, when the door was close shut, they would kindle a fire, which filled the dungeon with thick smoke. There being little air, this annoyed me very much, but they could endure it, being used to the like in their cabins.

One night the smoke stifled me, and stopped my breath, so that I fell down and lay on the ground. The prisoners cried out that I was dead; then the jailer threw open the door in haste, and when he saw me lying on the ground, he was in a rage, and thought they had killed me, but when he understood the cause, he carried me into the air. In a little time I recovered, and he called for a pail of water, and quenched the fire. After this when he locked the door at nights he was careful to put the fire quite out; so it wrought for my good, being eased thereby from that noisome smell and smoke, which had before very much impaired my health, and was so offensive, that when people came to the grate to see me, they could not endure the smell, but many times would go away with tears. Thus the minds of people were moderated, and their hearts tendered towards Friends.

But what added to my trouble, news was brought me of James Nayler's miscarriage. This came very near me, and brought me under great trouble of mind, so that I said in my heart, how shall I be able to stand through so many temptations and trials which attend me daily, since such a one as he is fallen under temptations? And I mourned in my spirit. In the interim the Lord answered me, and said, truth is truth, though all men forsake it. This strengthened me, and comforted me in my trouble. I was kept in that dungeon fourteen weeks.

When the court sessions came, the judge and justices being on the bench, as I was looking out through the iron grate, a justice of the peace, one of those who committed me, whose name was William Moore, going by, saw me standing and coming up to me, said, he was very sorry to see me there, and had been many times troubled in his mind for me, since I was committed, but he could not now help it, for I was committed without bail or mainprize. I told him, he had brought that trouble on himself, by his haste and passion in committing me on those terms, for my faith and conscience towards God. He said he was very sorry for it, and if he could do anything for me, he would readily do it. The enemies of truth reported, that I was in prison, because I and the Quakers were for having no law or government, but the light in man. I thought it would be a good opportunity to show the falsehood of this report to the country; and I desired

him to get me leave to come into court before the judge, for I had something to say. He said, he had spoken to the judge about me, but he would not meddle with me, being I was committed at the sessions. I desired him however, to let me come into court: so he went into court and presently sent the jailer for me; but so soon as he put me into the session-house, he slipped away.

I spoke to the people, who thronged in, bidding them make way for the prisoner. On which they made way, and I got near the judge; but he spoke aloud and asked, who I was? what I was? and what I came there for? I answered with a loud voice and said, I am a prisoner, and have been a close prisoner fourteen weeks, for my religion and faith towards God, and I want justice, and to be tried by the law now established; for I know no law that I have broken. And I am one who have ventured my life to establish the government as it now stands; and own the government and the laws. But the judge was disturbed, and cried out to the jailer to take me away. The jailer came, and I cried aloud to the people, to take notice and bear witness, I owned government and wholesome laws, and desired justice accordingly; but could not have it. He took me away, but presently one was sent to bid him not put me in the dungeon. I was very easy in my spirit, and much comforted in the Lord, for his power was with me; some sober professors came to me and said, they were very glad, and well satisfied with what I said of our owning the government and laws, for they had heard other things concerning us. This wrought mightily in the minds of people, and truth got ground. The next day I was turned out of prison without any trial.

Now the most of the land we had of Kempston was recovered from him by law, so that we sent our cattle to graze near Rossenallis, and being now at liberty, I went there to live with my family; the Friends that removed having settled thereabouts, we kept a meeting twice in the week for the worship of God, and we also got meetings in several other places to spread truth.

Chapter VI

Several Ministering Friends From England—His Imprisonment at Londonderry—His Deep Exercise on Account of Some Loose Professors of Truth—The General Persecution Then Raging Against Friends; and How Instrumental He Was in Allaying That Storm.

About this time several Friends in the ministry came from England, labouring in the Gospel of Christ Jesus, namely: Thomas Loe, John Burnyeat, Robert Lodge and some others, and many were turned to the Lord, and to the knowledge of his way of life and peace. I often travelled into the north in the service of truth, to Cavan, Belturbet, Newtown, Omagh, Strabane, Londonderry and those parts, and went through many hardships and dangers, being often in prison; yet the Lord's powerful arm preserved me, and carried me

through them all; praised be his name. At Strabane, where I had been often and imprisoned, several were convinced and a meeting was settled; also at Londonderry several were convinced of the truth.

At one time I travelled from Strabane into the county of Donnegal, which is mostly inhabited by Scotch people, being Presbyterians. I was moved to ride from house to house and ask if there were any that feared God. They looked strangely at me, and wondered I should ask such a question of such religious people. I came to one house and called, and the master of the house came out: I asked him if there were any who feared God there. He said he hoped so. I told him I was seeking a people that feared God. He said it was a good errand; and asked where I dwelt, and my name. I told him: he said, he was an Edmundson; and bid me alight and come into his house. I asked him if he would let me have a meeting in his house, and tell his neighbours and friends of it. He said he perceived I was a Quaker, and he dared not do it, for their minister was much set against the Quakers, and himself was an elder of their church. After some discourse of religion, we parted lovingly; I travelled on, and that night lay at an ale-house.

The next day I came to Londonderry; it was market-day, and there were stage-players and rope-dancers in the market-place, and abundance of people gathered. The Lord's spirit filled my heart, his power struck at them, and his word was sharp. So I stood in the market-place and proclaimed the day of the Lord among them, and warned them all to repent. The dread of the Almighty came over them, and they were as people amazed. When I found my spirit a little eased, I walked along the street, and the people flocked about me, and I found my spirit drawn forth towards them. I stood still and declared truth to them, directing them to the light of Christ in their own hearts, and they were very sober and attentive; but the stage-players were sorely vexed that the people left them, and followed me. They got the mayor to send two officers to take me to prison; who came and took me; but the sober people were angry that stage-players should be permitted, and a man who declared against wickedness and vanity, and taught the things of God, must not be tolerated, but haled to prison. The officers made excuse, saying, they were commanded and must obey. The jailer put me in a room that had a window facing the marketplace, where I had a full sight of the people; and my heart being filled with the word of life and testimony of Jesus, I thrust my arm out at the window and waved it, till some of them seeing me, came near, and others followed quickly; so that presently I had most of the people from the stage-players, which vexed them much. Then they got the mayor to cause the jailer to keep me close; so he bolted me, and locked my leg to a place where he used to fasten condemned persons. There I sat in much peace of conscience, and sweet union with the Spirit of truth. As I sat in a heavenly exercise, I heard the people shout and say, the man had broken his back. It was the man dancing on a rope, which broke or gave way, so that he fell on the pavement, and was sorely hurt. Many professors came into prison to see me, and I had much discourse with them, and good service for truth.

After a few days, being set at liberty, I travelled through the north, visiting Friends at their meetings, where were also several other Friends in the ministry, labouring in the Gospel. Many people were convinced and meetings increased mightily; yet some who were convinced and professed truth in words,

did not walk accordingly in their conduct, but were careless and loose, from under the cross of Christ, both in words and deeds; which gave occasion to our adversaries to reproach us, and speak evil of the way of truth, and was a stumbling-block to others, in whom were desires after the knowledge of God and the way of life. The concern of this came weightily upon me, and sunk my spirit into a deep exercise for truth, which was discernable in my face and body to those who knew me; and I was made a threshing-instrument in the hand of the Lord, to thresh sharply, and to reprove and rebuke such as walked loosely in the liberty of their wills and flesh and held the profession of truth in unrighteousness. I could not get from under this burden, until it pleased God to send his servant George Fox, to set up men's and women's meetings, and then I was eased; of which hereafter.

1661. King Charles coming in, the nation was in heaps of confusion, and people ran upon us as if they would have destroyed us at once, or swallowed us up, breaking up our meetings, taking us up in the highways, and haling us to prison; so that there was a general imprisonment of Friends in this nation. I was prisoner at Maryborough, with many more Friends, yet the Lord supported and bore up our spirits above sufferings and men's cruelties. Friends were fresh and lively in the Lord's goodness and covenant of light and life, contented in the will of God; for we had many heavenly blessed meetings in prison, and the Lord's presence was with us, to our great comfort and consolation in Him, who wrought liberty for us in his own time.

After things were a little settled, and people's minds began to cool, I found it upon my spirit to make application to the government for Friends' liberty. I got leave of absence for myself of the sheriff for about twenty days — went to Dublin and petitioned the lords justices, who then were the earls of Orrery and Mountrath, and Sir Morris Eustace, chancellor, that Friends in the nation might be set at liberty. I was closely exercised in that service; but the Lord's power gave me courage, opened my way to proceed and gave success to it; so that I got an order for Friends' liberty throughout the nation, though they were full of business, and abundance of people of all sorts attending. We got several copies of our order signed by the lords justices, and sent them to the sheriffs of the several counties where Friends were in prison.

Soon after I visited Friends' meetings through the nation, and inquired if the order was obeyed by the several sheriffs, and we were sweetly comforted in the Lord, and one in another. In about six weeks time I performed this service, returned and found Friends in our county kept in prison. I went to Maryborough, where they were. It was in the time of the quarter-sessions, and I took an opportunity to speak to the justices and high sheriff, to know the reason, why the government's order for Friends' liberty was not obeyed. The sheriff said, it was for fees, and they should pay their fees, or lie there and rot. But the justices sympathized with Friends, for our innocent sufferings had gained much on people's minds. I desired the justices to give me a certificate, what Friends were detained in prison for, which accordingly they did and three of them signed it.

I rode straight to Dublin, and found John Burnyeat and Robert Lodge in prison, taken at the meeting the

day before. I went early in the morning to the mayor, and got their liberty, and then went to the earl of Mountrath's lodging. When I was at Dublin before, the Lord gave me a place in his heart, which I retained until his death; also his son after him was always kind, and ready to do Friends good upon occasion. When I came to the earl's lodging, he was in his coach going to council; he saw me coming, and stopped his coach. I told him my business, and gave him the justice's certificate. He bid me follow him to the council chamber; and that forenoon he got me a full order to the sheriff, to set Friends at liberty, without paying fees to any person or persons, as they would answer the contrary. I hastened with the order and gave it to the sheriff, who immediately set Friends at liberty, but was very angry at me, calling me devil, and many bad names. Friends were much confirmed in the Lord, who wrought their liberty beyond expectation.

We were imprisoned several times, and the Lord made way for our liberty, but sheriffs and clerks of the crown would take our goods for fees. The sheriff, Thomas Piggott, of Dissart, took from me at one time, on that account, four large cows, worth twelve or thirteen pounds, and a great many cows and other goods from Friends, but it was observed, his substance wasted after.

The bishops being now settled, the priests were very fierce on us for tithes, their maintenance and church dues, as they called them; and summoned us to the bishop's court, and excommunicated most of the men Friends of our meeting, and took them by an order to prison. I was excommunicated with the rest, but was abroad in truth's service, when they were taken. When I came home the officers met me, for I did not shun them, but they would not take me to prison, for they said, they had too many in prison already, who were kept from their labours and families; yet Friends were easy in their spirits, being given up to suffer for the testimony of truth, and in the prison everyone settled to some employment.

Chapter VII

The government and Chancellor Boyle's clemency towards Friends, upon William Edmundson's petitioning them against G. Clapham's cruelty, then priest of Mountmellick—Prophetic warning to the inhabitants of Londonderry—Conference afterwards with the bishop and mayor of that place—Settling of meetings for Discipline in Ireland, by George Fox, in 1669

1665. Having my liberty, I found a concern on my mind to solicit the government against the priest's fierceness and cruelty; for George Clapham, priest of Mountmellick, endeavoured to prevent the miller's grinding corn for our families, or any speaking or trading with us, or any of our families. He watched the market and Friends' shops, and those whom he saw or knew to deal with us, he sent the apparitor to summon to the bishop's court; and so forced them to pay him and the apparitor money to get freed from

that trouble, they being afraid of the bishop's court, it bore such a great name.

This priest told his hearers that if they met any of us in the high-way, they should shun us as they would shun the plague; and if they owed us anything, they need not pay it; or if they knocked us on the head, the law would bear them out. At which the people were much troubled, and in general their love declined from the priest, and drew towards Friends; and they would offer their servants to carry our corn to the mill, that we might get bread for our families, or any other kindness they could do for us.

I drew up a statement of several of his gross proceedings, and got many of his own people to sign it, who had been abused; then went to Dublin and petitioned the government, who with the primate took notice of it, and the privy-council resented it, being contrary to all law and rule. They sent an order for the priest and apparitor to appear before the council; where they were sharply reprov'd, and would have been punished, for the primate said he would make them examples. But I told him, we desired nothing but to be quiet, and live peaceably in our callings, and that they should desist from their cruelty. The primate, who was also chancellor, said, if they did not desist, we should write to him, and he would make them examples to the nation. So I forgave them, and let all proceedings fall. This gained much on the minds of many chief men in authority.

Priest Clapham was very angry against me, although I had forgiven him; being very greedy and covetous. One time he took my neighbour's horse and car, came to my house and loaded up and carried away a great deal of cheese; also at that time he took away much goods, corn, and wearing clothes from Friends of our meeting, for some church dues, as he said. While I was at a meeting in Mountmellick, where I used to attend when at home, he being a justice of the peace, sent a constable to apprehend me, and made a court order to send me to Maryborough jail, but the earl of Mountrath superceded his warrant, and set me at liberty until the court sessions.

When the court sessions came, he stood by me against the said priest, who had drawn up two indictments against me; and when they came into court, four lawyers one after another pleaded for me, though I knew nothing of them or gave them any fee. But the Lord gave us place in the minds of people, and their hearts yearned towards us, so that as I passed through them in the courthouse, they would say, the Lord bless you, William, the Lord help you, William. The indictment was quashed, and the priest was hissed at by the court to his shame; the judge also turning against him. Several Friends came a great way to see and hear the trial, and greatly rejoiced in the Lord to see the priest frustrated in his evil designs.

Another time this priest Clapham indicted several Friends of our meeting at the court sessions at Maryborough, and me for being at a meeting on such a day, which he called an unlawful assembly; and for not being at church, as he called it, on the same day. He also indicted me for not paying a levy, or assessment towards the repairs of his worship house, though the wardens and constable had before taken from me, for the same, a mare worth three pounds ten shillings. Several Friends were thus proceeded

against, and we were fined and an order given to distrain our goods; on which account I rode to Dublin, and petitioned the lord lieutenant and council. I and one other Friend were admitted into the council-chamber, to state our grievance, and had a very fair hearing, that judge being present who gave judgment against us at the court sessions. The council gave their judgment, that the proceedings were illegal. The lord lieutenant wished to know, why we did not pay tithes to the ministers? I showed him out of the Scriptures that the law was ended which gave tithes, and the priesthood changed which received them, by the coming and suffering of Christ, who had settled a ministry on better terms, and ordered them a maintenance. He would know what maintenance the ministry must have? I told him, Christ's allowance, and I showed him from the Scriptures what it was, as the Lord opened them to me by his spirit and power, which gave me wisdom and utterance, and set home what I said unto their understandings. There were three bishops present, and not one of them replied in all this discourse, though so nearly concerned in it. In the conclusion, the lord lieutenant bid God bless us, adding, we should not suffer for not going to their public-worship, neither for going to our meetings. This quieted the priest, and it soon went abroad that the Quakers had the liberty of their religion, which was a great ease to Friends, for we had been often imprisoned and had much goods taken from us on that account.

While I was in the county of Armagh visiting Friends, our meetings were broken up by the soldiers, and many of us put in prison. There we had living powerful meetings, many Friends and friendly people came out of the country to them, and though under sufferings, we had a sweet heavenly refreshing time, for the glory of the Lord shone among us. There were in the ministry George Gregston and myself. The priest of the town kept his worship in the session-house, and it being under one roof with the jail, we could hear him at his worship; likewise he and his people could hear us at ours. The Lord's power so confounded him, that he could not get on in his devotion, but left the place and came no more to worship there while we were prisoners. The Lord's power, truth and testimony were over them all, everlasting praises to his great name.

Another time I was moved of the Lord to go from my own house to Londonderry, to warn them to repent, or the Lord would bring a scourge over them. So in obedience to the Lord I went, and when I came there it happened to be a day of humiliation, as they called it, being at the time the plague was in London. They were gone to their worship at the cathedral, and I was moved of the Lord to go there. When I came to the door, the man who used to ring the bells met me, and took me by the hand, and led me near the pulpit, where the bishop was preaching. He thought he had got a Presbyterian convert, and did not take off my hat, until he saw the people gaze at me, observing which, he took my hat off and laid it by. I stood there until the bishop had done preaching; the people's eyes were on me, and I spoke what the Lord gave me to say, warning them to repent, or the Lord would bring a scourge over them, and scale their walls without a ladder. The bishop called to the mayor and officers to take me away, but the dread of the Lord's power was over them, they all sat still, and did not molest me. When I had delivered the Lord's message, I went towards the door, where the man who led me in met me, and took me by the hand, having my hat in his other hand; he led me to the door, put my hat on my head, and bid God speed me well.

I went to my lodging, which was a public house, kept by John Gibson, who with his wife, were convinced of the truth. There I was moved to write a paper to the bishop and magistrates, and the next day I went to the bishop's house with it, he living in the city. I knocked at the door, and the man who led me in and out of the worship house the day before, opened the door, and made his apology, that he did me no harm at the church. I told him he did well, and asked him for the bishop. He said he was gone to dinner, and a great many gentlemen with him; for there was a great meeting of them; and he told me it would be better to come when they had dined.

I went back to my lodging, and in a little time came again, and they having then dined, I sent my paper to them, and they sent a priest to call me up. As I was going up the stairs, the word of the Lord said unto me, I will make you as a wall of brass. There were the bishop, the governor, the mayor, several justices, priests and others, in a great dining room; the bishop sat with his hat on, and the rest all stood bare-headed. When I came into the room, the bishop rose up from his seat, put off his hat, and met me with several low bows; but I was as a wall of brass, and stood in the power of the Lord, that was with me, which smote him. Then he sat down, and told me that what I said at their worship the day before was true, and he preached the same, and pointed to two of the priests, saying, they preached the same, therefore there was no need of me. I told him, the more preachers of truth the better, and there was need enough; and he being a bishop, ought to encourage me. He said he must know what I came to the city for and who sent me, and he bid the mayor examine me. So the mayor came from among the rest, and asked me where I dwelt? I told him, in the Queenscounty. He asked what trade I was? I told him, a ploughman. He asked my business there, and who sent me? I told him, the Lord Jesus Christ sent me, to warn them to repent, or he would lash them with his judgments. As I declared this, the Lord's power reached him, and he could not refrain from tears, being a tender-spirited man; so he went back behind the rest.

The bishop seeing this, was amazed, and bid two of his waiting men take me into the buttery and make me eat and drink. They took me by the arms down the stairs, and bid me go into the buttery to eat and drink. I told them I would not eat or drink there; but they urged me, saying, I heard their lord command them to make me eat and drink. I asked them if they were Christians at that house? They said, yes; then said I, let your yes be yes, and your no be no, for that is Christ's command. I said, I will not eat or drink here, and you take no notice of it, being accustomed to break your yes and no. They stood silent, and let me go, for the Lord's power astonished them and was over them all.

I went to my lodging, and was moved of the Lord to write a paper, and put it on the gates of the city, and to declare the Lord's message through the streets. Accordingly I wrote a paper that evening, and in the morning went first to the mayor, and told him the message I had to the city. He said the bishop had chided him the day before, because he did not send me to prison; but he did not intend to do it, so long as the law would bear him harmless, and wished he had me living by him, and then I should soon have another to help to suppress wickedness. I went from the mayor, and beginning near Water-gate, sounded the Lord's message through the streets; it was dreadful to the people, and several ran as if before naked

swords. As I came near the main guard, a soldier being at the door mocked, but in the dread of the Lord's power I looked in at the guard-house door, and cried, "Soldiers! All repent." The soldiers on the guard were smitten, as men affrighted, for the power of the Lord was mighty, in which I performed this service; and when I had done, I put a paper on the gates, as the Lord moved me. Being clear, I left the city, and visited Friends' meetings in the north, and they admired the Lord's goodness that carried me through that service without a prison.

The day I left Londonderry, the bishop took his journey towards Dublin, and, as I was informed by those who said they heard him, he preached a sermon before the lord lieutenant and government against the Quakers, comparing us to Korah, Dathan and Abiram, urging them with many arguments to suppress us; but he was taken sick in the worship house, carried to his lodging, and died, having preached his last sermon against the Lord's people and servants, who truly fear him.

The people of Londonderry afterwards remembered these warnings, and spoke of them in their great distress in the last siege, when thousands died for lack of bread, and through other miseries, the Lord having scaled their walls without a ladder, yet allowed not their enemies to get the city with force of arms, or scaling-ladders. And thus the warning before given them was fulfilled.

In the year 1669, George Fox came to Ireland, and several Friends in the ministry with him. He settled men's and women's meetings among Friends throughout the nation, that faithful men and women should take care in the government of church affairs, among our own Society, which meetings are of great service. I was much eased by it, as I told George Fox at that time, for I had a great concern in those things, which had lain heavy upon my spirit for several years before; and this gave every faithful Friend a share of the burden. I travelled with George Fox from place to place in the several provinces. When he had answered his service here, and was gone for England, I laboured among Friends in this nation, both in doctrine and church discipline, the Lord having given me an understanding in the government of his church, and his heavenly power attending, which enabled me to go through, and carried me over all opposition.

Chapter VIII

His various travels, perils and exercises, both by sea and land in America, where he went in the service of the Gospel, in 1671—The vision he had in his return, concerning an approaching scarcity for two years; though then a time of plenty

In the year 1671, I had movings upon my spirit to travel to the West Indies, which thing had remained with me for some time. I went to the Half-year's Meeting at Dublin in the third month, where I acquainted

Friends with my intended journey, who had unity therewith, and the Lord's presence and power appeared mightily among us, to our great comfort, confirmation and satisfaction. When the service of the meeting was over, I parted there with my wife and Friends in much tenderness, under a heavenly sense of the Lord's presence; took shipping, and landed near Liverpool. From there I traveled to London, and came there on the first day of the Yearly Meeting, and abode until the meeting was over. I also stayed some weeks visiting Friends in their meetings.

Several Friends in the ministry were there, ready to go to the West Indies in truth's service, namely: George Fox, Thomas Briggs, John Stubbs, James Lancaster, Robert Widders and others. We went together in one vessel, bound for Jamaica, but intended to touch at Barbados. We had many precious comfortable meetings aboard the ship, but in our voyage were chased by a pirate, a Salleeman, which in a moonlight night came up with us, and was ready to board us, but immediately a cloud covered us, and a fresh gale of wind out of the cloud carried us clear away. Thus the Lord eminently saved us out of their hands, and we were afterwards certainly informed who he was.

Several of us landed in Barbados, in the eighth month, 1671, and James Lancaster, John Cartwright and George Pattison went in the ship to Jamaica. At Barbados we had great service for the Lord and the good of the people; many were convinced and turned to the Lord, and brought into the way of life and peace.

After we had laboured there some time in the service of truth, Thomas Briggs, my fellow traveller, and I were moved of the Lord to visit the Leeward Islands, and Colonel Morris of Barbados would go with us. So we took shipping, and in four days landed in Antigua, where we had great meetings, and many were convinced and turned to the Lord. Several justices of the peace, officers and chief men came to the meetings, and confessed to the truth which we declared in the power of God. This soon went abroad and alarmed the other islands.

When we were clear to leave Antigua, we found our spirits drawn to visit the island of Nevis. Colonel Winthrop, who had been governor of Antigua, being convinced, he and his family received the truth, and we had several large heavenly meetings in his house. He would go with us to Nevis, and having a vessel of his own, shipped us in it, with himself, Colonel Morris, their waiting-men and seamen. We set sail from Antigua, and in the way we touched at a little island called Barbada, where we made a short stay, and had some service for truth.

Then we sailed to Nevis, and when we came near the island I was under great exercise of spirit, for I found something working against us and the testimony we had to bear for God. I told the two colonels, that there was something working against us, and desired them as soon as we dropped anchor, immediately to go ashore in their boat, and not to stay dressing and trimming themselves, as they and such persons use to do, so would they only be taken notice of, being great persons: and perhaps we might come privately after them, and get some service for truth among the people in the island, before we were taken much notice of; but they thought their great name would have gone over all opposition.

When they came to anchor, they went to trim and dress themselves as usual; which took up some time. I was under a weight of trouble; and when they were ready to go on shore, a marshal came aboard, with orders from the governor, that none should come ashore, until he knew from where the vessel came, and who were in her. Then we were all kept aboard the vessel, and a messenger sent to the governor, who presently sent an officer and soldiers aboard, with strict command that none of us should go ashore, or any come from shore to speak with us, upon penalty of a great fine; but the officer and soldiers were very kind, and allowed several Friends to come aboard to visit us. There were several honest tender Friends in that island, who were joyful at our coming to visit them; they ventured their fines and came aboard to us, and we were refreshed together in the Lord Jesus.

The governor sent for the master of the vessel, who was no Friend, and bound him in a bond of one thousand pounds sterling, to carry us back to Antigua. There came on board, one Colonel Stapleton, who was governor of Mountserrat, and several men of account with him. I told them, it was very hard usage, that we being English men, and coming so far as we had done to visit our countrymen, could not be admitted to go on shore, to refresh ourselves, within King Charles' dominions, after such a long voyage. Colonel Stapleton said it was true, but, said he, we hear that since your coming to the Caribbean Islands, there are seven hundred of our militia turned Quakers; and the Quakers will not fight, and we have need of men to fight, being surrounded by enemies, and that is the very reason why Governor Wheeler will not allow you to come ashore.

By the order of the governor we were carried back to Antigua, where we were received with gladness and had great service, many of all sorts flocked to meetings, and generally confessed to the truth. When our spirits were clear of the service in that island, we returned to Barbados.

My companion, Thomas Briggs, being taken very sick. Colonel Winthrop took us to Barbados in his own vessel, and went along with us, he having received the truth in the love of it. When we came to Barbados, Friends were glad, and George Fox was there in the Lord's service. We had many large precious meetings, the Lord's power and presence accompanied his testimony and work committed to us; and many were brought into the way of life and peace with God.

When we were clear in our service, we took shipping for Jamaica, namely: George Fox, Robert Widders, Solomon Eccles, Elizabeth Hooton and I, and after being about ten days at sea, we landed at Port Royal in Jamaica. We traveled much in that island, and had good service in gathering people to the Lord Jesus Christ, and settling meetings among them. James Lancaster and I traveled over an eminence called Mount Diabolo, to the north side of the island, where the people received us gladly and came to meetings, several were convinced and received the truth; and we settled a meeting there for the worship of God.

After some time of labour in the Gospel of Christ, having finished our service in that island, we committed them to the Lord's keeping, and took shipping for Maryland; but Elizabeth Hooton died in Jamaica, being an ancient woman. We left Solomon Eccles there in truth's service, and the rest of us shipped with

George Fox for Maryland. We had great exercise and perils in this voyage, in the Gulf of Florida, being sorely distressed with contrary wind and tempestuous weather, which lay heavy upon us several days and nights. We were also much bruised and tired; but the Lord had mercy upon us, who commands the winds and lofty waves of the sea to be still, and they obey him. By the Lord's providential hand we also escaped an imminent danger of being taken by a privateer. At length we got within the Cape of Virginia, and up the great Bay of Chesapeake, to the mouth of the Patuxent river in Maryland, where we anchored; but a violent storm arising we could not get ashore for some days, though our provisions and water were spent. When the storm ceased, Friends hearing of us, came in a boat and fetched us ashore.

Here we met with John Burnyeat ready to take shipping for England. We had several large heavenly meetings, and the Lord's power and presence were with us, to our great comfort. Then we traveled severally in our services, as the Lord ordered us. George Fox, John Burnyeat, and several other Friends accompanying them, traveled to New England. I took boat and went to Virginia, where things were much out of order; but the Lord's power and testimony went over all. When I had got several powerful meetings among them and their minds a little settled, so that truth had got some hold, I appointed a men's meeting for settling them in the way of truth's discipline.

Afterwards, it being upon me, I traveled to Carolina, and two Friends accompanied me, it being all wilderness and no English inhabitants or path-ways, but some marked trees to guide people. The first day's journey we did pretty well, and lay that night in the woods, as we often used to do in those parts. The next day being wet weather we were sorely foiled in swamps and rivers, and one of the two who were with me for a guide, was at a stand to know which way the place lay we were to go to. I perceiving he was at a loss, turned my mind to the Lord, and as he led me, I led the way. So we traveled in many difficulties until about sunset; then they told me, they could travel no farther; for they both fainted, being weak-spirited men. I bid them stay there, and kindle a fire, and I would ride a little farther, for I saw a bright horizon appear through the woods, which travellers take as a mark of some plantation. I rode on to it, and found it was only tall timber trees without underwood. But I perceived a small path, which I followed until it was very dark, and rained violently; then I alighted and set my back to a tree, until the rain abated. It being dark, and the woods thick, I walked all night between two trees; and though very weary, I dared not lie down on the ground, for my clothes were wet to my skin. I had eaten little or nothing that day, neither had I anything to refresh me but the Lord. In the morning I returned to seek my two companions, and found them lying by a great fire of wood. I told them how I had fared; and he that should have been the guide, would have persuaded me that we were gone past the place where we intended; but my mind drew to the path which I had found the night before. So I led the way, and that path brought us to the place where we intended, namely: Henry Phillip's house by Albemarle river.

He and his wife had been convinced of the truth in New England, and came here to live; and not having seen a Friend for seven years before, they wept for joy to see us. It being on a first-day morning when we got there, although I was weary and faint, and my clothes wet, I desired them to send to the people

thereaway to come to a meeting about the middle of the day, and I would lie down upon a bed, and if I slept too long, that they should awake me. Now about the hour appointed many people came, but they had little or no religion, for they came and sat down in the meeting smoking their pipes. In a little time the Lord's testimony arose in the authority of his power, and their hearts being reached by it, several of them were tendered and received the testimony. After meeting they desired me to stay with them, and let them have more meetings.

One Tems, a justice of the peace, and his wife were at the meeting, who received the truth with gladness, and desired to have the next meeting at their house, about three miles off, on the other side of the water; so we had a meeting there the next day, and a blessed time it was; for several were tendered with a sense of the power of God, received the truth and abode in it.

1672. I could stay no longer with them at that time, for I had appointed a men's meeting in Virginia, to be on the fifth-day of that week, things being much out of order among them. I therefore took my leave of them in the love of God, and began my journey on third-day morning, with my two fellow travellers. I had ridden but a few miles before I was seized with grievous pain, and a weakness in my bowels, occasioned by the great cold I got with those hardships in coming there. I rode in great pain that day, and at night lay in the wilderness. Soon after we alighted off our horses, my two fellow travellers, who should have helped me, fell sick and fainted. So I was forced to rise, kindle a fire and fodder the horses. After some time they recovered from their fainting fit. The Lord was merciful, and bore up my spirit that night, and the next day we got to Virginia to the men's meeting, and the Lord's power was with us, and Friends received truth's discipline in the love of it, as formerly they had received the doctrine of truth, for which they were great sufferers in the spoiling of their goods, the governor being a very peevish man, and much set against truth and Friends.

Friends desired to have another men's meeting before I left those parts; so we appointed another, the time and place being mentioned. In the mean time I traveled to several places in that country, and had comfortable meetings with Friends, and traveled thirty miles above Jamestown, to a place called Greensprings, where were several convinced people. A meeting had been settled there, but was lost, the people being stumbled in their minds and scattered by the evil example of one Thomas Newhouse, who had been a preacher among them, and went from truth into the uncleanness of the world. I got them together and settled a meeting; they were glad thereof and much comforted, as sheep that had been astray, and returned again to the Shepherd, Christ Jesus. So I left them tender and loving.

As I returned, it was laid upon me to visit the governor. Sir William Barclay, and to speak with him about Friends' sufferings. I went about six miles out of my way to speak with him, accompanied by William Garret, an honest ancient Friend. I told the governor, that I came from Ireland, where his brother was lord lieutenant, who was kind to our Friends; and if he had any service for me to his brother, I would willingly do it; and as his brother was kind to our Friends in Ireland, I hoped he would be so to our

Friends in Virginia. He was very peevish and brittle, and I could fasten nothing upon him with all the soft arguments I could use; so when I had done my endeavours and was clear, I left him.

I came that night to Justice Taverner's house, his wife was a Friend, and he loving to Friends. The next day was the men's meeting at William Wright's house, the justice and his wife went to the meeting, about eight or nine miles, and several other persons of note came to the meeting, particularly Richard Bennet, alias Major General Bennet, and Colonel Teve, with others, and a great many Friends. Some came a great way to that meeting, and a blessed heavenly season it was; many were tendered by the Lord's power, and the witness of God reached, which answered to the truth of the Lord's testimony, which was declared to them in his power. We had first a meeting for the worship of God; then Friends drew into a large upper room to the men's meeting, where I was with them in settling the affairs of the church. Justice Taverner's wife came to me, and told me, that the Major General, Colonel Teve, and others were below, staying to speak with me; so I went down to them. They were courteous, and said they only stayed to see me, and acknowledged what I had spoken in the meeting was truth. I told them the reason of our Friends' drawing apart from them was, to lay down a method to provide for our poor widows and fatherless children; to take care that no disorders were committed in our Society; and that all lived orderly, according to what they professed. I also informed them, that in England and other places, we had such meetings settled for that service. The Major General replied, he was glad to hear there was such care and order among us; and wished it had been so with others. He further said he was a man of great estate, and many of our Friends were poor men, therefore he desired to contribute with them. He likewise asked me how I was treated by the governor, having heard that I was with him. I told him that he was brittle and peevish, and I could get nothing fastened on him. He asked me if the governor called me dog, rogue, etc. I said, no, he did not call me so. Then said he, you took him in his best humour, those being his usual terms when he is angry, for he is an enemy to every appearance of good. They were tender and loving, and we parted so, the Major General desiring to see me at his house, which I was willing to do, and accordingly went. He was a solid, wise man, received the truth and died in the same, leaving two Friends his executors.

When I had been some time with Friends in Virginia, and had many sweet serviceable meetings among them, and things somewhat settled, I found my spirit clear of that service, and took boat and went back to Maryland, where I stayed several meetings, the Lord's power and presence accompanying, which made hard things easy. When I was clear there, I took passage by sea, and about ten days after landed safe at New York, where no Friends lived. John Evans, of Jamaica, being in my company at that time, we lodged at a Dutch woman's house, who kept an inn. I was moved of the Lord to get a meeting in that town, for there had not been one there before; so I spoke to the woman of the house to let us have a meeting, who was very willing, and let us have a large dining room, furnished with seats. We gave notice thereof, and had a large and good meeting, some of the chief officers, magistrates and leading men of the town being at it, who were very attentive, the Lord's power being over them all. Several of them appeared very loving after the meeting. The woman of the house and her daughter being widows, both wept when we

went away.

From there I went to Long Island, where were many honest tender Friends; and having several meetings with them, we were well refreshed and comforted together in the Lord. From there I went to Shelter Island, where I met with George Fox again, and several Friends with him, coming from New England and going to Virginia. I told him of my travels and service for the Lord, at the hearing of which he was glad, and we praised the Lord for his goodness. I told him that I was much pressed in spirit to hasten for Ireland; he said that Friends in New England had heard of me, and expected I would visit them, and besides, the passage of ships from those parts was stopped, by reason of war between Holland and England. I told him, I believed I should not wait long for a passage, for the Lord pressed me for Ireland, and I believed there was need of my service there. After being two or three days together at Shelter Island, we took leave one of another, and parted in the sweet love of God.

After some day's travel by Narraganset, and those parts, I came to Rhode Island, where I met with John Burnyeat, John Stubbs and John Cartwright. Roger Williams, a priest and an enemy to truth, had put forth fourteen propositions, as he called them, which he would maintain against any of the Quakers who came from Old England, and challenged a dispute on seven of them at Newport in Rhode Island, and on the other seven at Providence.

I joined with Friends in answering this challenge at the time and place appointed for the dispute, which was to be in Friends' meetinghouse at Newport; where a great concourse of people of all sorts gathered. When those propositions, as he called them, came to be discoursed of, they were all mere slanders and accusations against the Quakers; the bitter old man could make nothing out, but on the contrary they were turned back upon himself. He was baffled, and the people saw his weakness, folly, and envy against the truth and Friends.

There were many prejudiced Baptists, who would eagerly have helped the priest against Friends; but they dared not undertake his charge against us, for they saw it was false. The testimony of truth in the power of God, was set over all his false charges, to the great satisfaction of the people.

When this meeting was ended, which lasted three days, John Stubbs and I went to Providence, accompanied by many Friends, to hear the other seven propositions, which lasted one day, John Burnyeat and John Cartwright going another way in truth's service. At Providence there was a very great gathering of people, Presbyterians, Baptists and Ranters. Roger Williams being there, I stood up and told him in public, we had spent many days at Newport, where he could make nothing out agreeable to his challenge; but on the contrary manifested his clamour, rash and false accusations, which he could not prove against us; and that I was not willing to spend much time now in hearing his clamour and false accusations, having other service for the Lord, therefore would only spend that day. So he went on, as he had done at Newport, in Rhode Island. We answered to all his charges against Friends, and disproved them.

The prejudiced man was silenced; and then the professors desired to know our belief, what the soul of man was made of. I told them, I believed what the Scriptures said, that when God made man, he breathed into him the breath of life, and he became a living soul; and that it was sufficient for me to know Christ Jesus who redeemed my soul. But if any of them, who were great professors and old disputants, would undertake to show, of what God made the soul of man, he might. One who was an ancient leading man among them said, he would not meddle with it, and this ended the dispute. We had a seasonable opportunity to open many things to the people, appertaining to the kingdom of God and way of eternal life and salvation. The meeting concluded in prayer to Almighty God and the people went away satisfied and loving. Next day we had a meeting at Warwick, not many miles from there; to which most of those people came, and the Lord's power and presence were largely manifested; and after the meeting the people were very loving, like Friends.

From there John Stubbs went to Narraganset to meet John Burnyeat, and I went to Rhode Island by boat, and stayed some meetings there with Friends, and was well refreshed together with them in the Lord. From there to Sandwich, and had a good meeting with Friends, and another at Scituate; so to Boston, and had one meeting there, where was a ship ready to sail for Ireland; and being pressed in spirit to hasten over, I went aboard, and that day we set sail. The master of the ship was kind, and when I wished to have a meeting, if I told him of it, he would go upon the deck, and call all the people, and stay until I ended the meeting: his name was Thomas Edwards, a New England man.

In three weeks time we made land in Ireland, a readier passage being seldom known; when we came up with the land of Ireland, the wind turned north east, and a great storm arose, which cleared our way from pirates, there being then three Dutch privateers, watching the harbours of Cork, Kinsale and Youghal. This storm took them from the shore to the southward; so the next day we got into Youghal, before they returned to their post. There being two guns on board our ship, when we came into the harbour, the seamen would have fired them, as their custom is; but the master would not allow them, saying, they were blind who could not see, that it was not guns that delivered them from their enemies; and he believed in his conscience, it was for my sake they were preserved; and if I would go back with him to New England, he would give me my passage free. I told him there was a fine of a hundred pounds, on any master of a ship that should bring a Quaker to New England; he said he would venture that, if I would go with him. He was really convinced of the truth, and made sensible that the Lord's power was with me; for after I landed, and the ship was unladen, as they were going to take in fresh loading, the privateer came again, and took it between Cork and Youghal, for which he paid a ransom of two hundred pounds.

While I was at sea in that voyage, as I lay retired in my cabin, a heavenly vision came over my senses, and in it appeared two very poor ill-favoured cows, which arose under my plough-beam, as I was holding my plough. Whereupon I sat up in my cabin, and considered the matter. Then the word of the Lord came to me, and said, the two cows are two years, for there shall be two very dear years; and inasmuch as the cows arose under the plough-beam, they shall fall on corn and cattle. This came to pass in a very little

while: in the time of great plenty, contrary to men's reason, cattle died abundantly, and the price of corn rose to an extraordinary height, so that many were famished for lack of bread; and several families who had lived plentifully, were forced to go a begging, their corn being spent and cattle dead. Several families who were ashamed to beg, shipped themselves for servants to the West Indies, to get food; and many in this nation would gladly have worked for food and could not get employment.

When I landed, I went to Cork to the Province Meeting, which was at hand; and presently found there was cause for my spirit to be pressed, to hasten over for the preservation of the church's peace, some being gone into the loose foolish imaginations of Muggleton and others, both in England and of this nation, into looseness, and the liberty of their wills and carnal affections, from the cross of Christ, and self-denial, which caused great trouble and difference among Friends, both at Cork, Dublin, and several other places. We had much exercise before we got things brought into order, and settled; but the Lord's power was with us, and went over all, and He still gave an understanding to place judgment in the right line; praises to his name forever. Honest tender Friends, who kept their habitation in the truth, were very glad of my coming in such a time of need. So I laboured with them in this nation, both in the ministry and church government, according to the ability and gift that Christ gave me.

Chapter IX

His difficult voyage to the West Indies in 1675—His public dispute with Priest Ramsey, in the presence of about three thousand—His manifold perils and services in North America, both in the islands and continent, by sea and land, until his return, in 1677

About the year 1675, I was moved of the Lord to go to the West Indies again in truth's service; and after some time, many Friends being acquainted with it, and having unity therewith, my wife also being willing to give me up, I inquired for shipping to Barbados, and heard of a ship at Cork bound there, one Edward Hunt, a Friend, being merchant and part owner, who also went in her himself. I had an account near the time when they would be ready to sail, and accordingly went to Cork, my wife accompanying me there, and several Friends of our meeting; when we came to Cork, I agreed with the said Edward Hunt for my passage. My wife and Friends who went back, took their leave of me in much tenderness and brokenness of spirit, in the love of God, in which we gave up one another to be disposed of in his heavenly will.

A few days after this we sailed from Cork harbour, and things were well, the Lord's goodness being enjoyed at sea, as well as on land; but before we made our voyage we fell short of water, and went to allowance in the hot climate. We had six horses on board, belonging to the merchant, and their hay was spent; so were

forced to shave deal boards, and pull the straw out of the men's cabins, to mix with the shavings to give the horses to eat, and gave them biscuit; thus preserved their lives until they got ashore.

In the latitude of Barbados, we met with a ship from Guinea, bound for Barbados with three hundred negroes; we desired the master to let us have a barrel of water, but he told us he would not let us have a barrel of water for a barrel of silver; for he had been at allowance many weeks, and was afraid of running out. The day we caught sight of Barbados we had scarcely half a barrel of water left. In about eight weeks we made our voyage, and landed well in Barbados, where Friends received me gladly; and I had a large and open door among the people in the labour of the Gospel. People's lofty spirits were brought down, by reason of a very extraordinary storm, called a hurricane, which had done abundance of damage in the island, killed many people, and destroyed many brave buildings, ships and small vessels.

At this time there was great resorting to meetings, so that they were very full. I traveled through all parts of the island, and had meetings: many were convinced and received the truth, and Friends' hearts were opened and enlarged in the love of God, both to receive truth's doctrine and discipline. I had very good service, both in public meetings for the worship of God, and men's and women's meetings about church affairs; also in negroes' meetings in families, and several meetings were settled on such accounts, the Lord being with me, who gave me wisdom and understanding in the managing of those affairs, and the Lord's power attended his work, and blessed and prospered it mightily; so that things relating to truth's affairs, both as to doctrine and discipline, were settled to great satisfaction.

At this time there was one Tobias Fryer, a man of great substance and repute, and of authority in commission of the peace, whose wife was a Friend, and had laid long sick. She had a great desire to see me, and sent for me twice; but I being closely employed in the Lord's service, sent her word, to ask her husband's leave to have a meeting there, and I and some other Friends would come and visit her; she did so, and her husband granted it. On the day appointed I went, and many Friends and others came; it was a very thronged meeting, and the parish priest, one Ramsey, was there, and Justice Fryer got him seated in the midst of the throng of Friends.

After some time I stood up to speak of the things of God and the divine mysteries of Christ's kingdom, whose heavenly doctrine was clearly opened and preached, by the Divine operation of his holy Spirit, to the great satisfaction of the meeting and comfort of Friends, so that many of them after the meeting, expressed their gladness and satisfaction. The priest was uneasy, yet could make no opposition, for the Lord's power was over him and chained him down, though he was a very bad man. But the testimony of truth, in the demonstration of the spirit and power of the Lord, being set over him, made him fret: he also came to Bridgetown, and brought many rude people to our meeting there; which was very large and full. He there abused Friends in foul language, calling us heretics, blasphemers and traitors, and challenged a dispute with me, to prove his charge, which he said he would do from our own books. So after we got things a little quiet, we broke up the meeting; and at my lodging I wrote a few lines to him,

after this manner:

Priest Ramsey,

Forasmuch as you in public have charged our Society with heresy, blasphemy and treason; and that you would prove this charge from our own books, and on that account have challenged me to a public dispute, I am willing, with the Lord's assistance, to give you a meeting in defence of our faith and doctrine.

—WILLIAM EDMUNDSON

When these came to his hand, he seemed to cool in his hot challenge, saying, he had not a convenient place, fit for such a concourse of people as would come to the dispute; and besides, he would first have an hour's discourse with me in private. To which I replied again in writing, that for private discourse with him, I was not willing, but in public; and if he could procure leave of Justice Fryer, to meet at his house where we did before, I would come to him in his own parish, otherwise I would get leave of Colonel Linn, to meet at his house.

While I was writing this, Colonel Linn came to see me, and I told him what I was writing, he said all his house was at my service; and if that were too little, he had conveniency of trees about his house, and could make shades for thousands of people. So I sent my letter to the priest; and he sent his answer, that he would come to Colonel Linn's on such a day.

It soon spread abroad, so that most of the Friends in the island came there, and abundance of people; it was thought there were above three thousand. There came also several justices of the peace, and others of account. We met out of doors under shades; and when the meeting was settled, I proposed that both parties should be limited to an hour's time in questions and answers, and not to exceed at any time; and that both parties should prove their assertions by the holy Scriptures, or else to be void. This was assented to, but not observed by the priest, for instead of proving his former charge against Friends, he went out into railing and slandering of several Friends, sometimes against us all in general; and thus manifested his folly to the sight of the people. Friends were cool in their minds, and, as we had an opportunity, opened things to the people concerning our faith and principles; and having a Bible, showed them Scriptures for them. There was a general satisfaction among them concerning us, and it was of great service for truth.

This priest Ramsey had been a friar, and went out of England for misdemeanours, as after appeared by a certificate under the hand and seal of the Earl of Rochester, occasioned by a slander cast upon a Friend in England, which he there said in public he had from the said earl, who was a near kinsman to the Friend accused. After the meeting, Priest Ramsey went to the governor, Sir Jonathan Atkins, and made a great complaint against me, that I was a Jesuit come out of Ireland, pretending to be a Quaker, and to make the negroes Christians; but would make them rebels, and rise and cut their throats. Upon this the

governor was about to send his warrant to apprehend me, but I heard of it, and went to him before the warrant came; one Robert Dree, a Friend, went along with me.

When we came to the governor, and he knew my name and who I was, he said he had heard of me, and would take a course with me; using many rough words, and threatening highly what he would do to me. He sent his man for the marshal, who lived a mile from there; but before the marshal came, we had much discourse, and among other things he told me, he was informed that I was making the negroes Christians, and would make them rebel, and cut their throats. I told him it was a good work to bring them to the knowledge of God and Christ Jesus, and to believe in Him who died for them and for all men; and that that would keep them from rebelling, or cutting any man's throat. But if they did rebel and cut their throats, as he said, it would be through their own doings, in keeping them in ignorance and under oppression, giving them liberty to be wicked, and on the other hand starving them for lack of food and clothes convenient: so giving them liberty in that which God restrained, and restraining them in that which God allowed and afforded to all men, which was food and clothes. After some time he grew very moderate.

The marshal came, and asked him what his pleasure was. He answered, he thought to have committed me to prison, but his mind was altered; and asked me if I would appear before the council next day. I told him I would, if he commanded me; he said he did command me, and so dismissed me for that time. Next day I came to the council-house, and many eminent Friends of the island came with me; I was called into the council-chamber, and Friends stayed without. There were the governor and most of the chief men of the island; also the envious Priest Ramsey was there, strongly accusing Friends of heresy, blasphemy and treason, and would prove it out of Edward Burrough's book. The book was in town, I sent a Friend for it, who brought it to the governor. The priest turned it over and over but could find nothing to prove his charge. The governor checked him, and several of the council frowned on him: then the priest went on his knees, and asked them forgiveness; and from that time the governor was kind to me.

I laboured in the island about five months and had great service for the Lord; many received the truth, and things were well among Friends, and in good order. Being clear of the service there, and having drawings in my spirit to New England, I took passage for Rhode Island in a yacht, of which Joseph Bryar, a Friend, was master. When they were near ready to sail, I went and took leave of the governor, and he was very kind and friendly. The day we sailed, many Friends came to Bridgetown, to take their leave; and we parted in the love of God and sweet unity of his blessed spirit, in much tenderness. Thomas Redman, a Friend and doctor, went with me. We had a good comfortable passage, and came well to Rhode Island in about three weeks.

At that time New England was at war with the Indians, except the colony of Rhode Island, the governor of it being a Friend, yet the Indians burnt some towns out of the island, and killed several people who belonged to the government; but by the Lord's providential hand, were not allowed to come into the

island. The Indians prevailed mightily, burnt many considerable towns, and murdered people daily. It was a perilous time, and the ways infested with murderers, the Indians lying hidden in bushes, shot men down as they traveled, before they saw them; and many were killed after that manner.

When I had stayed to some meetings with Friends in Rhode Island, it was with me to travel eastward towards Piscataway, to visit Friends there who were under distress by reason of the war, though all looked upon it dangerous travelling; however, I committed my life to God who gave it, and took my journey. One Friend ventured to go with me, to guide me through the woods to Sandwich, and by the Lord's good hand we got safe there. Friends were glad of my coming, for there was an honest tender people there, who loved the Lord and his truth. I stayed with them two meetings, and we were well refreshed in the Lord, and one in another. I traveled from there to Seffenase, and had a meeting; from there to Boston alone, being thirty miles, and stayed one meeting: then went to Salem, and so to Piscataway river, visiting Friends, and having meetings at several places. I came to Great Island, and stayed a meeting or two with Friends there, and we were well refreshed together in the Lord.

Leaving my horse there, I went in a boat to Nicholas Shepley's, a man of note in that country, he and his wife both being honest Friends; from there over the river several miles, where there were many honest Friends, and had a meeting with them on a first-day of the week; which was very large and precious. Many came from far to it, and blessed the Lord for that comfortable opportunity. After the meeting I took leave of Friends in the love of God, and going back to Nicholas Shepley's, stayed there two or three days, and had a good meeting, to which many Friends and others came; we had also a men's meeting about church affairs.

About this time, there was a cessation of the war with the Indians on that river, and one evening, while I was at Nicholas Shepley's, there came in fourteen lusty Indian men, with their heads trimmed, and faces painted for war; they looked fierce—I sat down with them in the hall, and would have discoursed with them familiarly, for some of them spoke broken English; but they were churlish, and their countenances bloody. So I left them, and told the Friend, I saw they intended mischief in their hearts, but the Lord chained them; and they went away in the night, without doing us any harm. Next day I was to go to Great Island, and in the morning Nicholas Shepley told me, that he was informed the Indians intended to make a new insurrection. I went by water to Great Island, as I intended, and had a heavenly meeting with Friends before parting: I left them tender, in a sense of the love of God. After I left them, the Indians rose in arms and murdered about seventy Christians, as the post brought news, but I did not hear of one Friend murdered that night.

I came back to Salem, and had several meetings in that quarter, in some places where none had been before. I had two meetings at Marblehead, many resorted to them, and several were convinced and received the truth. People's minds were cast down, because of the Indian wars that prevailed mightily upon them.

I traveled in many places as with my life in my hand, leaving all to the Lord who rules in heaven and earth. I heard of some tender people at a place called Reading, so I and five or six Friends went there to an ancient man's house, whose name was Gould; his house was a garrison, for at that time most of the people in those parts, except Friends, were in garrisons for fear of the Indians. When we came to his house the gates were locked, we called, and the old man opened the gate. One of their elders was at prayer, so I stopped Friends until he had done, then we went into the room, where several were met to exercise religion, but they seemed to be disturbed at our coming. I stood still, and told them we came not to disturb them, for I loved religion, and was seeking religious people; the old man of the house bid us sit down, and he sat by me.

As I sat, my heart being full of the power and spirit of the Lord, the love of God ran through me to the people. I told them I had something in my heart to declare among them, if they would give me leave. The master of the house, who sat by me, bid me speak; and my heart being full of the word of life, I spoke of the mysteries of God's kingdom; and as I was speaking I touched a little upon the priests; the old man clapped me on the shoulder, and said he must stop me, for I had spoken against their ministers—I stopped, for I was tender of them, and felt they were a tender people; yet my heart was full of heavenly matter. After a little pause, I told them, I had many things to declare unto them of the things of God; but being in that house, must have leave of the master of it. He bid me speak on, which I did in the demonstration of the spirit and power of the Lord; so that their consciences were awakened, and the witness of God in them answered to the truth of the testimony; they were broken into many tears, and when I was clear in declaration, I concluded the meeting with fervent prayer to the Lord.

The old man rising up, got me in his arms, and said he owned what I had spoken, and thanked God that he could understand it; and said he had heard that we denied the Scriptures, and denied Christ who died for us; which was the cause of that great difference between their ministers and us. But he understood this day, that we owned both Christ and the Scriptures; therefore he would know the reason of the difference between their ministers and us? I told him their ministers were satisfied with the talk of Christ and the Scriptures; and we could not be satisfied without the sure, inward, divine knowledge of God and Christ, and the enjoyment of those comforts the Scriptures declared of, which true believers enjoyed in the primitive times. The old man replied with tears, those were the things he wanted. He would not let us go until we had eaten some food with him, though at that time provisions were scarce, because of the great destruction by the wars. Thus leaving them loving and tender, when we parted the old man wept, got me in his arms, and said he doubted he should never see me again.

I went from there to Boston, and had meetings there, and in several places in that quarter, having great exercise with some who professed truth and lived not in it; who did much hurt, and hindered the Lord's work. When I was clear of those parts, I went back to Rhode Island by sea, in a little bark belonging to Edward Wharton, a Friend, who lived at Salem. In a few days we landed at Rhode Island, where great troubles attended Friends by reason of the wars, which lay very heavy on places belonging to that quarter

without the island, the Indians killing and burning all before them; and the people, who were not Friends, were outrageous to fight: but the governor being a Friend, Walter Clark, could not give commissions to kill and destroy men. Friends were glad of my coming, and it pleased God that it was to good purpose in several respects; the faithful and honest-hearted among Friends were much helped and strengthened by my being there. I stayed some time among them, and had many blessed and heavenly meetings to worship God; also men's meetings for church affairs.

While I stayed at Rhode Island, the heat of the Indian war abated, for King Philip, the chief in that war, was killed, and his party destroyed and subdued; presently after a sickness came which proved mortal and took many away, so that there were few families in the island but lost some in two or three days' sickness. Many Friends died, yet I constantly visited sick families of Friends, although the smell of the sickness was loathsome, and many times I could feel all the parts of my body as it were loaded with it, so that I would say to sick families, it was much if I did not carry their sickness away, I was so loaded therewith. After some time it seized on me with such violence, that I was forced to keep my bed at Walter Newberry's, in Newport.

Then some loose spirits, whom I had dealt with for their looseness, were glad, and thought their curb and reins were taken off; but the Lord healed and raised me up, so that in about ten days' time I was able to appear in public meetings, and although my body was weak by reason of travels and troubles with wrong spirits, loose livers and false brethren, yet the Lord's power carried me over all. When I had stayed some time labouring in those parts, and was clear of that service, I was drawn towards New York, and James Fletcher being here in the service of truth, would go with me. So we took our leave of Friends in the love of God, and took shipping at Rhode Island for New York.

While we were on board the sloop, it came upon me to go to New Hertford, a chief town in Connecticut colony, which lay about fifty miles in the country, through a great wilderness, and very dangerous to travel, the Indians being in arms, haunting those parts, and killing many Christians. It looked frightful, that I, who was a stranger in the country, should undertake such a journey in those perilous times; but the service came close upon me, and I was under great exercise of mind about it, yet said nothing of it to any man for some days.

We were sorely tossed at sea, forward and backward, by contrary winds and bad weather, yet got once on shore in Shelter Island, and went to Nathaniel Sylvester's, a Friend, who dwelt there, where we had a meeting. After this the wind and weather seeming to favour us, we went aboard again, and set on our voyage, but in the night it was exceedingly stormy, and we were in great danger of being cast away; yet by the Lord's providence escaped, but were driven back to New London. The wind continuing against us, we stayed there three days, and endeavoured to get a meeting, but the people being rigid Presbyterians, would not allow us to have one.

We heard of some Baptists, five miles from there, who kept the seventh-day as a sabbath. I had a concern

upon me to visit them; so James Fletcher, and another friendly man who came from Old England, and lived near New London, went with me. It was on a seventh-day of the week when we came there, and they were met together with their servants and negroes, keeping that day, sitting in silence. When we came in they seemed to be disturbed; but I spoke gently to them, and said we came not to disturb them, but hearing they were a people that differed in religion from the generality of people in that country, we came to visit them; and if they had a religion that was good, to share with them. The master of the house bid us sit down; we sat a pretty while in silence, and my heart was filled with the word of life, yet I was afraid to raise their spirits, lest thereby I should lose my service; for I felt there were desires in them after the knowledge of God.

So I began my service by way of question, and queried if they allowed to ask questions one of another about religion? Which they assented to. I asked them why they kept that day as a sabbath? They said it was strictly commanded in the Old Testament. I asked if we were obliged to keep all the law of Moses? They said, no, but the keeping of the sabbath seemed to be more required than the rest of the law, for the priests blamed the Jews for breaking the sabbath, more than any other part of the law. I told them they were under a mistake, for they might find that our Saviour Jesus Christ, when he was in the flesh, did many things which the Jews accounted a breach of the sabbath; as healing people on the sabbath day, travelling with his disciples, who plucked ears of corn; and doing many things on the sabbath, with which the Jews were highly offended. So I opened many Scriptures to them, showing, that Christ had ended the law of the old covenant, and was the rest of his people, and that all must know rest, quietness and peace in him.

Then they asked me about water baptism and breaking of bread, and we had much discourse concerning it. They were very moderate and ready in the Scriptures. I showed them, that John, who had the ordinance of water baptism, said he baptized with water, but Christ should baptize them with fire and the Holy Ghost; and that his must decrease, and Christ's must increase. That by our account it was drawing towards seventeen hundred years since that day, which was sufficient time to wear to an end that which decreased, and establish that which increased. It was material for such as held water baptism to be in force, to show how far it was decreased and when it would be at an end; and Christ's baptism increased to perfection, and established according to John's testimony. But as for me, I believed that John's water baptism was ended long ago, and Christ's established, and that there was but one faith and one baptism, as the apostle witnessed to the Ephesians. I opened to them, that Christ was the substance of all those things, and his body the bread of life, that we must all feed upon. They were all quiet, and I declared to them, in the openings of life, the way of truth; and when clear, concluded in fervent prayer to God; and they were very tender and loving; so we parted.

The next day, being the first day of the week, we appointed a meeting near New London, at a friendly man's house who was with us; to which several of the Baptists came, and many other sober people. The Lord's power and presence were with us; but the constable and other officers came with armed men, and

forcibly broke up our meeting, haling and abusing us very much; but the sober people were offended at them.

That evening we weighed anchor and set sail, the wind seeming somewhat fair for us; but it still remained with me to go to New Hertford, yet it seemed hard to give up to be exposed to such perils as seemed to attend that journey; but I kept it secret, thinking that the Lord might take it off me. We had sailed but about three leagues, when the wind came strong ahead of us; that night we had a storm, and were glad to get a harbour, where we lay some days, the wind blowing stiff against us. The hand of the Lord came heavy upon me, pressing me to go to New Hertford; so I gave up to the will of God, whether to live or die. Then I told the company, that I was the cause, why they were so crossed and detained in their voyage. And I showed them how the Lord required me to go to New Hertford, and the journey seeming perilous, I had delayed; but now must go, in submission to the will of God, whether I lived or died. The owner of the sloop wept and the rest were amazed and tender.

James Fletcher would go with me: so we went on shore, and bought each of us a horse, and the next morning took leave of our sloop's company; and went on our journey without any guide, except the Lord, and traveled through a great wilderness, which held us most of that day's journey. We traveled hard, and by the Lord's gracious assistance got that night within four miles of New Hertford, where we lodged at an ordinary, and the people were civil. I got up next morning very early, it being the first day of the week, and went to Hertford on foot, leaving my horse at the ordinary, and desired James Fletcher to stay there until he saw the outcome of my service, for I expected at least a prison at Hertford.

I got there pretty soon in the morning, and I was moved to go to their worship. I came to one great meetinghouse, but the priest and people were not come to their worship, it being early; and my spirit was shut up from that place. Then I was brought under great exercise of mind, fearing that the Lord was angry with me, and rejected my service, for my delay under this exercise. I went forward about half a mile, and came near to another great meetinghouse, where I found openness in my spirit to go. I was glad of the Lord's countenance, though the people were not yet come to their worship.

There was a large river, where they built many ships, about a quarter of a mile distant; there I went and sat down, until I saw people go to their worship. When they were gathered I went and stood in the worship house, near the priest, until he had done his service, when I spoke what the Lord gave me. They were moderate and quiet, and the priest and magistrates went away, but many of the people stayed, and I had good service among them. When I had cleared my conscience we parted, and I went again towards the riverside. As I was going a man called me to come to his house and dine with him. I stood a little and looked at him, his spirit seemed to be deceitful; I asked him if he would take money for his food. He said, no; then I told him I would not eat with him. So I went to the river-side again and sat down, though I had not eaten anything that day.

After some time the bells rang for their afternoon worship, and I was moved to go to the other worship

house afore mentioned, from which in the morning my spirit was shut up. I went there, and the priest and people were gathered, having a guard of fire-locks, for fear of the Indians coming upon them while at their worship. I went in, and sounded an alarm in the dread of the Lord's power, and they were startled, yet were kept down by the Lord's power, in which I declared the way of salvation to them a pretty while; but after some time, by the persuasions of the priest, the officers haled me out of the worship house, and hurt my arm so that it bled; then they took me to the guard of fire-locks on a hill.

And though it was a very piercing cold day, and I still fasting, my body also thin by reason of the sickness I had in Rhode Island not long before, and other exercises which I traveled through, yet the Lord's power supported me, so that the officer who had me in charge, first complained of the sharpness of the weather, and asked me how I could endure the cold, for he was very cold? I told him it was the entertainment that their great professors of religion in New England afforded a stranger, and yet professed the Scriptures to be their rule, which commanded to entertain strangers; and besides they had drawn my blood. I showed him my arm which was hurt; he seemed to be troubled, and excused their magistrates. I told him the magistrates and priests must answer for it to the Lord, for they were the cause of it. Then he took me to an inn, and presently the room was filled with professors: much discourse we had, and the Lord strengthened me, and by his spirit brought many Scriptures to my remembrance; so that truth's testimony was over them. As one company went away another came.

When they were foiled, a preacher among the Baptists took up the argument against truth, charging Friends with holding a great error, which was, that every man had a measure of the Spirit of Christ; and would know if I held the same error? I told him that was no error, for the Scriptures witnessed to it plentifully. He said he denied that the world had received a measure of the Spirit, but believers had received it. I told him that the apostle said a manifestation of the Spirit was given to everyone to profit withal. He said that was meant to everyone of the believers. I told him Christ had enlightened everyone that came into the world, with the light of his Spirit. He said that was everyone of the believers that came into the world: and as I brought him Scriptures, he still applied them to the believers, saying, there was the ground of our error, in applying that to every man that which properly belonged to believers. Then the Lord by his good Spirit brought to my mind the promise of our Saviour, when he told his disciples of his going away, that he would send the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, that should convince the world of sin, and should guide his disciples into all truth. Thus the same Spirit of Truth, that leads believers into all truth, convinces the world of sin. So you must grant that all have received it, or else show from the Scriptures a select number of believers; and besides them, a world of believers who have the spirit; also another world of unbelievers, that have no measure of the spirit to convince them of sin. Here the Lord's testimony came over him, so that he was stopped, and many sober professors, who stayed to see the end, acquiesced therewith, and said indeed, Mr. Rogers, the man is in the right; for you must find a select number of believers, besides a world that have a measure of the spirit, that convinces them of sin, and a world that has not the spirit, so not convinced of sin: this you must do, or grant the argument. He was silent, and the people generally satisfied in that matter, their understandings being opened; so they took

their leave of me very lovingly, it being late in the night.

When they were gone, I desired the woman of the house to boil me a little milk, for I had not eaten that day. The aforesaid Baptist, Rogers, lodged there that night, but lived fifty miles off, and was pastor to those seventh-day sabbath people, that I had been with above a week before near New London. The people of this house where we lodged being Presbyterians, I called the Baptist from them into another room; he told me where he lived, and what people he was pastor to. I told him I was with his hearers, and they were loving and tender. He also acquainted me, that he was summoned to Hertford, to appear before the assembly then sitting, who had taken away his wife from him, whom he had married some years ago, before he was of the persuasion that he now was of. And since he became a Baptist, her father, being an elder of the Presbyterians, was set violently against him, and endeavoured to divorce his daughter from him, though he had two children by her, for some ill act he had committed before he was her husband, and while he was one of their church; whereof, under sorrow and trouble of mind, he had acquainted her, and she had divulged the same to her father; for which, he said they had taken away his wife. I asked how he could join with them in opposing me; and at such a time when I was but one, being a stranger, and they abundance in opposition? And, whether it was not unmanly to do so? It being late, I desired some further discourse with him in the morning, which he assented to; but although I was up before the sun rose, he was gone away before.

I sent to the officer, who had the charge of me the day before, to know if he had any further to do with me, who said I might go when and where I pleased. So I paid the people for my night's lodging, and being clear of the service there, I went towards the place where I left James Fletcher and our horses; and in the mean time James Fletcher came another way to look for me: thus we missed one another. When he came to Hertford, he heard by several where I was gone, and came back and told me that I had set all the town a talking of religion.

The next morning we took our journey towards Long Island, and in three days came there, where Friends received us gladly; but were much troubled in their meetings with several who were gone from truth, and turned Ranters, i. e. men and women who would come into Friends' meetings, singing and dancing in a rude manner, which was a great exercise to Friends. We stayed among Friends in that part for some time, and had large and precious meetings at several places; many of those Ranters came to meetings, yet the Lord's power was over them in his testimony, and chained them down. Some of them were reached with it and brought back to the truth, to own condemnation for their running out into liberty and wickedness.

When we were clear of that quarter, we took boat to East Jersey, and came to Shrewsbury, where we stayed some meetings, and were refreshed with Friends in the Lord. From there we went to Middletown, and had a meeting at Richard Hartshorn's, which was full and large; to which there came several people who were tainted with the ranting spirit. One Edward Tarff came into the meeting with his face blacked, and said it was his justification and sanctification; also sung and danced, and came to me, where I was

sitting waiting on the Lord, and called me old rotten priest, saying I had lost the power of God; but the Lord's power filled my heart, and his word was powerful and sharp in my heart and tongue. I told him he was mad, and that made him fret; he said I lied, for he was moved of the Lord to come in that manner to reprove me. I looked on him in the authority of the Lord's power, and told him I challenged him, and his god that sent him, to look me in the face one hour, or half an hour; but he was smitten, and could not look me in the face, but went out. The Lord's power and sense of it was over the meeting, in which I stood up and appealed to the rest, whether this was not the same power of God, in which I came among them at the first, unto which they were directed and turned, when they were convinced of the truth, showing them how the ranters went from it, and were bewitched by a transformed spirit, into strong delusions. It was a blessed heavenly meeting, people were tender and loving, and Friends comforted and glad of that blessed opportunity.

Next morning we took our journey through the wilderness towards Maryland, to cross the river at Delaware Falls. Richard Hartshorn and Eliakim Wardell would go a day's journey with us; we hired an Indian to guide us, but he took us wrong, and left us in the woods. When it was late we alighted, put our horses to grass, and kindled a fire by a little brook, convenient for water to drink; then lay down till morning, but were at a great loss concerning the way, being all strangers in the wilderness. Richard Hartshorn advised to go to Rariton river, about ten miles back, as was supposed, to find out a landing place from New York, from which there was a small path that led to Delaware Falls. So we rode back, and in some time found the landing place and little path; then the two Friends committed us to the Lord's guidance and went back.

We traveled that day, and saw no tame creature; at night we kindled a fire in the wilderness, and lay by it, as we used to do in such journeys; next day about nine in the morning, by the good hand of God, we came well to the Falls, and by his providence found an Indian man, a woman and boy with a canoe. We hired him for some wampameg, to help us over in the canoe; we swam our horses, and though the river was broad, yet got well over; and, by the directions we received from Friends, traveled towards Delaware town along the west side of the river. When we had rode some miles, we baited our horses, and refreshed ourselves with such provisions as we had, for as yet we were not come to any inhabitants. Here came to us a Finland man well horsed, who could speak English, he soon perceived what we were, and gave us an account of several Friends; his house was as far as we could ride that day; he took us there, and lodged us kindly.

Next morning, being the first-day of the week, we went to Uplands, where were a few Friends met at Robert Wade's house, and we were glad one of another, and comforted in the Lord. After meeting we took boat and went to Salem, about thirty miles, where lived John Fenwick, and several families of Friends from England. We ordered our horses to meet us at Delaware town by land; so we got Friends together at Salem, and had a meeting, after which we had the hearing of several differences and endeavoured to make peace among them.

Next day we went by boat, accompanied by several Friends, to Delaware town, and there met with our horses according to appointment, but for a long time could get no lodging for ourselves, or them; the inhabitants being most of them Dutch and Fins, and addicted to drunkenness. That place was then under the government of New York, and is now called Pennsylvania, there was a deputy-governor in it; so when we could not get a lodging, I went to the governor, and told him we were travelers, and had money to pay for what we called for, but could not get lodging for our money. He was very courteous, and went with us to an ordinary, and commanded the man to provide us lodging, which was both mean and dear, but the governor sent his man to tell me to send to him for what I needed and I should have it.

The next morning we took our journey towards Maryland, accompanied by Robert Wade and another Friend. We traveled hard and late at night, to William Southerby's at Sassafra river. From there we went among Friends on the Eastern Shore in Maryland, where we had many precious heavenly meetings for the worship of God, and men's and women's meetings to order the affairs of the church. A blessed time we had together, to our mutual comfort.

After some well-spent time there in truth's service, I had drawings to go over the great bay of Chesapeake, to the Western Shore to visit Friends; and Samuel Groom of London, master of a ship, being there, sent his boat and two of his men to take me over; that night one of the men was under much trouble of spirit, but we landed well early next morning at the cliffs. I had many good meetings on that side of the bay, and good service several ways, for there were some troublesome spirits gone out from truth, who were a great exercise to honest true-hearted Friends; the Lord gave me ability and understanding to deal with them, and to set truth and its testimony over them, to the joy and satisfaction of Friends.

After some time spent there, I went to the Eastern Shore again, and had many precious meetings with Friends, then took my leave in the love of God, in order to go down the great bay of Anamessy, to visit Friends there, accompanied by James Fletcher, and three other Friends to manage the boat; but meeting with very foul weather, and contrary winds, we were forced to put ashore on an island and pitch the boat, having sails spread for our covering, and we lay there all night.

Next day, the weather being very foul with sleet and snow and the wind against us, we stood over the bay to Patuxent river, and came to Benjamin Lawrence's house, who received us kindly; and we had a good meeting there. After which the wind turning somewhat fair, we took boat and went on our journey; but it was very cold foul weather, sleet and snow, and we were all that day and most of the night e're we got to the place intended, which we reached with much difficulty.

When we came on shore, I could neither go nor stand, but as two bore me up one by each arm, I had such violent pains and weakness in my back and loins with the piercing cold. We stayed to two meetings, and soon after they took me to the boat in order to go to Virginia, for I could not go without help. We put into the great bay of Chesapeake, and as we crossed the mouth of York river, a storm took us, and the

wind came against us, so that we were hard put to it to escape the breakers; yet the Lord's eminent hand saved our lives.

A report went to Friends in Maryland, that we were drowned, but we got to a little creek in a small island uninhabited, and were forced to stay there three nights, the wind being against us, also the weather foul and stormy with rain, sleet and snow. We had no shelter but the open skies, and the wet ground to lie on, this augmented my cold and pain, but the Lord bore up my spirit, and enabled me to endure it, as he had done in many other afflictions. As soon as suitable wind and weather presented, we took boat and set on our journey, and came to a branch of Elizabeth river, to one Yeats' house, where I had been before; he and his family were convinced of the truth.

We came there in the night, a little before day, and he caused a servant to open the door; they took me out of the boat, and led me into the house, for I was not able to go alone, and set me in a chair; but presently my spirit was uneasy and greatly disquieted, being sensible things were wrong in that house. In the morning the people got up, and then it appeared plainly that they were gone from truth. After I had discoursed with them concerning their running out, and had admonished them, my spirit being very uneasy under that roof, I desired our company to help me into the boat, which they did. We went to Elizabeth Houtland's, about three or four leagues off; where I stayed some days, and had meetings, and then James Fletcher left me. In a few days I grew pretty well, so that I could travel, and had many precious meetings with Friends, both for the worship of God, and the affairs of truth relating to Gospel order. There was indeed need enough of help, for things were much out of order, and many unruly spirits to deal with. I had good service and success, for the Lord blessed his work in my hand.

The country was in great trouble, and it was dangerous travelling in some places, the Indians being at war with the Christians, and the governor, Sir William Berkeley and Colonel Bacon at fierce war one against another; so that the country was involved in trouble. Friends stood neuter, and my being there was not in vain on that account. I traveled from place to place for a time, and frigates came from England with soldiers, to appease the difference between the governor and Colonel Bacon. The latter died; several of his party were executed, and others fined in great sums; but Friends were highly commended for keeping clear.

I was moved of the Lord to go to Carolina, and it was perilous travelling, for the Indians were not yet subdued, but did mischief and murdered several. They haunted much in the wilderness between Virginia and Carolina, so that scarcely any dared travel that way unarmed. Friends endeavoured to dissuade me from going, telling of several who were murdered. I considered, that if I should fall by the hands of those murderers, many thereby would take occasion to speak against truth and Friends; so I delayed some time, thinking the Lord might remove it from me, but it remained still with me. In the mean time I appointed a meeting on the north side of James' river, where none had been, and several Friends came a great way to it in boats, also the widow Houtland's eldest son, with whom I walked near two miles the night before the

meeting, advising him of some disorders in the family, and so we parted. He, with some Friends, went to one house to lodge, and I, with some other Friends, went to the house where the meeting was to be the next day, but before morning a messenger came to tell me, the young man was dead.

It was a great surprise to us: then the word of the Lord came to me, saying, all lives are in my hand, and if you go not to Carolina, your life is as this young man's; but if you go, I will give you your life for a prey. So after the meeting, we put his body in a coffin, and carried him in a boat to his mother, to bury him.

The next day I made ready for my journey, but none dared venture to go with me, save one ancient man, a Friend. We took our journey through the wilderness, and in two days came well to Carolina, first to James Hall's house, who went from Ireland to Virginia with his family. His wife died there, and he had married the widow Phillips at Carolina, and lived there; but he had not heard that I was in those parts of the world. When I came into the house, I saw only a woman servant; I asked for her master, she said he was sick. I asked for her mistress, she said she was gone abroad. I bid her show me the room where her master lay; so I went into the room, where he was laid on the bed, sick of an ague with his face to the wall. I called him by his name, and said no more; he turned himself, and looked earnestly at me a pretty time, and was amazed; at last he asked if that was William? I said yes. He said he was affrighted, for he thought it had been my spirit; so he presently got up, and the ague left him, and did not return. He traveled with me the next day, and kept me company while I stayed in that part.

On the first-day following, they appointed a meeting on the other side of Albemarle river, where the man and woman had been convinced when I was there formerly; but when we came the man told us his wife was just dying, and it would not be convenient at that time to have the meeting there. So we ordered the meeting to be about a mile from there, at one Tems's house, a justice of the peace, who, with his wife, was convinced and received the truth when I was in that country before. There we had a full precious meeting, but after we were gone from the house where the dying woman lay, she came to her senses, and her husband told her of the meeting, and of me; she said she remembered me well, and the words I spoke when I was there several years before, were as fresh in her memory, as if she heard me speak them just then; and said it had been happy for her that day, if she had lived accordingly. She died before our meeting was done, so that I could not speak with her. I had several precious meetings in that colony, and several turned to the Lord. People were tender and loving, and there was no room for the priests, for Friends were finely settled, and I left things well among them. When I was clear of that service, we returned to Virginia safe under the Lord's protection: praises to his name forevermore!

After some meetings in several places, and settling things among Friends, I was clear of that country, and it was with me to go for England, to be at the Yearly Meeting at London; there being then a Bristol ship in Elizabeth river, in which I took my passage. The merchant and doctor of the ship, was a Friend, and a good companion in the voyage. When the ship was ready, many Friends went aboard with me, where we parted in the love of God.

In our voyage we had several meetings on board the vessel, and when we came between Newfoundland and Ireland, we met with fierce southerly winds, which drove us far northward, and for many days we lay under much stress of weather; then finding a concern upon my mind, I called the master and company down into the cabin, where I prayed fervently to the Lord with them, near the conclusion whereof he that was at the helm, called to hand the sails, for the wind was turned. Then were all glad, and the weather coming fair, we stood away to the southward, and after a few days' sail we got in sight of Ireland. Having but a small breeze of wind, we stood along the Irish coast, because England being then at war with France, the master and merchant of the ship thought it not safe to keep out at sea, so concluded to put into Cork harbour, until the wind came fair to take us quickly over the channel for England.

The merchant, the mate and I, purposed, when we came to anchor, to go ashore at Cork, I having a desire to see Friends there, and they being kind men, were willing to have gone with me; but the master perceiving our intentions, when we came to the mouth of Cork harbour, tacked about the ship, and stood to sea out of mere crossness, being a very perverse drunken man; his name was John Cragg, he told us he knew our design, and would cross it: but it fell upon himself, for after coming ashore, he was turned out of the master's place, and the mate put in.

When we came to Bristol, I stayed some meetings there, and was well refreshed in the Lord Jesus with honest Friends, though I was a stranger to them before, only they had heard of me. Then I went towards London to the Yearly Meeting, many Friends from Bristol and several parts of the country being in company. The first day's journey we came to Marlborough, and Friends there having heard of me, were desirous to have an evening meeting, to which I consented; and a sweet, heavenly, comfortable meeting it was: after which, they desired me to give them another meeting as I came back, to which I assented.

It came upon me that evening to be at Reading meeting, which was to be on the morrow at the second hour in the afternoon, and was thirty miles off. I told Friends I must leave them, and be gone towards Reading by the sun-rising next morning, to be there at the meeting, and desired that a Friend might go with me, because I was a stranger to the way; but they were not willing that I should leave them, so concluded to be ready to travel with me next morning at sun-rising; which they did. And though we had several women in company, we got to Reading to the meeting, which was very large, there being many Friends from various parts, and the Lord's power mightily appeared therein. I was furnished in the word of life to declare the mysteries of God's kingdom, as also to lay open the mystery of iniquity, and honest Friends were tendered and refreshed; yet many separate spirits being in that meeting, they hardened themselves against the testimony of truth, as at other times.

The next day we came to London, where I met with many ancient Friends and brethren, and we were sweetly comforted in the Lord, and glad to see one another. I was at many public meetings for the worship of God, and men's meetings with elders and brethren for managing truth's affairs.

Having been about two years away in the Lord's service, from my wife and family and Friends in Ireland,

I left London in company with several Friends of Bristol and others, purposing to take shipping at Bristol for Ireland; but after I had gone seventeen miles on the way, I found drawings from the Lord to return to London again, to be at a meeting appointed there the next day for truth's affairs. So in obedience to the Lord I went back, and was at the meeting, where Friends were under a close exercise, occasioned by a separate spirit which had prevailed and led out some from the truth and unity with faithful Friends, into a fleshly liberty from under the cross of Christ and self-denial. I was exercised with Friends in this matter, and in the dread of the Lord's power moved to bear a testimony against that separating spirit; also elders and brethren, in a sense of the living power of God then present with us, judged and condemned it, and a paper was given forth from the meeting to that effect signed by many.

Being clear, I took my leave of George Fox and Friends, and proceeded again on my journey to Reading, accompanied by Thomas Briggs and Thomas Bracey; so to Marlborough next day, where we had a meeting, according to agreement before I went to London; then I went to Bristol, and stayed some meetings; and to King's-Road to take shipping for Ireland, several Friends went with me aboard, where we took leave one of another in the tender love of God.

Setting out to sea, we had not sailed up with the Isle of Lundy, before the wind turned contrary, and drove us ashore at Tenby, I went to Haverfordwest, and visited Friends, and had meetings in several places with them; we were well refreshed together in the Lord; and I stayed about a week. The wind coming fair we put to sea again, and landed at Cork, where Friends were glad of my coming. When I had visited Friends' meetings in that quarter, I went to John Fennell's, in company with several Friends, where we had a refreshing heavenly meeting. Here several Friends from Mountmellick, and thereabouts, came to meet me, in whose company I returned home, where I met with my wife and children in the same love of God that had made us willing to part one with another for a season for the Lord's service and truth's sake.

Some time after my coming home, I went to visit Friends' meetings through the nation, and was frequently at Monthly, Six-weeks and the National Half-yearly meetings, as they came in course, both for the worship of God and Gospel order, the Lord's presence and goodness still attending, and giving an understanding in matters, that answered his will and mind both in doctrine and discipline, and by his divine power he subjected Friends to his holy government, setting judgment on everything that appeared to the contrary. A holy, zealous concern was raised in the hearts of many honest Friends, for the honour of God and his blessed truth.

Chatper X

The just judgment of God upon George Clapham, the cruel priest—In 1682, William Edmundson

was excommunicated, and had a public conference with the bishop, in his court, about tithes, gospel ministers, worship, etc.—His voyage to the West Indies, in 1683

There being sometimes occasion to appeal to the government in behalf of Friends and truth, I with others was willing and ready to answer that service; and the Lord blessed our endeavours, and gave us favour with those in authority. Truth prospered and meetings increased, yet the priests were still covetous for tithes, which Friends for conscience sake could not give them, whereupon they suffered greatly.

The afore-mentioned George Clapham, priest, who had been so cruel against us, the Lord made an example of, depriving him of his natural senses; yet he kept the parish, and one James Lloyd, as he called himself, though others said he changed his name for misdemeanours he had committed, was hired as his curate. He was a shameless wicked man on several accounts, and very fierce to get tithes from us; and being somewhat disappointed by Robert Jackson and me, he put us in the bishop's court, had us excommunicated, taken with an order, and committed to prison in the year 1682, he himself guarding us there. When we came to the dungeon, where thieves and murderers were kept, he in a scornful manner told me, there was my lodging. We were confined prisoners about twenty weeks, and had many precious good meetings, having the benefit of Friends' company, who came to see us from most parts of the nation; few days passed, but we had the company of honest-hearted Friends from one place or other.

When the Lord's time was come, he made way for our liberty, in the following manner: The lord of Ely, being then our landlord, was concerned for us, because of our sufferings, and endeavoured with the bishop for our liberty, who ordered us to come to the court at Kildare. Accordingly we came, and there were the bishop, and about ten or twelve priests, the lord of Ely and his steward, with several other persons of account in the world, and a great concourse of people. One Dean Sing, was chancellor of the court; John Burnyeat and Anthony Sharp accompanied me to the court, yet went not in, but stood at the door, where they could both see and hear us.

The bishop began to discourse with me concerning tithes, which I was unwilling to enter upon, being sensible of my own weakness; but he urged: then the Lord by his divine Spirit, gave me wisdom and understanding, and brought Scriptures into my memory fluently, so that I proved tithes to be ended, and that it was anti-christian either to pay or receive them in Gospel times, which was opened so clear to the understandings of the people, that there seemed to be great satisfaction in the court. Then Dean Sing stood up before them all, and said, if he had known me as well before as he did now, I should not have suffered: with several other expressions of kindness.

We went through many other things, relating to Gospel ministers, Christian religion, faith, and the true worship of God. And my understanding was clear, ripe and ready, through the assistance of the Lord's blessed spirit, to answer to matters; so that they could not resist what I said. The bishop himself was silent; then I told him I thought my suffering was illegal, for that the clause in the statute of Henry the

VIII, by which they had proceeded against me, did not take hold of me; and if a moderate unbiased judge had the ministering of the law, he might have found that I was not the man it took hold of. For the words in that statute are, that if any man out of a perverse will and ungodly mind, shall detain his tithes, he shall be so proceeded against. But as for me, I did not detain tithes out of an ungodly will or perverse mind; but out of a tender conscience towards God, and could not believe, that the king and parliament of England intended that Act against tender conscientious men, but against ungodly, willful and perverse men, according to the clause in the Act. They had not considered that point, and were all silent, only the bishop, who enjoined me to give him in writing, the exact words of the aforesaid Act, and also to give him in writing, the reasons why I dissented from the church of England, saying, they must not lose such a man as I. They ordered us to appear there at the next court, and wrote to the sheriff, to let us have our liberty until then, and broke up the court. Our discourse held full three hours, in a quiet manner without any other business. When we came out to Friends, who stood at the court door, John Burnyeat said he was never better satisfied with a day's work in all his life, the testimony of truth being so over them.

We appeared, as ordered, at the next court, and the bishop then would absolve us; but I told him I could not come under any of their ceremonies, and we had much discourse about it; at last he bid God make us good Christians, and wrote to the sheriff to discharge us from prison, which was readily done. This suffering and conference through the Lord's blessing had a good effect. For since that time, both the bishop and officers of that court have been kind to Friends, and particularly to me.

In the year 1683, I was moved of the Lord to visit Friends in the Caribbee Islands and Jamaica. So after acquainting several Friends, and they having unity with me in my concern, also my wife being willing to give me up in the service of truth, as at other times, I heard of a ship at Cork bound for Barbados, of which Robert Scotten, a Friend from London, was master, who was glad of my company. When I received account that the ship was nearly ready to sail, I took leave of my wife and children, committing all to God, and took my journey accompanied by several Friends to Cork, where I took passage in the said ship. Friends who accompanied me there, stayed some days, when we parted in the tender love of God, and in the sweet unity and comfort of his spirit. In a few days we went to sea, the wind was fair, but soon after a great storm arose, which continued with us two weeks; and the tackling of our rudder was broken, and could not be mended for many weeks. We were hard put to it to sail without a rudder; but the Lord favoured us with a wind, and we got well to Barbados in about two months.

As soon as we came to anchor, several Friends came aboard, and were glad of my coming. I went on shore with them, and laboured in the service of truth, having meetings in every quarter of the island, both for the worship of God, and discipline, to settle things that were unsettled, and rectify things which were amiss, as much as in me lay. Friends were generally subject to Gospel order, and truth's government.

After I had been labouring there some months, it was with me to go to the Leeward Islands. Ralph Fretwell and some other Friends, then going to Pennsylvania, took me on board their vessel, and put me

on shore in Antigua, and proceeded on their voyage. I stayed there some time, and had many meetings both for doctrine and discipline, where there was great need of labourers. When clear, I took passage from there to Nevis, where were honest tender Friends, and we were well refreshed in the Lord, and in one another. I had many sweet comfortable meetings with them, to which also many people came, among whom were several justices of the peace, who were tendered and confessed to truth.

The chief judge of the island, Simmons, and his wife, were both convinced and came to several meetings; the report of which went abroad, and the general, Stapleton, seemed to be offended, and threatened to banish me out of the island. But Judge Simmons told him they had reason to bless God for my coming there, which had brought a blessing to their island. For before I came, they had not had a plentiful season of rain for three years past; and since my coming they had been plentifully replenished with rain, the effect whereof was like to bring them much increase. So I stayed until I was clear of that service, and left Friends tender and loving.

I took passage back for Antigua, but by contrary winds was put into Mount-serrat, and stayed there some days, then came to Antigua, and stayed to some meetings; and taking leave of Friends, sailed for Barbados, and in four or five days landed there. I was kindly received by Friends, who were glad of my coming back, to give them another visit. When I had stayed several meetings, and was often refreshed together with Friends, I went for Jamaica, accompanied by Henry Currier; many Friends from several parts of the island came to Bridgetown, where we took shipping, and there parted from us in the tender love of God, and unity of his blessed spirit.

In about two weeks' time we landed at Port Royal in Jamaica, and came to John Willmot's house to lodge. After having a meeting there, we travelled to other parts of the island, and had many meetings for the worship of God; also men's and women's meetings about church affairs, for the settling of Friends in Gospel order. There were some things hard to get through, so that my spirit was bowed down in suffering with the Seed of God, and under this trouble of mind, the strength of my body failed for some time; but the Lord by his spirit and power strengthened and raised me up again. We travelled much, and had many meetings in several places of the island and went through several hardships and exercises of various kinds. After some months' service in those parts, Henry Currier went from there to Bermudas, and so to Barbados; but I stayed, being not yet clear, and had meetings both for the worship of God, and men's and women's meetings for settling the affairs of the church in Gospel order, in which service the Lord stood by me, and helped me to go on in his work through strong oppositions, the word of his testimony being over opposers, whereby honest-hearted Friends, who loved the truth and government thereof, were greatly strengthened and comforted. I had good service there for the Lord several ways, for about seven months.

Being clear of that service, I took passage for Ireland, in a vessel bound for Cork, whereof John Benford was master; when we were ready to sail, several honest Friends went aboard, and took their leave of me

in tender love. In about seven weeks' time, we landed well at Cork, and the Province Meeting being at hand, which was then appointed at Limerick, I went there accompanied by many Friends from Cork, and those parts. Here my wife and several Friends from Leinster met me; we were joyful in the Lord, and glad to see one another.

Chapter XI

After his return from America, he faithfully published in many meetings, a remarkable prophecy of the late troubles.—His several prudent and successful applications to the government, for the relief of distressed Protestants, until 1690.

King James II being newly come to the crown, people's minds were not settled under the government, and some officers showed themselves busy in disturbing our meetings, and at that time committed me and several other Friends to the Marshalsea. But we were soon released, and kept our meeting during the time appointed for that service, and the Lord's presence being with us. Friends were well refreshed and comforted therein, and in one another.

1685. When the service of that meeting was over, I went with my wife and Friends from Limerick to my own house, and as way opened, visited Friends in the north and other places, duly attending public meetings both for worship and discipline. Then a weighty sense came upon my spirit, of great exercise and trials approaching, which would try us all, and that the Lord would spread the carcasses of men on the earth, as dung. So in the spirit and power of the Lord, I faithfully and plainly warned Friends and others of it in many public meetings, and often in the Lord's movings, advised Friends to lessen their concerns in the world, and be ready to receive the Lord in his judgments, which were at hand, and to flee unto him for succour, that they might have a place of safety in him. The like doctrine, admonition and exhortation often, and in many places, I was moved of the Lord to publish. So I am a witness, that his care is over his people, that they be not surprised, but make ready against the day of trial. And in a short time trouble came on quickly.

The Earl of Tyrconnel, then lord deputy of Ireland, armed the Irish and disarmed most of the English; so that great fear came upon the Protestants, most of the great leading men, and many others, left their places and substance, and went for England, others of them got into garrisons, and those who stayed in their dwellings lay open to spoil. An open war soon broke out, and abundance of the Irish, who went in bands, but were not of the army, called raparees, plundered and spoiled many of the English Protestants; also many of the army, who were under command in troops and companies, were very abusive, being countenanced by their officers; so that the Protestants were under great distress many ways, though the

government gave forth several proclamations against such abuses.

We being sharers with many other Protestants in these sufferings, a concern came upon my mind to appeal to the government, to redress abuses committed in the country, by some of the army, particularly one troop at Mountmellick, who were very abusive, concerning whom I petitioned the Duke of Tyrconnel, who heard my complaint, and for example to the rest, cashiered the quarter-master, and ordered two of the troopers, who had done abuses, to be cashiered and also sent to jail, and the troop to be immediately removed to another place. This eased our quarter for a little time.

The quarter-master was very submissive, and desired me to solicit the duke to restore him to his place; which I did, and the duke granted it. This won much upon many of them, and I gained acquaintance at court. But things grew worse and worse. A party of Sir Maurice Eustace's troop came our road, and did great abuses to several Protestants in Mountmellick, and thereabout. Some of them came to my house, and were very rude, taking me by the hair of my head, and haling me about the yard among their horses feet, without the least provocation; some of them with clubs, and others with cocked pistols, swearing they would kill me; which my wife hearing, came out sorely amazed and affrighted, desiring them to take all we had, and save my life. Then they left me, and turned after her, swearing and calling bad names; and shot several times at my mastiff-dog that was chained, and so rode away like mad men, abusing and beating all the English they met with; and some they almost killed. In Mountmellick there was a great scuffle, and like to have been worse than it was, between them and some English, whom they abused. News went there that I was killed, so they concluded a massacre was intended, believing I would give them no occasion. This alarmed and affrighted the Protestants in our parts, and some ran into woods and bogs, to hide themselves.

The next morning I went to Mountmellick, where several English Protestants expressed their gladness to see me alive. The chief men of the English there, who were not fled, were Justice Warnford, Hopton Harris, etc. I went to them, they were glad to see me, but concluded this was a fore-runner of a massacre. I told them I was of another mind; for it rather appeared to be a contrivance, to alarm and affright all the English, to make them run for England, that they might have the country, and all we had to themselves. I believed they intended no massacre; for if they had, they would not have given us this alarm. And if they would manage this matter well, it might make full proof, for all the English in Ireland to know, whether they intended a massacre or not. I advised to take full examinations of the abuses, and send some men to Dublin with them, and petition the government; and by this we should all know what they intended to do. They assented thereto and liked it well; but said that at this time, unless I would go and undertake it, none else dared. I considered the matter, and understood well that the undertaking was at the hazard of a man's life; yet perceiving it might be the saving of many, I took courage, and my life was not much to me for the good of my countrymen. I told them, if Hopton Harris and George Wheatly would go with me, I would undertake it. They were two noted men in the town, who had been abused by that party; they considered the matter, and were willing to go. Then the justice took examinations of the abuses done, and

the next day we took our journey to Dublin, but not the usual road, lest we should have been way-laid.

When we came to Dublin, I went to the Lord Chief Justice Nugent, who was still my friend, and acquainted him with the whole matter. He seemed to take little notice of any abuses but what they had done to me, and promised to be at the castle such an hour, and he would assist me in getting to speak to the Duke of Tyrconnel. So I and the other two went to the castle, where Judge Nugent came, as he promised, and presently I was called into the duke's closet, but the other two were not permitted to go in. I told the duke of the abuses done to me, and what troop they belonged to; he looked with a sour countenance, and said little to it. Then I spoke of the gross abuses done to my neighbours, and particularly to those two men that came with me, who were standing without; but I was stopped, and bid to speak to my own business, and then dismissed. I went out to my two neighbours, and told them I well perceived they intended no massacre, but to affright the rest of the Protestants out of Ireland; however, I would prosecute this matter to the end, perceiving that they would not hear them; yet I desired their company, and they were willing to be with me.

We went then to Colonel Russel, who was colonel of the regiment to which those troopers belonged, and told him of the abuses, and how the English were affrighted. He seemed to be much concerned, and said if such were not made an example, it was time for everyone to look to himself, but he would go to the duke, and lay it home to him. This Colonel Russel went soon after for England. We went to the lord Granard, who was then lieutenant-general, and acquainted him with the affright the country was in upon this occasion. He was much concerned and dejected in his mind, and said he was general, and no general; but he would go to the duke and lay it close to him. We were also with the lord Mountjoy, and several other persons of note among the Protestants.

The noise thereof spread, and the duke sent that evening, and said we had made a great noise in the city, and he would know if we had witnesses ready. I said we could have a hundred, and more if need were. He ordered us to be at the lord Chief Justice Nugent's next morning at eight o'clock; also the captain and troopers were ordered to be there, to have the matter examined. We came at the hour appointed; the captain, Sir Maurice Eustace and the troopers were there, and examined, but all denied the fact; then Judge Nugent asked me, if I knew any of those who abused me. I challenged one, and he confessed; then the officer, who was with the party, was put to discover the rest, which he did: so they were disarmed, and sent to the jail at Maryborough. The two neighbours who were with me speaking of the abuses done to them, the judge checked them for making some small resistance in their own defence at Mountmellick. Having seen what they aimed at, we went home.

The troopers who were committed, came soon after to Mountmellick, by the sheriff and jailer's leave; one of them came to my house, to ask me forgiveness, and said they would make me what satisfaction I pleased. Then I went to Mountmellick where the rest were, both the abusers and abused, and discoursed privately with justice Warnford, showing him that we had got all we were likely to have; for we saw how

things wrought, and it was best to forgive them, otherwise we should get nothing but their hatred, and perhaps a worse mischief than we had gotten already. Some were against it, but I went out to the soldiers, and told them I hoped this would be a warning to them, to be civil for the future; and so forgave them what they had done to me, wishing them to satisfy the rest whom they had abused. They begged me to write by them to the lord Chief Justice Nugent, to give them their horses and arms, for they bought them; which I did, and they were very thankful, and promised to be kind to my Friends wherever they met with them. They had their horses and arms restored. Soon after this same troop came into our quarter, to take horses and arms from the Protestants, the captain alighted at my house, and was very courteous, promising to do what kindness in him lay for any of my Friends; notwithstanding which they generally took Friends' horses, as well as others.

Trials and great exercises increased daily, most of the eminent leading men of the English Protestants were gone, and those who stayed were discouraged from appealing to the government for the preservation of the country. Things looked with a face of ruin and destruction; through a sight and sense of which, a concern came upon me to appeal to the government in behalf of the Protestants, and in particular for Friends. I was often at Dublin, and used what interest I had with the government, for the public good. The Irish army were marching to the north against the Protestants there in arms, and I was much concerned with some Friends in Dublin, to use all our interest with the chief officers, to spare and be kind to our Friends in the north, for they were not in arms; and many of them promised they would, and performed their promises.

1689. Calamity increased; the raparees on one hand, plundered and spoiled many of the English, and on the other hand the army marching and quartering, took what they pleased from us; and our families were their servants, to make what we had ready for them; and it looked like a sudden famine, there was such great destruction. I considered the way to prolong time, that the English might eat part of their own substance, was to get a guard of Irish soldiers in that quarter, which lay open to all mischief. So I went to Dublin, and got an order from the Duke of Tyrconnel, for one captain Francis Dunn and his company to stay with us and protect that quarter against thieves, raparees, and other violences. This put a little stop to plundering in our quarter, which sorely vexed the plunderers and thieves. Then some evil-minded officers got this captain Dunn removed, and he marched nearly forty miles; but King James being then come into the nation, another Friend and I procured his order to bring him back again; yet they were not quiet until he was again removed, and then the Protestants went fast to wreck in their substance.

In those times I was much at Dublin, applying to the government in behalf of the country, for the Lord had given Friends favour with the government, and they would hear my complaint, and gave forth several orders to magistrates and officers of the army, to suppress raparees and restrain their abuses, and they stood a little in awe of me, for they knew I had an interest with the government. I was sometimes with King James, and told him of the calamity the Protestants were under in the country, and he would hear me quietly, for the Lord made way in their hearts for us, against such a time of great exercise and trial,

and I had a concern upon me to make use of it for the public good, the chief of the English Protestants being gone, who might have applied to the government for the safety of the country.

Chapter XII

His frequently exposing his own life to save his neighbours, and standing his ground in those perilous times—His house set on fire, himself and two sons led away to be murdered by the Irish raparees—Delivered out of their hands by Divine Providence—About the year 1690, he, with many more, see the fulfilling of his prophecy, mentioned in the last section

Now wickedness was let loose, and got ahead; so that by violence and cruelty most of our Protestant neighbours were forced from their dwellings, and several families came to my house, until every room was full; also most of their cattle that were left, they brought to my land, thinking themselves and goods safer there than elsewhere. We were under great exercise and danger, not only of losing our goods, but our lives also.

At the Boyne Fight, the Irish army being beaten, many of them fled our road, and plundered many in our parts; they plundered my house several times over, and we were in great jeopardy of our lives; they were wicked and bloody; so the family was forced to go out of the way, and my wife desired me to go aside, lest they should kill me, for she would venture her own life to save mine; but I could not do it, though they should be permitted to kill me. Yet the Lord's secret hand restrained them, and preserved our lives. They took all our household goods they could find and liked, and all our horses that were left. Violence was let loose, and no government to make address to. The English army did not come near us for some time, and, to look outwardly, we were exposed to the wills of cruel blood thirsty men.

1690. I sent to the chief of the Irish near to us, who stayed at home, and they came to me; I told them they might consider we had lived as peaceable neighbours, and I wished we might do so still; and though at present the English in this neighbourhood lay open to the spoil of their countrymen, yet they might easily apprehend it would come to their turn; for the English army being masters in the field, would soon advance, and then they might expect the same measure from them, as the English now received from their countrymen. Wherefore, I advised that they would use their utmost endeavours to keep their countrymen from spoiling the English of the little which they had left, and when the English army advanced to us, we would use our endeavours and interest to do the like for them. They seemed to accept the proposal gladly, and promised with many oaths to perform it to the utmost of their power; but did not: for there were few nights passed, but some of our English neighbours were robbed or wounded; and

when I told them of their promises, they would pretend ignorance of the matter.

The English who remained near us, were forced to flee into the parish worship house at Rossenallis, a little way from my house, for safety. When the English and Scotch came into those parts, they plundered the Irish; but King William put forth a proclamation, that the Irish and others, who would live peaceably at home, should not be molested. Notwithstanding which, there came two captains, with about three hundred soldiers, and drove away about five hundred head of cattle and horses, and also took away prisoners. One William Dunn, who had been a captain in the former wars, and two of his sons were of the number, one of whom they stripped of his clothes, in order to hang him, having suspicion that he was a raparee; then the Dunns sent for me in haste, and acquainted me therewith: I took horse and rode after the parties as swiftly as I could, having regard to my promise of neighbourhood; when the Irish neighbours saw me ride after them, many followed in expectation to get their cattle and people released.

I rode four miles before I overtook them; when I came near, the two captains perceiving who it was, for they knew me before, made a halt and met me. I reasoned the matter with them, and told them of the king's proclamation, and that it would not be the soldiers, but they who commanded, that must answer for the injury done; and that it was a reflection upon the king's promise, as also a great reflection on the English nation. So with much discourse and arguments to this purpose, the two captains seemed willing to release all, if the soldiers could be prevailed upon. I rode with them to the head of the party, but they were very angry, and would needs have killed the Irish who followed for their cattle. Whereupon I quitted my horse and ventured my life among the rude soldiers to save the Irish, and with much ado, and the captains' assistance, got them moderated, on condition to give them a small part of the cattle, to release the rest.

Then I mounted my horse, and sought out the man whom they had stripped for hanging: when I found him, I threw him my riding-coat to put on, and desired one of the captains to assist me in finding him that had taken his clothes. When we had found him, I reasoned the matter with the captains and soldiers, telling them it was unmanly, and not like a soldier, to strip men in that manner; for I had been a soldier myself, and would have scorned such a base action; besides it might be a precedent to the Irish to strip the English. Many such arguments I used, which at last prevailed; so that the captain made the soldier put off the man's clothes, and give them to him again. I also got both the father and his sons released, with all their cattle, and a great part of the others.

Frequently, when the English soldiers took away the Irish people's cattle, I persuaded them to give up some of them again, or bought them for a small matter with my own money, and gave them to the owners; and let their horses graze on my land, to save them from the plunderers.

The English army having settled in their winter quarters, and the raparees increased their number; most of the Irish run out, and our quarter lay open to them. They burned many brave houses, and some towns;

also killed several Protestants, and all the country was full of trouble; yet, through the wonderful mercies of God, we kept our meetings constantly, and enjoyed them peaceably, but in travelling to and fro, were many times in danger of our lives by the raparees, yet the Lord preserved us wonderfully, so that I do not know of above four Friends in this whole nation who were killed by violent hands during all the time of this great calamity.

The time of our Half-year's National Meeting at Dublin approaching, beginning the 8th day of the ninth month, 1690, I went to it as usual. We had a heavenly blessed powerful meeting, and Friends were more than ordinarily glad one of another in the Lord Jesus, who had preserved us alive through so many dangers, to see one another's faces again. In the time of the meeting tidings were brought me, that the raparees had taken about twenty of my cows, but that none of my family were hurt. At which I was well satisfied, for then all were in danger of their lives, who saved any cattle about us, and lived out of garrisons. When the service of the meeting was over, I returned home, and found my wife and family well; which was great satisfaction. But spoil and cruelty increased, and imminent dangers were plain in my view; yet I dared not remove, for I knew it would discourage Friends, and the English about us, and perhaps cause them to flee from their habitations, and so be exposed to lack many necessaries; for they took notice of me, and many of them thought they were safer for my staying in my place. I also believed that one hair of my head should not fall without God's providence.

On the 23rd day of the ninth month, before-mentioned, I went to colonel Biarly, then governor of Mountmellick, and told him that if he did not use some speedy means to succour our quarter, it would be to his great damage, for I expected every night that my house would be burnt; and if I gave way, all the English thereabout would flee and so the raparees might burn and destroy all the forage there. I urged him to take some way to succour us, informing him how he might easily do it; yet he took little notice of it, for that same night some hundreds of raparees beset my house, and I with my family being asleep, they fired several shots in at the windows, which were heard at Mountmellick, two miles off. Whereupon several went to the governor, colonel Biarly, and desired a party of men to relieve me, which he would not grant them; then a certain lieutenant, as they said, went to him, and desired a party of men, saying, I was an honest man, and he would relieve me, or lose his life. But Biarly answered, he would hang that man that would go out of the garrison. So the raparees set fire to my house, and I stayed therein until much of it was burnt.

When we could stay no longer for the fire, I made conditions with them, and opened the doors, and went out: but they soon broke their conditions, for though they had bound themselves with many oaths, they took what plunder they could get from the fire; which being very fierce, destroyed the greatest part. One mare was burnt to death in the stable, and two more they got out of the fire, sorely scorched; they took my wife's uppermost garment and so left her, but me and my two sons they took away prisoners, bare-legged and bare-headed, and not much better than naked. One of them, at my request, lent me an old blanket of my own to lap about me; and they took away all my cattle, leaving not one. They took me and my two

sons that night through rough places, bushes, mire and water to the knees, in cold weather, where our bare feet and legs were sorely hurt, and bruised with the bushes, gravel and stones.

The next morning they took us to a wood, and held a council upon us; who concluded to hang my two sons, and shoot me, because they said I was a stout man. I told them many of them knew me, and my two sons also; and I challenged them all to prove, that either I or my sons, had wronged any of their country-folks one farthing during all these times of trouble; but on the contrary, I had saved them what I could; sometimes with the hazard of my life among the English soldiers. Several of them made answer, and said they knew I was an honest man. Then I told them, if I died they were my witnesses I was innocent, and God would revenge my blood. They wondered at my boldness, and indeed my life was little to me, for I desired to die, if it were the will of God. Then they hoodwinked my sons to hang them, and having prepared two fire-locks to shoot me, they came to hood-wink me also; but I told them they need not, for I could look them in the face, and was not afraid to die.

Now came up one lieutenant William Dunn, who was well acquainted with me and my two sons; he was son to old captain Dunn, whom I had got released, together with his cattle from the English soldiers, and brother to him whom they had stripped in order to be hanged, whom I got released also, as aforesaid. He who commanded this villainous party that burnt my house, with several others whom I had done kindness for, were present; so this lieutenant Dunn, expecting to get preferment for what he had done, would take us to Athlone, twenty miles from that place. Thus the Lord interposed, and would not allow them to take our lives, having a further purpose of service for me.

The said Dunn kept us three nights by the way at a cabin, cold and hungry, so that they themselves wondered how I could endure it; but I told them they had taken and destroyed my food, and the Lord had taken away my appetite, so I was fitted for it. As we went to Athlone, we met lieutenant Richard Dunn, and one Poor, his brother-in-law, who railed against us; but I told him he should not rail at us, for we were prisoners, and a right soldier would not rail at a prisoner. They said they were going to burn Mountmellick, as also the rest of the country then unburnt. I told them there were many honest people there, and said God help them. After some other discourse they left us.

As we went through Raghan, there came out of a cabin an ancient Irishman, who looked on me with a sorrowful countenance, as though he pitied me, I looked on him, and asked him if he could give me a piece of bread, for I knew my sons were very hungry. The man answered, and said he would give me a piece of bread, if he bought it with gold, for he believed I was one that did not use to beg my bread. So he went into the cabin, and fetched as coarse a piece of bread, I thought, as ever I saw, and said he was sorry he had nothing to give me to eat with it; but I told him it was very acceptable, and gave it to the lads. That night we got straw to lodge on, rested well, and the next day came to Athlone. We were no sooner got into the great street but it was filled with a crowd of rabble and soldiers, and the high sheriff of that county in the midst of them, calling us traitors, rebels, and such like names, that it was much they

did not stab us with their bayonets and skeins, through the sheriff's animating and encouraging them. But in the interim a genteel man crowded through them, and came close to me, and calling me Master Edmundson, asked me how I did. I answered, saying, You see how I do; but I do not know you. He answered, and said, I know you to be an honest man, and spoke aloud to the sheriff and the rest, saying, I have known him above twenty years, and I know him to be an honest man, say you all what you will of him. This made them all quiet: thus the Lord provided succour for us, from their own people, in the time of imminent danger. They took us to the main guard where the rabble thronged in upon us; but this man came there, and told them they did not know me so well as he did; he also acquainted me what William Dunn, who brought me there, had informed against me. Then I told him the whole passage, and he said if that was all, he would not have me deny anything. I answered him, I had done nothing that I need deny. This man's name was Valentine Toole, a lieutenant. I heard he was reprov'd for being so kind to me, and dared come no more to see me.

In some little time we were taken to the castle, where the governor, colonel Grace, and the council of chief officers were met. I came in with my old blanket lapped about me: the governor asked where I lived. And what was my name. I told him I was old William Edmundson: he stood up, with tears in his eyes, and said he was sorry to see me there in that condition, for he knew me well, having been sometimes at my house. Then the governor asked the lieutenant who brought us there, what he had to say against me? And he accused me of several things falsely, and I having free liberty to answer to every particular, did so, that the council of officers were well satisfied, and the governor spoke roughly to the lieutenant, and asked him what he brought us there for? He answered with this excuse: that the raparees were about to hang us, and he brought us there to save our lives. The governor said if he had them there, he would hang them. And so he committed us to the custody of captain Francis Dunn, and soon after sent us a loaf of bread, a piece of beef, a bottle of drink, and twenty shillings of brass money; but we could get no straw to lie upon, but lay upon the bare floor, which was very cold and hard; we lacking clothes, and my strength being much spent, I was not likely to continue long, if the Lord had not provided succour for me.

John Clibborn, a Friend, lived six miles from Athlone, though most Friends in those parts were forced away, except he and some of his family, who hearing of me, came to Athlone; when he saw me in that mean condition, he cried out, wringing his hands, and told them that they had taken prisoner as honest a man as trod on the earth. After some time, he went home to fetch us some food, for he had little clothes left for himself, having been sorely plundered and spoiled. Most of the field officers and captains knew me, I having been often at Dublin with the government, when King James was there, and they would discourse familiarly with me. One time I asked them what they had against me? And what I had done, that they kept me prisoner in that sad condition, and did not bring me to a trial? Colonel Moore said they had nothing against me for anything I had done, and he believed I was a very honest man; but they understood I was a witty man, and capable to do them an injury, and that was the reason they kept me. I told them that was poor justice, to punish a man for what he was capable of doing, and not for what he had done. The next day John Clibborn came again, and brought some food, but we could get no straw yet

to lie upon. I was much spent, and my spirit grieved with their wicked company, so that I desired rather to die quietly in a dungeon, than to be among them.

I sent John Clibborn to the governor, to desire that I might come upon my trial, or be removed into the dungeon. The governor said he was sorry for me, for I was an honest man, and there were none who were my enemies, but the Dunns, who were all rogues; and he dared not release me, for there were many eyes over him, because he was kind to the English; but to send me to the dungeon, he could not find in his heart to do. The town was so thronged with people, that there was no room to be had in which I could be easy; he was in a strait, and knew not what to do with me.

John Clibborn then requested him to let me go with him to his house at the Moat, and he would engage his body, and all that he had, for my true imprisonment, and to come when he sent for me alive or dead: so the governor was content, and let us go with him. Thus the Lord provided succour for me in a time of great distress. When I was there, with much difficulty, I got a few lines written and sent to my wife, that she might know we were alive, and where we were; which was great satisfaction to her and Friends; for many were under great trouble of mind, and it was a trial on most Friends in our country. The English fled to garrisons, and most of the Irish went to the raparees.

One of my sons, who was with me, had a tan-yard well stocked with hides and leather, and about a week after our house was burnt, my wife went to fetch them off, and several English neighbours, with horses and cars, went to help her; but while they were loading the leather, etc., lieutenant Richard Dunn, and his brother-in-law, _____ Poor, whom I had met in going to Athlone, and who railed at me, as aforesaid, together with a multitude of raparees came upon them; so that they were forced to run for their lives, and leave the horses and cars, the leather and hides, etc., which the raparees carried away.

My wife not being able to out-run them, they took and stripped her naked, being cold weather, in the beginning of the tenth month, called December she being ancient, and going two miles naked, got a cold, which continued with her until she died, being about seven months after. The next morning a small party of English soldiers fell upon that great company of raparees, and killed the said lieutenant Richard Dunn, also his brother-in-law, Poor, and a great many more of them: so were they prevented from burning Mountmellick, as he and others had threatened to do.

While I was with John Clibborn at the Moat, many of the Irish came daily to get what they could; there came also colonel Bourk with about three hundred fire-locks, as a frontier guard, to intercept the English soldiers. He was very loving to me, and promised that when he got to Athlone, I should have my liberty, for he believed I was an honest man. So in a little time he and his party went there; and with his assistance the governor set me at liberty, having set my two sons at liberty three or four days before, who were gone to their mother. Being at liberty, I got to Streams' town, which was the next English garrison, though it was difficult and dangerous travelling, because of the raparees, there being now little but killing and destruction on both sides. Here I met with my son Samuel, who, notwithstanding he had left the profession

of truth and cast off his education therein, yet was concerned for me in this great trial; he came to that place, being the utmost frontier garrison of the English, to use his best endeavours for my liberty.

From Streams' town I went to Mullingar, which was a great garrison of English, where the officers and soldiers were very kind to me, and expressed their great gladness for my safe coming off, though many of them had never seen me before, but had heard of me, and of my ill usage; for the noise of it went far, and several had sworn, that if they had killed me and my sons, they would have killed all the Irish they met with. From Mullingar I came to Jane Barcroft's, near Edenderry, and from there to Mountmellick to my wife, where many were glad to see me again. We shifted for house-room as well as we could, the town being thronged with soldiers, and families driven from their habitations in the country; many of whom died for lack of conveniences and necessaries, together with grief for their losses.

The Irish preyed much abroad in the country, and destroyed it; so that the English army marched out to drive them back over the Shannon, and they burned much of the country that harboured them on this side. At this time also major general Kirk, with part of the army, came to Mountmellick with intention to settle garrisons in convenient places, to save the country, some informed him of Rossenallis, as a fit place for a garrison, telling him of me, and how I had been treated there by the Irish. He sent for me, and commanded me to go with him to Rossenallis, and show him the place; so being commanded, I went with him.

Many Irish lived there and thereabout, under the English protection, who supposing that I had occasioned their coming to make a garrison there, were very angry with me, because this would hinder them from harbouring their kindred and countrymen, who were raparees, as they had frequently done before, therefore they got eight or nine bloody raparees, to lie in ambush between Mountmellick and Rossenallis in order to kill me, as hereafter may appear. For young John MacLisln, who had betrayed my wife into an ambush before, together with Dennis Dunn, came to Mountmellick in pretence of great friendship, desiring me to go to Rossenallis, and speak with the officers in the garrison, and it would be better for the dwellers there; but as the Lord would have it, I did not go that day. Two days after they came to me again with the same pretence, saying also, that the soldiers were pulling down my out houses, which were left unburnt; and using many arguments, in show of kindness and friendship, to persuade me to go to Rossenallis, but I was restrained by a secret hand that knew their evil design, and would not allow me to fall into their snare. Howbeit next morning, James Dobson, with his son and cousin coming that way, they shot his son dead in the place, himself and cousin they took to the woods, and barbarously murdered them. That night the Irish Papist inhabitants generally ran to the raparees. Thus the Lord preserved my life from the hands of cruel and blood-thirsty men.

As soon as the ways were opened to travel, I went into the north to visit Friends, and some Friends accompanied me. As we went by Dundalk where the armies had been one against the other, there were many bones and tufts of green grass that had grown from the carcasses of men, as if it had been from

heaps of dung. Then I told Friends who were with me, you may remember, that I declared it in public in the word of truth many years past, and many times in various places, that the Lord would dung the earth with the carcasses of men, and would spread them as dung upon the face of the earth; and now you see it here fulfilled. In that journey I had many sweet comfortable meetings in the north, Friends' hearts were glad, and we were greatly refreshed in the Lord Jesus, and one in another. When clear of that service, I came to Mountmellick.

Chapter XIII

After the troubles, William Edmundson in 1691, goes from the National Meeting at Dublin, to the Yearly Meeting at London—Visits Friends in England; in which time his wife died—After his return to Ireland, he repairs the ruins of his house near Rossenallis, and settles there again—Visits several meetings in Ireland, reviving good order and discipline in the churches of Christ

Not long after, I went with my wife to my son-in-law, William Fayle's, who lived near Dublin. Our National Half-year Meeting approaching, we kept it at Dublin at its usual time, to which I went, and the Lord's presence appeared mightily among us, the hearts of Friends being tender before him. It was a blessed season, Friends being greatly bowed in thankfulness, under a weighty consideration of the providential hand of God, which had preserved us through so many difficulties and dangers in this time of great calamity.

We made inquiry into the sufferings and losses sustained by Friends in the several provinces, in the time of the war, and took care, that poor Friends everywhere in this nation should speedily be supplied with necessary food and raiment, until we could further assist them, as need might require, in order to their livelihood, and convenient settlement near meetings for the worship of God, and benefit of them and their families. Also, a weighty concern was upon Friends for the settling of godly discipline in the church, and many suitable things were opened and communicated in the love and wisdom of God, tending to the promotion of truth, and its holy heavenly order and government among us; also several testimonies were borne in the power of the holy Spirit, confirming us in our Christian care and concern, and Friends' spirits were subject to the will of God, giving him the glory, who is worthy forever.

I found a weighty concern upon my spirit, to go from there to London to the Yearly Meeting of Friends, and after the service of our Half-year Meeting at Dublin was over, I took my leave of Friends, also of my wife and several of our children who were there, being under a sense of sorrow when I parted with them, as if we should not all see one another again. Many Friends went on shipboard with me, and there

in tender love we parted. Thomas Winsloe went with me for England, and so to London. We landed at Liverpool, and visited Friends about Bickerstaff; so proceeded forward, having some meetings by the way, and were at London at the Yearly Meeting, where many elders and brethren were glad to see me. I was at several public meetings for the worship of God, and at the men's meetings for church discipline. When the service of the meeting was over, I took leave of Friends and travelled northward, having several large and good meetings in several counties.

I came to York to their Quarterly Meeting, which was a very great meeting of Friends from many places, and had good service there, for the Lord's power and presence were with us, to our great comfort and confirmation in his work and service. I there met with a letter, that gave me an account of my wife being sick, and sorrow seized me, as sensible of her death; so I hastened as much as the service of truth would allow, towards the seaside; but had several meetings in the way, particularly at Durham, Sunderland, Raby, Barnard-castle, Camsgill, Kendal, Swarthmore, Hawkshead, Pardsey-crag, and near Whitehaven.

As soon as I could get a passage, I took shipping at Whitehaven, and landed at Dublin, but my wife was dead some time before I got over. She died five miles from Dublin, at my son-in-law, William Fayle's house, in the presence of her children, and was decently buried in Friends' burying-place in Dublin, accompanied to her grave by many Friends and others. After I landed, I went to my son Fayle's, and found him and his wife lying sick, neither of them sensible, and to appearance hardly like to recover; but staying some time there, it pleased the Lord that they recovered. I was at several meetings thereabout and at Dublin, for many Friends lived there-away at that time, who were forced from their habitations in the country. Then I went to Mountmellick, and visited Friends in those parts, who were not gone from their habitations, and so to my ruined place near Rossenallis, where I made some repairs to the building for myself and youngest son Tryal to dwell in, all the rest of my children having left me, being most of them married. I was frequently with Friends at meetings both for the worship of God and men's and women's meetings, for other services relating to church discipline and Gospel order.

When the country was a little quiet from the war, I travelled into Munster and Ulster, and besides visiting Friends in those provinces, I had large and serviceable meetings at many places, where meetings were not then settled, namely, Belturbet, Inskillin, Londonderry, Colerain, Kilray, Dawson's-bridge, Magharafelt, etc., and returned through the meetings of Friends into Leinster.

Now a weighty concern came upon me more and more, to warn and stir up Friends all over the nation to be concerned and diligent, in a circumspect zeal, for promoting truth in all its rights and the righteous government and comely order thereof. Many things and ways the Lord opened in my understanding to show Friends how they might yet be more serviceable for God and his truth in their day; and most Friends received the Lord's testimony, and became concerned. So the faithful set to work for God in various parts of the nation, and many large accounts were given to our National Meetings, that they found the Lord was with them, and opened things to them more than before they were so concerned, giving wisdom

and understanding to manage matters which came before them, relating to truth and Friends; the Lord's power being over all, blessed be his name forever!

Chapter XIV

In 1694, William Edmundson goes to the Yearly Meeting at London—Many comfortable meetings in several shires in England, and in several counties in Ireland after his return there—His conference with Dean Reader, concerning tithes, etc.

In the year 1694, it was with me to go to London, to the Yearly Meeting; so I went first to Dublin to our National Half-year's Meeting, where were Friends from every province, and many things were under our consideration, for promoting the kingdom of Christ Jesus and his righteous government; as also for the preservation of Friends from the spots, cumber, and surfeiting cares of the world and things of it. The Lord's glorious power was with us, owning our service and concern for his honour and the glory of his great name, who gave the faithful a spirit and understanding that none could gainsay; greatly blessing his work in our hands, and us in the handling of it faithfully with diligence, preferring it before ourselves or earthly concerns.

When the service of that meeting was over, I took shipping for London, accompanied by about twelve Friends who went with me to the Yearly Meeting; also many Friends went on ship-board with us, and there took leave. The wind favoured to carry us by the French privateers that were then in the channel, and things were ordered for our safety, so that we took notice of the providential hand of God therein. We landed at Nesson; some of us went to Liverpool, and were with Friends about Bickerstaff, at their Monthly Meeting for business; from there we went to Warrington, and near to it met with the rest of our company, and went together towards London, the Yearly Meeting being at hand.

Near Ridgley we had a meeting at an inn where we lay, and there were many people at it. We came to London the day before the Yearly Meeting began, where many elders and faithful brethren were glad of our coming. I stayed in London about two weeks, and duly attended public meetings for the worship of God, and men's meetings for truth's affairs. When the service of that meeting was over, I travelled northward, accompanied by John Pirn, and had many large and comfortable meetings in various places; Friends' hearts were glad and well refreshed in that visit; for the Lord's power and goodness accompanied us. Some of the places where we had meetings, were in Bedfordshire, Hertford, Leicester, Dunnington, Nottingham, Mansfield, Chesterfield, Stockport and Manchester; there John Pim left me, and went towards Chester, intending for Ireland.

Being moved of the Lord to turn towards York, I sent to Roger Haydock, who came to me at Manchester, and went with me to York. As we went we had a meeting at Leeds, which was full and large, where the Lord's heavenly presence was with us, and Friends' hearts were comforted therein. From there we went to York, and it was men Friends' Quarterly Meeting, and women Friends' Yearly Meeting. There were several hundreds of Friends from various parts, the Lord was with us, and many faithful Friends were glad of our company.

There Thomas Trafford met me, and when the service of that meeting was over, we went to a meeting near Halifax; from there Roger Haydock went homewards to Lancashire, but Thomas Trafford travelled with me. We had many large powerful meetings at Bradforth, Roidan, Hardcastlegarth, Massam, Richmond, Swadell, Wentzerdale near Skipton, and Edgeend meeting; so to Manchester and into Cheshire, and had several meetings of good service; then went into Lancashire to Hardshaw to their Monthly Meeting, which was large and powerful, there I met with Leonard Fell; we were glad to see one another, and truehearted Friends were glad of that visit. Thomas Trafford and I went back to Cheshire, and so through Wales to Holyhead, and stayed there about a week for a passage; then took shipping for Ireland, landed at the hill of Hoath and came to Dublin. I stayed the first-day meeting there, and then came to my son-in-law, William Fayle's, and from there to Mountmellick, where Friends received me gladly.

I attended meetings for the worship of God, as they fell in course, and was with Friends in managing church affairs, both in Monthly, Six Weeks, Quarterly and Half-yearly Meetings; and as the service of truth increased, the increases of God were multiplied in our hearts, and gave us ability to perform it to his glory, and our great comfort and satisfaction. From our Half-year Meeting at Dublin, in the ninth month, 1694, I went to visit Friends in several counties, and had meetings at Wicklow, John Wickham's, Israel Webster's, Shellaly, Castledermot, Province Meeting, and at Waterford, Clonmel, Kilcommon and Cashell; there several of our Friends met me and accompanied me homewards.

The first day of the second month, 1695, I took my journey towards the north, to visit Friends, and had a comfortable meeting near Castle Jordan, many Friends of our Monthly Meeting being with me there. When the meeting was ended we parted in the tender love of God. I went on my journey towards the north, accompanied by my son-in-law, William Fayle and John Barcroft; the next day we came to Old-castle and stayed a meeting there; several Friends came to it from other places, it being their men's and women's meeting day, for ordering church affairs. The next day we had a meeting fifteen miles from there, near Ballyhayes, where were many Friends, and we were well refreshed, the Lord's presence and goodness being with us.

The next day we travelled about thirty miles into the county of Armagh, and the day following, being the first-day of the week, we were at the meeting at Ballyhagan, at which were many Friends: we were greatly comforted together, and glad to see one another.

From there we went beyond Charlemount to visit Friends, and had a comfortable meeting with them;

then came back to Ballyhagan to their fifth-day meeting, and stayed there until the Province Meeting, it being their Quarterly Meeting both for the worship of God, and ordering of church affairs, which held part of three days, and was very large; so that some Friends said they never saw the like there before. Friends were well refreshed, for the glory of the Lord shined among us, his power was over all, and his Seed in dominion. I was helpful there to Friends, in the ordering and managing of truth's affairs in the church, and they were willing and glad to be advised, for that the Lord Jesus, who called me into the ministry, gave me a measure of understanding in the ground of church government, discipline and Gospel order. The meeting ended, and Friends and brethren parted in great love, union, and comfort of the Lord's holy Spirit.

The priest of that parish, one Dean Reader, had cited several Friends to the bishop's court for small tithes, but had a desire to speak with two or three Friends; and hearing of me, had a mind to speak with me in particular: so the morning after our meeting was over, it being the second day of the week, three other Friends, with me, went to his house, where he was ready to receive us. We discoursed of things very moderately and at large, for some hours, about tithes and ministers' maintenance; his great and chief plea was the law of the land and the government that gave it them; and when he had used all his arguments to strengthen his plea, and I believe saw they were all fully answered, he let his argument fall. I told him that I had one thing more to offer to him, which if he would do, I believed it would end the difference; and that was, to do as he would be done unto, which is the royal law of Christ. So we left him moderate and loving, parting friendly.

That day we came to John Robson's, and from there to a meeting at Lurgan, where were many honest-hearted Friends, and the Lord's power and presence were with us to our great comfort and satisfaction. Next day we were at Lisnegarvy meeting, where were many honest tender Friends, and we were refreshed in the Lord, and glad to see one another.

From there we came to Ballinderry, and stayed their first-day meeting, which was full and comfortable: then to Grange, and rested one day with James Greenwood, I being unwell. We went to a meeting near Toberhead, and several Friends from Grange accompanied us. On the day following we were at a meeting at Dunclaudy, then returned back again to Grange, and stayed the first-day meeting there for the worship of God, and also the men's and women's meetings for the keeping of good order in the church, and had good service for the Lord and his truth on several accounts. Honest-hearted Friends were glad of my company and service; so we parted well satisfied and comforted with the Lord's goodness.

From there we went to Lurgan to their fourth-day meeting, which was large and full with Friends and other people, there being a marriage accomplished in the meeting that day. I spoke of several things relating to the ordinance of marriage, as the Lord by his power and spirit opened my understanding and gave me ability: it was a heavenly powerful meeting. From there we went to a meeting the next day at Hillsborough, accompanied by many Friends, and had a comfortable meeting; the mysteries of the

kingdom of God were opened in the demonstration of the spirit and power of the Lord Jesus Christ, his testimony reached the hearts of the hearers, and God's witness sealed the truth of what was declared.

We rode that night five miles to Tobias Courtney's, and the next day to Lurgan, where William Brownlow and William Williamson came to meet me, and to take their leave of me, both being ancient Friends. We stayed the first-day meeting, which was very large and full; many Friends of other meetings came there, and the Lord answered their labour and good desires, in blessing our meeting with the openings and overflowings of his word of life; it was an opportunity of consolation and sweetness. After which we took leave one of another in the love of God and comfort of his holy Spirit.

Next morning we took our journey towards Dublin, to our third month National Half-year's Meeting, in 1695, in company with Friends from the north, who went up to it. There was a great appearance of Friends from several parts of the nation, and the Lord's power was with us, in the managing of truth's affairs, both in doctrine and discipline; the meeting held most of three days, and Friends parted in the peace of God.

From there I went in the company of many Friends, both of Leinster and Munster, to our Province Meeting at Castledermot, where things relating to a holy discipline were managed in the wisdom of God, and the Lord was with us as formerly in such opportunities and services, which he sanctifies to his people, and furnishes his servants with spiritual gifts to perform, as occasion requires, and according to the service of the day. When the meeting was over, I took leave of Friends, and returned to my own dwelling, being ready to answer the Lord's service as it presented, according to my ability and gift received.

Soon after my return home, I visited Friends at Dublin, Edenderry and Mountrath, having meetings with them at each place. Our next Provincial Meeting being at the Moat, I went there, where were Friends from several parts, and many other people; we had a good serviceable meeting, the Lord's ancient goodness being with us; after which I went home.

Chapter XV

In 1695, William Edmundson, with several others, presented to the Legislature the case of Friends—He visits Munster province, and attends National and Provincial Meetings, in which were given seasonable admonitions against covetousness and, seeking great things of this world

About this time the parliament met at Dublin, and we understanding that the priests were endeavouring

to get an act to recover tithes in temporal courts, in such manner as would much prejudice us, I went to Dublin, where I met with other Friends, and joined with them in labouring for the ease of Friends, with many of the members of parliament, both Lords and Commons, as also with judges, to let them understand how prejudicial such a law would be to the king's subjects in general, and most of all to us. They were generally kind and friendly; and after I had been concerned some time in that service, and also in meetings for the worship of God, I returned home.

From there I went to the Quarterly Meeting for Leinster at Castledermot, where the Lord's power and presence appeared mightily with us, both in our meetings for worship, and in men's meetings for truth's affairs, relating to discipline in the church. Having performed that service, I rode again to Dublin; and after some time spent there in the service of truth, I went to a meeting at Edenderry, where a marriage was solemnized, and many Friends and others were present. A heavenly meeting we had, and divine things were opened to the understandings of the people. That night I went with my son-in-law, William Fayle, to his house, and next day was at Ballynolert meeting, and so returned home. Shortly after I rode to Birr, in company of some Friends, to be at the burial of the eldest son of Thomas Winsloe, which being on the first-day of the week, many people came to the meeting and also went with the corpse to the graveyard. I had good service for the Lord, and his testimony was over all; blessed be his name forever, who gives ability by his power and good spirit to perform every service he requires.

From there I returned home, and about a week after I went to the Moat, accompanied by John Pim and Joshua Beale, to the burial of Samuel Strangman, an honest ancient Friend. We had a large meeting of Friends and others and good service both at the meeting and burying place; the Lord's power and the testimony of his blessed truth were exalted, and all seemed to be satisfied with what was declared.

Soon after was our Province Meeting at Mountmellick for the worship of God and truth's affairs in which the Lord's blessed presence was with us to our comfort and satisfaction; afterwards I went to the National Half-year's meeting at Dublin, in the ninth month, 1695, where were many Friends from several parts of the nation, and the Lord's powerful presence was eminently with us, to our great comfort and encouragement in his service.

Some time after the meeting was over, I returned home, from which, after a short stay there, I went to Dublin again, in company with another Friend, where the parliament was then sitting, and had before them a bill for the recovery of tithes, with triple damages, from such as did not pay them. I joined with Friends in addressing the members of parliament, and drawing up a paper to show what injuries and gross abuses we had received and suffered, because for conscience sake we could not pay tithes; and how the said bill, if passed into a law, tended to the ruining of our substance and families; with other reasons against it. A copy thereof was ordered first to be given to the lord deputy, Henry Capell, then to be printed and given to the members of parliament, who readily heard us, and seemed very courteous, promising to do what they could for us. I left Dublin in the company of several Friends, and came to our

Quarterly Meeting at Castledermot, where I met with some exercise by a bitter spirit; but by the Lord's power, patience and wisdom, faithful Friends went over it.

From there I went to the widow Barcroft's, and settled some concerns belonging to the widow and her children; so returned home accompanied by one Friend. Our next Province Meeting being at Mountmellick, I stayed until it was over, and soon after took a journey into Munster, to visit Friends in that Province, accompanied by Joshua Northall and some others; we went to Waterford, Clonmel, Knock-Graffan and Youghal, having meetings in those places and good service for the Lord, his truth and people.

From Youghal we went to Cork, in the company of several Friends of that city, who came to meet us, stayed in Cork five days, and had several meetings, and were at their Province Meeting for the worship of God and church affairs, and had good service for the Lord on several accounts, being well refreshed in the Lord. From there, accompanied by Friends, both of Cork and Limerick, we rode to Charlevil, where we had a brave heavenly meeting; the glorious mysteries of life and salvation were opened by the spirit and power of Christ.

From there we went to Limerick, and stayed there to three meetings, and so to Birr, where several Friends from our meeting met us, and we had a weighty meeting there. I went home to my house in company of Friends, on the 25th day of the twelfth month, 1695. In this visit we found a godly zealous concern upon several Friends for promoting the close order of the blessed truth, and practising thereof to the honour of God and the good of his people, of which we were very glad, and our service and labour of love was well accepted, in a brotherly condescension thereto, under a sense that the Lord's power and goodness were with us, which made way through all, and gave us satisfaction and comfort in our journey, blessed be the Lord forever.

Our Quarterly Meeting for the province of Leinster being at hand, to be held at Castledermot, I went there, accompanied by several Friends, and we had good service, the Lord's presence being with us, both in our meetings to worship him, and in meetings for church discipline, in which Friends were closely concerned in the affairs of truth, and to promote Gospel order in the churches. This meeting held part of three days, and when the service of it was over, I came home in the company of many Friends. The next morning I rode to Maryborough to speak with the lord Chief Justice Pyne, about some horses taken from some of our Friends.

Soon after this was our Monthly Meeting at Mountmellick, which I attended, and when the service of it was over, I went to my son-in-law, William Fayle's, and visited thereabout, and from there to a meeting at Edenderry, then to Isaac Fuller's, and so to John Clibborn's, visiting many Friends' families up and down in that quarter, giving advice and admonition as occasion required. I also stayed the first-day meeting at the Moat; and being pressed in spirit under a sense of some miscarriage, I cleared my conscience thereof in the testimony of Jesus. The next morning, being second-day of the week, I rode to my own house.

Soon after was our Province Meeting for Leinster at Castledermot, which held most of three days for the worship of God and ordering church affairs. I was there with the elders and brethren, and the Lord's power and presence mightily appeared among us, to give us wisdom and understanding; also a close concern came upon us, to search narrowly into matters relating to Friends, and in particular, to keep out a covetous spirit after the riches and great things of this world, from among our Society; knowing that it surfeits and corrupts the mind and darkens the understanding of people where it prevails. And through the Lord's mercy and goodness, there appeared a concurrence with the concern in most Friends. When the service of that meeting was over, we parted in much satisfaction and comfort of spirit, I returned in the company of many Friends, and came to my own house; our Monthly Meeting being the week following, which I also attended.

Chapter XVI

In 1696, William Edmundson writes to Friends at London, being unable to go there; visits Ulster province, and deliberates about marrying again—Has hard exercise by a selfish worldly spirit, the danger whereof he describes by an apt parable

About three weeks after was our National Half-year's Meeting at Dublin, which began the 8th day of the third month, 1696, and continued about four days for the worship of God and church affairs; many good and needful things were there discoursed of, and assented to in peace and unity—the Lord's blessed power and presence being with us to our great comfort, making hard things easy.

At this meeting I received letters from several brethren in England, earnestly desiring that I would be at the next Yearly Meeting at London; for that the public service of truth required it. But I was not able to answer their desire, because of weakness. So I wrote, and sent a letter by George Rooke and Nicholas Gribble, who intended to go over to that meeting. When the service of this our meeting was over, I came home, accompanied by many Friends, but was weak of body. The first day following was our Monthly Meeting, and the next first-day after was our Province Quarterly Meeting, both at Mountmellick, to which many came from several parts, and heavenly good meetings we had, both for the worship of God, and managing of Church affairs, the Lord assisting and enduing us with wisdom; the testimony of truth was over all, and I had ability given me from the Lord to answer what he required of me, before which my natural strength was faint and weak.

I continued about home for a while, keeping to our usual meetings, and when I grew well and able to travel, I went to Munster Province Meeting. This meeting was at Clonmel, in the fifth month, 1696, and held two days for the worship of God and managing the affairs of the church, and there were many

Friends from several parts. In this journey I had several meetings, at Mountrath, Knockballymagher, Waterford, Wexford, and the Monthly Meeting at Ballinaberny, which was full and large, and the Lord's power and presence accompanied and gave ability in all meetings and services; many hearts were tendered and comforted.

I had also a meeting at Israel Webster's, and one at Shellaly, then came to Castledermot, to our Province Meeting, where was a great appearance of Friends from several parts, and many Friends in the ministry, both of England and this nation. This meeting held part of three days for the worship of God and church discipline, and the Lord's power and glorious presence were mighty among us, strengthening our hands in his work, to our great comfort and satisfaction, both immediately and through his servants. When the meeting was over, we parted in the love of God, the testimony of truth being in dominion. I returned to my house on the 17th day of the sixth month, 1696.

Soon after this I took a journey into the province of Ulster to visit Friends, accompanied by Joshua Northall, and some others. We went to Dublin, and stayed two meetings on first-day, from there Roger Roberts and Thomas Ashton accompanied us into the north. We had a meeting at Drogheda, and the next day came to Ballyhagan, to the Province Meeting, which held part of three days, and a great assembly of Friends there was, the Lord's power and presence being with us to our great comfort and confirmation. The service of this meeting being over, the aforesaid two Friends from Dublin returned home, and I with the rest of my company went over the river Band, and had many heavenly comfortable meetings at several places, as at Lurgan, Ballinderry, Lisnegarvy, Grange, etc. In our return we had a precious meeting with Friends at Lurgan before parting, in which we were comforted and refreshed together to our great satisfaction.

From there we took our journey towards Leinster, accompanied by some Friends of Ulster about forty miles, and had a meeting with Friends near Ballyhayes; after which the Friends who accompanied us returned home. We travelled next day to Old Castle, and had a meeting with Friends there, and the day following into Leinster province, and were at Friends' meeting at Edenderry the next day, and on the day following at Ballycane meeting near Cashel; so returned home. I had good service for the Lord, his truth and people, in this journey through his assistance, who gave me strength and ability every way; blessed be his name forever!

On the first-day following I went to visit Friends in their meeting at Mountrath, and returning home abode there for some time, frequenting our own meetings, both weekly and monthly as they came in course. I also went to our Quarterly Meetings at Castledermot, which held two days, and the Lord's comfortable presence was with us, in a sense whereof the affairs of truth were managed in peace and concord. From there I went to Dublin to our National Half-year's Meeting, which began the 8th day of the ninth month, 1696, and held by adjournment four days; the Lord's glorious presence greatly appeared both in meetings for the worship of him, and those for managing church affairs, which were gone through in peace and

unity to our great satisfaction and comfort.

After the service of the meeting was over, I took my leave of Friends and brethren in the overflowings of the love of God, and went homeward. The depth of winter coming on, and being unable to travel and labour in truth's service as formerly I had done, I stayed for some time about home, attending meetings as they fell in course, both Six-weeks, Monthly and Weekly, for the worship of God, and services relating to truth. The Lord's work went on and truth prevailed, which is cause of great gladness of heart.

About this time it came into my mind to marry, yet I was not hasty to proceed; but many weighty things relating to that affair came under my consideration; and though it would often present in my understanding, yet I sought the Lord's counsel, and quietly waited to know his mind therein, until I had his gracious answer, in the clear openings of his light shining in my heart. Then finding my way clear, I acquainted the person towards whom my mind was drawn in that respect, namely: Mary, the widow of Joshua Strangman, about the age of forty-nine years, whom I had ground to believe would be a comfort to me, and helpful in my family, being a woman of good understanding and one who feared the Lord.

After some time of consideration, she consented thereto, provided our children and Friends were satisfied therewith. I also acquainted her, that if the Lord gave me health and ability, I must first go for England to perform some service for Him there, which had been before me for some time; which she was well satisfied with, being willing to stay the Lord's time. I abode some weeks at home, being unwell, through colds contracted in my travels; but our Quarterly Meeting for Leinster province at Castledermot, was at hand; where the elders and friends in the ministry used to meet, and to make inquiry whether those of our Society walked answerably to their holy profession, in blameless lives and conduct. In which service the Lord's power and divine presence had often been plentifully manifested among us.

I had a great desire to go to this meeting, though unwell in body; so in faith of the Lord's ability I set forward, and rode to Athy, fourteen miles, in some pain, and the next morning got to Castledermot, to the meeting of elders and brethren in the ministry, where an account was given from each meeting in our province of the state of things among Friends. My spirit was under a great exercise for truth's testimony, and the labours of concerned elders who were likely to come under a worldly selfish spirit; wherefore I, with some elders and brethren, laboured hard against it, and the meeting was adjourned until the next day.

I spent that night in some trouble of mind for the testimony of truth, and besought the Lord for his assistance; early the next morning we met again, and the Lord's power broke through all opposition—his testimony came over all, and things returned into their right channel to our great comfort. Here, according to order established among us, I acquainted the elders with my purpose of going for Wales and England, towards the spring, to perform some service in truth's testimony, which was before me, and they seemed to be well satisfied therewith.

Things being concluded among the elders, we all went into the public meeting for the worship of God, where in the spirit and power of the Lord Jesus I bore a testimony, and by a parable warned Friends of the mystery of Satan, in his working with man, by drawing his mind into the things of this world, comparing it to the root of a tree, that shoots downward too deep into the ground, from the very heart of the tree, and causes the growth of much wood and high branches, but brings forth little or no fruit. From which was opened, in the doctrine of the kingdom, the danger of riches and great concerns in the things of this world. Friends' understandings were opened, the witness of God reached, and many tendered in their spirits. This meeting held by adjournment three days, in which the Lord renewed my strength, and I was glad that I was there for the service sake. When it was over, I returned home. This was in the end of the eleventh month, 1696.

Chapter XVII

In 1697, he goes over to the Yearly Meetings at London, Wales, Bristol and Colchester—Visits several meetings through England and Wales for about seven months—After his return he solemnizes his marriage with Mary Strangman, at Mountmellick

Soon after this I went to the Moat and was at their meeting on first-day, and stayed until third-day, there being a marriage and many people at it, both Friends and others, where I had good service for truth; and on the first-day following was at our Monthly Meeting in Mountmellick, where I acquainted Friends in the men's meeting of my intention of going for England shortly in truth's service, and desired their certificate according to the order established among us, which accordingly was given.

Our Province Meeting for Leinster, was also at Mountmellick, the 14th day of the first month, 1697, and lasted two days in the worship of God and church affairs, being a powerful and comforting meeting; many Friends were there from several quarters, and we took leave one of another in the sweet tender love of God. On the 16th day of the said month, I took leave of my family, who were sorrowful to part with me, and came to Dublin the 18th day of the same, where I stayed three meetings, the last of which was a mighty powerful meeting, and things declared and opened in the power of God, not to be forgotten.

After the said meeting, being the 23d day of the first month, I went on board the yacht Mary, bound for Holyhead in Wales; many Friends went to the water-side with me, where we took leave one of another in the tender love of God; but three Friends were willing to bear me company in the Lord's service: Roger Roberts, George Rooke, and John Barcroft. That night we lay at anchor in Dublin harbour, the next morning set sail and landed at Holyhead about noon the day following, being the 25th of the month

aforesaid.

The next day we took our journey, and that night lodged at Bangor; we hired a guide over the mountains, and came to Clanroust about the middle of the next day, being the seventh-day of the week, and 27th of the month, where we met with Joseph Ellis, a shop-keeper, and a Friend's son, who much desired we would have a meeting there, it being a place where no meeting of Friends was settled. Finding freedom and willingness, we got a meeting at the inn where we lodged; and although the parish-priest endeavoured all he could to hinder it, yet many people came into and about the house within hearing, and the doctrine of the kingdom of Christ was preached in the demonstration of the spirit and power of God; the Lord's power and authority went over them, and kept them quiet; and some were reached with the testimony of truth.

After the meeting was over, it being the first-day of the week, David Jones, a Friend, came to meet us; we went home with him, about eleven miles, and rested the next day. We had a meeting there on the day following, and were refreshed in the Lord, and one in another; then we went to a meeting near Dolgelly, at the house of Lewis Owen, and from there to Dolobran, to Charles Lloyd's, and had two meetings there. From there to Llanydlos in the company of several Friends of those parts, to the Yearly Meeting for Wales, which held two days for the worship of God and church affairs. I had good service for the Lord and the good of his people; the Lord's mighty power broke forth among us, which brought many under his heavenly testimony, and many bore witness to the truth of what was offered in the word of life relating to church government among Friends.

When the service of the meeting was over, George Rooke went into South Wales, to Haverfordwest, and I, with Roger Roberts and John Barcroft, came to Roger Hugh's house, and the next day had a meeting there. I was very unwell, having got cold, which much disabled me; yet I travelled to Leinster, where on the first-day of the week we had a large meeting in Friends' meetinghouse. Things relating to the kingdom of Christ were opened in the demonstration of the spirit and power of God; many being reached, and confessed to the truth of what was spoken. After the meeting was over, I was very unwell with pain and weakness, which seized closely on me, and caused me to lie down; and a doctor in that town, who had been at the meeting, and in whom the witness of God was reached, which witnessed to the truth of what was spoken, hearing of my sickness, offered freely to serve me day or night, according to the utmost of his skill, to recover my health and strength, and was very careful of me, in applying things that were beneficial.

I stayed there two weeks at Timothy Townson's house, Roger Roberts also stayed with me, and was very helpful, John Barcroft being gone to Warwickshire. In that two weeks' time of weakness I had three meetings with Friends in the house where I lodged, not being able to go to the meetinghouse, and I laid before them their shortness in managing the Lord's business in men's and women's meetings, by reason whereof the authority of their meeting was much lessened, and the service of truth not answered.

John Barcroft being returned to us, and I much recovered from pain, though weak, was willing to go on my journey; so with my two companions and Timothy Townson, I rode to Ross the 26th day of the second month, 1697. The next day travelled to Gloucester, and at the request of Friends there, stayed a meeting, which was appointed the next day, and was large. I was strengthened to answer the service in the meeting, and the Lord's power was graciously manifested, which healed me: after the meeting was over, I sent for several Friends to my lodging, and discoursed them about things that were amiss among them, relating to truth's affairs.

The next day we rode to Nailsworth ten miles, where was a meeting and a marriage; I had good service for the Lord. The day after we rode to Bristol to the Yearly Meeting for eight counties, which held four days, many elders and brethren being there, and the heavenly glorious power of the Lord accompanied the service. I had several opportunities to speak to ministers, elders and others, in their several stations and services in the church of Christ; and the Lord's eminent glorious power went over all, whereby many hearts were made glad, and thankful to the Lord for that visit and service. So in the sweetness of the love of God, and glorious shining of his power, I took my leave of Friends, and, with my three companions from Ireland, went to Melksham; William Penn and several others set us on our way some miles. We had a meeting at Melksham on first-day, to which many came from several places, and the heavenly doctrine of truth was preached to them, in the demonstration of the spirit and power of Christ. The next day we went to Chippenham, and had two meetings and good service for the Lord and his truth. From there to Cain, and had a meeting, to which came several Separates, and the Lord's power in his testimony went over all.

After the meeting was over we rode to Marlborough, and the next morning Friends coming together, sat down to wait on the Lord, and were comforted one in another, then parted in the love of God and sense of his goodness. We rode that day to Newbury, and from there to Ore, where we had a meeting next day; the Lord's glorious power was with us, and, many heavenly things were opened in the doctrine of the kingdom of Christ.

From there we went to Reading, and on the day following had two meetings, being the first-day of the week; several of the Separates came to it, and the testimony of truth in the authority of the Lord's blessed power, went over all. The next day we came to High-Wickham, and had a meeting there on the day following; after which we went to Thomas Ellwood's house, and on the next day had a comfortable meeting in their meetinghouse at Jordans, and were refreshed in the Lord.

We lodged that night at Richard Baker's, who accompanied us next day to the Yearly Meeting at London, being the 20th day of the third month, 1697, where I and my three companions tarried about ten days in the service of truth, and were at many heavenly meetings, both for the worship of God, and men's meetings for managing truth's affairs, relating to church government. I had great service on several accounts in that city, and the Lord's power went over all.

When the service was over I parted with the elders and brethren in the tender love of God, and took my journey towards Colchester, accompanied by George Rooke and Samuel Waldenfield, several Friends of London going with us on our first day's journey. Roger Roberts and John Barcroft left us at London, and went towards Ireland. We had serviceable powerful meetings in our journey to Colchester, and were there at the Yearly Meeting, which lasted part of three days; and there was a great collection of Friends from several parts. I had good service for the Lord and his blessed truth in several respects, and in the heavenly authority of the Lord's power, his testimony went over all, both in doctrine and discipline, to the comfort and satisfaction of Friends.

I travelled towards Norwich, accompanied by George Rooke and Samuel Waldenfield aforesaid, and had several precious serviceable meetings by the way. We were at Norwich on first-day at two meetings, and second-day being their Monthly men's and women's Meeting for truth's business, I had much service, and good opportunity to speak to several necessary things relating to church government. The next day we came to another meeting eight miles from there, accompanied by several Friends from Norwich, and had another meeting the next day but one, about twenty-seven miles distant; after which Samuel Waldenfield left us, and went to Edmundsbury to a meeting there.

I went to a place called St. Ives, accompanied by George Rooke, where we had a great meeting and good service for the Lord to the comfort of Friends. After the meeting was over, we took our leave of Friends, parting in the tender love of God, and that night came to Ramsey; the next day to Ireby, about forty miles; and the next morning were at the meeting in Nottingham, where was a marriage, and a rumour being spread beforehand, there gathered a great concourse of people, and some of them were restless by reason of the throng. After the meeting we rode to Mansfield and stayed a meeting there.

On the day following John Gratton and several Friends came there; he went with us to Thomas Brockshaw's, and the next morning he and George Rooke went to a meeting eight miles off, after which George Rooke came to me again, and on first-day we had a heavenly powerful meeting at Tupton. Then we went to John Gratton's house, and the next day we rode to Stockport in Cheshire, where we had a meeting that evening, and on the day following Benjamin Bangs came with us to William Barns's house at Sankey in Lancashire, and we went the same day to Liverpool, being the last day of the fourth month, 1697.

We abode some days at Robert Haydock's, and had a meeting, to which Friends came out of the country. From there we travelled to Chester, and had a meeting on first-day, many Friends of the country coming to it. Here I parted with George Rooke, having a concern on my mind to visit some meetings in several counties, and that night I went to John Merrick's in Cheshire, where Friends who lived several miles distant came to see me. I was at a meeting at Middlewich the next day, and on the day following had one at Franley; the Lord's power enabled me to perform his service in his heavenly testimony, which was acceptable to Friends on several accounts, who were glad and well refreshed.

The next day I went to Penketh in Lancashire, and was at a meeting there on a first-day, which was large

and full, many Friends came to it from Cheshire, and other places. I was also at their Monthly men's and women's Meetings for truth's affairs, where the Lord's power did mightily appear, and I had good service in several respects. Travelling towards Yorkshire, I came to John Acridge's, and had a meeting near Cain, which was full and large, and another four miles from there. So went to Ireton, and had a meeting there on first-day, which was very large; the Lord's power was greatly manifested therein, and the mysteries of God's kingdom wonderfully opened to the comfort and satisfaction of that great congregation.

I went to Steeton, and had a meeting; from there to Bradford, and had a meeting two miles off; so to Burton, and had a meeting at Michael Miller's house on a first-day; from there to Pomfret and Selby; and the next day to their Monthly Meeting at Tuckwith; and from there to York, and had two meetings on a first-day; the Lord's heavenly power accompanied us to our great comfort and satisfaction. From York I went towards Burlington, having sent word before, to have a meeting there the next day; and from there to Scarborough, and had a meeting; Friends were tender and well refreshed.

I went to Whitby and had a meeting; and from there to Gisborough, where Joseph Inman, a Friend from Ireland, who had come over to visit his relations, met me and accompanied me until I returned again to Ireland. At Gisborough I had a meeting on a first-day, to which came many Friends from several places, and the Lord's power mightily appeared among us; many precious things were opened, and close Gospel order recommended, which was very needful there and in many other places, wherefore it lay upon me to stir up Friends to their duty in Gospel discipline. I went into Bishopric to Stockton, and a living powerful meeting we had there; to Darlington, and so to Raby, and had a meeting there; and from there over Stainmoor to Sedgberg, and had a meeting at Friends' meetinghouse on a first-day, which was large and very full, many Friends coming far thereto, and we were well refreshed and comforted in the Lord. We parted in the love of God, and sweet peace and unity one with another.

I went to Kendal, and had a meeting; from there to Cumberland, and was at a meeting at Pardsey-crag; and at the county Monthly men's meeting for church affairs; and from there to the Border Meeting on a first-day; and the next day, being the 30th of the sixth month, we took our journey into Scotland, and got that night to Dumfries, being twentyfour miles; and the next day to Moneygoff about forty miles; and so to Port Patrick, where I sent back my horse with John Rutledge and Henry Iveson, two Friends who came from Cumberland to accompany us to this place.

Next day we took a boat, and on the day following landed at Dunnaghadee in Ireland, being the 3rd day of the seventh month, 1697. I hired a horse, and rode to Lisnegarvy twenty miles; and from there to Richard Boyes's, and had a meeting there on a first-day; also to Lurgan, and from there to Ballyhagan, and was at the Province Meeting, which held part of two days, for the worship of God and affairs of the church. I went to Dublin in company with several Friends, who had a service to attend there: the parliament then sitting, I tarried a week, and attended meetings as they came in course. Then took my journey home-wards, several Friends accompanying me, and the next day came to my house near Rossenallis, being the

22nd day of the seventh month, 1697, where I found my family well, through the Lord's preservation, who drew me from them in his service, and enabled me to perform it for the good of many, to his praise and honour, who is worthy forever.

Soon after, our Monthly Meeting at Mountmellick occurred, where I and Mary Strangman presented our intentions of marriage to the men's and women's meetings, and in the week following again to the Province Meeting at Castledermot, where the Lord was with us. When the service of that meeting was over, which held part of three days, I came to Mountmellick.

I went to Mountrath, and stayed two meetings; but the parliament being to sit in Dublin, and the bishops and priests having prepared two bills to pass into acts, about their tithes and maintenance, which were likely to fall heavy on Friends, if granted, I rode to Dublin, accompanied by Gershom Boat and James Hutchinson, and joined with Friends in using our endeavours with the members of parliament, to stop the priests' proceeding; and in order thereto we drew up in writing our objections, and ordered them to be printed in readiness to give in to the parliament, when the priests' bills came into the house. We likewise went to one of the lords justices, the lord of Galway, and acquainted him how those bills, if they passed into acts, would destroy the fruits of our labours; and gave him a paper, that he might see what the priests and their servants had taken from us without those laws; whereby he might judge what they would do if those bills passed into laws. We did the like to the chancellor and several of the parliament men, who seemed to be courteous and concerned for us. Having put things in as good order as well could be, to answer our opposers, the parliament also adjourning for one week, I left Dublin and came to Mountmellick, accompanied by two Friends.

Soon after was our Half-year's Meeting in Dublin, and I went there, where, with other sincere brethren, we were under an exercise for the promotion of truth, and removing those things which hinder the prosperity thereof; and a minute was sent from that meeting to the several provinces, advising Friends to watch against such hurtful things. After the meeting was over, I went home to my house and was very unwell for some time, partly by cold, and partly by occasion of the exercise I had been under for truth's sake; but the Lord's power carried me over and healed me.

Friends having had my intentions of marriage with Mary Strangman under their consideration for some time, in men's and women's meetings, and inquiry being made, and all things clear, public notice was given of the time and place, and upon the 1st day of the tenth month, and fourth of the week, 1697, before a public assembly in our usual meetinghouse at Mountmellick, we took each other in marriage. In which weighty affair the Lord's heavenly presence accompanied us, to our great comfort and confirmation; and many in that meeting being sensible thereof, were refreshed in their spirits; several testimonies were borne to the Lord's goodness, which attended us in that ordinance; everlasting praise to his worthy name forever. Amen.

I continued some few weeks at my own house, keeping to our meetings as they fell in course, until our

Province Quarterly Meeting at Castledermot, where I was under some exercise, but the Lord's power and heavenly testimony prevailed, and the service of truth went on, so that we had a comfortable heavenly meeting, and Friends were refreshed in the Lord. When the service of that meeting was over, which held part of three days in the worship of God and public service in truth's affairs, I went home and duly attended the service of our meetings as appointed, and the Lord blessed his work and his concerned servants therein, although a worldly selfish spirit in some struggled hard, yet the Lord crowned his testimony with dominion, his heavenly power and presence appeared with us and for us, against that spirit which so predominated in some.

Chapter XVIII

Visits Friends in the north of Ireland—Wise counsel in a difficult strait at the Province Meeting—In 1669, visits Ulster, and some part of Connaught—Rapho and Sligo the priests made some opposition—Settles a meeting at H. Hamilton's—Joins with Friends in their provincial visit

At our following National Meeting at Dublin, in the third month, 1698, several testimonies were borne in public, against that worldly earthly spirit, by approved brethren both of England and this nation, in the demonstration of the spirit and power of God, which was glorious among us there, as at other meetings upon truth's service. Returning home after the service was over, I kept to meetings about us, and was at our next Province Meeting at Castledermot, where the Lord's sweet, comfortable presence was with us, and matters relating to church order and discipline were closely proceeded on with unity and love, to the great satisfaction of faithful concerned Friends. When the service of this meeting was over, which lasted part of three days, I returned home in the company of Friends, and kept to meetings about us and to the service of them as usual.

In the sixth month, 1698, I traveled into the north, and was at the Province Meeting at Lurgan, which held part of three days in truth's service, and the Lord's power was mightily manifested among us to our great comfort; then I with some Friends traveled together, and visited most of the meetings in that part of Ulster, then came up the country to Dublin, and had three meetings there. Accompanied by several Friends from Dublin, I had two meetings in the county of Wicklow, and one in the county of Wexford, so came to Leinster Province Meeting at Castledermot, which held part of three days, and was attended by a large number of Friends. The heavenly glorious presence of the Lord was among us, and things relating to church government closely discoursed of, for the honour of God and good of his people; the world and things of it in particular were under our consideration, as they had been often before, namely: the riches, height, finery and delight thereof, which too much prevailed to the damage of many, and hindrance of

truth's prosperity; as also to the grief and wounding of the hearts of true, sincere, self-denying Friends, who loved the truth more than all.

After much discourse how to stop the stream thereof, that it might not prevail over our Society, it appeared difficult to accomplish, and the way intricate, how to deal with such, to bring them into the bounds of Christian moderation, to use the creatures in their proper places and services, for which they were created and given of God to men; and to avoid covetousness. The way not opening with clearness to proceed, I desired Friends to adjourn the meeting, which was done; and the Friends of the said meeting met together again, with many ancient concerned women. I desired we might be still, and wait on the Lord, that he might open our hearts, and show how us to proceed in this weighty matter. Accordingly Friends were all still and quiet, and the Lord filled our hearts with his holy Spirit and ancient goodness; so that the meeting was covered with the glory of the Lord, that shined among us; then a way opened in his divine light, how to proceed in the present affair, and things were offered to the meeting in that matter which answered the witness of God in all their hearts, so that there was an agreement to observe the same; and many testimonies borne to truth's limits and against the covetous worldly spirit. Friends parted in much gladness, and with great satisfaction.

When the service of the meeting was over, I went home the next day with my wife, keeping to our meetings as usual, until the ninth month, and then rode to Edenderry, and was at Friends' meeting there, and from there to Dublin, in company with many Friends going to our Half-year's Meeting, which held three days in the worship of God and church affairs. Friends were there from several parts of the nation, and things were carried on in quietness, though an opposite spirit to truth's testimony appeared, yet the Lord's power, which was with us, was over it, and Friends kept in the wisdom of God.

Cold winter weather being come, and I not able to endure hardship, to travel in truth's service as formerly, being ancient, I kept to meetings as they fell in course. Our Province Meeting for Leinster being at the Moat, I went there, and we had a comfortable meeting, several Friends in the ministry from England were there, and had a time to clear themselves in their service, whereby Friends and others were edified. Some time after, finding my body able to ride short journeys, and having clearness in my spirit, I went to Birr, to visit Friends, and had a good fresh meeting there.

The week following I went to the Moat, accompanied by John Pim and Gershom Boat, and was at their meeting on first-day, which was full, and the Lord's good presence with us. Things relating to truth's testimony were largely opened in the demonstration of the spirit and power of Christ—Friends were well refreshed in the Lord, and one in another: so I took leave of Friends there, and came home.

Not being able to endure hardship in travel, I stayed about home, keeping to our usual meetings as they fell in course, until the third month. Then I rode to Dublin to our National Half-year's Meeting, which held part of four days, and a great appearance of Friends from several parts was there, and the heavenly glorious presence and power of the Lord Jesus was with us, both in meetings for divine worship, and

those for the service of truth in church affairs; many things relating thereto were closely managed in the wisdom of God, in great unity, peace and concord.

The week following I rode to Castledermot, to our Quarterly Meeting for the province of Leinster, which held part of three days, and the Lord's familiar goodness was plentifully with us to our great comfort and satisfaction, and truth's affairs closely managed in much unity. We parted in a sense of the Lord's goodness, and I returned home and attended our meetings as usual, until the sixth month; then finding my health and strength increase, I went a journey towards the north, and took New Garden and Dublin meetings in my way, and the Lord's power mightily accompanied his testimony. George Rooke went with me from Dublin to the north, and in two days we came to Lurgan.

Next day we came to the Quarterly Meeting near Ballinderry, which continued part of three days, for the worship of God and church affairs. When the service of the meeting was over, we went to Lurgan meeting, and then to Ballyhagan, and so to the meeting beyond Charlemount and Toberhead, near Salter's town, where many Friends met us and many other people came, and a heavenly meeting it was. Then we went to Grange, Colerain, and to Dunclaudy meeting; in all which meetings with Friends, the mighty power of the Lord did accompany us in his word and testimony, to the comfort and confirmation of faithful Friends, and placing of judgment on the unfaithful. Having so far gone through Friends' meetings, we entered the mountains in the county of Londonderry, and had a meeting at Dungiven on a first-day, to which came many people, several of whom were persons of account; and all seemed to be well satisfied with what was declared in the authority of the Lord's spirit and power, which reached his witness in their hearts.

Leaving Londonderry about two miles on the right hand, we came to Raphe, in the county of Dunnegal, the bishop's place, where we lodged at an inn, and endeavoured to get a meeting, but none dared let us have a house to meet in, for fear of the bishop, though several would eagerly have had a meeting to hear us. The next morning we appointed a meeting in the market-place, to begin at the ninth hour, and went accordingly, where several came; and while my fellow-labourer was declaring truth to the people, two priests came with a constable, who laid hands on him, saying he was the king's prisoner, and must go with him. The priest brawled and raged; then I stood up by the market-cross, and desired them to be civil and quiet, and hear what we had to say; then if any magistrate had anything to question us of, we would go to him; but the priest raged, and was so full of wrath that he trembled: They would know what we were? From where we came? and why we came there? I asked if they were magistrates? They said no. Then I told them we were the king's subjects, and inhabitants in the nation as well as they; and told the priest that trembled, he was full of wrath, and not worthy of speaking to, unless he would discourse soberly; but for the people's sake, and for their information, who had heard various reports concerning us and our principles, I would give them an account, both what we were, from where we came, why we came there, and what faith and principles we held. So I gave an account of these things until I was clear, which the priests could not endure, but went away; for the authority of truth was over them. We kept the meeting until we were clear in our spirits, and then went to our lodging; where, having a large room,

and an entry adjoining, I told our landlady we intended to have a meeting, and she gave consent. We gave notice to have it at the fifth hour that evening, and a full, powerful, heavenly meeting we had, many people of account being there, and the testimony of the word of life went over them all.

The next day we had a meeting two miles from there, to which several came, and desired to have another meeting; but we could not stay then, having before appointed a meeting at Litherkenny, to begin at the first hour that afternoon, where some convinced people, scattered in that country, met us, they having notice of our coming; and we had a good open meeting in the under-sheriff's barn, who kept the chief inn in that town. We lodged there that night, and next morning it was with me to have another meeting, which accordingly we had, and it was a comfortable confirming time.

We advised those few convinced people in that quarter, to meet together at Hugh Hamilton's house, to wait on the Lord; which they assented to. Being clear of our service in those parts, William Whiteside, Jacob Marshal and Bartholomew Garnet, who had been with us at many meetings, and helpful to us in that rough country, returned home; but I with my companions, George Rooke, Abel Strettell, Richard Guy and Henry Ridgway, took our journey towards Connaught, and in a little more than two days' travel came to Sligo, upon a seventh-day of the week. The high-sheriff of the county, and a justice of the peace, living in the town, we acquainted them, as also the provost of the town, that we intended to have a meeting there next day; they were very civil, and granted us the market house to meet in. There was a great concourse of people, and the things of God's kingdom were largely declared in the demonstration of the spirit and power of Christ. The next day we had a meeting at Killoony, six miles from there; but the priest of the parish was angry and got a warrant from a justice of the peace to break up our meeting, and to set us in the stocks for an hour. The constable came to execute it, but the Lord's power prevented him, and therein we kept our meeting, though the priest was in the next room: after the meeting he was moderate.

We went back to Sligo, having appointed another meeting there, to be on the day following, a merchant in the town having a large empty house, was so kind and friendly as to let us meet therein; where we had a heavenly glorious meeting, for Christ's testimony sunk into many of their spirits. There were several eminent people at it, one justice of the peace, and two justices' wives; and some came to us after the meeting, and expressed their satisfaction. When the meeting was over, we rode to Killoony, and lodged, the next day being very stormy we came to Carrickdrumroosk, and at the inn where we lodged, there being a good convenient room for a meeting, I asked the woman of the house if we might have a meeting there that evening? She gave liberty, and notice was given for a meeting to begin at the fifth hour, many came to it, and it was a powerful opening meeting, the people seemed to be well satisfied, and worthy of the opportunity.

The next day we traveled hard to get to Langford in time to get a meeting there; but we found the people's hearts shut up, therefore had none; but we lodged there that night, and then came to the Moat to our Province Meeting, the 23rd day of the seventh month, 1699. Here we met with many Friends, brethren

and elders, engaged in the service of visiting Friends in the province; and I being one appointed by the meeting to join in it, we concluded to meet in Dublin, the 10th day of the following eighth month. I returned home with Friends, having had my health and strength very well, to perform my service for the Lord in the foregoing journey; and the Lord's blessed power was with us, and went over all; everlasting praise to his great and glorious name. Amen.

According to agreement I went to Dublin, to join in the service of visiting Friends. As I went, my horse threw me, and I was sorely bruised, but John Pim and my son-in-law, William Fayle, being with me, helped me up, and stayed me with their hands, until I recovered strength to sit on horseback. I rode in great pain to Dublin, yet joined with the Friends appointed for the service aforesaid, where we made full inquiry of men and women Friends, and such in general as frequented our religious meetings, how they walked in the truth in their places and stations, according to Gospel order, that their lights might shine before men in a good and righteous conduct, to the glory of God, who had called and gathered us to be a people. We had several meetings on this account in that city, and spent three days in the service to good purpose, the Lord's power and heavenly presence being with us, which crowned our labours, and made them acceptable.

When clear, we went from there in the peace and comfort of the Lord's good spirit, and came to Wicklow twenty-four miles. I rode in great pain from the hurt I got by the fall off my horse, yet the Lord's goodness helped me through. We had three meetings with Friends in that county, and made the same inquiry as at Dublin. Then we went to the county of Wexford, and had two meetings with Friends; and to the county of Catherlough, and had two meetings with Friends upon the same occasion; in all which meetings we had good satisfaction in our labours of love for the honour of God, and good of one another. Our service being over in this visit, we returned home, and the week following the Quarterly Province Meeting for Leinster being appointed at Catherlough, I rode there, where was a very great appearance of Friends from several parts, and a great concourse of other people. The meeting held part of three days for the worship of God and church affairs; it was a powerful heavenly meeting, the Lord's power being over all, and his witness reached in many hearts, to their great satisfaction and comfort.

Here we made report to the men's meeting of our service in the visit before-mentioned, which seemed to be satisfactory. After this meeting I returned home, and kept to our usual meetings; also visited Friends at Mountrath, and went to the burial of Elizabeth Smith, near Edenderry, having good service at the graveyard in the testimony of truth, many Friends and others being there. I tarried the meeting of Friends at Edenderry, and then came to Ballynolert, and stayed one meeting there; so with Robert Hoope and John Barcroft to our meeting at Mountmellick, and some time after went to the Moat, where we had several meetings, and the Lord's power and goodness was with us, in which we were well refreshed together. I returned home, and kept to our meetings as they came in course, until the latter end of the second month, 1700.

Chapter XIX

In 1700 he visits Munster, where he was much afflicted in body—After his recovery and return, he, G. R. and J. F., went towards Connaught—At Ayres-court all three were put in the stocks—At Abby-boyle, they had a good meeting in the streets, etc.—They write to the bishop of Clougher, and return through several meetings in Ulster and Leinster

About this time I went towards Munster to visit Friends, and was at a meeting at Mountrath, and one at Knockballymagher, and so went to Limerick, and stayed three meetings; where we were well refreshed in the Lord. Then rode to Charlevil, and stayed one meeting; from there to Cork and were with Friends at several meetings, it being the time of their Provincial Meeting, the Lord's heavenly presence was with us. Here I was taken with a great pain in my right side, yet the Lord's power enabled me to answer the service of that meeting; when it was over we parted in the sweet love of God, and comfort of his holy Spirit.

I rode in much pain that day to Clougheen twenty-two miles, where I tarried that night, and John Pirn with me; the next morning we got to John Fennell's, and had a meeting with Friends to worship God, whose goodness was with us. Next day, accompanied by several Friends, I rode to Thurles, about fourteen miles, in great pain, my distemper increasing; and on the day following with much difficulty got to James Hutchinson's, not being able to go any further. There I lay under great affliction, which increased with violent pain and grievous soreness over my body, yet nothing to be seen outwardly.

Thomas Pearce of Limerick, who came with me from Cork, on purpose to help me, administered what he thought was proper for my distemper, to give me ease. My wife came and stayed with me, also some of my children and several Friends came to see me. In about seventeen days, finding some ease, I was desirous to go home, if possible; and through the Lord's mercy rode there in two days, being fourteen miles. The National Half-year's Meeting being at hand, and having some service before me at that meeting, I was desirous to be there to perform it, although the distemper and soreness remained much upon me; yet I was willing to trust the Lord, who had often helped me through great weakness, to perform many weighty services for his honour, the promotion of his truth and good of his people.

I took my journey to Dublin, and in two days got there, being thirty-four miles, where the Lord by his power strengthened and enabled me to perform my service in the meeting at that season. There was a very great appearance of Friends from several parts of the nation, and we had several good opportunities, the Lord's power through his Spirit opening deep mysteries to us, both in doctrine and discipline, to our great benefit and comfort. When the service of that meeting was over, I took horse at Roger Roberts's: there many Friends and brethren came, where we parted after supplication to the Lord, whose love and life flowed in us. In two days' time I came home to my house, the Lord's name be praised forevermore.

Finding my body unable to endure long journeys, I kept to the service of meetings near home, as they

fell in course; and about the beginning of the sixth month, 1700, went with George Rooke to a meeting at Ayrescourt, in Connaught, where few or none had been before, and another at Ballyboy, where many people came, and heavenly things were largely opened in the testimony of truth, which reached God's witness in the hearers, who signified their satisfaction with what was declared, in the demonstration of the Lord's spirit and power. We likewise had a sweet comfortable meeting with Friends at Birr, and so returned home.

My ability to travel increasing, I found some openness in my heart to go in truth's service again into Connaught, and some other places, that wanted visiting by faithful labourers. So on the 16th day of the sixth month, 1700, I took my journey, accompanied by George Rooke and several other Friends, and had a meeting at Ballyboy, and another at John Ashton's house, where none had been before; many professors came to that meeting, and seemed to be well satisfied with what they heard.

Then we went to Ayres-court in Connaught, where several Friends came; and being set down to wait upon the Lord, in a barn we had obtained for the purpose, colonel Ayres, who was owner of that place, came with a lawyer, a constable and wardens, who in a violent manner pushed and haled us out of our peaceable meeting, and drove us into the street, commanding the constable to put me in the stocks, which he did. This was a grief to the people, some of whom wept, to see an ancient man set in the stocks for worshipping God, having never seen the like before. Many people being gathered about the stocks, with several Friends, George Rooke spoke a few words by way of exhortation; and colonel Ayres commanded the constable to set him in the stocks, which he readily did; afterwards Jacob Fuller for the like was also set in the stocks with us, where we sat together in sweet peace and comfort of the Lord's holy spirit.

After sitting there some time, the people being troubled for us, the constable opened the stocks, and bade me take out my leg, I told him I did not put it in; so he held the stocks open with one hand, and took my leg out with the other. My companions were also set at liberty, and the Lord's mighty power was with us, which sprung in my heart as a fountain, wherein I published the mighty day of the Lord, warning all to repent. I also declared the Gospel of peace and glad tidings in the openings of life, through the Lord's spirit; and we had a brave heavenly meeting, truth's testimony was over the heads of our opposers, and Friends sweetly refreshed. Parting with joy in a heavenly dominion, I with my companions rode that night to Ballinasloe, and some went farther; next day we came up to the rest of our company, and rode to Carrickdrumroosk thirty-five miles, and on the day following had a meeting at the inn, where we lodged, to which several sober people came, and seemed to be well satisfied with what they heard.

Then we went to Abby-boyle, and lodged at the burgo-master's house, who let us have his stable to meet in, at the eighth hour in the morning. Notice thereof being given, the people generally were willing to come to the meeting, and in order thereto were gathering; but priest Cope, being dean there, obstructed what he could, and set a company of rude boys to make a great noise, and a man to play the fool. I went into the street near the dean's house, and Friends came after me, where in the Lord's power I sounded

forth the great day of the Lord's coming, the dread whereof silenced the rabble, the man also who played the fool fled; and the people gathering in the streets, and others looking out at their chamber windows, I preached repentance, and opened the way of life and salvation to them. The dean being within hearing of what I thus declared in the Lord's power, I challenged him to come forth before the people, to prove his practice agreeable with Christianity, and to disprove ours if he could; but he would not appear. When I was clear, George Rooke prayed to the Lord in the street, and we had a good meeting, being held and concluded in truth's authority, which was over all, and the people were loving.

I called for the man whom the dean had sent to play the fool, and he coming to me, I admonished him—he seemed to be sorry for what he had done, saying, he believed I was a good man, and if he had known as much before, as he did then, he would not have done so. After our service here was over, we took horse and rode that day to Sligo, twenty miles, where the high sheriff and magistrates were very civil and kind, and said that anything they could serve us in, should not be wanting. They freely granted us the session-house to meet in, and let us have the key of the door. We had three meetings there, and the Lord's presence and power was gloriously with us, which crowned our service, and bowed the spirits of many; one justice of the peace sat with us in the first meeting, that we might have no disturbance. We abode at that town three nights, and being clear of our service there, rode to Balleek where several desired a meeting; the owner of the place then living there, came to us, and offered his assistance in anything he could serve us; but other service being before us, hindered us from staying a meeting there at that time.

We came to Petticoe, and found freedom in our spirits to have a meeting at the inn where we lodged, and sent to give notice of it. In about three hours there was a large gathering of sober deserving people: it was a powerful meeting, and they parted friendly. The next day we rode to Auger, twenty-five miles, being a bad road over mountains, and also a heavy rain and storm in our faces, so that both we and our horses were much foiled; but through the mercy of God, we all got there well, and the next day had a meeting: the people were civil and quiet.

The bishop of the diocese lived about a mile from that place, but was not at home, so we could not invite him to our meeting, but sent him three little books enclosed in a letter; a copy whereof follows:

FOR THE BISHOP OF CLOUGHER

Friend,

Here are a few of the true Christian church of reformed Protestants, upon a visit to our Christian friends and people, according to Christian duty, which our Saviour and his apostles taught and practised for our example to follow; and because of other service on this account, our time would not well admit to give you a visit, yet you being a ruling man in church affairs, we did not forget you, but as a token of our friendship have sent you here enclosed three little books, which may be for your profit, if rightly applied; which is all at present from your

Christian friends,

—WILLIAM EDMUNDSON, GEORGE ROOKE, ROGER ROBERTS, THOMAS WINSLOE

Auger, the 27th of the sixth month, 1700

After this meeting we rode to John Whiteside's, near Charlemount, fifteen miles, and the next day had a heavenly meeting with Friends at their meetinghouse, and on the day following went to Toberhead twenty miles. The next day, being the first-day of the week, we had a meeting at Thomas Gregg's house, where many Friends met us from Grange and Dunclaudy; then we went to Colerain and had a meeting, and several Friends came out of the country to it; from there to Grange, and had a meeting with Friends, and another at Antrim.

Then we went to Richard Boys's house, where we stayed to the Province Meeting, which held two days, and a great appearance of Friends there was, and the mighty power of the Lord was with us. When the service of that meeting was over, we rode to Lurgan, and had a meeting, and another at Ballyhagan; then to Friends near Ballyhayes, thirty-two miles. When we had gone through these meetings, we rode to the county of Longford to get meetings, and spread truth in those places. Had a good meeting at Granard, where none had been before, and many came to it, who were reached with truth's testimony, and desirous to have more such meetings.

From there we went to Ballinalee, and had a meeting about a mile from there, to which several professors came, and the mystery of faith was largely opened to them. We had another meeting at a place called Tristiny, where several Friends met us from the Moat and Mountmellick; some noted persons and others also came to it, and the everlasting Gospel was largely preached to them in the demonstration of the spirit and power of the Lord.

After this meeting we rode to Lismoiney, to Isaac Fuller's, and there parted in the sweet peace and unity of the Lord's blessed spirit, which accompanied us in our travel and service, and was mouth and wisdom to us in every place where we came, so that gainsayers could not oppose, and many confessed to the truth of the testimony we bore for God, and his dear Son our Lord Jesus Christ; everlasting praise to his great name. Amen.

George Rooke and Roger Roberts went home to Dublin, Thomas Winsloe to Birr, and I to my own house, accompanied by Joshua Beale and Richard Guy, the 18th day of the seventh month, 1700.

In a short time after our Provincial Quarterly Meeting was held at Catherlough, and my mind was inclined to be there; so I went in faith of the Lord's power, though in much pain, and the Lord helped me to perform the journey. When the service of the meeting was over, I returned home; and soon after George Rooke came from Dublin to our Monthly Meeting at Mountmellick; after which we travelled together

in the King's county and county of Tipperary, visiting some meetings; and also went to Clonmel to the Province Meeting for Munster, which held two days for the worship of God and church discipline.

When that meeting was over we rode towards Dublin, and in three days got there; the next day the National Half-year's Meeting began, and many Friends from several parts of the nation came to it. It held four days in doctrine and church discipline, and I met with some exercise; but the Lord's power carried me through it, as at other times, and we had a good heavenly meeting, and when over, parted in the love of God and comfort of his blessed spirit; and I returned home.

About eight or ten days after, I was drawn in spirit to go again to Dublin, which accordingly I did, accompanied by my son Tryal, and my son-in-law, William Fayle, where I found service for truth's testimony, that required my being there at that time; and sensible honest-hearted Friends were glad of my coming. I stayed four meetings in Dublin, and the Lord's power in his testimony was over opposite spirits. One John Beck, who had professed truth, and had gone from Friends for a wife, together with his wife, both appearing in our public meeting for the worship of God, in a bitter and envious spirit, with railing accusations against Friends, were publicly detected and their folly manifested, and Friends were refreshed and comforted. So being clear, I returned homewards with my two sons, and some other Friends.

That day I came to my son-in-law, William Fayle's, and next day to Ballynolert, where I stayed a meeting with Friends, and then came home. In the twelfth month our Province Meeting falling in course to be at the Moat, I rode there—it held part of two days, and was a heavenly comfortable meeting; Friends were sweetly refreshed, and parted in the sense of God's love upon their spirits.

I kept to adjacent meetings as they came in course, not being well that winter. I felt a concern upon my spirit to visit some places in the north of England, and on the 6th day of the third month, in the year 1701, I went from my house, though not in health, and in two days came to Dublin very weary. Next day the service of our National Meeting began, and a great appearance of elders and Friends was there from several parts of the nation, and the Lord's mighty power was with us, to our great comfort and satisfaction, which made me easy over my illness. The service of this meeting lasted part of six days.

Chapter XX

In 1701 he visits the north of England; in about two months time returns, and writes to R. T. an excellent dissuasive letter against the too eager pursuit after the gain, pleasure, and great things of this life

Finding myself stronger and better in health, through the Lord's power which healed me, I laid my intention of going for England before the elders and brethren, who gave their free consent. George Rooke, Thomas Pearce and Jacob Fuller accompanied me for England, intending to go to London to the Yearly Meeting. We took shipping at Dublin, on the 16th day of the month aforesaid, and many Friends accompanied us to the water-side, where we parted in a sweet tender frame, and in the comfort of God's love. We had an easy smooth passage, and in about thirty-two hours landed at Nesson; then rode to Chester, and at Friends' meeting there, I felt something of opposition, which after the meeting, appeared in the high floating spirit of one, who could not bear reproof, and who afterwards was disowned by Friends for disorderly conduct.

We rode to John Merrick's, and it being a very wet day, I got a great cold; we went however, to Middlewich in Cheshire, to Friends' meeting, it being the first-day of the week and 18th of the third month. In the latter part of the meeting I was seized with great illness, and pain over my body, and was forced to stay at the house of our Friend, William Hancock, five days, where they were very kind and tender to me. Here by mutual consent, George Rooke and Jacob Fuller went on their journey towards London, to the Yearly Meeting, and Thomas Pearce stayed. I was not able to travel with them, and besides was stopped in my spirit from going to London.

When I was able I went northwards, as the way most clearly opened to me, accompanied by Thomas Pearce. We came to Penketh in Lancashire, and were at Friends' meeting on first-day, where the Lord enabled me to open many mysteries of Christ's kingdom and government, in the demonstration of the spirit and power of God, who gave me strength over my weakness, and we were well refreshed in the Lord. Many Friends came to see me, and we were glad of each other.

From there we went to John Haydock's, and stayed there two nights, where unexpectedly we met with John Bousted, Robert Atkinson, Peter Fearon and several others going to the Yearly Meeting at London. We were glad and comforted to see one another; but they seemed to be much concerned and troubled, that they could not have my company to London. Thomas Pearce and I rode to Lancaster, and stayed there one night, and had a meeting with Friends; also visited Friends who were in prison in the castle, for not paying tithes to the priests. Next day we rode to Swarthmore to see Margaret Fox, who was then weak in body.

We abode there three nights, and were at their meeting on first-day, and the Lord's power was with us to our great comfort; then rode to Kendal, several Friends of Swarthmore going with us. The next day we got to Camsgill, and stayed at Thomas Cam's three nights, and were with them at their meeting. From there we went to Kendal, to the Monthly Meeting of men and women, for church affairs, and many things were largely opened to them on that account, which seemed to afford great satisfaction and comfort to many.

Then we rode home with John Bleakling, and next morning into Ravenstonedale, accompanied by many

Friends, where we had a large meeting out of doors, many came to it, both Friends and others from several places, being on a first-day of the week, and the Lord strengthened me to declare the word of life, which reached many hearts. We rode back to Sedbergh General Meeting, where many Friends came, both of Yorkshire, Lancashire and Westmoreland, and a powerful heavenly meeting it was; many hearts were tendered, and weighty things in the Lord's power were opened, relating both to doctrine and Gospel order; the Lord having strengthened and healed me of my illness. From there we went to Kirby-Stephen, where I met with Lancelot Lancaster, my old acquaintance of Little-Musgrove, the place where I was born.

I had a desire to have a meeting there, and asked him if he could accommodate us with a place to meet in; who cheerfully replied he would do it. I rode in company with Thomas Pearce to Little-Musgrove, where the people showed their gladness to see me; and I gave them notice of having a meeting there on the first-day following, none having been held there by the people called Quakers. They seemed very willing and ready to further our views; so we rode on to Appleby, and lodged that night at the jailer's, who kept an inn, two Friends being prisoners there for some priest's demands. The next day we rode to Strickland-head, and had a meeting there with Friends; here Anthony Robinson came to us, he being newly arrived from Ireland.

Next day we came to Little-Musgrove, where my old neighbour, Lancelot Lancaster, his wife and children, received us with great expression of love and kindness. We lodged there that night, and the next day had a great meeting in a large barn. Many came to it from several towns and places thereabout, and the doctrine of Christ's kingdom was largely and powerfully declared; the people seemed to be well satisfied, and expressed the same after the meeting with words of great kindness. Their hearts were open for more meetings, but that evening we rode to Blue-grass on Stain-moor, and lodged at a kinswoman's house, who was glad to see me, and desirous to have a meeting at her house.

The next day I rode to Cuddeston in Yorkshire, accompanied by Thomas Pearce and Anthony Robinson, and on the day following was at Friends' meeting at Lartinton, where things were opened in the testimony of truth for Friends' benefit, and we parted in a sense of the great love of God. After the meeting we rode to Raby, where I lodged at Jane Vickridge's house, and stayed a meeting with Friends, to which several who belonged to other meetings came, and we were well refreshed in the Lord and one in another. Next morning we parted in a sweet sense of the love of God, and that day rode to Durham, and lodged at an inn.

The day following went to Newcastle, and next day being the first of the week, we were at two meetings there; the testimony of truth in the Lord's power was delivered suitable to the states and conditions of the people. On the day following rode to Sunderland and stayed one meeting with Friends; after which we rode to John Hall's, and next day he went with us to Stockton, and on the day following we had a fresh comfortable meeting there. Next day we rode to Darlington, and on the day following being first-day, we had two meetings with Friends to our mutual comfort.

The next morning early we took our journey towards York, and Robert Trueman, at whose house we lodged in Darlington, went with us and stayed to the Quarterly Meeting. We arrived there in two days, and on the next morning the Quarterly Meeting began, being the 2nd day of the fifth month, 1701. It was very large, and held two days. Here we met with George Rooke and Jacob Fuller, our fellow travellers out of Ireland, and were glad to see one another. When the service of this meeting was over, George Rooke, Thomas Pearce and I, in company of many Friends rode to Knaresborough, and had a meeting in the tollbooth or market-house, and many of the town's people came to it; the doctrine of Christ's kingdom and the mystery of faith were largely opened, and the meeting ended well: so we parted in peace.

After this we went to Friends' meeting at Massam, which was full, it being on a first-day of the week. We then went to a meeting we had appointed before, at Kirby-Stephen, which we held in a large barn belonging to the inn; many people came, and the testimony of truth was over all—several seemed to be reached, and we were well satisfied in our labour of love.

Next morning we rode to Crosby-Garret, and that day had a satisfactory meeting there, with sober people, in a barn belonging to an ale-house; and they seemed to be affected and well satisfied with what was declared. After the meeting we rode to Brough, under Stainmoor; and lodging that night at an inn, had a meeting there next day in a barn—several people came who heard the Word declared, and were quiet; but seemed to be a harder people than they at Crosby the day before.

We rode to Blue-grass on Stainmoor, and had a very thronged meeting, it being on a first-day of the week; and the doctrine of Christ's kingdom, the mystery of faith and way of salvation were largely opened to them; and many seemed to be affected with what was declared, and were tender, friendly and loving. After this meeting we parted in peace and love, and rode to Great-Musgrove, having appointed a meeting there that afternoon— one Thomas Waller having promised me his barn to meet in; but the priest hearing of it, sent his wardens to charge him, that he should not let us meet there. So we had the meeting on a green in the middle of the town; the people came to it, and were very sober and solid, parting lovingly like friends. Being clear of that quarter, we took leave of Friends and rode to Warcop, and lodged at an inn: here Thomas Pearce was taken ill, and we stayed part of the next day; but he being willing to remove from there, we took horse and rode to Strickland-head, and the next day to George Bewley's.

The day following we went to Friends' meeting near William Greenup's; and the next day we were at Friends' meeting at Pardsey-crag; and on the day following at Broughton. Friends had appointed a meeting for us at Boulton on the first-day following, George Rooke having gone before to see his relations, and to give notice of the said meeting, which was large and full; many came to it, both Friends and others, and it was a glorious meeting.

The next day we went to Broughton again, where Friends had appointed a meeting for as many Friends in the county as were willing to come, and had a concern for church discipline and Gospel order, both men and women, they being desirous to have an opportunity with us before we left the nation. Notice

was given through the county, and many concerned Friends came, both men and women, and the Lord's ancient goodness was with us in that meeting, where many things relating to church discipline and Gospel order were closely spoken to; and we were comforted together, and parted in the love of God and tenderness of spirit.

After the meeting we rode to Whitehaven, in order to take shipping for Ireland, several Friends going with us; and near the middle of the day we went aboard, and put to sea; but the wind being contrary, were near four days and three nights at sea; but arrived safe at Dublin on the 26th day of the fifth month, 1701, it being the seventh-day of the week. Next day I stayed at Dublin two meetings, and that evening several Friends, who heard of our landing, came to Dublin from Wicklow, where they had been at the Province Meeting.

The next morning I left Dublin and came home, and found things well; blessed be the Lord for his mercies and goodness. Soon after, in company with my wife, I went to see our relations at Ballynolert, in the county of Kildare, and stayed one meeting with them, and so returned home; then went to a meeting at Ballyboy, to which many pious, sober people came, and the Lord's power was with us, in which the Gospel was preached, and the people seemed to be well satisfied. From there we went to Birr, and had a meeting; and then rode home. I wrote a letter in the openings of truth, directed to Robert Trueman at Darlington, in Bishopric, as an admonition to him and others, as follows:

My Friend, R. T.

The remembrance of you and your tender wife, in true love, causes these few lines, chiefly to renew your memory, to perform the contents of your own letter, written to me some time ago, to give me an account of the ease and peace you found in your practice, relating to the lawful things of this world; and you know what my friendly admonition in the love of truth was, when I parted with you in York, that you might perform in deeds, what you had said in words. And now, dear Robert, I know that the eagerness after the lawful things of this world, at this time hinders the growth of many Friends in the precious truth, and their service to it, though otherwise of great abilities to do much service for truth on many accounts, as instruments in the hand of God. But we cannot serve God as we ought to do, and as the day requires, neither please the Captain of our spiritual warfare, as good soldiers, if we involve and load ourselves with the things of this world. This is the great failure and stumbling block at this day, and too many of our Society are hurt thereby, who have in measure escaped the unclean, unjust and unlawful things of this world, and washed their garments from the spots thereof; and bear the name of virgins, and now sit down in the dust, in the lawful things of this world, without a due regard to the right use and service of them in the creation, and to the bounds and limits of truth in getting and using them, in their places and services. Thus as the foolish virgins, they lack the oil that would make their lamps burn with a holy fragrant smell, according to divine knowledge, for the promotion of the Lord's blessed truth on all accounts; and would make their lights shine, in which the service of the day would be clearly seen, and the glory of the Lord arise more and more, to discover all things that are offensive and must be cast out. On

this account great danger does appear, that many, like the foolish virgins, will be shut out of the Bridegroom's chamber, when those that are ready, who have shaken themselves from the dust, and put on the beautiful garments, who have oil in their lamps, and rise in the brightness of this glorious day of the Lord, having their affections set on things that are above, where Christ is, and not on things that be upon the earth, will enter with Christ into the wedding chamber. Now, my friend, I would not burden you with words, but my heart is open in true love to you and yours; and I certainly know the enemy of mankind is working in a mysterious way, to overthrow many who have had their faces towards Zion, now to look back to the gain, profit and pleasure in those things that are soon gone, and of which a little will serve in their right use with a contented mind. I can do no less but give notice of it, that you and others may escape his snares, and cast off those burdens in this easy Gospel sabbath-day, and cheerfully run the race in the service of God and their generation, according to the ability and gift received in their station and place.

I could say much on this subject, but shall cut short, and leave the outcome to the Lord, who is raising his holy Seed, that will bruise the head of the serpent in this evil purpose, as well as in other things, that he has made head in, to hinder the Lord's people in their progress towards his holy rest, that God has prepared for them that love him. Many have fallen short of that rest in such times of temptation; and it is to be feared, some of the stars of this day, may fall in this temptation, and presentation of the glorious things of this world that perish. I conclude, with bowels of true love to you, and your well-meaning tender wife. After our parting from York, we had service in that county, and in Westmoreland, and in Cumberland, both with Friends and others in several places, which I hope will not always lie buried, or return empty, without some fruits to the praise of God, and profit of men. When we were clear of that service, we shipped at Whitehaven for Ireland, and after four days at sea, landed safe and well at Dublin; and, in the main, things are well with Friends in this nation, and a right concern on many for truth's prosperity in its holy comely order and discipline; which the Lord makes to prosper in the hands of his faithful servants, to the great satisfaction and comfort of many; and there is great openness in many places, and little or no opposition. The remembrance of my love is to honest Friends at Rayby, who are concerned for good order in the church of Christ; to Jane Vickers, and the rest, and to her Friends at Stockton, where I lodged, and to John Hall, and to all such as afore-mentioned, as if I named them. I know there are a few names in that county who have a true regard to God's honour, and would have things well in his house; but see that many things need reforming, which is their trouble; and with such my spirit travails. When you see William Ellis, tell him that his ancient friend in the love of truth, advises him to take heed that the proud spirit after the things aforementioned, does not hurt him unaware; which is my best love to him.

—WILLIAM EDMUNDSON

Chapter XXI

*Visits Ulster, and several places in Connaught, where none of our meetings had been—
Obstructed at Abby-boyle by the burgomaster*

Our next Quarterly Provincial Meeting being at Catherlough, I went there: the service of that meeting held part of three days, for the worship of God, and ordering affairs in the church of Christ. When it was over I went home, and that week took my journey to the Province of Ulster, and so into Connaught in the service of truth, accompanied by Joshua Beale and Richard Guy. On the first-day of the week, we had a full and satisfactory meeting at Abbylary, where no meeting of our Society had been; many goodly people came to it, and the Lord's power was with us, in which the mysteries of his kingdom were preached, and the way of life and salvation opened. The people were very attentive and tender.

After the meeting we rode to Cavan, and the next day beyond Ballyhayes, and had a meeting with Friends there. Several people came to it, and many weighty Gospel truths were delivered, suitable to the people's condition, and the service of the day; next day we rode to Ballyhagan, in the county of Armagh, and had a comfortable meeting with Friends; after which we rode to Richard Boyes's in the county of Antrim, where the Quarterly Meeting for Ulster was held, part of three days for the worship of God and discipline of his church: the mighty power of God was with his testimony, which broke through all, and wrought into a tender submission thereto.

We went back to Lurgan, and had a large meeting of Friends and others, where many precious things relating to Christ's kingdom and government were opened in the power of truth, suitable to the states and conditions of the people. The next day we went to Grange, and on the day following had a meeting with Friends, and were refreshed together in the Lord. The following day to Donclaudy, and had a meeting; and next morning we rode through the mountains to Dungivin, and had a meeting there that day.

The day following we came to Colerain, and on first-day had a full meeting, where the word of truth was powerfully preached, and God's witness reached in many consciences, so that many were comforted and refreshed. After this we rode to Castlefin, in the county of Donnegal, and had a meeting where none had been before: the people were attentive and sober.

At Newtonstewart we had a thronged meeting; and on the day following travelled through the mountains, over a rough bad road, and lodged at Petticoe, in the county of Farmannagh, expecting to get a meeting there, but were disappointed, and had poor entertainment. Next day we rode to Balleek, and it being a very stormy day with exceedingly high wind and hail in our faces, and a bad road, both we and our horses were sorely foiled, and I got a cold; yet in the evening we had a satisfactory meeting which helped us, and repaired our hard day's work. Several, both Protestants and Papists, were there; also a Papist priest, and truth's testimony was over them all, without opposition, to our comfort and satisfaction. The next day

we rode to Ballyshannon, in the county of Donnegal, and on the first-day of the week, had two meetings, the people of the town were very attentive and sober, although in these two places last mentioned, no meetings of our Society had been held before. Then we went to Sligo, and lodged two nights, and had a full meeting there. From there to Abbyboyle, in the county of Roscommon, and would have had a meeting there, but the burgomaster would not allow us, and hindered the people. I told him that we were servants of the living God, and came to call the people to repentance; and inasmuch as he obstructed our service, I charged the sins of the people upon him; whereat he trembled: so I left him.

We rode to Carrickdrumroosk, where some of our company sought for a convenient place to have a meeting, and the steward to sir George St. George, granted us the session house to meet in; but afterwards the priest of the town, with two more, dissuaded him from it: so that when we went there, and many people had gathered to have a meeting, the steward told Friends he could not let us have it. Returning to the inn where we lodged, the sober people went along with us, and the woman of the inn willingly granted us a large dining room to meet in, and we had a sweet comfortable meeting; the mysteries of Christ's kingdom were freely declared, and the way of life and salvation largely and plainly opened, and the hearts of the people were open and tender. The next morning we rose early, and travelling hard, got to Jacob Fuller's about two hours within night; I was very weary, but rested there the next day.

On the following first-day, we had a meeting at Kinagh, where none had been before; so came back again that night to Jacob Fuller's, and on third-day had a meeting with Friends, on fourth-day one at the Moat, on fifth-day one at Lismoiney, and on the sixth-day went again to the Moat, where I met my wife and several Friends, who came to the Province Meeting, which began there the next day. When it was over, I went home with my wife, and kept to meetings as they came in course.

Chapter XXII

Goes to the Half-years Meeting at Dublin—Is nominated to go over to London; but being weakly, and unable to perform that journey, he writes an epistle to Friends

On the 8th day of the ninth month following, our National Meeting began at Dublin, as usual; where was a large appearance of Friends from several parts of the nation, and great numbers of others thronged to our meeting for the worship of God, and much service there was. It lasted part of four days, and was carried on in peace and concord, in the wisdom of God, which was with brethren and elders, in managing the affairs of truth, both for doctrine and church discipline, and ended in great peace, to the praise of God and comfort of Friends.

When this great meeting was over, I returned home. Winter being come, and my old age not able to endure much cold or hard travel, I attended the service of meetings near home, and in the tenth month our Province Six-week's Meeting being at Lamb's Town in the county of Wexford, I had some drawings upon my spirit there, to which I went, and had good service on several accounts, the Lord's goodness being with us, which crowned our service with success and great comfort.

Not long after this, there came a letter from one of our correspondents at London, signifying that Friends there were soliciting the parliament to get an amendment of the act of the Solemn Affirmation, so called, and that some Friends of Ireland were desired to go over to assist in that service, according to agreement formerly made at the Yearly Meeting at London; and I being one nominated to go on that service, rode to Dublin, where, in a few days, most of the Friends from Ulster and Munster, appointed for that service, came up.

We had several sweet comfortable meetings in that city, both for the worship of God and conference in matters relating to faith and principle; in which meetings, things were opened to edification and comfort. My going there was of good service, and acceptable to Friends, we being sweetly comforted together; but my ancient decaying body not being able to perform that journey by sea and land to London, in cold wet winter weather, I wrote an epistle to Friends of London, and enclosed it in a letter to our correspondents there.

When I had done what service I could in the afore-mentioned business, I parted with Friends in the overflowings of the love of God, which filled our hearts, in which we supplicated his holy name in great tenderness and brokenness of spirit. After which I returned home, and kept to our usual meetings, observing the time and service of our Monthly and Provincial Meetings, as they came in course.

Chapter XXIII

In 1702, he goes over to the Yearly Meeting at London—After his return, he visits Ulster in company with G. R.—Writes to the bishop of Kildare in behalf of Friends' school-master at Mountmellick

The time of our National Meeting at Dublin approaching, I went there in the third month, 1702, where was a great appearance of Friends from several parts of the nation. Accounts were given of truth's prosperity, and Friends' care of the honour of God and credit of his blessed truth; and it was concluded, that some Friends of this nation should go to the Yearly Meeting at London.

I being one appointed by the meeting to go on this concern, with twelve other Friends, we took shipping from Dublin the 15th day of the third month aforesaid, being accompanied by many Friends to the water side, and had a sweet comfortable meeting before parting, the Lord's power and light shining in our hearts, tendering them in his presence, to our great consolation and confirmation that he owned us in this service. We had a comfortable easy passage, and enjoyed much of the Lord's goodness with us. After being four nights at sea, we landed at Mossen in Wales, rode to Chester, and the next day took our journey towards London, where we arrived in five days, having had one meeting with Friends at Mims by the way, on the first-day of the week.

We were gladly received by many brethren, who greatly rejoiced to see us. The next morning the Yearly Meeting began, and there was a great number of Friends and brethren from most counties in the nation. The meeting continued by adjournment five days, and many things were discoursed relating to the affairs of truth and Gospel discipline, particularly that about the affirmation. The meeting came to this agreement, that the dissatisfied Friends might have liberty to solicit the parliament for an act that would be easy to them, when opportunity offered. After that meeting was over, having been at some very full meetings, and preached the doctrine of the kingdom of Christ, in the demonstration of the spirit and power of God, to the comfort and satisfaction of many hearts in that city, being clear we determined to leave London. Many worthy brethren came to take their leave of us, and we parted in the sweet, comfortable melting power of the Lord Jesus Christ, which seals us in the covenant of light and life; then took horse, several brethren of the city accompanying us some miles.

We came to Chester, and finding an embargo on shipping there, rode on to Holyhead, having a meeting with Friends at Harding in Wales by the way. While we were at Holyhead, Thomas Wilson, Joseph Pike and Samuel Randall, whom we had left behind at London, came up to us, and about the tenth hour of the evening next day we set sail in the packet boat for Ireland, and about the same hour in the evening following, came to anchor in the bay of Dublin. We all returned together, and landed safe and well; blessed be the name of the Lord for all his mercies.

I stayed in Dublin to the first-day's meeting, and on second-day went homeward. Our Province Meeting for Leinster being held at the Moat, soon after, I went there; it held two days, and I returned home, and was taken with a great illness, occasioned by a violent pain in my head, which kept me at home four or five weeks. Our Province Meeting being at Castledermot, the 20th day of the seventh month, 1702, and I being somewhat recovered of my illness, went to it.

Finding myself able to travel, I rode to Dublin, and stayed one meeting there; then took a journey into the north, accompanied by George Rooke, and we had many full and precious meetings in various places, both with Friends and others in several counties, and the Lord's power and wisdom were mightily with us, to divide the word according to the conditions and states of the people; also his power healed me of my illness, so that I was well and strong to answer the Lord's service. Having travelled therein about

three hundred miles in about five weeks, I returned home.

Before I took that journey, Friends' schoolmaster, who taught their children at Mountmellick, had been cited several times to the bishop's court, and was likely to be excommunicated for teaching school without the bishop's license, and I having some acquaintance with the bishop, wrote the following letter, and sent it to him:

May it please the bishop,

This comes as an address in the behalf of a friend of mine, who teaches our children at Mountmellick, for which, and no other cause of offence, some persons have presented him in the bishop's court, which may be supposed was done out of prejudice or self-interest; for he is a quiet harmless Englishman, capable to instruct children in learning and sobriety. We understand, that the officers of the said court are proceeding against him to an excommunication; and the ultimate result must be a prison if not prevented by you.

Be pleased to hear a few sentences, though in a plain dress, yet true in themselves. We are Christians, and hold the faith and doctrine as delivered by our Saviour Christ Jesus and his apostles, before the apostasy and falling away, according as it is left on record in holy Scriptures, and we are conscientious in our duty, as much as in us lies, to educate and train up our children accordingly.

Experience has taught us, that in sending children to schools where books are used, filled with idle stories, lying wonders, fopperies, and invented ceremonies, besides evil conduct, both in words and actions, being countenanced if not encouraged by too many school-masters and mistresses, childish nature in youth is prone to listen thereto, rather than to things that tend to virtue and sobriety, and being grafted in their minds when young, grow up with them, and so obstruct better things, that tend to godliness and their salvation.

This is our case plain and simple, which I desire you may in moderation consider, and let it have your favourable construction; and that we are Protestants, according to the faith and doctrine in the reformation from Popery and apostasy, the truth whereof has been tried on many accounts and occasions, that have happened since the Lord gathered us to be a people, and the same has turned to the credit of our Protestant profession. And further, in the late calamities in this nation, we suffered with the Protestants of the church of England, so termed, and some of us can say, when there was but a step between us and death; and the Lord's hand of Providence interposed, and restrained cruel vile men. We have not sought any reparation for our sufferings; but desire, that as we are Protestants, and have suffered with you, we may now, in time of peace, live quietly under you in our lawful callings, to maintain our families according to a good conscience towards God and all men.

And now the Lord being highly provoked by wickedness of all sorts, I say, if he in justice should again bring his scourge and overflowing tempest over this nation, we must suffer with the Protestants; for we can flee to no people but to them: So what you do against us, you do against yourselves, and pull the house down with your own hands, contracting trouble to yourselves, by troubling us. For if you excommunicate us, and throw us into

prison upon the account of our consciences, you must release us again; or if we die in prison upon the account of a tender conscience, it will be charged to him or them who are the cause of it; and I am sure it is the principle of the right church of Old England, who are not biased with self-interest, not to imprison people upon conscience, and much less a man for teaching children to read the holy Scriptures and good books tending to virtue.

I have a secret belief, that you have no delight or inclination, that people should be cast into prison on such accounts, which makes me the more willing to let you know the proceedings of your officers in court against our said friend, desiring you to read this, and so leave it to your discretion, and the outcome to the Lord.

Postscript: A worthy saying of Bishop Boyle, called Primate of Ireland, against controversy and strife among Christians, is in these words: “Heaven is a quiet place, there no quarrels are; and religion is a holy and peaceable thing, which excites to piety and charity; but not to strife and debates.” And that noble and worthy Prince, King William, in his speech to the parliament, says, “That differences of names among Protestants might be taken away, and no other distinction of religion exist among his subjects, but Protestants and Papists.”

Chapter XXIV

In 1703, he goes over to the Yearly Meeting at London and Bristol, visiting many counties in England—Quarterly Meetings at Lincoln and York—After his return, visits Friends in the province of Munster

Soon after my journey to the north, our Provincial Quarterly Meeting was at Mountmellick, which held part of three days, and the Lord’s heavenly presence was with us in his service, to our great comfort. In the week following was our National Half-year’s Meeting at Dublin, as usual, where the Lord’s power and presence accompanied us in a glorious manner; a blessed comfortable and serviceable meeting it was, and church affairs were managed in peace and concord. After the meeting was over, which held most of four days, I returned home, and continued keeping to meetings thereaway, not being able to travel much in cold winter, by reason of old age.

The Quarterly Meeting for Leinster province being at Castledermot, I went there; it held part of three days, and was a comfortable meeting, both in the worship of God and for discipline, which was closely managed in sweet unity and concord. I also went to our next meeting for Leinster province at Catherlough, which held most of two days in worship and discipline to good satisfaction. Some Friends having been appointed by the National Half-year’s Meeting at Dublin in the last ninth month, to be at the Yearly Meeting in London in 1703, and I being one of that number, we concluded to be at Dublin the 26th day of the first month, in order to take shipping for England. Having an intention of visiting several

other meetings of Friends in several parts of England, and our Monthly Meeting having unity with my concern, gave me their certificate as a member thereof, as is usual in such cases.

On the 25th day of the first month, 1703, I set forward, parting with my wife in tender love and resignation to the will of God; went to Dublin, and there met with some of the Friends appointed to go with me for England. We stayed two meetings in Dublin, and took shipping on the 1st day of the second month, namely: George Rooke, John Watson, Thomas Pearce, John Hoope and myself; many Friends accompanying us to the water-side, where we had a sweet comfortable meeting in the overflowings of the love of God, which sealed to us that his goodness would go with us. We shipped in the packet boat bound to Nesson, and came to anchor in Chester Water next day, and George Rooke and I went to Liverpool, next day to Penketh, and stayed a meeting there, which was large, it being on a first-day of the week. Here the rest of our company came to us, and we went to Franley in Cheshire, to a Monthly Meeting of Friends, and the next day to Morley Monthly Meeting, having good service for the Lord in these meetings, and Friends were comforted. At Newtown Friends desired to have a meeting with us before we left that county, which we accordingly had to good satisfaction and comfort in the Lord, and one in another. Thomas Pearce and John Hoope rode to Nantwich, to appoint a meeting; to which we went, and people came in, so that we wanted room, it being on a first-day of the week.

From there we went to Wolverhampton, Sturbridge, Bewdley, Droitwich, and Worcester, having a meeting at each place, and stayed at Worcester until first-day and had two meetings more, which were large, and Friends were comforted in the Lord, whose presence was with us in a plentiful manner. The next day we went to Tewksbury, and so to Gloucester, and Nailsworth, and were with Friends at their meeting, in each place. Here we met with Joseph Pike come from Cork and intending to go to Bristol. We went together and were at Friends' meeting in Bristol, and tarried in that city five days, being the time of their Yearly Meeting, and a very great gathering of Friends from various parts. We were at several heavenly meetings, and had good service for the Lord and his people, his power being mightily manifested with us in his work.

When the Yearly Meeting was over, we took leave and parted in the melting power and tender love of God. We left Bristol the 29th day of the second month, namely: George Rooke, Thomas Pearce, John Hoope and I, and came to Tidbury, where we had a meeting; then to Sudbury, and Cirencester, and had two meetings there, being on a first-day of the week; then to Carlow, and had a comfortable meeting with Friends. From there to Abington, and had a meeting; and on the next day were at Friends' meeting at Reading, where we stayed the first-day following, having two meetings, which were of service and comfort to true-hearted Friends, and then came to Windsor, and had a meeting with Friends.

On the 13th day of the third month, 1703, we came to London to the Yearly Meeting, many Friends from most counties were there, and we were at many serviceable meetings for the worship of God and truth's affairs relating to Gospel order; and the hand of the Lord was with us, to direct in matters of church

discipline. When the Yearly Meeting was over, I stayed in London, in truth's service, until the 27th day of the third month, then took leave of Friends in the tender love of God, and went in company with Isaac Alexander and Thomas Pearce to Hertford; several brethren of London accompanying us on our way; the next day we had a full meeting at Hertford with Friends and others.

The day following we went to Ives, and on the first-day of the week, had a large meeting at Friends' meetinghouse, where the doctrine of Christ's kingdom was powerfully preached, Friends comforted and well refreshed. The next day we went to Stamford in Lincolnshire, and were at Friends' meeting there; and on the day following to King's-clift in Northamptonshire, and next day back to Stamford, and had another meeting; the day following to Deepin, where we had a large powerful meeting; and from there to Bourn, and had a meeting which was large, many Friends came there from other meetings, it being on first-day.

Our next meeting was at Willoughby, at Samuel Everet's house, and then went to Lincoln, to the Quarterly Meeting, which held part of two days. When the service of that meeting was over, we went to Gainsborough, and next day had a meeting there; then to a large meeting at Brigg, it being first-day of the week; and so to Epworth in the Isle of Exham, and had a meeting with Friends.

After this we went to Thorn, and to Selby, and had a meeting there; the day following to York, to their county Quarterly Meeting, where was a great appearance of Friends, and our service well accepted. When this meeting was over, Isaac Alexander, my fellow-labourer in the Gospel of Christ from London here, went homewards, and we parted in the love of Christ, in which we travelled together. Thomas Pearce and I went to Weatherby, and that day had a meeting there with Friends; then to Leeds; and next day to Halifax, accompanied by Aaron Atkinson, Joseph Baynes, and some other Friends; and on the day following, being the first-day of the week, we had a full meeting there.

The next day, Thomas Pearce and I took our journey towards Nesson, to look for shipping for Ireland; and not finding conveniency there, went to Holyhead, where we shipped our horses in the packet boat, and that evening set sail, having a rough night at sea, but through the Lord's mercy came well into Dublin harbour the next morning, being first-day of the week: but did not get ashore with our horses until near night. I was weary and sore with hard travel and labour, and rested at Dublin one day, then went homeward, and on the 30th of the fourth month, 1703, came to my own house, where through the Lord's mercies I found things well, blessed be his name! This journey was above six hundred miles, besides crossing the sea.

Soon after I came home, our Quarterly Meeting was at Castledermot, to which I went, and there was a great collection of Friends from various parts; we had good service, a concern being upon many for truth's prosperity and good order in the church of Christ. This meeting held part of three days; when it was over I went home, and kept to meetings as they fell in course. Our next Province Meeting was at

Athy, to which also I went in company of some Friends.

After this I took a journey to visit Friends in the province of Munster, with George Rooke, my companion and fellow-labourer in the Gospel; and having some meetings in our way we came to Cork, and were at their Province Meeting, where were many Friends. Abiding there some days, we had several good meetings, in which Friends were well refreshed in the Lord; and we parted in the love of God. We then took our journey to Charlevil, where we had a meeting; and next day we rode to Limerick, and had several meetings there with Friends; from there we went to Birr, and so to my house.

Our Province Meeting for Leinster being that week at Mountmellick, I was there with many Friends from other parts, and some from England. About this time the Parliament sat at Dublin, and the bishops and priests having drawn up the heads of a bill for the more easy recovery of tithes, etc., they laboured with both houses, lords and commons, to get the bill passed into an act, which, if granted, was likely to prove ruinous to Friends. But through the Lord's mercy and care over us, who gave us favour in the hearts of our superiors, upon diligent application of Friends to the parliament, and showing our reasons against passing the said bill, they, in tenderness to us and others whom it might affect, laid it aside.

I was now unable to ride, by occasion of a fall, but some time after, being recovered, I went to our Province Meeting at Castledermot, where the Lord's good presence was with us, and the affairs of the church were closely managed in the wisdom and authority of the blessed truth, to the great comfort of concerned Friends and brethren. There were two Friends from England with us, and the meeting held part of three days in the worship of God and discipline of the church. When it was over I returned to my own dwelling, and cold weather coming on, together with old age, my decaying body would not permit me to travel long journeys: so I kept to meetings near home as they fell in course.

Chapter XXV

In 1704, he visits Friends in their National and Provincial Meetings—In his sickness is resigned to the will of God—Gives a summary of his life, faith, and practice, etc.

In the third month, 1704, the National Meeting of Friends being held at Dublin, as usual, I went there in the company of some Friends, and attended the service of that meeting, which held three days in the worship of Almighty God, and for promoting truth and righteousness among us. Comfortable accounts were given from other meetings of the godly care of Friends in their several meetings and quarters, for the honour of the blessed truth, as also the good and preservation one of another; and though some

occasional exercise happened, yet the Lord's power went over it, and our concluding meeting was full, wherein large and heavenly testimonies were borne in the demonstration of the spirit and power of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, to the comfort and refreshment of Friends; in a sense of which we returned to our several places of abode.

Some time after I went to Munster Province Meeting at Clonmel, which held most of two days, and was a refreshing comfortable meeting, in the heavenly openings of the testimony of Jesus; and in our parting one from another in tenderness of heart and true love, we sweetly enjoyed the Lord's goodness, to our great comfort and satisfaction. I went home in company of some Friends, and kept to adjacent meetings as they came in course, being unable to take long journeys, by reason of weakness and pain over my whole body.

Leinster Province Quarterly Meeting at Mountmellick being near, I got to it, though under affliction of body, and the Lord enabled me to answer what service he required of me. It held part of three days in worship and discipline, in both which, through the Lord's assistance by his divine Spirit and power, I bore a faithful testimony for him and his blessed truth; so that if it were the last time the Lord would give me to appear in public testimony, I found myself clear.

After the meeting I returned home, but my illness increased, so that my whole body was under great affliction and pain, even nigh unto death; no place could give me ease, and many Friends and elders came daily to see me; some from far. In these visits I was comforted, and by their fervent prayers, through the tender mercy of God, the violence of the raging distemper somewhat abated, so that my weak abilities were able to bear it. Thomas Pearce from Limerick, carefully applied things for my ease in this time of extremity, as heretofore he had done upon the like occasions, having accompanied me several times in travel, in the Lord's service, both in this nation and England.

In the eighth month, 1704, in the seventy-seventh year of my age, being under much affliction and weakness of body, I was resigned unto the blessed will of the Lord, and were it his time, would gladly have been dissolved and at ease, "where the weary are at rest, and the wicked cease from troubling." For I was not afraid of death or the grave, but could say, through the tender mercy of God, "Death, where is your sting? Grave, where is your victory?" through steadfast faith and hope in my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who suffered for me, and whom death or the grave could not hold; but who rose again, and appears before the Father for me, as advocate, mediator and interceder. In my youthful days he was pleased to visit me with the appearance of his holy Spirit, to turn me from the evil of my ways, making me sensible of his judgments and mercies, calling me by his grace to a reformation, and also put me into his service in the ministration of the Word of Life, and doctrine of his kingdom, endowing me with a talent of his holy Spirit of understanding in doctrine and discipline, for the benefit of his church. In which I have laboured for the space of above fifty years, according to my strength and ability, through many troubles, deep exercises and perils of various kinds, by sea and land, which fell to my lot in the Lord's service, both

in the wilderness by robbers and blood-thirsty murderers, by open opposers and enemies to truth, and worst of all by false brethren under the same profession. These things, and many other great exercises and straits, the Lord's arm and gracious providence have still preserved me through, and supported me over in the faith that gives the victory, having blessed his work and given the testimony of his truth, dominion to this present time.

It pleased the Lord to give me ease from my violent pain, after a considerable time of affliction, and the National Half-year's Meeting of Friends being at hand at Dublin, as usual, I found some drawings in spirit to go to it, though my body was weak, and according to appearance unfit to take a journey. But I went in faith, knowing that the Lord's strength had carried me through great weaknesses, deep exercises, and sore afflictions, in his service; and according to faith in him, strength was given me to perform that service, to the satisfaction and comfort of many Friends. After the meeting was over, which held three days, I returned home, in the company of several Friends.

Soon after I went to Leinster Quarterly Meeting at Catherlough, and the Lord's power was with us in an eminent manner, to Friends' comfort and encouragement in the service of truth. It held part of three days in the worship of God and church affairs, and I returned home, and kept to meetings as they came in course, both weekly and monthly.

In the beginning of the first month following, I had drawings in my spirit to go to Dublin, which I did, and was with Friends about a week, and at three public meetings for the worship of God, as also at their men's meeting for church affairs; and the Lord was pleased to fill my heart with his word and testimony, as at other times, and to open many divine mysteries, which I published in the demonstration of the spirit and power of the Lord Jesus, in the public meeting, as he was pleased to give me ability and utterance. In the conclusion of the testimony, in the fresh opening of life, I told the auditory, that in the last calamity over this nation, that city felt little of it, but heard the report, and had not prized the Lord's mercies so as to walk worthy of them in that great preservation; and now, I was to tell them, the Lord had a rod in store for the inhabitants of that city, and I desired in submission to the will of God, that it might not be such as would break them to pieces; and bid them remember, that I had told them of it.

Another day I was sitting in a Friend's house in that city, with several elders and brethren, and it sprang afresh in my heart to say to them, that the Lord would make this earnestness of getting the riches of this world, to many with whom he has long striven, and often faithfully warned of the danger thereof, that they might be weaned from the same, even as the flesh that God gave to the Jews in the wilderness, when they slighted the bread which he gave them from heaven, and lusted after the flesh-pots, onions and garlic, in Egypt.

Chapter XXVI

In 1705, he visits the province of Ulster, accompanied by George Rooke—In 1706, they visit several places, where people were desirous to hear the testimony of truth—Meets with abuse at Roscrea—Visits Leinster Province Meeting, and the county of Tipperary, in company with Thomas Wilson

Some time after I left Dublin, and returned home, it pleased the Lord to heal me so that I was very healthy, only weak of body by reason of old age and hardships, that I had endured in my travels. I kept to meetings near us, and was at Dublin at the National Meeting in the third month, 1705. From there I went to the Province Meeting at Wicklow, for Leinster, and returned to Dublin again, where I stayed one meeting, after which I rode to James Ashton's, about eight miles. He was lying sick, and we had a comfortable meeting there, the Lord's power and spirit being with us; several Friends from Dublin were at that meeting, and we were well refreshed in the Lord; from there I went home.

In the sixth month following I had drawings in my spirit to visit Friends' meetings in the north of Ireland; so in faith, that the Lord would give me strength to perform it, I took my journey, and George Rooke from Dublin met me at John Barcroft's. We travelled together in the service of truth, and went to the Province Meeting for Ulster, in the county of Armagh, which held part of three days in the worship of God and church discipline, and had good service for the Lord and his people. We visited Friends' meetings through that province to Colerain, and had large and good meetings, and many heavenly mysteries, in the life and power of the Gospel of Christ Jesus, were opened to Friends and others who came to meetings, to hear the way of truth declaimed.

I was made strong in the Lord's power to perform that service; elders and brethren were glad of the visit, and Friends well comforted. When we had performed that service, we returned homeward, and came to Navan, where we lodged at an inn, and purposed the next morning to have parted in the love of God, in which we travelled together in the Lord's service; but being taken very ill that night, my companion would not leave me until I was something easier.

Then we rode together about two miles on my way homewards, where we met with John Barcroft and Eleazer Sheldon coming to meet us, they having heard of our returning that way. When we came to a road that turned to Dublin, we took leave of George Rooke, who went home, and I, with the other Friends, rode to John Barcroft's, and lodged there that night, and the next day to my son-in-law Eleazer Sheldon's, and on the day following came to my own house, the Lord having enabled me by his mighty power, which was with us, to perform this journey of about three hundred miles in old age; everlasting praise to his great name. Amen.

I frequented meetings near home, weekly and monthly, as they fell in course; and Leinster Province

Quarterly Meeting being at Castledermot, I went to it, and had good service for the blessed truth, in the openings of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus and the power of God. That meeting held part of three days, as usual; and when it was over I went home, and soon after to Dublin, to our National Half-year's Meeting, where were Friends from several parts of the nation, and accounts were given to the meeting of the prosperity of truth, and preservation of Friends therein; and matters relating to Gospel order in the church of Christ were closely discoursed in several needful points. I was brought under great exercise of spirit, by reason of opposers; but the Lord's power went over all opposition, in which I was comforted, and praised God, who is blessed forever. When the service of that meeting was over, I returned home.

Winter coming on, and my old decayed body not being able to endure cold and hardship in travel, I kept to meetings near home, until the following spring; then Leinster Province Meeting being at Catherlough, I went there, and six weeks after was at our Quarterly Meeting for Leinster, at Castledermot, in the second month, 1706. There was a great appearance of Friends from several parts of the province, and accounts were given of the care of elders and concerned Friends, in every Monthly Meeting in the province, that all who frequented our religious assemblies, and professed the truth, might walk orderly in all respects, as becomes true Christians; also accounts were given of great openness and desires in many people to have meetings, to hear truth's testimony declared in several places, where our Friends had no meetings; wherefore Friends and brethren, who had public testimonies in the ministry of the Gospel, were encouraged to visit such places, that those good desires in people might be answered.

When the service of that meeting was over, I returned home in the company of George Rooke, we having determined to go and visit a quarter, where people were desirous to hear the testimony of truth declared; and after staying one meeting with Friends at Mountmellick, we went to Mountrath, and had a meeting there with Friends, and from there to Knockballymagher, and had one there. We then proceeded on our journey from among Friends, and came to Roscrea, where the people were willing and ready to let us have a convenient place to meet in, and many came to the meeting; but Dominick Mead, an arch-deacon, so called, and justice of the peace, was enraged against us and very abusive, not only with his tongue, but also with his hands; yet Friends' patience and wise conduct in the authority of the blessed truth, prevailed over him; so that we got two meetings, for publishing the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, which were to our satisfaction.

Next day being the first-day of the week, we had a meeting some miles from there, where a noted man was willing to let us meet in his house, and a great gathering of goodly people came to hear truth declared. On the day following we had another meeting some miles distant from there, and several sober people came to it, who were attentive to hear the free Gospel preached, and seemed to be well satisfied with what they heard declared. From there we went to Birr, and stayed a meeting with Friends, and afterwards came to my house. In all these meetings the Lord's good spirit and power strengthened and gave us wisdom to divide the Gospel, and open the mysteries of the kingdom of Christ, to the understandings of the people.

The next day being our meeting at Mountmellick, George Rooke stayed with us, and then we parted in the love of God. Our National Half-year's Meeting beginning at Dublin the 8th day of the third month following, I took my journey there, with my wife and several others, where was a great appearance of Friends from several parts of the nation, and good accounts brought of Friends' godly care for the preservation one of another in Gospel order. The Lord's mighty power was with us to our great comfort and refreshment, whose good spirit gave us wisdom and utterance, both in doctrine and discipline. The service of this meeting held three days in the public worship of God and church affairs; and when it was over I returned home.

Our Province Six-weeks' Meeting being at the Moat, I found a concern to go there, where was a large number of Friends and others, and the Lord's refreshing goodness was with us, to our great comfort and encouragement in this religious duty. The meeting held part of two days in public worship and discipline; when it was over I went home, and kept to meetings as usual, and soon after went to Knockballymagher in the county of Tipperary, and was at the burial of a daughter of James Hutchinson; and many Friends and others being there, I had good service among them in the testimony of the Gospel of the kingdom of Jesus Christ; so returned home in the company of my wife and other Friends.

Some time after, our Province Meeting for Leinster being held by appointment at Athy, I went there, and when it was over returned homeward with my wife, and soon after I visited Friends at the Moat and thereaway, and had four comfortable meetings. From there I rode to Thomas Wilson's, and stayed two nights, and had a large meeting at Edenderry, the Lord's blessed power being with us, and enlarging our hearts in the mystery of the doctrine of his kingdom to our comfort. From there I went to Ballynolert, and had a meeting with Friends there, and then returned to my own house.

Soon after this I went to our Quarterly Province Meeting at Castledermot, which held part of three days; and when it was over, I took a journey to the counties of Wicklow and Wexford, and had a meeting at Ballynaclash, and another at Wicklow. From there I went to William Eves's, where George Rooke came to me; and the next day being the first-day of the week, we were with Friends at their Monthly Meeting at Ballycane, and the Lord's presence was with us to Friends' comfort and refreshment.

From there we went to Clones, and next day to Israel Webster's; and the day following to Thomas Stephens's, and had a meeting in each place; from there to Enniscorthy, and lodged at Jacob Lary's, and the next day to Lamb's-town, where we had a full meeting; after which we returned to Enniscorthy, and the next day went to John Fred's and had a large meeting in a barn, it being the first-day of the week.

That evening we went to Robert Lackey's, where we had a powerful meeting, the high sheriff of the county and several others being there, who afterwards expressed their satisfaction concerning the truth of the doctrine declared, in the demonstration of the spirit and power of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. From there we went to Athy and had a meeting the next day; after which we parted, the Lord

having enabled me to perform this travel and service, by the assistance of his accustomed goodness, in the eightieth year of my age; praises to his great name forever and ever. Amen.

The time of our National Meeting at Dublin being at hand, I went there, where the Lord's power was plentifully manifested in our meetings, both for the public worship of God and those for discipline, and keeping up good order in the church of Christ. Many heavenly mysteries of faith were opened in the spirit and power of the Lord Jesus Christ; also the affairs of truth were managed with peace and concord, in the sense and guidance of the holy Spirit of truth, and Friends and brethren were sweetly comforted and edified in the love of God: so parting therein we returned to our several habitations; praises to the Lord forever, who enabled me to hold out in this journey and service, and is a present help to them that fear him.

1707. Winter coming on, and my decaying body not being able to endure much hardship, I kept to our usual meetings at Mountmellick, weekly and monthly; and in the first month, the season being temperate, I rode to Dunlavin, and had a large meeting there, to which many sober people came. From there I went to Castledermot, to our Quarterly Meeting for Leinster province, where many Friends met, and were well refreshed in the Lord Jesus Christ. That meeting held part of three days, and the week following Thomas Wilson met me at Birr by appointment; we stayed one meeting there with Friends, and then went to the county of Tipperary, where several sober people were desirous to hear truth declared, and willing to let us meet at their houses; we had two meetings with them, and then came to James Hutchinson's, where we had a large meeting on a first-day. From there we went to Mountrath, and stayed a meeting there, and so returned home.

Chapter XXVII

Friends' care over William Edmundson's wife in her sickness—He and G. Rooke visit most of the three provinces of Ulster, Leinster and Munster

Our National Half-year's Meeting at Dublin drawing nigh, I went there with my wife. There was a great assemblage of Friends from several parts of the nation, and accounts were given of truth's prosperity, and of Friends' care in every province, for the welfare of the churches; the Lord's ancient goodness was with us, and his holy Spirit gave ability in his service, both in doctrine and discipline; but my spirit was deeply affected with sorrow, in that most of our elders were taken away from us, who used to attend the service of such meetings. This meeting held part of four days; when it was over we returned home, I being much disabled in body by a great cold and old age, also my tender wife was taken sick on the road; yet the Lord

enabled us to get home; everlasting praises to his great name for all his manifold mercies!

When I had rested two or three days, I was pretty well again; but my wife's illness increased upon her, so that she took her bed, and lay very sick nearly three months, being so weak and worn away, that she could not turn or help herself, but as she was assisted. Many Friends came to visit her from various places, and several women Friends of Mountmellick were very kind and careful of her, two of them at a time attending her day and night for the most part, when, according to appearance, there was little likelihood of her recovery. Yet I often prayed earnestly and fervently to the Lord, that he would be pleased to heal and restore her to me, as a help-mate in my old age; and he was graciously pleased to answer my petition, as he had at many other times in great straits, and raised her from her illness; blessed be his worthy name forevermore! When she was a little recovered, I went to the Moat, and visited Friends' meetings thereaway; so returned home, and found my wife much recovered.

Soon after, Leinster Quarterly Meeting being at Castledermot, I went there, and some Friends were there from each Monthly Meeting in the province, who brought accounts of the state of each meeting, and how the testimony of truth was kept up. When the meeting was over I went with my fellow-labourer, George Rooke, to John Watson's, and the next day to Waterford, and on the day following had a meeting there with Friends and others, and had good service for truth.

Next day we rode to Clonmel, and on the day following had a meeting in their meetinghouse. After this we went to Knockgraffen, and lodged at Peter Cook's house, and next morning to Tipperary, and had a meeting that day, to which several sober people came, and were very attentive to what was declared, in the spirit and power of our Lord Jesus Christ, and went away well satisfied; also Friends were well refreshed in the Lord.

The next day we went to Limerick, and on the day following, being first-day of the week, had two meetings in Friends' meetinghouse there; and on third-day we had a meeting at Six-miles-bridge, in the county of Clare, which was large: many men of account came to it—three justices of the peace, one of them was the priest of that parish, and all were very sober and attentive to hear truth declared; the Gospel was preached to them in the demonstration of the spirit and power of God, and many deep mysteries of the kingdom of Christ Jesus were opened, which seemed to make an impression on many of them.

After the meeting was over, we went to the inn where we had left our horses, and the aforesaid priest, who was a justice of the peace, came there to us, and very courteously offered his kindness in what he could do. From there we came back to Limerick, and that evening had a meeting with Friends at Thomas Pearce's house, and from there to Birr, and on the day following were at Friends' meeting there; and the next day came to my own house, where I parted with George Rooke, who went to his house and family in Dublin.

I kept to meetings about home, and in a short time it was on my mind to visit Friends in the province

of Ulster, and to get meetings at some places where no Friends dwelt. Leinster Province Meeting being at the Moat, I went there, and stayed the service of that meeting, and then took my journey to the north, with my aforesaid companion George Rooke and several other Friends. We rode that day to Finagh, in the county of Cavan, and had a meeting in the evening at the inn where we lodged, there not having been a meeting of our Society in that town before; several people came to it, where truth was declared to them, and they were sober. Next morning we went to Cavan, and visited some Friends who were prisoners there for their testimony against tithes.

The day following we were with Friends at their meeting beyond Ballyhayes, and then went to Coot-hill, having sent some Friends before to Clownes, to get a place for a meeting, which they did. We had a meeting with Friends at Coot-hill, and the next day went to Clownes, where we had a full meeting, and the Gospel of Christ was preached to them, all being quiet. We then rode to Monaghan, and that evening had a meeting in a large dining room at the inn where we lodged.

The father and uncle of the priest, who had cast those Friends into prison at Cavan, living near our road, we went there the next day and discoursed with them, endeavouring to obtain our Friends' liberty, but got little entrance. We came that night to Ballyhagan, where we had a large and full meeting on the first-day of the week, and the Lord's power and comfortable presence were with us to great satisfaction.

Next day we were at a full and comfortable meeting beyond Charlemount, and then went to Toberhead, in the county of Londonderry, and had a meeting, to which Friends came from other meetings, and were well refreshed in the Lord Jesus Christ. We then went to Grange, in the county of Antrim, and stayed a meeting with Friends, and from there to the town of Antrim, and had one there.

The Province Meeting for Ulster began there on the next day, and held part of two days in worship and discipline; from there we went to Lurgan, and so to Monallen, and had a meeting, where most of the ancient Friends came, and were well refreshed in the Lord, and one in another. After this meeting we went to see Archibald Bell, he being very old and feeble, and having walked in the truth many years; and the next day went to the meeting at Richard Boyes', and so to Lisburn; we were with Friends at their meeting there, and then to a meeting at Hilsborough. In all of them the testimony of truth was largely declared, and many deep mysteries in the doctrine of Christ's kingdom were opened, in the demonstration of the spirit and power of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

After this meeting we went to Tobias Courtney's, and lodged there one night, and on the next day to Lurgan, where we had a very large and full meeting of Friends and other people. On the day following, being the first-day of the week, the Lord's power was mightily with us, and many heavenly mysteries were opened in the doctrine of the everlasting Gospel of Christ Jesus, to the tendering and refreshing of many hearts, and to the breaking down of the strong holds of the man of sin. When this great meeting was over, we had gone through our intended service in the province of Ulster, except visiting one small meeting, which lay some miles remote; and I being much spent, and having also got cold, was willing to rest one

day, before I took my journey to Dublin. My companion, George Rooke, answered the service of that meeting, and by appointment I met him at Newry, where we had the company of many honest, tender Friends, who were going to Dublin to our National Half-year's Meeting, which was then at hand.

The next day we all went to Garland's town to lodge that night, and had a meeting there in the evening, the innkeeper being very courteous and willing to let us have room to meet in. We then went to Drogheda; several Friends from Dublin met us, and we had a meeting there; the testimony of truth was set over the unfaithfulness of some inhabitants in that town, who professed the blessed spotless truth.

Chapter XXVIII

In several meetings, both National and Provincial, he was earnest to have marriage, which is God's ordinance, both begun and accomplished in God's counsel

We all went to Dublin, and on the day following, being the seventh-day of the week, and 8th day of the ninth month, 1707, our National Half-year's Meeting began, and many Friends were there from several parts of the nation; also accounts were given of the affairs of truth, and concern of Friends for its prosperity. The meeting held part of four days, in the public worship of God and meetings for church discipline. When it was over I returned home; and the Quarterly Meeting for Leinster province being shortly after at Mountmellick, accounts were brought from the several Monthly Meetings in the province, how church discipline was kept up, and a holy and zealous concern was on Friends, that marriage, which is God's holy ordinance, might be proceeded in and performed according to his holy will, that therein his joining might be known, so that those who give and take in marriage, may do it in God's fear and counsel, and not for riches and worldly ends, for this is contrary to the ordinance of God in marriage, which is honourable in itself, being uncorrupted; and truth must and will regulate the violation thereof.

Some time after this, the aforesaid concern of marriage was closely spoken to in our Monthly Meeting for church affairs at Mountmellick. Our Six-weeks' Meeting for Leinster province being appointed to be at Athy, it was upon my spirit to be there, and to visit some meetings of Friends thereaway; and though it was cold winter, the days short, foul weather, the ways very deep, and my body aged, yet I doubted not the Lord's assistance to give ability to perform this service, as he had at many other times done for me in great difficulties and dangers. So in the faith of Jesus I went there, where was a pretty large gathering of weighty Friends and elders; and after some time spent in worshipping God, we went to our service in church affairs, men and women apart, in the sense of the Lord's goodness.

Several matters relating to Gospel order and discipline in the church of Jesus Christ were closely

discoursed, and several couples presenting themselves at that meeting, declaring their intentions of marriage with each other, it gave occasion for a large discourse on that great ordinance of marriage, as it was instituted by God; and a weighty concern was upon my spirit, to press all Friends concerned in giving or taking in marriage, to do it in the Lord's way, as he instituted it in the beginning, when he created man, and then woman to be a help-mate, and brought her to him, and joined them together as man and wife. That so all Friends concerned in that matter, should be careful to act therein in the counsel of God, from the beginning to the accomplishment thereof, and marry in the Lord; which marriage is honourable.

When the service of this meeting was over, I went in truth's service, as it opened on my spirit, in a sense of the Lord's drawings, and had a meeting at John Watson's, and another at New Garden, and the Lord's goodness was greatly with me, who mightily strengthened both in the inner and outward man; so that the testimony of the blessed truth was held forth, and the doctrine of the Gospel divided, in the wisdom and authority of the spirit and power of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the great comfort of true-hearted Friends. When this service was over, I went to my own dwelling in peace and satisfaction in the Lord. I attended meetings near home until our next Provincial Quarterly Meeting, which was at Castledermot; and the Lord drawing my spirit to that service, I went there in the faith of Jesus Christ, that he would strengthen both my outward and inward man, to perform the journey and service which he required, as he had often done to my great encouragement, through many difficulties and weakness. Accordingly the Lord strengthened me with his power and good spirit, to stand in his testimony over all that was contrary to the government of Christ in his church. The service of that meeting was carried on in the authority of the Lord's power and ancient goodness. When the meeting was over, I returned home, attending meetings as usual.

Our next Six-weeks' Meeting for Leinster province being appointed at Catherlough, I went to it, where many Friends of the province met to worship God, and perform service in the Church of Christ, and still I found that the Lord renewed my strength and ability beyond the ordinary course of nature; everlasting praise to his great name!

The next Quarterly Meeting for the province of Leinster was at Mountmellick, where the Lord's power did eminently appear, for maintaining the testimony of his blessed truth, both in doctrine and discipline.

After this meeting, I went to our National Half-year's Meeting at Dublin, which was then at hand, being in the third month, 1708, and, through the Lord's great goodness and mercy to me, was enabled to hold out through the service of that great meeting, which held from the 8th to the 12th day of the month.

Our next Six-weeks' Meeting being appointed at Ballycane in the county of Wicklow, I had some drawings on my spirit to be there; and trusting in the Lord for ability, took my journey to New Garden, in the county of Catherlough, and was with Friends at their meeting. After which I went to Dunlavin, where I had appointed a meeting; George Rooke from Dublin met me there, and we had a full and satisfactory meeting of Friends and sober people. We then went to Thomas Duckett's, and next day to Ballycane

in the county of Wicklow, where the Province Meeting began the day following, and there was a great appearance of Friends and sober people.

Chapter XXIX

In 1708 and 1711, he visited Munster, and attended both Monthly, Provincial and National Meetings in his old age—In 1712, at the National Meeting in Dublin, he solemnly took his last leave of Friends; after which he fell sick, and in three months time died, aged near eighty-five

Finding my ability renewing, and drawings upon my spirit to visit some parts of the province of Munster, our Quarterly Meeting being at hand, by appointment at Castledermot, I took that in my way towards Munster. Here I met George Rooke, who went with me that journey in the Lord's service. After the meeting we went to Waterford, and had a meeting, and next day to Clonmel, where we had a meeting with Friends on the day following.

From there we went to Joshua Fennell's, and had a meeting; so to Tipperary, and had a meeting in the market-house, where a great concourse of Friends and others assembled. Then to Limerick, and the day following had a meeting at Six-miles-bridge, in the county of Clare, so came back to Limerick, and stayed another meeting there with Friends. On the day following we went to Silver Mines, and that evening had a meeting at the inn where we lodged, to which many people came, and were attentive to hear the doctrine of Christ's kingdom, which was preached to them in the spirit and power of the Lord Jesus Christ.

We then went to Birr, and on the first-day of the week, had two meetings there with Friends, and afterwards had a meeting with Friends at Walter's-town; one at the Moat, and the day following one at Lismoiney; in all which the Lord's spirit and power were with us, and his goodness upheld us in the testimony of his blessed truth, the Gospel of his kingdom being rightly divided, and Friends refreshed in the Lord Jesus Christ. Here I and my companion parted, and each of us returned home. This was in the sixth month, 1708.

I kept to meetings near home, until our Half-year's Meeting at Dublin, which began the 8th day of the ninth month. I went there, where many Friends came from several parts of the nation, and an account of the affairs of truth and welfare of the churches was given. Here I met with some exercise, but the Lord's power went over it, blessed be his great name, who stands by and owns his testimony. When the meeting was over, I returned home, and my body was weary with riding; so I tarried near home, and frequented both Weekly, Monthly and Six-weeks' Meetings.

I also was enabled to go to the following Half-year's Meeting at Dublin, which began the 8th day of the third month, 1709; and some time after, having drawings upon my spirit to visit Friends about the Moat, I went there, accompanied by Joshua Strangman, and was at Friends' meeting at the Moat and Walter's-town, where we were well refreshed in the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Quarterly Meeting being at Castledermot, I went to it, and the Lord's mighty power was with us, in the service of that meeting, both in the public worship of God, and in meetings of discipline, for promoting Gospel order among us, and many things relating thereto were closely discoursed, in a weighty sense of God's goodness on the spirits of sensible elders and brethren, to our great comfort in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Some weeks after the Province Meeting for Munster being appointed at Limerick, and I having a concern upon my spirit to be there, took my journey, accompanied by Ralph Stephenson and my son Tryal. We went to Birr, and stayed a meeting with Friends; and on the day following I went to Limerick, and attended the Province Meeting there, which held part of two days. The Lord strengthened me mightily in the performance of this journey and service; everlasting praises to his great name.

I kept to meetings near home, until about the time of our National Half-year's Meeting, which began at Dublin the 8th day of the ninth month; when I went in company of Richard Eves, to our Province Meeting, which was held at Athy at that time; after which we went to Dublin, and on the day following our National Meeting began, where a great many Friends from several places convened, and accounts were brought of the affairs of truth in the particular meetings.

Soon after I went to our Provincial Quarterly Meeting at Castledermot, which held part of three days in the worship of God and discipline of the church, and the sweet and comfortable presence of the Lord Jesus Christ was with us, to Friends' great refreshment.

In the third month, 1710, I went to our National Meeting at Dublin, and accounts were given of the affairs of truth, and of Friends' concern in each province for its prosperity. Soon after, our Quarterly Province Meeting being again at Castledermot, I went there, and stayed the service thereof, which was weighty; the Lord hitherto renewing my strength in his service, both in the inward and outward man.

Our next Six-weeks' Meeting for Leinster Province being appointed at Ballycane, in the county of Wicklow, I found a concern upon my spirit to be there, and accordingly went, though feeble in body; and after the meeting was ended, through the Lord's mercy, I got well home. The National Half-year's Meeting at Dublin approaching, I found the Lord's drawings fresh upon my spirit to be there, though I was very feeble and weak in body; for the Lord's gracious promise was to me, that I should not lack strength and ability. I accordingly went and had good service for the Lord and the testimony of his blessed truth, in which he wonderfully strengthened me over old age and other infirmities, so that the journey was made easy.

1711. Our Quarterly Meeting for Leinster being appointed at Castledermot, having some drawings upon my spirit, I went there, and afterwards to our National Half-year's Meeting at Dublin; in both which the Lord strengthened me in the service of his blessed truth, in doctrine and church discipline, and the power of the Lord, in his testimony, was over all. When the service of these large and heavenly meetings was over, finding myself unable to endure long journeys, I was content to rest in the will of God, who had lengthened my time to old age, and done great things for me; to whose great and worthy name be praise, glory and honour, forever and evermore.

Having rested some time, and kept to meetings near home, finding my ability something strong again, and my mind drawn forth to visit Friends' meetings in the province of Munster, I set forward in the seventh month following, accompanied by Richard Guy and Joshua Strangman, and came to Birr, where we had a meeting, and next day to Limerick, and had a meeting there, and on the day following, Joshua Strangman returned home; but Richard Guy and I went to Charlevil, and had a meeting with Friends. On the next day to Cork, and had two large meetings on the first-day of the week. From there we went to Bandon, and so returned to Cork; and then came to Youghal, and had a meeting in each place. Friends showed great gladness to see me once more among them, and we were sweetly refreshed in the Lord Jesus Christ, and one in another; for the Lord's refreshing goodness went along in that visit, and I had many sweet comfortable opportunities with Friends who came to see me, besides public meetings.

At Youghal we parted with Friends in the tendering power of the Lord Jesus Christ, who filled our hearts with his goodness, and went to Kilcommonbeg, and had a meeting at Joshua Fennell's house with Friends of that quarter: then we went to James Russel's, about three miles from the town of Tipperary, and had a meeting with Friends of that part; here George Rooke from Dublin met me, and we rode to Clonmel, and had a meeting, to which several Friends came, who were going to Munster Province Meeting at Waterford.

We went in company with them, and alighted at Carrick at an inn, to refresh ourselves and horses: soon after which I was taken with violent pains, excessive vomiting and shaking of my whole body, so that it shook the bed I lay upon, and I was not fit to travel that day nor the next. After two days' rest I found myself much easier; and on considering the matter, I found freedom in my spirit to return homeward. This journey was above two hundred miles, and I was then about eighty-three years of age.

When I had rested some time, and kept to our meetings for the worship of God, I found my body something better, and able to travel short journeys in truth's service; and Leinster Province Meeting being at Castledermot, I went there. I also went to our National Half-year's Meeting at Dublin, in the ninth month, and was enabled to answer the service required of me, the Lord's power being eminently manifested for carrying on his great work of a complete reformation in the church of Christ, and maintaining his testimony both in doctrine and discipline. When that meeting's service was over I returned to my house, and kept to our meetings, as usually I had done, but found my body grow weaker and weaker, yet my

understanding sound.

Our next National Half-year's Meeting beginning the 8th day of the third month, 1712, I found some drawings upon my spirit to be there, and in the faith of the Lord Jesus Christ I went, and the service of truth was carried on in great peace and concord; and the Lord's blessed power enabled me to perform the part committed to me, both in doctrine and discipline, to his praise and my comfort. Here I took my leave of Friends, never expecting to see their faces any more in that place. When the service of that great meeting was over, which held about three days, in the worship of God and church discipline, I went to my own house, in company of my son, Tryal Edmundson, and Richard Eves, and found my body could not endure to travel, being now near eighty-five years old.

Chapter XXX

A Supplement

Several weighty expressions of William Edmundson on his death bed—A brief account of his death and burial

This worthy elder, after his return home, attended meetings thereaway, while of ability of body; also read over his journal and other papers, and on the day before he took his bed, was at a burial near his own dwelling, where he bore a living testimony to Friends and neighbours present, advising all to make ready for such a time as their own death; and exhorting the young people to beware of pride and height; which testimony, though short, was very reaching, a good power attending, and he concluded in sweet and fervent prayer to the Lord.

Next day, being the 2nd of the sixth month, a few hours after he had finished the reading of his writings for truth's service, he took his bed of the illness whereof he died, and said he was willing to die, and well satisfied to go out of this troublesome world, for his day's work was finished.

On the 4th of the said month he said to Friends present, I find my legs fail me, and it is tedious to die upward—desiring the Lord would make his passage easy. He requested that his will might be performed, and the substance of his journal no way altered. And soon after said, “Lord Jesus Christ, O great Physician, who can cure me, look upon me: I had rather die than live.” That night being very ill and full of pain, he was desirous to go to bed, and when helped towards it, he kneeled down at the bedside, and was enabled in the midst of his extremity to call upon God, to the comfort and satisfaction of Friends present, beseeching the Lord to abate in some measure the bitterness of the pain that lay on him, which in a great

degree was answered. He got little sleep that night, yet he lay for the most part pretty easy and quiet; and towards morning, being in a very tender frame of spirit, he was truly thankful to God for his mercy and goodness, and did bless, praise and magnify his great name for the same, desiring those present to praise the Lord also on his behalf.

On the 5th day of the month, some Friends being in the room, sitting quietly by him, he desired their prayers for him, for he was weak and not able to undergo much. Soon after he got a little sleep, and when he awoke, besought the Lord to this effect: “forget not your faithful mercies, but mitigate these pains, if it be your will, and stand not at a distance in this time of need: I pray you, O Lord! Touch, one touch with your finger, and cure all.” A little after he ordered where his grave should be made, and gave some advice and charges to his children.

On the 6th, he expressed to some Friends his concern and trouble of mind, because of the pride and height that young people were gone into, far wide from the humility and plainness that truth led Friends into in the beginning; and said, one examples another therein; his spirit seeming burdened under a sense thereof. On going to bed, he renewed his supplication to the Lord, not to forget his faithful kindness towards him.

On the 7th he said to his wife, “I am now clear of the world and the things of it.” To Friends who came to visit him that afternoon, he said, “Friends, you would do well to retire to the Lord.” After a time of silent waiting, he prayed fervently to God to their great comfort; and though the extremity of his distemper was great, yet he bore it patiently. Friends from several parts coming to see him, he frequently declared his zealous concern for truth’s prosperity, and the promotion of its government in the churches of Christ, that not only those who were peculiarly concerned as elders in the discipline and oversight of the church, should be rightly qualified and gifted for that service—men of truth, fearing God and hating covetousness; but also that all who were admitted into close communion, as members of men’s and women’s meetings, should be subject to truth, and walk agreeably thereto in the whole course of their conduct. When such came to visit him, who had not been subject to those wholesome rules, established in the church for good order and discipline, he did not spare to admonish and reprove them in the authority of truth for their good.

On the evening of the 10th, being in a heavenly frame of mind, discernible to those near him, he spoke thus: “heaven and earth, sea and dry land, and all things shall be shaken; nothing must stand, but what is according to the will of God: so look to it Friends.” And some time after; “I lie here under pain, and would gladly be removed; but I am like one that pursues death, and it flees from me, although I see not why my time should be prolonged, my natural parts being decayed; neither do I see anything left undone, which the Lord required of me, when I had strength and ability, or that the Lord charges me with any neglect or transgression.”

On the 18th, as he lay, he spoke thus to some present; “I have something to say to you, if you have ears to

hear it; the spirit of vanity is let loose, the Lord allows it, and it is like to make a separation.” At another time he said to some intimate Friends present: “there are wonderful things to be done, the Lord has a mighty work to do, that must be gone through, and there be few that see through it.”

Several other weighty expressions dropped from the mouth of our dear, ancient Friend in the time of his sickness, some of which are inserted in the testimonies given forth by Friends, who visited him near his end, and were eye and ear witnesses thereof.

Though many of his last sayings were not committed to writing, yet what is here collected may demonstrate his zeal for the glory of God and welfare of Zion to his latter end. After about one month’s sickness and pain of body, which was sharp to bear at times, having run the race with patience, and kept the faith, he departed this life in sweet peace with the Lord, in unity with his brethren, and good-will to all men, the 31st day of the sixth month, 1712, being nearly eighty-five years old, and was buried the 4th day of the seventh month following, in Friends’ burying place at Tineel, near his late dwelling-place, accompanied to the grave by many Friends and others from several parts, where several testimonies were borne, from a lively sense of his manifold services, perils and labours of love, both in this nation and islands abroad; after which his body was decently interred, but his memorial lives among the righteous.

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Epistles and Papers of William Edmundson

AN EPISTLE TO FRIENDS, WRITTEN IN JAMAICA.

Dear Friends,

As you have received and believed in the precious truth, so live in it to God’s glory, and walk upright in the freedom and liberty of the truth and Gospel of peace, in which you will have peace with God. Go not back into the liberty of the world, for that will bring you into bondage, and the old leaven will steal in by little and little, which leavens into the love of the world, draws from the love of God, hinders the incomes of his love in your souls, and draws the mind into great incumbrances, and sets the affections on things below, to mind earthly things more than heavenly. This becomes a yoke of bondage, and will make you look down into the earth, and keep you from looking up to the Lord, who says. Look unto me. All stand fast and firm, therefore, in the freedom and liberty of the blessed truth. Let none lose the heavenly image, lest the earth and earthly image steal in and come over again; and like the grave swallow up, or like the thorns choke all that is good, and so stain and spoil the beauty and comeliness, which you have in the

everlasting truth.

Friends, in the name of the Lord Jesus, shake yourselves from the dust, and from the earth, being quickened and raised from the grave, and from the earth, by the spirit and power of the Lord. Sow not among thorns, but plough up the fallow-ground, and keep a diligent hand at the plough, that as the axe has cut down the branches, so the plough may tear up the roots, that the roots of corruption, earthly-mindedness and covetousness, which is the root of all evil, and the root of bitterness be not left unrooted out through neglect; and so those old roots spring up again, and choke the good, and make the garden unfruitful to God. Must not his people be as a fruitful field, and as a pleasant garden to bring forth much fruit, to be a sweet smell and a sweet savour? And so, all Friends, see that the fields and gardens of your hearts be kept clean, and the roots hacked up as well as the branches; that you may flourish in the new covenant, as the field of the Lord, and as his garden, give a sweet smell and savour of life unto life, and of death unto death; and as his fruitful plantation, bring forth much fruit to his praise and glory, who is the chief Planter and Workman, that he may delight to dwell in his plantation, and to walk in his garden, and to water it in due season, and not have cause to reject or cast out any, as a withered and unfruitful branch, through unworthiness.

Let all walk worthy of God's love, visitation and mercies, and take heed of turning again unto such things, as truth judged, led out of, and caused us to deny at the first, in trading or otherwise; for truth changes not. Therefore keep the first love and principles, spotless and blameless in the sight of God and man, and remember the children of Israel, whom God took by the hand to bring from the bondage of Egypt, and to give them the Land of Promise, how many of the first generation fell, and came short by looking back through unbelief, and tempting and grieving the Lord in the time of their trial. Also Lot's wife, who looked back, was set for an example. And are not we a kind of first fruits, and a generation whom God has visited, and taken by the hand to redeem from the earth, and from the world, after a long night of apostasy and falling away? Let all take heed and be circumspect; for there is much upon my spirit concerning these things, hard to be uttered, and harder to be borne by some. See that none leave either hoof or horn in Egypt, for then the mind will be towards it.

Therefore all arise, and come forth with the Seed royal, that all we have may be in the hand of the Lord, as an offering and sacrifice to him, which is but a reasonable service. We are but stewards of what we have, and must give an account to God; therefore take heed of being married to your shops, and trades or merchandise, whereby you are encumbered and hindered from coming to meeting, serving the Lord and doing his work, as though your work and business must be done first, and the Lord's last. Would not you blame and be angry with your servants, who would prefer and do their own work and business before yours, and be so encumbered and busy therein, that your business is neglected? Therefore be careful that the Lord's business is first done, and his truth and the concerns thereof preferred before all, that you may receive an answer from the Lord of "Well done, good and faithful servants." For if any be linked and married to the world, and to the earth, their shops, merchandise or trading, and have their delights there,

how are they God's freemen and Christ's spouse, married to him? Must not they, who are married to Christ, be free from the world through the cross of Christ, the power of God, and walk as freemen, having the earth under them, and not over them?

Therefore be good merchant-men; prize the precious truth, the precious pearl, and the preferment of it above all, that the love of the world enter not, and work as the old leaven, by which the streams of God's free love in your hearts may be stopped. Prize the love of God and walk worthy of it; for as a tender Father He gave his Son for us, even the Son of his love, whom he has made heir of all things, that we through him may be heirs of an everlasting inheritance, and not go after other lovers, or have the heart carried away with them, who will not stand instead, nor can they save in the needful time.

—WILLIAM EDMUNDSON

Jamaica, the 24th of the Twelfth month, 1671.

PART OF A LETTER TO HIS WIFE.

I have had several meetings here with Friends; the Lord's heavenly presence was with us, and many were well refreshed. I desire that all may be careful of God's honour, and the fame of his blessed truth, which is more than all, that occasion be not given whereby truth may be evilly spoken of. My love is to all our children with you; and my desire and charge to them is, to fear God, love his truth and people, and love one another; live in peace and walk soberly to all; for the fear of God will keep their hearts clean, and by it they will learn wisdom towards God and men, which will adorn and commend them before men, and in the end produce both peace and comfort. My dear love is to you, as a true and faithful husband, which you may assure yourself of, wherever I am, or however I may be disposed of; and my tender love is to all honest-hearted Friends, as if I named them, and rest

—YOUR LOVING HUSBAND

A letter of examination to all who have assumed the place of shepherds, and overseers of the flocks of people of all sorts in Christendom, to see if your accounts be ready, and what order the flocks are in: with a few lines of good news to the several flocks.

Woe to the shepherds of Israel who feed themselves! Should not the shepherds feed the flocks? You eat the fat and clothe yourselves with the wool; you slaughter the fatlings, but you do not feed the flock. The weak you have not strengthened, nor have you healed those who were sick, nor bound up the broken, nor brought back what was driven away, nor sought what was lost; but with force and cruelty you have ruled them. So they were scattered because there was no shepherd; and they became food for all the beasts of

the field when they were scattered.—Ezek. 34:2-5.

Behold, I am against the shepherds, and I will require My flock at their hand; I will cause them to cease feeding the sheep, and the shepherds shall feed themselves no more; for I will deliver My flock from their mouths, that they may no longer be food for them.—Ezek. 34:10.

Come all you who have assumed the title of shepherds, and overseers of the flocks of people of all sorts in Christendom: you have had the oversight, and ordering of the people for a long time; and the Lord has been as a man in a far country, but now he is coming to call you to account, and will require the flocks at your hands; the time is near when you must give account of your charge, and receive a recompense of reward from him according to your deeds.

This is a warning to you all, to have your accounts ready, and see that the flocks are in good order, and that nothing is wanting; for you will not permit any to meddle with the flocks but yourselves, therefore at your hands the Lord will require them.

Have you kept a diligent watch night and day, with carefulness for their souls? Have your locks been wet with the dew, and the hairs of your heads with the frosts, to preserve their feet in the way of peace, from the devourer, and out of all filthy unclean ways? Have you been good examples before your several flocks in all things, walking before them as good patterns?

Have you led them to the pastures of life, and fed them in due season? Or have you not played the careless idle shepherds, sitting in your fat places, and lying at ease upon your soft pillows, feeding with the fat, and sporting yourselves in your day and time, while the poor flocks go astray in the by-paths, and are scattered in the barren wilderness, as sheep wanting a shepherd, and as a people without their guide, where their souls are starved for lack of the bread of life? Have you led the flocks to the fountain of living mercies and well-spring of life, where they might drink freely, without money, and thereby be refreshed, and all become fruitful; or are they not dried up for lack of the springs of life, and so unfruitful in anything that is good?

Have you not also in this condition led and driven them, by your example and persuasion, to the dirty puddles of sin and uncleanness? Have you not persuaded the flocks, that this is what they must drink, while on this side the grave? Are not your flocks, as you call them, by that means, fallen into gross diseases, as rottenness of heart, unsoundness of mind, blindness and deafness, from seeing their salvation, and hearing the voice of the Lord Jesus? Are they not fallen into lameness of feet and hands? So that they cannot walk upright in the just man's path, which is a shining light, but stumble at it; nor can they handle the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God; by which they should war against the man of sin, and break down his strong holds.

And by drinking iniquity, sin and uncleanness, are not the flocks fallen into gross diseases; that there is

no health in them, and become weak in the faith, wherein they should resist the devil and overcome him: and have lost their taste, smell and savour in the things of God; so that everything that is seasoned with his spirit and power, becomes loathsome to their taste, by reason of disease, wanting salt in themselves, by which they should be the savour of a sweet smelling sacrifice to God, and be able to season the earth? And through lack of it, is not the earth corrupt, and the creation burdened? Does it not groan, and wait to be delivered from that bondage?

What have you in your flocks to offer to the Lord, that may find acceptance with him? Will he accept of the unclean, the sick, lame or blind? Must not the church, that is presented to God, be without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing? Nothing that is unclean can enter into his kingdom. Have you looked carefully to your several flocks, to keep them from the spots of the world? Or are they not run over with a scab, as with a leprosy? And have you not played the lazy shepherds, to look no better to the flocks? Or the empirics who have said, you have the care and cure of souls, and are the physicians; and yet let your flocks fall into such gross diseases and uncleanness? Are not you the careless shepherds, and physicians of no value? Would not you blame and be angry with the herdsmen of your flocks, and require your flocks at their hands, or throw them into prison till they made satisfaction, if they dealt so badly with you, concerning your flocks and herds? And will not the Lord do so by you? Is it not just and equal, that he require the flocks at your hands? For you have been well paid for looking to them, as you very well know, and the nations can witness.

Have you kept one certain voice, as the good Shepherd does, that the sheep might hear, his voice and come together, and not stray and fall into pits? Or have not your voices been variable as the wind, giving an uncertain sound? And your flocks not finding a certain voice among you, are scattered into sects and parties, pushing one another into the pit and mire, instead of helping out of it.

Again, have you been careful to count the flocks morning and evening, as shepherds ought to do, that none be wanting? Or have you neglected this duty also, save at fleecing times; like the hireling, who cares not for the flocks, but for the fleece? Have you endeavoured to keep the flocks, over which you pretend to be overseers, marked with the Lamb's mark in their foreheads, that they may be known to be his? For if they be not, but marked with another mark, will he not say, "Depart, I do not know you?" Have you acquainted the flocks with the fold of peace and safety, and with the way to come into it gently, and to rest in meekness and quietness? Or have you not been negligent, and let them grow wild, as the wild goats upon the mountains, and as bullocks unaccustomed to the yoke, or as heifers snuffing up the wind?

Have you not left the office of a shepherd, and are not many of you turned hunters, who hunt the Lord's little flock, which he has gathered by his power into his spirit, and put under the hand of the true Shepherd, who feeds them in due season? Do you not hunt them as a partridge, and make it your game and sport to spoil and destroy them, as the flock of your prey, and prepare your tongues like bows, and your words like arrows, to destroy and cut them off, whom you know by the Shepherd's mark, from all

the flocks in Christendom, so called?

Do you not sound the horn of envy and persecution, to awaken and stir up all of like mind with you, to hunt and spoil the Lord's little flock, as though they were not worthy to feed and live upon the earth, with the rest of the flocks; or as if the earth were yours, and not the Lord's; and that he might not have a flock upon earth, as well as you, or as though he had no right, but all were yours? Think you that the Lord sees not this, and will it not kindle his wrath, and hasten him to call you to an account, and reward you according to your works?

May not he justly hunt you, who have been the chief hunters of his flock, and prepare his bow and arrows against you, and mark you out, and make you a hissing, and a by-word to the nations? Is it not just for him to take the flocks from you, who have been careless, and neglected your service and duty; and now will not let his flock be quiet, but rend and tear them? Is it not justice and equity for him to rend the flocks from you, who will not allow them to receive the law at his mouth, whom he has ordained a priest forever, and whose lips preserve knowledge?

Will not the just principle in you answer to his justice, when it comes upon you to take the flocks, and lay you aside, and put them under the hand of his Son, Christ Jesus, the good Shepherd; who will bring them to the fresh pastures of life, and feed them in due season, and cause them to hear his voice, and to know it, and to come to his fold and lie down in it in quietness, meekness and patience, where none shall make them afraid, preserving from the storm and from the heat.

He will bring them to the well of clean water and fountain of living mercies, and cause them to wash and be clean, and to drink and be refreshed, that they may no longer be barren in fruits of holiness, but bring forth to God's glory; and anoint their eyes with eye-salve, and open their blind eyes. Then they will see you to be blind guides, and bless the Lord who redeems them from you. He also will give them precious ointment, even the virtue that goes out of Him, the good Physician, that will cure their spots and leprosy, which ran over them while under your hands, and will purge their corruptions, and cure the diseases of sin, by which death has had dominion. He will give them saving health, heal their backslidings, and open the mysteries of his kingdom to them; circumcising their hearts and ears, and causing them to understand those secrets which are hidden from the wisdom of this world, and bring them out of the many ways, into the one way, Christ Jesus the way to God; and out of the many sects, divisions and parties, which they are fallen into, and have been entangled with, in the cloudy and dark day that has been over them, while under your hands. He will set His name and his Father's name upon them, and give them the seal of the new covenant, that they may know and be known that they are his, whom he has purchased with his precious blood, and redeemed, searched and sought out; and as a good Shepherd, who neither sleeps nor slumbers. He will bring them to the mountain of the house of the God of Jacob, and teach them of his ways, and watch over them.

He will work a reformation in the nations, and bring them to the one true church, which is in God.

founded and built upon the sure foundation that God has laid as by the hand of a wise workman, into the fellowship of the one body, whereof Christ Jesus is the head; who supplies the whole body with all things needful to build them up in their most precious faith, which gives them victory over the man of sin, and renews into the true worship of God, in spirit and in truth, and a true conformity thereto, by his law of the spirit written in the heart.

There Christ is Priest according to the appointment of the Father, Minister and Bishop of the soul, who ministers life, peace and comfort unto them, and renews his holy and heavenly ordinances in the church, baptizing into one spirit and into the one faith, that works by love and purifies the heart, giving a white stone, and in it a new name, and feeding them with the sincere milk of the word. He fills the priest's office in the church of the Firstborn, preparing the altar and spreading the table with fine white linen, which is his righteousness; and prepares the bread for his church, and fills their cup with the new wine, that they may all drink of the cup of blessings, which is the communion of his blood; and may all eat of the one bread, which is the communion of his body, and his body is bread indeed, and his blood is drink indeed. This is that which gives life; and without it they cannot have life; and this is free without money, wherewith the Lord's table is furnished, and he is inviting the people and gathering the nations to it, from your costly tables; for you have sold them bread, wine and water at a dear rate. But he will freely feed them with all things necessary, as a household of one faith, and as one family. Christ Jesus, who is greater than Solomon, their Lord and Master, shall govern them, setting up and renewing family duties among them, to stand on their watch, to resist every appearance of evil, and to pray with the spirit and with the understanding, and to sing with the spirit and with the understanding also. And he shall rule, whose right it is, and the government is upon his shoulder, whose kingdom is everlasting, and of his government there shall be no end. The Lord will do this, to reform the nations, and bring them to uniformity and true conformity in his dear Son.

—WILLIAM EDMUNDSON

Jamaica, the 24th of the Twelfth month, 1672.

*Part of a Letter written by William Edmundson, at Barbados, to Friends in
Ireland; dated the 8th of the First month, 1675.*

My love is to all dear Friends.

It is not distance or length of time, tribulations or peril by sea or land, though many, that can make me unmindful of you; for you are sealed in my heart in an everlasting remembrance of true and unfeigned love, in the holy Spirit and covenant of the Father's love, where our unity stands with the Father and his dear Son, and one with another. My earnest desires are to the Lord, that in it you may all be kept faithful to the Lord in all things, without spot or blemish; and that truth may be loved and preferred before all, in

you all, and by you all in all things. Though it be my lot to be as one separated from that, which may be as dear and near to me as other men, and as one cast out from the enjoyment of wife, children, or other benefits and comforts in this life, as the off-scouring and forsaken, liable to good report or evil report, to be received or rejected, in plenty or in need, liberty or bonds, safety or perils by sea and land, life or death, to take my lot, as it may fall by night or day, in house or wilderness, among friends or enemies, I must be content for the Gospel's sake; a dispensation of it being given to me, and a necessity laid upon me to preach it; for which sake my life is not dear to me, so that I may finish the work committed to my trust, with joy, and in the end stand in my lot among the justified.

Now my Friends, will not the consideration of what you enjoy, provoke you to love and good works, to be diligent in the Lord's business, and prefer it before all your own? For you are partakers with me of the same riches of God's love, which is to constrain us all to love him. Consider the benefits you enjoy, and let them be as obligations upon you, to serve the Lord and his truth in faithfulness in your places, and one another with fervent and unfeigned love, and not to slight matters where truth is concerned; but keep all things sweet and clean, appertaining to your pure religion, which in itself is unspotted. For you know that truth is pure, innocent and peaceable, and holiness becomes the house of God, who loves holiness, but hates uncleanness and will not dwell with the unclean. So dwell in the love of God, and in the peace of our Prince of Peace, and be at peace one with another, that the love of God in Christ may dwell in you, and abound among you.

By this all my dear Friends may know, that I am very well and have had good service for the Lord in this island, and the Lord is with his testimony, and blesses and prospers his work; many are convinced, and meetings so full that the meetinghouses cannot contain the people. Many of the blacks are convinced, and several of them confess to truth, and things here are peaceable, and in as good order as can well be expected at present. James Fletcher and companion came here about a month after me, and this day took shipping for the Leeward Islands, and intend to go to Bermudas, and so to New England. I am ready to leave this island the first opportunity for Rhode Island or New York, which I expect may be about two weeks hence.

John Haydock landed here two days ago from New England, and is well, and that country is much distressed by the Indian wars. They had a sharp fight this winter, in which, they say, the English were beaten and lost above three hundred men, six or seven captains slain, and many officers. They of Boston have sent out fresh men, and it is supposed have fought again by this time. Great fears surprise the people, and their hearts fail them, that they lack courage when they should look their enemies in the face. The guilt of the blood of the innocent shed by them lies on them, and the Lord has given them blood to drink. It is said, that several of their priests in Boston colony had a meeting to inquire of the Lord, what the reason is that he is departed from them, and goes not forth with their armies; and their return is for many causes, but this the chief, namely: Allowing the Quakers' meetings among them. Thus persecution makes men blind, that they run headlong to their own destruction; but many of the people are dissatisfied, and

believe it is the killing and persecuting of the Quakers, that is the cause of their distress; and they are distracted and confused among themselves, with fears on every side, and great jealousies, that all the Indians in those parts of America will be in arms this next summer.

It is likely to be troublesome and perilous travelling, but the Lord can preserve and deliver out of all, unto whose will I am given up, whether it be to suffer for his name, or to live or die for his truth, his will be done; and I hope my life will not be dear to me to part with, if he see it good; and I do not doubt but he will give me strength, in the inward man, to bear what the outward man may suffer for his glorious Gospel. These tidings do not affright or amaze me, for the glory of the recompense of reward to the faithful is before me, and does out-balance all fears. Your prayers to the Lord on my behalf may help me in my various trials and exercises, who desire to be in your daily remembrance, even as you are in mine, never to be forgotten, for my spirit is with you, and the overflowing of the love of Christ in my heart dearly salutes you all; and as we live in this, we shall never die, but shall meet again, if not in this life, yet in the life to come.

Finally, dear Friends, I cannot but put you all in mind, to walk as freemen in the truth, and in the liberty of the Gospel, and be not too careful, or too busy, or encumbered with the things of this life; but be ready for sufferings, which may attend that nation before many be aware, that we may all be ready, as Christ's freemen, to drink that cup which the Lord is pleased to put into our hands, for the trial of our faith, which is more precious than gold. My dear and true love is with you all, in the power of an endless life, wherein I am,

Your friend and brother,

—WILLIAM EDMUNDSON

SOME LETTERS TO HIS WIFE

My dear Wife,

This is to let you know, in part, of my fare in this my travel. I landed in Barbados in eight weeks and four days after I left Ireland, and abode there about six weeks, where I had much service for the Lord, which was well accepted by Friends. Sailing from there to Antigua, we were in danger of shipwreck, our ship having twice struck on rocks and afterwards run upon a shoal, our master and company not being acquainted with that coast; yet through the Lord's mercy and help we got safe off, and landed well. I was very sickly and weak in body, while I was in that island, and my spirit oppressed with wrong things there, so that I was bowed down in body and mind, yet I kept meetings. After nine days abode there I sailed to this island, and have had several meetings, and several people of account resort to them, and are very tender and loving. I am now very well, blessed be the Lord, and intend, if the Lord will, when clear in this island, to sail to Antigua, and so as opportunity presents to Barbados, and when clear there, I know

nothing at present but I may return to you in Ireland, if the Lord permit, which I know will be welcome news to you. My tender and true love is to all Friends, as if I named them, and to our children, and my prayers to the Lord are for them day and night, and for you all, that you may be preserved, and walk blameless in the Lord's truth, to his honour and our mutual comfort. My true and faithful love is with you, and I desire you, be tender of God's honour and truth's fame: So rest.

Your faithful husband,

—WILLIAM EDMUNDSON

Charles-town, in Nevis, the 10th of the Second month, 1684

My dear Wife,

The true and tender love which in duty I owe you, is an engagement upon me to write to you by every opportunity that presents, that you may partly know of my fare in my travels through many and deep exercises. I have been at Nevis and Mountserrat, and being now returned to this island, am very well, blessed be the Lord, who gives me strength and ability to perform his service committed to my charge, even beyond expectation. I purpose in the will of God to take the first opportunity for Barbados, and when clear there, I find nothing at present but I may return for Ireland, but must abide in the will of God, to which I still hope you will submit, whether in returning or travelling further, life or death. My true desires and prayers to the Lord night and day, are for you and yours, that you may be preserved blameless in his blessed truth, to God's honour and our mutual comfort.

Your faithful and loving husband,

—WILLIAM EDMUNDSON

Antigua, the 3rd of the Third month, 1684

Dear Wife,

My dear, tender and true love is to you, which you may assure yourself is true and faithful in all places, and neither time nor distance, prosperity nor affliction can wear out; for my heart is with you in sincere love as it ought to be, and my desires to the Lord day and night are for you, that you may be preserved blameless in his blessed truth, which in measure you know, the increase whereof I much desire, and to find which at my return would be great joy and comfort to me. I hope you do, and wilt strive with all godly endeavours, to live and walk in the course of your conduct, blameless in the sight of God and men, as becomes the blessed truth and Gospel of the dear Son of God, which we profess, and for which in measure I am set in defence, through good report and evil report. Therefore fulfill my desire, and it will greatly add to my comfort, and increase my joy in the Lord Jesus, which is desired before all visible things, by me your faithful husband. I have been some considerable time at the Leeward Islands, namely:

Antigua, Nevis and Mountserrat, and being clear there, am now returned to this island, and my coming to these parts was in a needful and acceptable time, and not in vain, as many can bear witness. The Lord's goodness is with me in his blessed service, for which not only I, but many others bless and praise the Lord, whose care is over his people. I find the longer I stay, the more is the service, and truly the Lord gives me ability of body beyond expectation. Everlasting praise to his name forever.

My tender fatherly love is to our children, with continual care and fervent desires for their preservation out of the evil of the world, the snares of the devil and lusts of the flesh, which drown ungodly men in perdition. If they turn aside into these, it will wound my heart, and heap loads of sorrow and affliction upon my head. But if they fear God, and love truth with all their hearts, and the bent of their inclinations be to virtue, justice and righteousness, as good examples, which become children of a careful and religious father, then they will make glad my heart, more than the increase of all the riches of the world. This is according to the truth of my heart, as the Lord knows, who searches all hearts.

My dear love is to all Friends, as if I named them, desiring they may be preserved blameless in the blessed truth; which, through the mercies and love of God, they have received and believed in; and that the propagation of it may be preferred before all in their hearts and affections, is the real desire and breathing to God on their behalf, of their ancient and true Friend, who cannot forget them when before the Lord. Once more my love is mentioned to you, and I hope yet, in the Lord's time, to see you again to our comfort, and remain, Your true and faithful husband,

—WILLIAM EDMUNDSON

Barbados, the 4th day of the Fourth month, 1684

Dear Wife,

In my last, I gave you some encouragement to expect my return to you from this Island; but finding a concern to go to Jamaica, I cannot be clear to return in peace without performing, and I hope you are willing to give me up to the will of God, whatever it be, in life or death. I think it fit, and true love leads me thereto, to give you an account of how I spend my time. I abode in this island about five weeks, then sailed to the Leeward Islands, Antigua, Nevis and Mountserrat, and laboured in truth's service about ten weeks, and returned here, having had good service for the Lord and his people, which was well accepted, and I hope will not prove fruitless; the Lord's blessed presence and power are with me, to mine and many others great satisfaction and refreshment. Everlasting praises to his name forever.

Through the tender mercies and endless love of God, I am able in body to labour beyond expectation; the Lord is worthy to be served with the abilities he gives. I purpose in the will of God to go for Jamaica, by the first opportunity of a passage. I earnestly beg and desire above all earthly things, that you and our children may be preserved from the corruptions and evils of the world, in a blameless

conduct, as becomes the truth, which you know in part. And as your whole inclinations, fervent desires, ardent affection and reverence are to virtue, abhorring every vice, no doubt the Lord will increase your knowledge and faith in his Son, and multiply his grace and truth in you, and put his good spirit upon you, by which you will be made a good savour in your places, both to God and men, and cut off occasion from such as watch with an evil eye for your halting, to make it a cloak for their unjustifiable doings, and to reproach me upon occasion. My earnest desires and prayers to God, through the spirit of his Son, are day and night for your preservation from all the evils of the world, and corruptions of the flesh, with the lusts thereof; and that you may be enriched with the increase of God, through the blessed spirit of his Son, to his honour and your comfort both here and hereafter. This will be more joy and gladness to me, than the increase of all the riches in the world. The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, preserve you blameless, and cause his face to shine upon you, that in his light you may shine to his glory and honour, to whom all is due forever, Amen. My dear and true love is with you, and to our children, and to all dear Friends, as if I named them.

—WILLIAM EDMUNDSON

Barbados, the 12th day of the Fifth month, 1684

For all Friends who know the heavenly gift of Christ Jesus, from the apostles to the hindermost of the flock of Christ, that they neglect not the service of their day, according to the abilities and gifts received, and more especially those gifted for doctrine and government.

Christ Jesus, the promised Seed, who bruises the serpent's head, of whom the law and prophets gave testimony, according to the promise of the Father, came in due time, in that prepared body, to do the will of God for man's redemption; which when he had finished, and tasted death for us, he ascended up on high, and gave gifts to men, and peculiar gifts to believers. To some apostles, to some prophets, and to some evangelists, pastors and teachers, discerners of spirits, and help-mates in government. Several other gifts gave he also to his gathered flock that believed in him, for edifying and building them up in the precious faith, of which he is the author, that they may come to the perfect knowledge of God and Christ, in the measure and stature of the fulness in him, and be established in him the head and foundation, and grow up in him in all virtue and godliness, in Gospel order.

Everyone thus gifted by Christ Jesus, is to wait on his gift, and attend to his service in the ministration thereof, according to the proportion of grace and faith given. Whether it be prophesying, ministering, teaching or exhorting, all are to wait on their service; and he that rules to be diligent, and speakers are to perform it as the oracles of God; and thus to administer one to another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God, and to keep in the bounds and line of their own measure and gift of Christ, not going

beyond it into another man's line. They are to be sound in faith and doctrine, and not to be entangled or cumbered with the affairs of this life, nor choked nor surfeited with the riches of this world, nor laden as with thick clay, to hinder their following Christ the Captain, who has called and gifted them for his work and service in his vineyard, to labour in the Gospel and leave all for it, that it might be performed and finished according to the will of God, under the daily cross and self-denial. Such must not be at ease in the flesh, world or will, or in their own time and place in trading, dealing, and getting riches but diligently attend to their service and gift, and keep the body in subjection, lest while preaching to others, they become cast-aways; and take heed to themselves and to the flock of Christ, of which the holy Ghost made them overseers, and be examples before them, and feed them in due season.

Christ Jesus, when he ascended into glory, established his church in government, as well in discipline, as in faith and doctrine; and committed the care and trust to gifted men for every service, to keep the whole body in order, according to the rule and holy rites of the new covenant. And the apostles, elders and brethren met together, as well in relation to matters of Church government, as for the worship of God; and discoursed of matters committed to their charge and trust, as stewards and overseers of Christ's vineyard, husbandry and heritage.

Those preachers who went from Jerusalem to Antioch, and would mix the law of the first covenant with the doctrine of Christ's kingdom, were reprehended and the churches advised of their error; others also in those stations of apostles, prophets and preachers, who kept not to the gift of Christ, but went beyond their line and rule into confusion and disorder, which tended to destruction and not to edification, were admonished and reprov'd. Disorderly, unruly women were not permitted to teach or preach in the church; and those qualified men, through the gift of Christ, who had the concern of church affairs, with the assistance and approbation of the holy Ghost, wrote epistles and decrees to the churches, and appointed elders, as overseers, in every meeting—faithful men, to whom was committed the care, to see those decrees truly and duly performed, that the church of Christ might shine in comely order and discipline, as lights in the world, to the glory of God.

Thus the churches were established, and those who ruled well were worthy of double honour; and such who kept to the heavenly gift, discovered false teachers, false apostles, false brethren and antichrists, that were among the believers, as wells without water, clouds without rain, fruitless trees that cumbered the ground, and wandering stars, for whom the blackness of darkness was reserved forever; and such as loved their bellies and pleasures more than God, yet would be talking and preaching, not knowing whereof they affirmed, being gone from the rule and line of the heavenly gift of Christ. So the Lord's care was over his gathered flock, for their preservation in faith and fellowship with himself, and one with another; as members of one body, taking due care one of another for their preservation from all uncleanness, disorder, snares and entanglements that are in the world; and that all should be kept in the holy order and discipline of the Gospel of Christ Jesus. Husbands to love their wives, and wives to love and reverence their husbands; children to honour their parents, and servants their masters; and widows

to be chaste; also young men and maids to be sober-minded, and not to marry with unbelievers; and all to labour, for he that will not work, must not eat—and rich men to be rich in good works.

Thus the church of Christ, both male and female, were established in their heavenly order and degrees; wherein all were to keep their ranks in the discipline and ministry established by Christ in his church, under the new covenant; and to prefer his public service before private interest.

The church that Christ espoused to himself, was adorned with her jewels, and beautiful through his comeliness; but when the apostasy and falling-away came, spoken of by Christ and his apostles, as seers of the times, the generality of Christians went from the heavenly gift, saving a small remnant, who kept to the gift of the holy Spirit, who were forced to lie obscure under the arm of God's providence, sighing and mourning because of confusion, disorder, and the abominations which came into the churches. Christ the man-child departed from them, and the witnesses were slain—yet unburied. Then the whole building went to ruin, rents and breaches, and all in confusion, both in doctrine and government; everyone sought their own wealth, preferment and ease in the world, the flesh and will; and the cross of Christ was lost. Ministers went to the letter, having gone from the heavenly gift of Christ's holy Spirit, and got into easy places; everyone seeking their own gain and advantage, and cared for themselves, not for the flock, for which Christ had shed his precious blood. Self-interest prevailed, and the public spirit that stands for and seeks the public good, was lost; the churches were filled with confusion and errors, their overseers being blinded with the world and by the god of it, the faith of Christ and Christianity was marred, the beauty and comeliness gone, the temple and tabernacle of God ruined, and his divine service and worship lost, as it was instituted by Christ.

Thus it lay till the time of reformation and restoration, according to the appointment of the Father; which in mercy is largely manifested in our age, wherein Christ Jesus is returned in the brightness and glory of his Father, to bring up the church out of the wilderness. He is bringing back and gathering his scattered flock, to the faith once delivered to his saints, of which he is Author; and causing his divine light to shine in their hearts, to give them the knowledge of the glory of the Father; and raising the ruin of his temple and tabernacle, that he may dwell and tabernacle in us, and bring us into fellowship with the Father and himself, and one with another; and to worship the Father in Spirit and in Truth, and be partakers of his holy ordinance of baptism, baptizing by one spirit into one body, of which he is Head. He is renewing the heavenly gifts of his holy Spirit, both in doctrine and government. The everlasting Gospel is preached again, and order and discipline settled in the church, according to his former institution, for the preservation and growth of all his gathered flock, in the increase of God.

The care of the flock of Christ is committed to gifted men, whom the holy Ghost has made overseers, and who are to take heed to themselves, and to the flock, that all the house of God, which is his people, may be kept in order, with respect to all things divine and human, according to Gospel rule. All are to attend on their ministry and service, and fulfill it according to their ability and gift; that the house of God may

be settled on her own mountain, which is above all mountains and hills, and many shall flow to it, and see the ancient beauty and comeliness which the Lord is restoring to his church, in decking her with her former ornaments of Gospel rights and privileges. All concerned in this great work of restoration, who have received a gift from Christ to officiate therein, are to attend to their office and service for the public good, and not to choose their own time, or ease in the flesh, or their will in the things of this world, which loads them as with clay, and hinders their service for the public, and is no example of self-denial to the flock of Christ; but savours of that spirit of apostasy, which is to be purged out, as the old leaven, that so it may be seen we are in the footsteps of those who were given up in strength, understanding, time and substance, to spend and be spent in the service of the Lord and his people.

—WILLIAM EDMUNDSON.

CONCERNING OFFERINGS TO GOD, IN PRAYER AND SUPPLICATION.

The offerings that are acceptable to God, must be offered in righteousness, and with clean hearts and lips. For the Lord is pure and holy, and will be sanctified of all that come near him, and his worship is in Spirit and in truth. Prayer, supplication and addresses to God, being a special part of his worship, must be performed in Spirit and in Truth, with a right understanding, seasoned with grace and with the word of God; even as the sacrifices under the old covenant were to be brought and offered in clean vessels, seasoned with salt and with fire. So all, now under the new covenant, who approach so nigh to God as to offer an offering in prayer, must have their hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and their bodies washed in clean water, and sanctified with the word of God, and their senses seasoned with his grace and spirit in divine understanding, and must offer that which is sound and pertinent, which the spirit makes known to be needful; whose intercession is acceptable, as a sweet smelling sacrifice to God, and a savour of life unto life, and of death unto death, though in sighs, groans, or few words, being sound, pithy and fervent. For the Lord knows the mind of the spirit, that makes intercession to him, who hears and graciously answers.

All are to be careful, both what and how they offer to God, who will be sanctified of all that come near him, and is a consuming fire, who consumed Nadab and Abihu, who offered strange fire, though they were of the high priest's line. And there may be now offerings in prayer and supplication, in long repetitions of many words, in the openings of some divine illumination, with a mixture of heat and passion of the mind, and a zeal beyond knowledge; and in this heat, passion and forward zeal, such run into many needless words, and long repetitions; and sometimes out of supplication into declaration, as though the Lord wanted information. These lack the divine understanding, and go from the bounds and limits of the spirit and will of God, like that forced offering of king Saul, which Samuel called foolish, and the strange fire and forced offering. These offer what comes to hand and lavish all out, that may open and present to view at times, for their own benefit; as if there was no treasury to hold the Lord's treasures; so such in the end, coming to poverty and need, sit down in the dry and barren ground. Therefore all are to know

their treasury, and treasure up the Lord's openings, and try the spirit by which they offer, that they may know the Lord's tried gold, and not mix it with dross or tin; and know his stamp, heavenly image and superscription, and not counterfeit, waste, or lavish it out, but mind the Lord's directions, who will call all to an account, and give to everyone according to their deeds; and all the churches shall know that he searches the heart and tries the reins.

As under the old covenant there was the Lord's fire, that was to burn continually on the altar, which received the acceptable offerings; so there was strange fire, which was rejected as well as the offering that was offered. And now in the new covenant there is a true fervency, heat and zeal, according to the true knowledge of God in the spirit and word of life, that dies not out, in which God receives the acceptable offerings: so there is also a wrong heat of spirit, and zeal without true knowledge, that with violence, through the passion of the mind, and forwardness of desire, runs into a multitude of needless words and long repetitions, thinking to be heard for much speaking, but is rejected, and is a grief, burden and trouble to sensible weighty Friends, who sit in a divine sense of the teachings and movings of the Lord's good spirit, in which they have salt to savour withal; though the affectionate part in some, who are not so settled in that divine sense, as to distinguish between spirit and spirit, is raised with the flashes of this wrong heat and long repetitions, which augment the trouble of the faithful and sensible, who are concerned for the good and preservation of all.

We read that the priests of Baal in their offerings, were earnest, hot and fierce, and cut themselves, making long repetitions from morning until evening, so kept the people in expectation to little purpose. But Elijah having repaired the Lord's altar, and prepared his offering, in a few sensible words, pertinent to the matter and service of the day, prayed thus in the spirit and power of God: "Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day, that you are God in Israel, and that I am your servant, and that I have done all these things at your word. Hear me, O Lord! hear me, that this people may know, that you are the Lord God, and that you have turned their hearts back again." Which the Lord heard and answered. So here a few sensible words, with a good understanding, pertinent to the matter, without needless repetitions, were prevalent with God.

Our Saviour, Christ Jesus, when he taught his disciples to pray, bade them not be like the hypocrites, or heathen, who used many repetitions, and thought to be heard for their much speaking. "Therefore," says he, "be not like unto them, for your Father knows what things you have need of before you ask him." The prayer which he taught, is full of matter to the purpose, though comprehended in few words; and all his disciples and apostles are to learn of him, and observe his directions, and not the manner or customs of the heathen and hypocrites, in this weighty matter of approaching nigh unto God with offerings, in prayer and supplication.

Our Saviour also left us a good example, written for our learning. When he was under the sense of drinking that cup of sufferings for the sins of all mankind, and of offering to God that great offering for

their ransom, he prayed in these words, “Father, if you be willing, remove this cup from me, nevertheless not my will, but yours be done.” And in giving thanks in these words, “I thank you, O Father! Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hid these things from the wise and prudent, and have revealed them unto babes, even so Father, for so it seemed good in your sight.” And there are many more examples in the Scriptures, full and pertinent to the matter, comprehended in few words, and not like the heathen, in tedious repetitions, who think to be heard for their much speaking. Therefore all who approach God with their offerings, are to be watchful and careful, both what and how they offer under this administration of the spirit, and dispensation of the new covenant.

I have travelled under a deep sense and concern in this matter for some time.

—WILLIAM EDMUNDSON

The 12th of the First month, 1695.

TO HIS SON

Son Tryal,

I received yours at Liverpool, with one by order from the Monthly Meeting, and am heartily glad to hear that things are well with you, and I pray God continue them so, with the increase of his goodness. For no worldly things would be so pleasing to me, as your preservation from the corruptions that are in the world, which the fear of God, and love to his blessed truth, preserve out of. If you and the rest take good heed unto this, it will add to my comfort; and if it should be otherwise it will add to my trouble, and heap sorrow upon my head. Therefore I desire that you may all be careful, in your conduct and conversation, for God’s glory, your own good and credit, and my comfort. I am very well, considering my old age, and my travels and labours in the Lord’s service, which hitherto the Lord has given me strength and ability to perform, I hope to his honour and the good of many.

There is some service before me in three or four counties in these northern parts, which I am now entering upon, resigned to the will of God, whether to live or die. George Rooke, my companion, who has hitherto been very serviceable and helpful, is now leaving me and coming to Ireland, with Amos Strettle; so that I am left alone, but hope the Lord will not leave me, who has been with me hitherto, and blessed and prospered his work and service, giving strength and ability beyond the ordinary course of nature; blessed be his name forever.

And now, my son, it will be gladness to me, that you show yourself a man for truth, in all your concerns; and if you truly fear God, you will learn wisdom, which will give you credit and favour with the Lord and his people.

Remember my tender fatherly love to your brothers and sisters, and to my grandchildren, desiring they

may all do well, and so walk, that no occasion may be given by any of them against the Lord's blessed truth, or for defamation of themselves. For in everything, wherein any sin against God and dishonour him, they discredit and dishonour themselves: but all that honour the Lord in their conduct, he honours, and will honour with many favours. This is what offers at present from a tender careful father.

—WILLIAM EDMUNDSON

West Chester, the 12th of the Fifth month, 1697.

TO HIS SON

York, the 7th of the Sixth month, 1697.

Son Tryal,

This may let you and the rest know, who desire to hear of my welfare, that through the mercies of the Lord I am well, and sensible of his renewing my strength every way, to perform his service required of me, which I hope will be to his praise and the good of many when I am gone. My chief care is, that I may do my day's work in time, according to his will; first in general, and secondly in particular for my children and offspring of my family. To be clear of all men's blood in the day of account, my service is more than ordinary in several things, and strength and ability given accordingly. The Lord is great, and greatly to be revered and feared; his wisdom is infinite, and the ways of his judgments unsearchable. My soul and spirit, in the sense of his wonders, in the depths of exercise, admires his infinite goodness, and praises his holy name.

As I wrote in my last to you, my children's folly is as a weapon in the hand of evil doers, against the Lord's work in my hands; but the Lord, who knows my heart's integrity and innocency, out-balances all opposition with his irresistible power, and crowns his testimony with dominion over all gainsayers; blessed be his name. Yet it is a grief and sore trouble to be wounded with an arrow that sprung from my own loins, prepared through my children's folly for lack of the fear of God, and reverence to such a father, whom the Lord has endued with many favours. It ought to seize all your hearts and break them in a deep sense of bitter sorrow, and be a warning to all of you, who are innocent, to be watchful over your own ways in godly fear, that you fall not into the like temptations, which dishonour God, and are a blot and stain to their name, who fall into them, not easily to be done away out of the memory of God and men. A good name deservedly lost, is hard to regain: therefore you my son, with the rest that are innocent, fear the Lord, love his truth, take advice of approved elders, which may be for your preservation in credit with God and good men; and experience shows, that they who honour the Lord, he does honour them. I was at Liverpool and Chester, thinking to come over with George Rooke, but was not clear of this service which I am upon, and must not leave it until performed.

I earnestly desire you will be careful on your part, in the fear and wisdom of God, to perform what you

have written, that I may have comfort of you: for nothing in the world is so pleasant to me, as to see my children doing well, walking in the blessed truth. I have had many large and full meetings since George Rooke left me, in Cheshire, Lancashire and thus far in Yorkshire; many Friends came far to meetings, and the Lord's power answered their expectation, and many honest hearts are thankful and glad of this labour of love. I came this day to this city, and intend to stay their meeting tomorrow, being first-day, and then as the Lord enables, to go towards Burlington, Scarborough and Whitby; and when clear there, through Bishopric and Westmoreland into Cumberland, and if the Lord lengthen my time, then to see you again.

I know not yet whether to ship at Liverpool, or go by land to Port-Patrick in Scotland. I hope in the Lord's strength to be in Cumberland in three weeks from this date. Remember my dear love to elders and honest Friends of our Monthly Meeting, as if I named them one by one; and I charge you to give them a true copy of this, and let them read it in the men's meeting, and it shall be a witness for me, if I should not see your faces again.

And now my son, my prayers are for you, and my care is for your well-doing, that your behaviour in all things may give you credit, and me comfort. Show yourself a man in all concerns, and act in all things as in the sight of God, who orders all things for the best, for them that fear him, and cast themselves upon his ordering providential power, that rules all things. It is safe to keep there out of all self-will and haste.

—WILLIAM EDMUNDSON

A POSTSCRIPT TO AN EPISTLE FROM LEINSTER PROVINCE MEETING.

When the Lord first called and gathered us to be a people, and opened the eyes of our understandings, we saw the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and the wickedness that was in the world; and a perfect abhorrence was fixed in our hearts against all the wicked, unjust, vain, ungodly, unlawful part of the world in all respects. We saw that the goodly and most lawful things of the world were abused and misused; and that many snares and temptations lay in them, with troubles and dangers of several kinds, which we felt the load of, and that we could not carry them, and run the race the Lord had set before us, so cheerfully as to win the prize of our salvation. Therefore our care was to cast off this great load and burden, namely, great and gainful ways of getting riches, and to lessen our concerns therein, that we might be ready to answer Christ Jesus our Captain, who had called us to follow him in a spiritual warfare, under the discipline of his daily cross and self-denial. Then the things of this world were of small value with us, so that we might win Christ; and the goodliest things thereof were not near us, so that we might be near the Lord; for the Lord's truth out-balanced all the world, even the most glorious part of it.

Then great trading was a burden, and great concerns a great trouble; all needless things, fine houses, rich furniture and gaudy apparel, was an eye-sore. Our eye being single to the Lord, and to the inshining of

his light in our hearts, this gave us the sight of the knowledge of the glory of God, which so affected our minds, that it stained the glory of all earthly things; and they bore no mastery with us, either in dwelling, eating, drinking, buying, selling, marrying, or giving in marriage.

The Lord was the object of our eye, and we were all humble and low before him, self being of small repute. Ministers and elders in all such cases, walked as good examples, that the flock might follow their footsteps, as they followed Christ, in the daily cross and self-denial, in their dwellings, callings, eating, drinking, buying, selling, marrying and giving in marriage. And this answered the Lord and his witness in all consciences, and gave us great credit among men.

But as our number increased, it happened that such a spirit came in among us, as was among the Jews, when they came up out of Egypt. This began to look back into the world, and traded with the credit which was not of its own purchasing, striving to be great in the riches and possessions of this world. Then great fair buildings, in city and country, fine and fashionable furniture, and apparel suitable, dainty and voluptuous provision, rich matches in marriage, and excessive, customary, uncomely smoking of tobacco came into practice, under colour of being lawful and serviceable, far wide from the footsteps of the ministers and elders whom the Lord raised up, and sent forth into his work and service at the beginning; and contrary to the example that our Lord and Master Christ Jesus left us, when he was tempted in the wilderness with the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them, which he despised.

And of Moses, who refused the crown of Egypt, and to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; rather choosing affliction with the Lord's people—having a regard to the recompense of reward. And the holy apostle writes to the church of Christ, both fathers, young men and children, advising against the love of the world, and the fashions thereof, which are working as the old leaven at this very time, to corrupt the heritage of God, and to fill it with briars, thorns, thistles, tares and wild grapes, to make the Lord reject it and lay it waste. But the Lord of all our mercies, whose eye has been over us for good, since he gathered us to be a people, and entered into covenant with us; according to his ancient promise, is lifting up his spirit, as a standard against the invasion of this enemy, and raising up his living word and testimony in the hearts of many, to stand in and fence up the gap, which this floating, high, worldly, libertine spirit has made, that leads from the footsteps of those that follow Christ, and know him to limit them with his bounds, and dare not in their own will and time, lay hold on presentations and opportunities to get riches, which many have had, and refused for truth's sake, and the Lord has accepted thereof as an offering, and rewarded them with great comfort, to the praise of his great name.

—WILLIAM EDMUNDSON

AN EPISTLE TO FRIENDS IN BARBADOS.

My dear Friends,

You are in my memory in the ancient love of God, in which I visited you, and laboured in your island, and those parts of the world, to gather into the blessed unchangeable truth, and to settle and confirm you in it, according to the ability and gift of God given to me, and ministered to you in the demonstration of the spirit and power of Christ. In this, the mysteries of faith and the discipline of the Gospel were unfolded to you, for your settlement under Christ's government in the new covenant, and to know the bounds and liberty of it, that you might walk in it in all things, to the praise and honour of God, who called and gathered you to be a people; and not turn to the elements of the world, nor be entangled, neither carried away after the lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh, or pride of life; but walk in the liberty of the new covenant, as lights in the world. God has set limits for his people in his new covenant, as he set bounds for the Jews in the old covenant, which they were to observe and do, yet did not; but took liberty beyond the bounds of that covenant, and were cut off, though they were the natural branches.

And now all inward Jews, who are circumcised with the spirit of Christ, are to know the liberty of the Gospel of Christ, and the bounds of the new covenant, and observe them in all things, that their doings may be to the praise and honour of God; whether in eating, drinking, buying, selling, marrying or giving in marriage. They are not to take liberty to themselves in their unsubjected wills, to satisfy their carnal minds, in vanities and pleasures; and so break God's new covenant, as the natural Jews did the old covenant. Such fruitless branches will wither, and be cut off from God's people, and be ranked with Adam in the fall, who broke God's covenant, by going beyond the bounds that God set him, and was driven out of the garden of God. So all that go into fleshly liberty, out of the cross of Christ and self-denial, go into the earth, and into the pleasures and delights of it, and are dead while they live.

Walk in the blessed and comely order, established in the church of Christ by his spirit and power, in his heavenly counsel and divine wisdom, that all may be preserved from the evils and vanities that are in the world, and grow up together in the faith of Jesus, and grace of God, from one degree of strength and knowledge of Christ Jesus to another; that through the exercise of your senses, in the law of the spirit of life in Christ, you may be skillful in the word of righteousness, to act for God in the unity of his holy Spirit, and fellowship of his light, as co-workers together in his vineyard. Thus all things may be kept clean and sweet, and every weed and seed that God has not sown, may be plucked up and rooted out of his garden, which is to bring forth good and pleasant fruit to his honour, that he may take pleasure to walk, and dwell in you, to sup and make his abode with you, and in you, to your comfort. And if it should be my lot in my old age to see you again, I might be comforted in your faithfulness and growth in the blessed truth, and a godly concern fixed in your minds, for the promotion of the government of it, both in doctrine and discipline.

In this nation we are very peaceable, and truth prospers; Friends are in good esteem, and a godly concern comes upon many, to be devoted with their whole abilities to serve the Lord, who gives them wisdom and understanding in the management of truth's affairs, for the good of all. And the Lord blesses their endeavours; so that in his spirit and power, which is strong and mighty with us, the authority of truth

in church government is over all gainsayers; and the close order of the Gospel is over all loose libertine spirits and earthly worldlings; and truth prevails to the great satisfaction of all the sincerely concerned, and to the praise and honour of God. Amen.

The parliament is now sitting in Dublin, where I, with several Friends attend, and they are very loving and kind to us—ready to do us good, and to ease us in what they reasonably can, and have a regard to us in acts that pass. The Lord is to be admired in the care he takes of his people who trust in him, and cast their care upon him, and seek his honour before all private interest; such the Lord is honouring; everlasting praises to his name.

My sincere love, in the unchangeable truth, is to you all, and my prayers to God for you.

—WILLIAM EDMUNDSON

CONCERNING MEN'S AND WOMEN'S MEETINGS.

Dear Friends, Brethren and Sisters;

Let us seriously consider the great and weighty service of our men's and women's meetings, to order and manage matters relating to Gospel order in the church of Christ, to the honour of God and his blessed unchangeable truth, made manifest to us, that we may be preserved faithful therein, and our lights may shine in the comely order thereof, by the good fruits brought forth among us, the Lord's peculiar people in this generation, as good examples to others, and as lights in the world. Men's and women's meetings had need to have a special godly care, to see that all their members keep within the bounds of truth in the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment, as the children and household of Abraham, that the promise of God's blessings to Abraham and his seed may rest upon us.

My Friends, it is no small charge, that the Lord commits to the care of the aforesaid meetings, the care of his flocks, the preservation of the testimony of truth, and the honour of his great and worthy name: so that it is of absolute necessity for all the members, both male and female, to know their election, and in what it stands, and in what authority they sit in those meetings; for the service thereof must be performed in the wisdom and counsel of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the authority of his blessed spirit and power. For the things of God knows no man; but the spirit of God, in which the election stands, and this is that which fits for the Lord's service in his church, as he has appointed everyone to his service and office. We know that our men's and women's meetings for the Lord's service in his church, were ordained of God, and settled among us in the authority and by the assistance of his blessed spirit and power, and committed to the trust and care of faithful men and faithful women, to keep them up in the spirit and power of God, in which they were set up: testimonies whereof may be seen in many comfortable epistles written to men's and women's meetings, for all the members to keep their possession in the spirit and power of the Lord Jesus Christ.

This is, and was the Lord's way in the settling of his church and people under his government. For when the Lord's ancient people came out of Egypt by a high hand, the Lord gave them laws and statutes to keep and do, and appointed elders, as judges and overseers, to see that they kept the Lord's way, which he prescribed, and to do justice and judgment, as Abraham commanded his household after him. And those elders and overseers were of God's appointing, and known by the people to be men qualified for the service; such unto whom the Lord gave of his good spirit, which opened their understandings to make a true inspection into matters that came before them, to do justice and judgment, according to the law of God. And when such elders or overseers ruled, as were thus rightly elected, and walked by the rule of the Lord's good spirit, they were a blessing to the people, and the Lord was with them: but when others came to sit in the assemblies, as elders, overseers and judges, not appointed of the Lord, neither guided by his spirit, what calamity then came upon Abraham's household.

Likewise in the primitive times, when many in various places, both of Jews and Gentiles, were gathered to the faith in Christ Jesus, and churches or meetings were established; then faithful men who were qualified for that service, were appointed as elders or overseers by the approbation of the holy Ghost, to take the oversight of the flock of Christ, to see that all who professed faith in Christ, should walk in his doctrine, as it was first delivered by Christ and his holy apostles; and to see that the testimony of Jesus was kept in all its branches, that the comely order of the Gospel might be shown forth in them to unbelievers, as lights in the world; that if any could not be won by the word and doctrine, the witness of God in them might be reached by the just and good examples of the churches of Christ.

And those qualified elders and pastors, whom the holy Ghost made overseers in the churches, were to feed them in due season, not of constraint, but of a willing mind; neither for selfish gain, but for truth's sake; neither as lords over God's heritage, but examples to the flock, and to do justice and judgment without partiality; being faithful men, sanctified with truth, seasoned with the grace of God, and gifted with a good understanding in church affairs, relating to Gospel discipline; having their senses well exercised in the law of God, to know what was for truth, and what was against truth; and accordingly to permit nothing to be ushered into the church of Christ that was against truth; but as doorkeepers in the Lord's house, to stand in and for truth's testimony against everything that would lessen the credit thereof.

But when the faith of Jesus was departed from, and self-interest got into the churches, then this godly care and holy discipline went to decay, and earthly wisdom, carnal reasoning, worldly policy, riches, greatness and literal learning swayed the counsels in church affairs. And now the Lord is raising up those ruins, and putting his church in its ancient order, settling those meetings of faithful members, to be kept up in the authority of his spirit and power, wherein neither riches nor policy must rule; but in all such meetings about the Lord's business, the Lord must be chairman, ruler and judge, whose good spirit of heavenly wisdom and divine counsel must rule in the hearts of his people, who sit with him in that weighty service of church government; for it is in the gift of the Lord's good spirit, that the ability stands to perform that service as well as doctrine. If any undertake it otherwise, they miss their way, mar the work, and instead

of being helpmeets in government, do many times cause trouble in the church.

This from Your ancient friend and brother,

—WILLIAM EDMUNDSON

Testimonies Concerning William Edmundson.

A Testimony of the Provincial Quarterly Meeting for Ulster, held in Lurgan the 5th of the Seventh month, 1713, concerning our ancient and worthy Friend, William Edmundson, deceased.

There seems to be a duty on us to cast in a mite into the treasury, by way of testimony and commemoration of the many laborious and eminent services of this our dear Friend William Edmundson among us, for the honour of the great Lord of the harvest, in which he was a faithful and valiant labourer, and an instrument in the Lord's hand to the convincing and gathering many to the Lord, both by doctrine and discipline, in which he was unwearied, undaunted, and often eminently attended with power from on high, which gave life and authority, impressing his testimony upon the minds of Friends; and many have often been affected and comforted therewith.

His services and visits in our northern parts, during the continuation of ability of body, were frequent and also edifying. His chief concern and labour was, that Friends might keep faithful to the testimony of truth which they had received and walk in the same; and a great care and concern was often upon him, exhorting Friends to beware, and have a care of the great concerns of the world making too much impression upon their minds, which should be after the Lord.

He often reminded Friends of the apostle John's advice, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world;" and also was very often concerned to mention most of the sixth chapter of the first to Timothy, for confirmation of the doctrine he had to deliver, which was agreeable to the holy sayings and practices of our blessed Saviour and his apostles, and faithful followers, who have laid down their heads in peace with him. As it is the incumbent duty of all mankind to glorify God, being the end of their creation; so it is apparent, that the accomplishment thereof consists in chiefly minding things pertaining to the kingdom of Christ, which was the chief end and aim of this our dear Friend through many countries, as well in America as Europe. We have reason to believe that he had great love to us in this province, being the first part in this nation in which he laboured after his convincement, and was instrumental in settling several meetings; and the first meeting of Friends in this nation, some of us heard him say, was in Lurgan.

For a more particular account of his services we refer to his journal; for which reason we think it not expedient to mention the particulars of his worthy labours in this place, but shall speak something further of his qualifications. He was a man gifted for doctrine, and above many for discipline; a reprove of evil-doers, and an encourager of those who did well, yet with great care, so that none might be lifted up thereby. He was gifted with a spirit of discerning, and readily saw the danger some were in by falling from truth; and being sound in the faith, valiant to contend for it, and quick in apprehending those things that appeared to the breach of unity and fellowship in the churches, he timely laboured to prevent separation and controversies, and so was an instrument of keeping the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace, in points of faith and principle, as the same are testified to in the holy Scriptures. He was a confirmer of the doubtful, and a sympathizer with the mournful—endued with Christian as well as human courage, like a prince in Israel, so that he feared not to encounter with those who seemed mighty, especially when the testimony of truth was violated by them. And notwithstanding his great courage as a man, yet when it fell to his lot to suffer by imprisonment or otherwise for his Christian testimony, he was clothed with a lamb-like and meek spirit. He was an eminent apostle and able minister of the Gospel of life and salvation, having an extraordinary gift in opening and applying the typical part of the law to the substance in the Gospel; a faithful elder, whose lamp shined brightly, and therefore was by us esteemed to be worthy of double honour; and although those who loved undue liberty, might account him as a burdensome stone, yet he passed through many exercises on their account, which the Lord grant they may lay to heart before the day of their visitation be over.

Much more might be said on his behalf, on account of his faithfulness, watchfulness, labours, diligence and care in the service of God and churches of Christ; but shall conclude, firmly believing that the Lord has taken him to himself in a good old age, like a shock of corn in its season, whose memory is sweet to those who yet survive; and we pray, that it may please the Almighty, to raise up others to supply his place and service in the churches of Christ.

Signed by order, in behalf of the said meeting, by

—ROBERT HOOPE, ALEXANDER SEATON.

The Testimony of Friends of Leinster province, concerning William Edmundson.

We being under a deep sense of the wonderful lovingkindness of God to mankind in every age and generation, but especially in that he has been pleased in this latter age of the world, after a long, tedious and dark night of apostasy, to cause the light of his Son Christ Jesus, so clearly and eminently to shine forth, expelling the thick cloud of darkness that had long been over the understandings of people, and causing his everlasting Gospel to be preached again in the purity thereof; and the true faith, once delivered to the saints, to be again professed and enjoyed; as partakers of such mercies and privileges, we are under deep obligations to walk humbly and reverently before the Lord, and to return unto him praise, glory and

honour, who with his dear Son, our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, is worthy thereof forever.

Among the many faithful labourers in the vineyard of the Lord, our dear and ancient Friend, William Edmundson, deceased, deserves to be remembered, especially by us of this province, where for many years the place of his residence has been; concerning whose faithfulness and eminent services for God and his people, and endeavours for the propagation of the blessed truth, a testimony lives in our hearts, and much might be spoken, but it is not our intention to attribute anything to the creature, that belongs to the great Creator, God blessed forever. Amen.

This our ancient Friend was by the Lord endued with a large and good understanding, so that in his testimony he was many times wonderfully opened into the divine mysteries of God's heavenly kingdom, and would speak excellently of Zion, the beauty and glory thereof; as also of the mysterious workings of Satan. He was early convinced of God's blessed truth, when deep trials and exercises attended on each hand; but coming into deep humility, and relying upon the arm of the Lord alone for help and deliverance, he was thereby preserved and kept pure and steadfast in his love to him, through all those difficulties and hardships that attended; so that in the hand of the Lord, he was made instrumental to convince many of the way of life and salvation, and bring them into obedience to the precepts of Christ Jesus. So that by his, with the labours of other faithful servants, whom the Lord commissioned and sent into this island, in the work of the ministry, meetings were settled, and many joined with Friends, being weary of the dead, lifeless profession and outward performances they had been under, wherein they had found no spiritual comfort or refreshment to their souls.

After meetings were settled in many places, and the Lord had been pleased to gift and qualify several in this nation to preach the Gospel, who were concerned for the promotion of truth and righteousness in the earth, and that the great work of reformation, which the Lord had begun, might be carried on and prosper, more than for any worldly concern whatever, it pleased the Lord to send forth this our ancient Friend into the nation of England, as also into the islands and English plantations in America, several times, where he faithfully laboured and had eminent service, many being convinced of the blessed truth by him, and others confirmed therein. His concern and labour was fervent, that all those to whom the Lord had been graciously pleased to stretch forth a hand of love, and convince of his blessed truth, might walk in faithful obedience thereunto, adorning the same by a humble, blameless and self-denying conduct.

The great Lord of the harvest, who had called him to labour in his service, to whom he gave up in obedience, and was devoted to serve, gave him a clear sight of the necessity of a diligent care among Friends, that such as professed the blessed truth, and walked disorderly and loose in their conduct, should be seasonably dealt with, and the evil and danger thereof plainly laid before them, and they in the love of God admonished to amendment of life. But if such advice and admonition were slighted and rejected, and those things persisted in that brought scandal and reproach upon the blessed truth, then for the clearing of truth and its faithful followers, to testify against those obstinate offenders and their

actions, as such whom we had not unity with; as also, that a due Christian care might be taken to relieve the necessities of the poor. And that all Friends concerned in that holy ordinance of marriage, should seek to know, and duly regard the mind and will of God therein, more than worldly riches or earthly ends; often zealously exhorting Friends thereto, as well as to proceed orderly with respect to parents and guardians, and to observe justice and equity on all accounts.

When it pleased the Lord to concern his faithful servant, George Fox, to set up men's and women's meetings, to take care of those things, our dear friend William Edmundson rejoiced thereat, and gladly closed therewith: so that Monthly and Provincial, as also National Half-Yearly Meetings were appointed in this nation, and have been kept up to this day, which have been of good service for the ends before mentioned, many having reaped great benefit and advantage thereby, and have cause to bless the Lord for the same.

Our said Friend was a diligent attender of such meetings, as well as those more particularly appointed for performing Divine worship to Almighty God, and was greatly concerned, that none might be admitted members thereof, but such as were of clean and orderly conduct, walking as examples to the flock, having a concern upon their minds for the promotion of truth and righteousness in the earth. He many times had good service in such meetings, by being clearly opened, in the word of life, to declare the qualifications necessary to fit members for such meetings and services. Beginning at those whom the Lord put his spirit upon to assist Moses, who were men fearing God and hating covetousness; he would go through the law and prophets, the holy doctrines delivered by Christ, when in the blessed and prepared body, as also the discipline and order in the primitive church, before the apostasy entered, and the glorious promises how it should be in the latter days in the church, coming up out of the wilderness; which we are now in measure witnesses of. O! the great dread and fear we ought to be under, and concern to walk worthy of so great favours and mercies.

As the Lord was pleased to gift him for the ministry, so that he could speak a word in season to the states and conditions of people, he was also graciously pleased to pour forth the spirit of prayer and supplication upon him in an eminent manner; so that his appearance, when in the performance of that part of Divine worship, was in such dread and awfulness upon his spirit, that it had a great reach and impression upon the spirits of Friends, causing many times great tenderness to come over the meeting—the hearts of the sensible being greatly comforted and refreshed, were inwardly filled with joy and divine praises to the Most High, from whom all our mercies, both spiritual and temporal, do proceed.

He was greatly concerned for peace and unity in the church, and that those things which tended to break the same might be kept out. Much might be said concerning him and his faithfulness to God and concern for truth, and the promotion thereof; as also for the good and benefit of God's people, but shall refer to his own journal, and other testimonies that may be given concerning him. So shall conclude with fervent prayer to the Lord, that he will be pleased to raise up, gift and qualify many more, for carrying

on the glorious work of reformation, that he has begun, to the praise of his own great name, who is worthy forever.

Given forth at our Province men's meeting for Leinster, held at Catherlough, the 18th of the Second month, 1713.

Signed by order, in behalf of the said meeting, by

—JOHN PIM, NICHOLAS GRIBBELL.

The Testimony of Munster province Meeting, concerning William Edmundson.

Our dear Friend and elder brother in the Lord, William Edmundson, who is removed from us, and has finished his course in a good old age, and no doubt, is entered into his mansion of rest and peace with the Lord forever, out of the reach of the wicked, and the troubles which attend this outward life, as well as the assaults of the enemy of all our happiness; while in it, was one of the Lamb's warriors and true followers, and approved himself so, as well as a good pattern and example to those he left behind him.

Concerning his convincement and receiving the blessed truth, as also his coming forth in a public testimony, and his great sufferings by imprisonment, with other hard and cruel usages, we leave the particulars to his own journal and our brethren, the elders of the province Meetings of Ulster and Leinster; in which provinces he had been a dweller ever since his settling in Ireland, being above fifty years; knowing that the Friends of those parts are the most capable of being particular therein. Notwithstanding which, we think it no less our concern to give the following short testimony with our brethren concerning him:

That from the first knowledge of him in this province, which some yet remember, and which was pretty early after truth was preached by the people called Quakers in this nation, he came into Munster with a public testimony, visiting Friends; wherein also he appeared fervently zealous for truth and the promotion of it. Having obtained mercy to be faithful, the Lord rewarded his faithfulness, by increasing his gift in a large measure, whereby he received power, and became fitted to be an able minister of the Gospel, and an instrument in the hand of the Lord for turning many to righteousness. Many and often were his visits in the Lord's work, not only through this province and nation of Ireland, but also in England; besides his great labours and hard travels beyond seas, in several voyages to the American churches, in which he had very great service for the Lord, not only in the work of the ministry, but also by encountering truth's adversaries, priests and people in public assemblies, and other times concerned against bad, loose and libertine people in various places, who made a profession of truth, but not dwelling under the cross and yoke of Christ, were as the unsavoury salt to the people of the world, and a grief and burden to faithful Friends. In these services the Lord's power eminently attended him, making him

as a wall of brass, to the confuting of truth's adversaries, as well as a help in time of need, for restoring and helping others. Indeed, the Lord had qualified him in both respects, and had endued him with a very large understanding in the things appertaining to his kingdom.

He was sound in doctrine and in judgment; plain in preaching, and free from affectation. In apparel and gesture, grave; in his deportment, manly; of few words till a just occasion offered, and very exemplary in life and conduct. Much might be truly said of this man of God, which we omit for brevity's sake, and because we believe others will be more large; but in a word, may say, he was freely given up and devoted to the service of the Lord, and great was his care and concern for the whole flock of God in general, that they might grow in his truth; and in particular he was made a blessing in the hand of the Lord to this nation: a man of a thousand for promoting virtue in the many branches thereof, as well as a sharp instrument for threshing and cutting down that which was evil and hurtful in the churches.

The last visit he made into this province, was in the year 1711, being then in much weakness of body, yet fervent in spirit, and his ministry as lively and acceptable as ever; and so took his leave of Friends in Munster in more than ordinary tenderness and brokenness of spirit; after which, he visited us no more, but grew weaker and more feeble till his dissolution, which was in the year 1712.

May the great Lord of the harvest raise up more such labourers in his vineyard, is the desire of our souls.

Signed by order, in behalf of the said meeting, by

—THOMAS WIGHT. JOSEPH PIKE.

Waterford, the 2nd of the Ninth month, 1713.

The Testimony of Friends of Mountmellick Monthly Meeting; concerning our dear and ancient friend William Edmundson, whom the Lord has been pleased to remove from us by death; and though it be our loss, we believe it is his great gain.

He was early called forth to labour in the Lord's vineyard, and was made instrumental in the Lord's hand for the good of many, and had a great share in bearing the burden in the heat of the day, which he cheerfully underwent, and was endued with valour and courage fitted for the work it pleased God to call him to. In the times of the sufferings of Friends in this nation, he had a deep share both in body and goods; and when he was at liberty, he was very serviceable to Friends, in laying their sufferings before the rulers, for he was enabled to stand before them, and had good success, the Lord helping him in his service and labour of love, and Friends' liberty was obtained, which was gladness of heart to him, and comfort to them.

He dearly loved truth and the prosperity thereof before anything in this world. For this was his usual

practice, when the Lord had laid any service before him to do, he readily answered, preferring it before his own outward affairs; and in the will of God, he undertook long and perilous travels several times into America, as may appear by his journal, spending himself and his substance for the Gospel's sake and the good of souls. And for the promotion of truth, he gladly joined with that eminent servant of the Lord, George Fox, and others in this nation, about settling men's and women's meetings, and when settled he laboured in them, and managed with all his understanding. He was also concerned in settling other particular meetings for performing worship to Almighty God; and where Friends thought themselves too weak to keep meetings, he often would go and visit them, and if there was anything that appeared dubious, he was very helpful by way of advice, as the matter required. He was ready and willing to serve the Lord, his truth and people, both at home and abroad, with that ability and substance that God had given him. For notwithstanding the charge he was at by his frequent travels, yet he was very exemplary and open in collections for the poor, and contributing towards building of meetinghouses, and was very open and free in his own house, entertaining many Friends.

Although he was sharp in his testimony against the transgressing nature, yet when he was sensible that any were dejected, or cast down in a deep sense of their own unworthiness, he was very tender towards such, and willing to reach forth a hand to help them, both by comfortable advice and fervent prayers to Almighty God for their strength. The care of the churches was much upon him; he was also deeply sensible of the common calamity that was coming upon this nation, which he prophetically spoke of in his testimony through most parts thereof, several years before it came to pass, with a word of encouragement to Friends, that if they were of that number that sighed and mourned for the abominations that were committed by the inhabitants of the land, the Lord would set a mark upon such, and would spare them. For that the Lord had determined to dung the earth with the carcasses of men; and many yet living are witnesses of the fulfilling thereof in some measure. And as it drew nearer, O! how earnestly was he concerned, calling to Friends for something that might be as an offering to God, both for the nation and the preservation of his people; and did join with Friends in pouring forth prayers with tears to God on this account, which we believe the Lord graciously heard and answered in preserving their lives.

He was very helpful and strengthening to Friends in those times of great calamity; he was also concerned in addressing the government and chiefest men in authority on behalf of Friends and the English inhabitants, and they commonly would hear him, and often granted relief. He was careful in advising Friends, that they should not touch any goods where property was dubious, in those times; and when the war was over, and Friends began to settle in the country, his care was, that Friends might settle near together, and also that they might keep within the bounds of truth and moderation, in all their trading and dealing. He laboured, that Friends might be preserved out of the vain fashions and customs of the world, and was for many years under a deep exercise, that they might not take an undue liberty in exceeding Christ's precept of yes and no, instead of an oath. And a weighty concern came upon his spirit, that all that were concerned in the ordinance of marriage, might seek the Lord in their undertakings, that worldly ends might not be the object.

He was valiant in his day for the truth, having a word in due season, which was precious to many; often concerned in exhorting Friends to do their day's work in their day. He was a man whose heart was inditing good matter, and as a good householder, brought forth things new and old; often advising Friends when they offered anything in meetings, whether in doctrine or discipline, that they should wait to feel and offer in a living sense. He had many large openings into the mysteries of Christ's kingdom, often concluding meetings in prayer to the comfort of many.

He lived to old age, and continued livingly zealous for truth; and though well known in many parts, yet for the good order's sake established among Friends, even in old age, he requested a certificate of the Monthly Meeting to which he belonged, to signify Friends' unity with him when he travelled abroad, to England or other places, in the work of the Gospel, from time to time. We might say much more as to his service for truth among Friends, and of our loss of him on that account; and though he be taken away from us, his memory lives and remains with us.

Signed by order, in behalf of the said meeting, by

—TOBIAS PLEDWELL, JOHN BARCROFT.

Mountmellick, the 1st of the First month, 1713.

The Testimony of George Rooke, concerning William Edmundson.

A testimony lives in my heart to give to the memory of my true and worthy friend, William Edmundson. He was a man with whom I have had some acquaintance above thirty years, but we were more intimately and nearly acquainted about fifteen years last past, it having been my lot to be often with him in the service of the Gospel, both in England and Ireland; sometimes among Friends, and sometimes in places where none were who bore the name of Quakers. In all places where we travelled, his service for God was great to the stopping of the mouths of gainsayers, and convincing many of the way of truth, directing and turning people's minds from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God; so that many became the seals of his ministry, which he delivered in great plainness; not in words which man's wisdom teaches, but in demonstration of the spirit and of power. In his travels he was very careful not to make the Gospel chargeable; and had a great zeal against the hireling teachers, who sought for their gain from their quarter, and looked after the fleece more than the flock: and for his testimony against such, he often went through great sufferings both in body and goods, as the book of Sufferings and his following journal show.

Of his travels in America I shall not say much, leaving it to them that were more acquainted with his service there, and his own account thereof in the ensuing pages; though I have heard him say, that he went through great exercises among them, both in body and spirit—there arising many vain and unruly talkers among them, who gave great trouble to the churches, and it fell to his lot often to deal with such.

He was a man fitted for such service beyond any other that ever I was acquainted with; and great was his care to have such made manifest, and a stop put to them, that they might proceed no further, wherever he met with them; but especially that such might be kept out of men's meetings: for he was careful that the authority of truth in men's and women's meetings might be kept up, where the Lord's business was managed, that the members thereof might be faithful men and faithful women, fearing God and hating covetousness, that so true judgment and justice might be maintained in all these meetings, without respect of persons; and judgment placed on all unruly and disorderly persons, that God's house might be kept clean, which holiness becomes forever.

He was not one who sought after popularity, but was rather shy, not intimate with any of whom he had not a trial and true knowledge, nor willing to lay hands suddenly on any; but of those he had found faithful, he was a great encourager in the Lord's service. I have often heard him say, it was great satisfaction to him, to see Friends come up in the service the Lord had fitted them for; and great was his concern to stir up those the Lord had gifted to answer their respective services, by doing their day's work in their day, while ability of body and understanding was continued. He was an excellent pattern to us all, in that he spared not himself while his abilities were continued to him, but even to old age did perform service and travels beyond the ordinary course of nature, in which he would often say, the Lord was his song and his strength, who had carried him through many and various exercises and perils of various sorts. The greatest trials he met with, were from false brethren, who opposed the good order of truth, which the Lord has established among us, whose oppositions, both private and more public, he like a rock, immovably withstood, and as a fixed star in the firmament of God's power did remain, holding his integrity to the last.

He was one that truly sympathized with his suffering brethren and sisters, not sparing himself to obtain their relief and enlargement, when closely confined in prison for their testimony against the hireling teachers, and the great oppression of tithes, by applying himself to the persons concerned, and sometimes to the chief governors. He was a man of an undaunted spirit, grave, meek, free from affectation in speech and carriage, and therefore fit to stand before princes; and in such services he was often very successful, the Lord opening a way and prospering his endeavours.

The gain of all he was ready to consecrate to the Lord, and not to any abilities of his own, whether natural or acquired, having a large share of the former, though he had not much of the latter; being a man of no great learning as to the outward, yet had the tongue of the learned, so as to speak a word in season to the conditions and capacities of most; for he was sound and profound in the mysteries of life and salvation.

This eminent elder and overseer in the house of God, was one of, if not the first instrument in the hand of God, in this generation, to publish his everlasting truth through this benighted island, and direct the inhabitants thereof to the in-shining light of Jesus Christ, the glorious Sun of righteousness. In the discharge of his service in the ministry, he persevered with such constancy, faith and fidelity, that it pleased

his great Lord to bestow on him, as an additional favour, a large understanding in the right ground of government and discipline in the church, in which he earnestly laboured for universal love, unity and good order, through all the churches of Christ, preferring the honour of God before all things else. Many times things would open in him to admiration, showing to rich men and the eager getters of this world, the danger they were in of hurting themselves, by hindering their growth in the truth. No, I cannot set forth the service he had among us; but this I am sure of, the churches of this nation will have a great loss of him; for indeed the care of the churches was daily upon him, and too few there are to stand in the gap against iniquity, or who will expose themselves as he did, in dealing plainly with everyone, not letting sin pass unreprieved, nor faults untold, sharply reprovng obstinate offenders, but mildly admonishing the sensible and penitent. A man of truth indeed, who sometimes did tell us, he was glad when he looked back and considered how he had spent his time, since the day it pleased the Lord to lay his hand upon him, and call him into the ministry; and by a careful search, could not find that he was behind with his day's work.

When he was taken sick he sent for me, before my return from the Yearly Meeting at London; and the next day after I came home I went to see him, and found him very weak but very sensible, and he freely imparted his mind to me in several things, and particularly about the regulation of men's and women's meetings, "of which regulation," said he, "there is absolute need," and he believed some would come to see the necessity thereof more than they yet had.

I stayed with him about four or five days, in which time I observed nothing proceed out of his mouth, save what showed his concern for truth and the good order of it; and when I went to take leave of him, he said, "We have had many good meetings together, I believe we shall meet in heaven;" and this he spoke very tenderly. In a few days after he departed this life in a good old age and full of days, being aged near eighty-five years, and a minister fifty-seven years; and I doubt not, but he has obtained a reward of durable riches, a crown of righteousness, and his memorial is blessed, for he was a father in Israel in his day.

Though he was a man oppressed, afflicted and troubled in his life time, yet now he is where the voice of the oppressor is no more heard, but the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest from their labours, and their works do follow; receiving the reward of peace, and sentence of well done, faithful and good servant, enter into the joy of your Lord. May we all so labour as to be counted worthy thereof, with this our aged Friend at last, is the sincere desire and travel of.

Your friend, who wishes the welfare of all men, both here and hereafter.

—GEORGE ROOKE.