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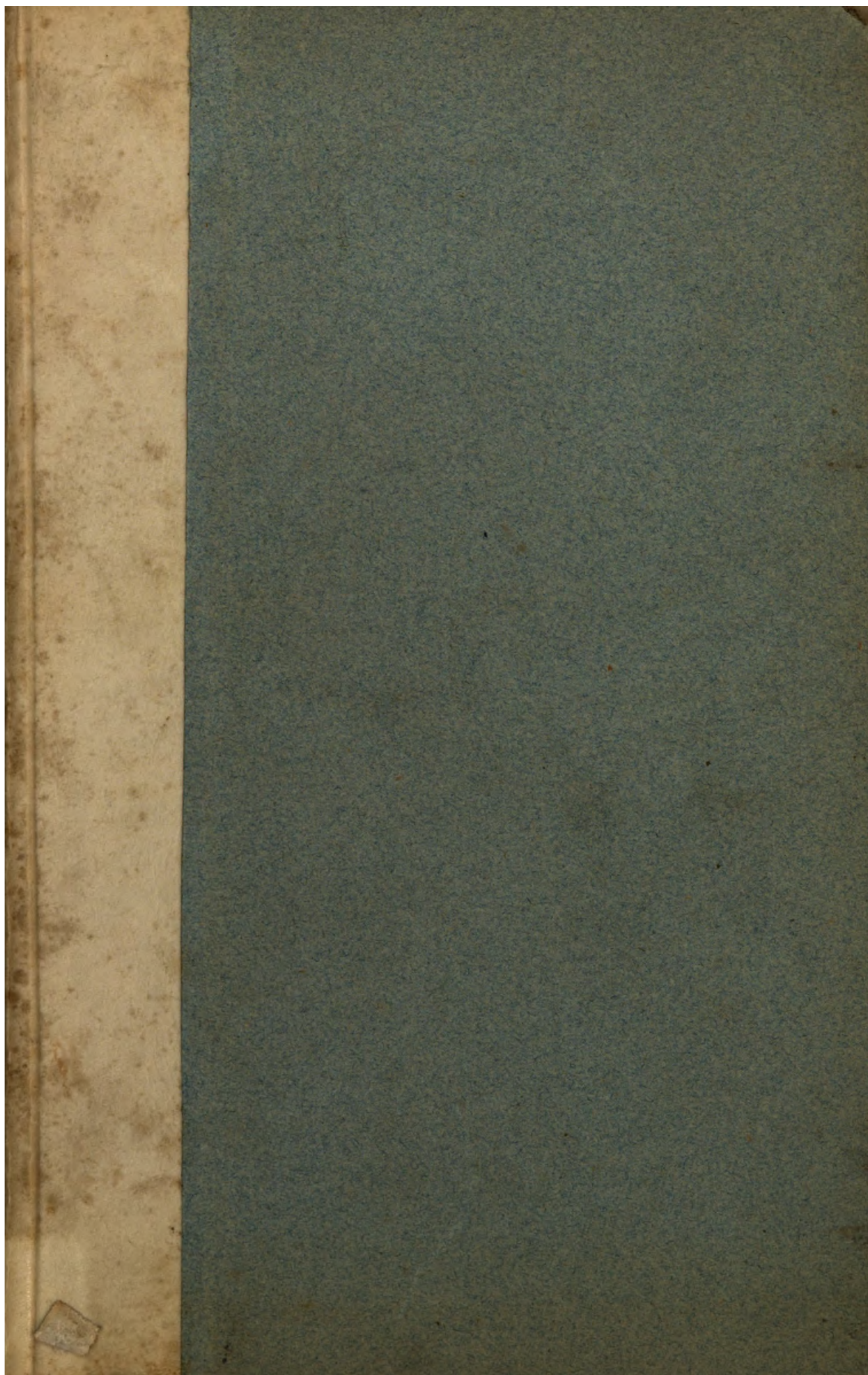
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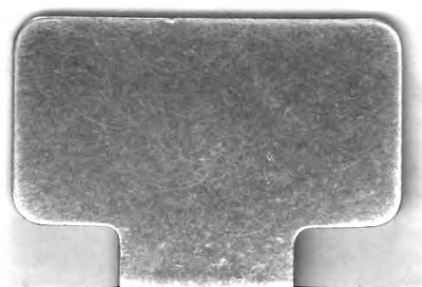
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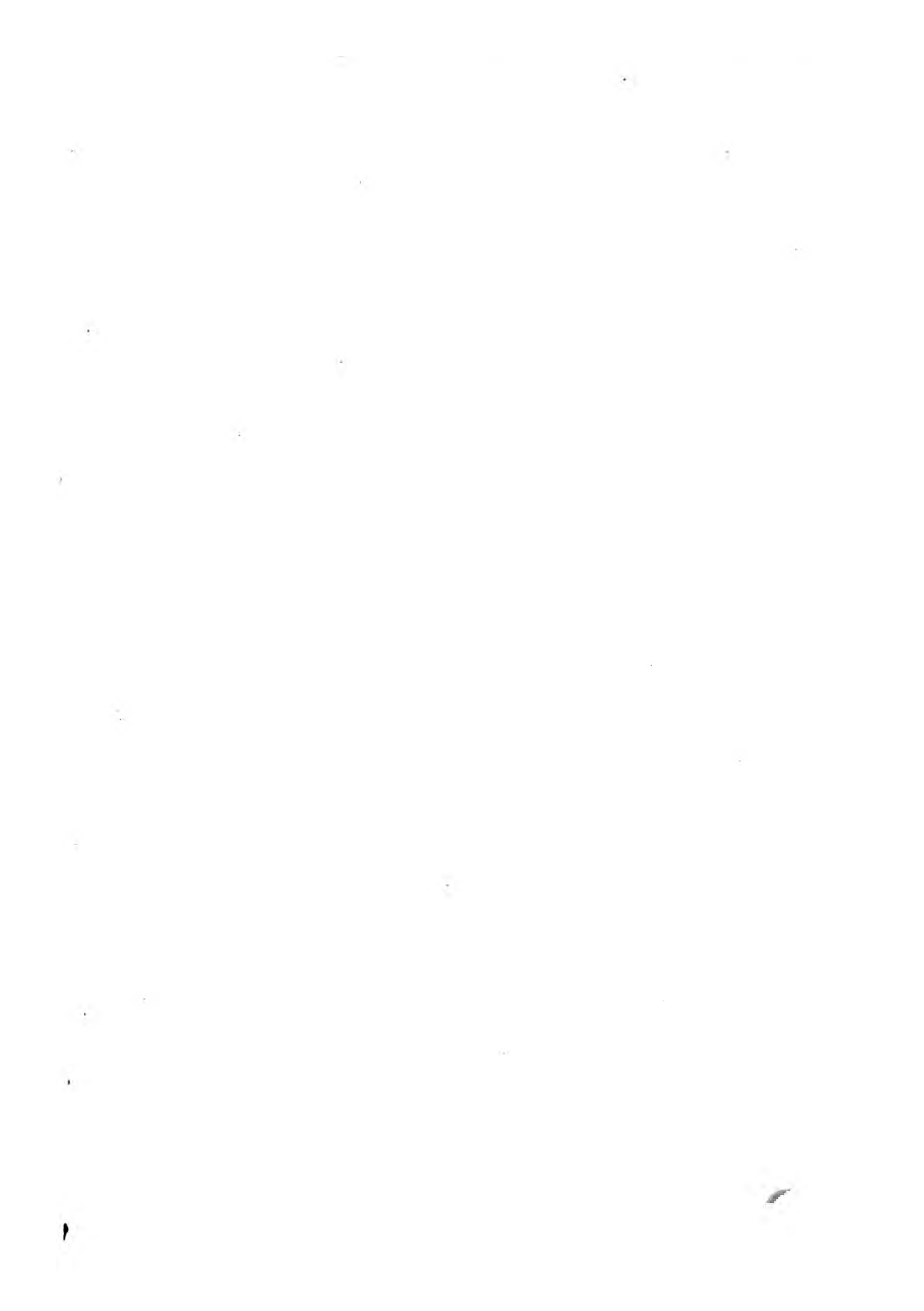
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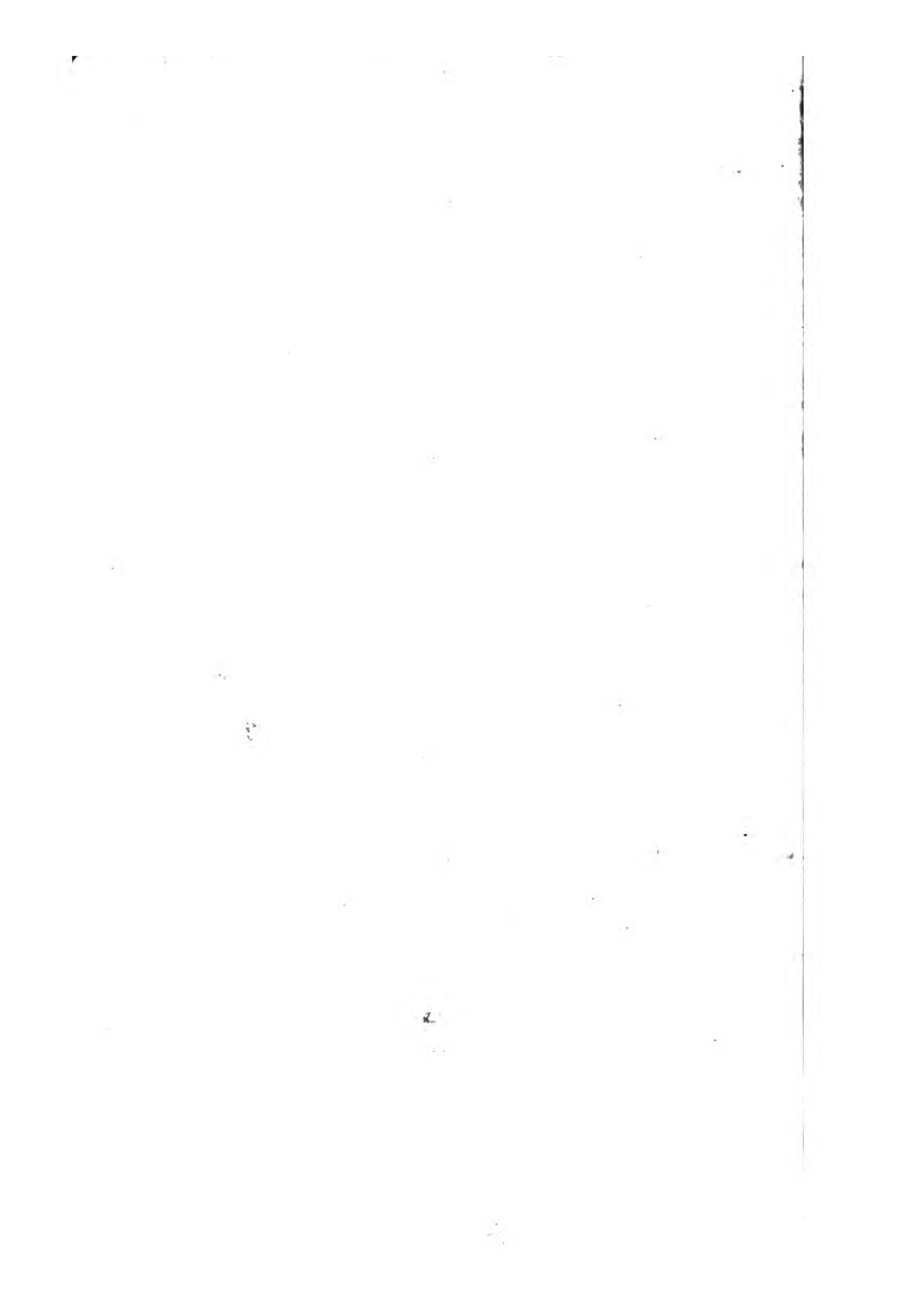


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ORIGINAL LETTERS

OF

The Rev. JAMES HERVEY, M.A.,

AUTHOR OF "THE MEDITATIONS,"

"THERON AND ASPASIO," &c.

From the Originals

in the Collection of the Rev. R. H. Knight, M.A., the
present Rector of Weston Favell.

"A letter from Mr. Hervey will not be unacceptable."

SCARBOROUGH:

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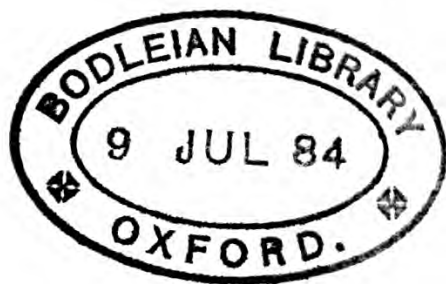
BY LONGMAN, REES, ORME, BROWN, AND GREEN, PATERNOSTER

ROW; AND BY J. TAYLOR, 162, GREAT SURREY STREET,

BLACKFRIARS, LONDON.

1829.

1125. C. 10.



PREFACE.

That the following letters bear the Herveian impress, will, I think be evident to any person who has but a superficial acquaintance with the writings of this popular author. The *Originals* are in the possession of a descendant of the writer — the Rev. Robert Hervey Knight, the present Rector of Weston Favell, who has kindly presented me with faithful transcripts.

Some surprise may be expressed on discovering that they issue from a provincial press, so far distant from the place where the writer resided; but to clear up any suspicions respecting their genuineness, which might arise from this incident, it may be stated, that the publisher is a native of that village of which Hervey was Rector. This circumstance afforded him a favourable opportunity of access to these epistolary treasures.

J. C.

Scarborough, }
April, 1829. }



LETTERS

OF THE REV. JAMES HERVEY.

On the Exercises of Juraments and Determining for the Degree of B. A.—On a Curacy near Bath, &c.

The Rev. Mr. Hervey,
at Hardingstone.

Honoured Sir,

I thank you for yours. You reprove me for my dilatory way of proceeding, very justly I own; and therefore I thank you for that also, I hope I shall from this time amend, and begin henceforward “not to be slothful in any business” which is given me to do. I was examined yesterday. I must do *Juraments* five times on Friday, and be admitted to my

degree on Monday. After which I shall easily *Determine*. Mr. H—ings tells me I must wear a Bachelor's gown. Mr. Farrer, a little while ago, asked me to resign my room to a pupil of his, who is to come the middle of this month. To which proposal I have agreed, because I can live much cheaper out of college. I shall by this means save the expense of calling up, of bed making, &c. as well as have a room at a cheaper rate, and pay for it only when I am resident. On which account I assure myself this step I have taken will be approved of by you and my Mother. I am sorry to hear of your being forced to go on with farming: I could wish you would let it, though at some disadvantage, and though we should suffer thereby some thing in our fortunes. As to the curacy by Bath I can give you no determinate answer. My friend, I believe, is a very sincere one; and I have reason to be assured, will do me what service he can. There is one person, who has had the offer of it before me; whether he will accept of it or no is not known. As soon as *I* know *you* shall know. You may depend upon it I shall not take one step in any matter of this nature without your counsel and consent. I hope you will send me a letter next week to wish me joy on being a Graduate. And in the

mean time pray earnestly for me, that my joy
may be real and full.

I am,

in haste,

Your dutiful Son,

J. HERVEY.

April 8. 1736.

Written, it is supposed, at Linc. Coll. Oxford.

*His arrival at Bideford, and account of a
melancholy accident to a Wedding Party.*

To Miss Mary Hervey,*

at the Rev. Mr. Hervey's,

Rector of Weston,

near Northampton.

Bideford, Dec. 30, 1738.

Dear Sister,

'Tis long, very long, since I saw you,
and you cannot wonder if I am desirous either
of seeing you, or hearing from you. I hope

*The youngest sister of Hervey, afterward married to the
Rev. Robert Knight, Rector of Weston Favell. "She was a
sincere Christian, and died the death of the righteous, with a
hope full of immortality through Christ, June 14. 1799, in
the 76th year of her age." In the closing scene of her life,
she made use of the same words of the Psalmist which her
good brother (as she had used to call him) had uttered before,
on the approach of death, "My flesh and my heart fail me, but
God is the strength of my heart and my portion for ever."

God has given you health, and enabled you to grow in wisdom, as well as in stature, ever since I left Northamptonshire. O! may you, may I, may all our dear relations go on growing and increasing in all goodness; then whether we meet again or not in this world, we shall doubtless have a blissful meeting and an everlasting fellowship in the kingdom of Heaven.

I am now at Bideford, a sea port town, about fourteen miles from Mr. Orchard's. Shall preach here to-morrow, and intend to stay a week or more.¹

As soon as I came into the town, (see how frail and uncertain our life is!) I received the news of a most surprising and melancholy accident. A boat, with about sixteen or seventeen passengers in it, was upset, and every soul was drowned. They were going to celebrate a wedding, and the intended bride and bridegroom were on board. Let us learn, dear sister, from this fearful dispensation of providence to be ever in expectation, and daily in a preparation, for our last great change. Let our loins be girded about with holy circumspection and watchfulness; let our light be burning with

¹ It will be observed that he had not at this period obtained the Curacy of Bideford, as we find he did not enter upon it till the year 1739.

unfeigned devotion and piety, that we may be in continual readiness to meet the everlasting bridegroom, for if he should come at an hour we look not for, and find us unmeet for his holy presence, good God! what would become of us. These poor people thought as little of a hasty summons into the other world as we do; yet such a summons was issued out for them by that absolute Lord "who killeth and maketh alive, and none asketh him, what doest thou?" O! what reason have we to place any dependance upon any thing under the sun! Yea, what great reason have we to account it all as deceitfulness and emptiness, a wretched scene of false and amusing vanity! They promised themselves the pleasure and merriment of a wedding, but behold, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, they are hurried away to the Judge of the quick and dead, there to be tried for everlasting life or everlasting death. All the good cheer provided for the marriage is left behind, and they for whom it was provided are sunk deep and rotting in a watery grave; their own flesh being now a feast for voracious fishes. Let you and I, dear sister, be taught hereby to sit loose to the enjoyments of this transitory world; not expecting our happiness from any of its fleeting goods, but from the possession of holiness and

righteousness. The one will be an eternal portion, such as can never be taken from us; the other emptier than wind, and uncertain as uncertainty itself; such as we are not sure to keep one hour, and such as in a little time we are to loose for ever and ever. You see I am obliged to put an end to my epistle, but I shall never put an end to my wishes and prayers for your early piety, and eternal happiness.

I am,

Your loving Brother,

J. HERVEY.

My duty to Father and Mother, and Sister Betty.¹ Shall be glad to hear from her or you. I hope my last letter and the bond came safe to hand.

*On becoming a Candidate for Priest's Orders
—On "The Family Instructor," &c.*

To the Rev. Mr. Hervey.

Rector of Weston,

near Northampton.

Honoured Sir,

Your last I received along time ago, too long an interval I own to let slip without paying my thanks for it. My being Candidate

¹ Afterward Mrs. Clark, of Hardington.

for Priest's Orders is put off till Christmas. I had not got my title, testimonials, and scarcely certificate, soon enough to be lodged in the Bishop's hands, twenty days before Ordination, which his Lordship insists upon being done. I am sorry to hear of the trouble you have from

* * * * *

* * Alas! what strangers are

we to meekness and gentleness, long suffering and forbearance, disinterested loving kindness, and the cordial affection of christianity. If the SON OF MAN were to come at present, I fear he would find as little of these divine virtues, as of faith, upon the earth. Delay LORD for awhile this thy coming to judgment, and come in the prevailing power of thy grace, that, we may first be made an acceptable people, prepared for thy last tremendous advent! *Amen!* What you say of — makes me more and more desirous to have as little to do with the purses of a parish as possible, I would have no dependance nor demands upon them, *Quantas enim, quam miseras lites, res pecuniaricæ non raro cient!* If I am to be a fisher of men, let it be in quiet and untroubled streams. *

* * * * *

And when all these points are settled, and provision made against the uncertainty of our

frail lives, I shall wish both my honoured parents may live long, see many good days, and at last come to their grave, full of faith, and full of holiness, as a shock of corn cometh in, in his season.

I am now in Cornwall, at a worthy friend's house,* whither I have forgotten to take your letter, so that if I omit to answer any material passages, you will know to what cause kindly to ascribe it. Mr. Orchard's house lies in a low valley, about a mile distant from the sea, and from it those immense waters cannot be seen, but this is situate upon a rising ground, just upon the edge of the ocean, whence I have a daily prospect of the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep. O that I may feel the work of his renewing grace upon my soul! and at last experience the wonders of forgiving mercy, the wonders of redeeming merit, in my pardon and salvation!

I have met with a couple of small volumes lately that please me exceedingly. I think they are written both judiciously and piously, from a deep insight into human nature, and a thorough understanding in the pure and unde-

* Probably at the Rev. Mr. Thompson's, Vicar of St. Gennys, Cornwall, whom he styles 'his inestimable brother.'

filed religion of the gospel; excellently calculated for abundant usefulness. They run in the method of plays and dramatic performances: and yield the entertainment secreted from the defilement of those admired, but corrupting pieces. 'Tis called "*The Family Instructor*," a book high in my esteem. I wish you would put it into my sisters' hands, and earnestly advise them to fix it as a settled maxim in their minds, that they read over holy books to no purpose, unless they learn to live them over.

Your dutiful Son,

J. HERVEY.

Without date or residence.

Post-mark, Lancelton.

On his Father's illness.

To Mrs. Hervey,

at the Rev. Mr. Hervey's,

Rector of Weston,

near Northampton

Honoured and dear Mother,

I had finished, and was subscribing a letter to my brother William, when yours came to hand. I was complaining of the silence of all my relations. but little did I think that it was owing, on my dear Father's part to so

unhappy a cause. I am grieved to hear of it ; and wish I could lighten his burden by sharing some of his pain : but I can only pray that the merciful God, who is infinite in his goodness, as well as terrible in his doings, would support my honoured father under this severe trial. *Amen*, blessed and gracious God, *Amen!* Thou hast sent thy rod to correct, oh! send thy staff to comfort! Let thy everlasting arms be underneath him, and the consolations of thy spirit strong upon him! Make thou all his bed in his sickness, and command the affliction to work effectually for the joint good of him and his, both of him who suffers, and of those who sympathize with him! Oh! give thy distressed servant, our dear father, give him most compassionate God, patience in the time of adversity. And in thy due time restore him to health, and “compass him about with songs of deliverance!” Hear us adorable LORD, for his sake who sweat blood for us in Gethsemane, and poured out his soul unto death for us on Calvary. For his sake, who felt the keenest edge of mortal smart for us on earth, and ever liveth to make powerful intercession for us in heaven ; even JESUS CHRIST, thy dearly beloved son. *Amen.* Were I at any tolerable distance, I

would fly to attend on my honoured Father in these, his afflicted circumstances; but O! 'tis so long, so tedious a way, and I am at my best estate so languid, such a weakling, and so unfit for fatigue, that I must content myself with praying for his welfare; and wait in earnest expectation of hearing of his recovery. Yes, indeed, I should sincerely rejoice to see again the Father that begot me, and the Mother that bare me. May God, if it be his holy will, indulge me this satisfaction. I must conclude, lest the post be gone. Please to present my duty to my Father, assure him of my most earnest prayer to the God who "killeth and maketh alive, who woundeth and bindeth up." O! that they were better and more prevailing through the mediation of CHRIST Give my love to Sisters, and believe me to be,

Honoured Madam,

Your dutiful and sympathizing Son,

J. HERVEY.

Bideford, Feb. 15., 1740.

*On flying from infections—On wealth
unjustly gotten, &c.*

To Miss Hervey.

Dear Sister,

Your letter was the first I ever received

from a Sister, and gave me a pleasure I never enjoyed before. My Sister Clark, I suppose is taken up by domestic business, and the care of a family; and this is the reason I have no line from her. I hope your hurry is over by this time, and the alterations in your house finished. We build, but, alas! know not who shall inhabit; we heap up riches, but cannot tell who shall gather them. Every thing on earth is uncertain and precarious. Happy they, who are daily securing to themselves an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled in Heaven. I should be glad to hear how my aunts are after their return to their own dwelling. In vain, sometimes, we fly from infectious diseases, and death. They follow us like our shadow and dog us wherever we go. Could we take the wings of the morning, and shoot like the sun beam to the utmost parts of the earth, yet even there the contagion would find us. Yes, in spite of all our caution it would assuredly find us; unless God vouchsafed to interpose for our preservation. Let us engage his protection and secure his favour betimes, then in all dangers and adversities, his faithfulness and truth, shall be our shield and buckler. Blessed are the people that are in such a case; yea, safe, and

happy are the folk that have the **LORD** for their safeguard. I wonder whether **Mr. B---** has accommodated matters with his prosecutor and is returned to his seat at **B---**. Wealth unjustly gotten, is often seen to fall away, like water that runneth apace. The curse of **GOD** attends it, and like a corroding canker, consumes it utterly. Awful is that Scripture, which expressly says, "He that getteth riches, and not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at his end shall be made a fool."

You will please to present my compliments to your acquaintance, to **Miss Collins**, **Miss Cooper**, and **Miss Howe**. When you visit any of your poor neighbours, pray remember me kindly to them. I hope, dear, **Sister**, you pray often for yourself, and don't forget to pray sometimes for

Your affectionate Brother,

J. HERVEY,

Bideford, Jan. 21., 1741.

***On an early death—On his health—Death of
Lady Anglesea—The Holy Sacrament, &c.***

To Miss Hervey,
at the Rev. Mr. Hervey's,
Rector of Weston,
near Northampton.

Dear Sister,

My Mother's disorder that a little while ago was abating, is now I hope, quite gone. A little boy that lives over against me lies dangerously ill of the same disorder. A looseness has been upon him a considerable time; it was extremely violent, and turned to the bloody flux. He is at present in a very low and languishing condition; if not at the point to die. I pity the poor mother. Her case I believe, will very quickly be exactly parallel with that of the disconsolate mourner's at Nain. There are the very same circumstances of misery to aggravate the loss, and sharpen the calamity. What was said there, may be said with as much truth here. That "the deceased was the only Son of his Mother, and she was a widow!" You see, Sister, youth may die as well as age; the blossoms drop as well as the ripe fruit. There are many young names in the register of deaths, and abundance of short graves in the church-yard. May this be an effectual admonition to

young people! May this awful consideration incline them, and may the divine grace enable them "to number their days, and apply their hearts unto wisdom."

My father orders me to give a particular account of my health. At present I am tolerable well. Sometimes I feel a languor in my limbs, and sometimes a hoarseness in my voice. Stirring about agrees with me. Visiting my neighbours gives a little briskness to my spirits, and cheerfulness to my temper. The **GOD** and **FATHER** of our **LORD JESUS CHRIST**, I trust, will order all for good.

As to my other affairs. The mare is disposed of, and has been long ago. I am to have for her, the money she cost me. My **R**——s resolutions relax. His mind softens, and his fist opens a little. Whether through constraint or a sense of honesty I know not. However he has dropt his design of with-holding part of the payment, and consents to allow me for the work done by my kind friends. My Father hints that I have lost a valuable friend, by the death of **Lady Anglesea**. His conjecture is too true. Not a friend only, but the best of my friends is gone with her Ladyship. She was the most liberal, as well as the most exemplary of all my parish-

ioners. What gratuity I am to have for preaching the funeral sermon, is to me a secret. The Gentleman entrusted with this business, has been at my lodgings three or four times: with a design, I presume, of executing my Lady's orders; but I happened always to be abroad.

I shall be glad to hear from Sister Clark. She may put her letter, together with yours, in the frank enclosed in this. You will pay my compliments to Miss Collins, and Miss Howe, and wish my Cousin Roberts joy in my name. Hannah and old Coley, and all my neighbours at Weston, remember me kindly to.

The foregoing was written ever since Tuesday, and now 'tis Sunday, Business has intervened, and many, many avocations have diverted me from finishing. The youth mentioned in the beginning, is gone to his long home. I am going to do the last office to his remains, and expect every minute to be called to the house of mourning. May this stroke of Providence awaken the younger part of my flock to seriousness. Gay and giddy as they are, death may be at the door.

The Holy Sacrament was administered among us this day. We had two new communicants, both of them are young; and I hope of

them enlightened by divine grace, to see the things belonging to their eternal peace. Dear Sister, do you continue to commemorate our Redeemer's death? Do you often think upon the nature of that holy ordinance? Do you meditate on that new Covenant which is sealed in the Sacrament? Do you remember what my Father said about it, when he laid upon the bed of languishing, and thought himself upon the brink of eternity? Do you willingly give yourself up to the obligations of it, and wait in humble expectation of its benefits? Having put our hands to the plough, we must not in any wise look back.

The poor youth is committed to the dust and gone to that repose from which he will never arise, till time is expired, and the heavens are no more. Present my duty to my Father, thank my kind Mother for her care of me and always pray for,

Dear Sister,

Your affectionate Brother,

J. HERVEY.

Bideford, Oct. 4,

1741.

Congratulations on the birth of a Niece, &c.

To Miss Hervey.

Dear Sister,

I received the favour of your letter ; and could not forbear being pleased with the kind contents, as well as commending the propriety of the spelling. I return my thanks for the care you have taken in transacting my business with Mr. Rivington. I hope you were agreeably entertained at his house ; I don't doubt but you were respectfully received and genteelly treated. If you see Mr. Staple, please to make my thankful acknowledgment for his franks. They are now peculiarly acceptable, and are reserved to convey packets of considerable size, and some importance. I wish you joy of your new Niece and congratulate my Brother and Sister on the birth of their daughter, and on the christening of Miss Amabella. We all wish her a long life, abundance of happiness, and as much holiness as distinguished her great Aunt and her name-sake. I saw Mrs. Cooper yesterday, she enquired after your health, and also whether you have been to stay two or three days with Mrs. Purchase ? As you will often see the babe and sometimes

have her in your arms, you will remember that the glorious SON of GOD, whose outgoings were from everlasting, once became an infant of days for you. HE who made the world, and upholdeth all things by the word of his power, vouchsafed to be made of a woman, and to be born under all the pitiable circumstances of infantine weakness. This little one has a warm room, and soft pillow to lie on; but the blessed JESUS, when a babe, had a stable for his chamber, and a rugged manger for his cradle; when grown up to a man, had not where to lay his head. HE became THUS poor that you and I dear Sister, might be rich; rich in the favour of GOD, and in the joys of eternity. I must write to Mr. Burton, Sir John Thorold and Mr. Rivington, therefore you will excuse me from adding any more, but my tender respects to Betsy, my love to Brother and Sister, and to yourself,

Who am,

Your affectionate Brother,

J. HERVEY.

Weston, Jan. 25, 1747.

On a Journey to London, &c.

To

The Rev. Mr. Hervey,
Rector of Weston,
near Northampton.

Honoured Sir,

You are long before this appriz'd of my most unexpected and unaccountable excursion. Mr. Hartley promised to come to Weston, and inform you of, as well as reconcile you to, my whole conduct. He, Dr. Stonehouse, and Mr. Whitfield constrained me to take the journey.¹ I was extremely unwilling, and have often been blaming myself, therefore hope you will be the more ready to excuse. I find, I am a person of no resolution; cannot withstand importunity; not fit for the world.

I humbly thank God, that I am arrived safe at town. We had pleasant weather, and no misfortune. Rode commodiously enough, and found sufficiently good accommodations by the way.

I am now at Mr. Whitefield's house. Where

¹ This visit to London was probably made in the winter of 1749, when his friends formed this design of conveying him thither for the benefit of his health, which was then much impaired by his great attention to duty.

is every thing neat and convenient ; great care taken of me, and a hearty welcome given me. Here, I believe, I shall take up my lodging, as often as I come to London. It lies in the way to Tottenham ; is very open and airy : and has no bugs : a sort of city gentry for whom I have no great fondness.

I write this night to Oxford, in order to prevent Mr. Gubb's coming to Weston. I hope my Mother has taken some care to get my parish supplied. I will very readily pay the gentleman that officiates. I was the less peremptory against the trip to London, because it was my Mother's inclination, that I should try, whether change of air would afford me any relief. I now shall have an opportunity of making the experiment. The success is in the hand of an unerringly wise, and infinitely gracious God. And though I should be glad, if it be the divine will, of a restored constitution ; I should be much more desirous of a resigned and thankful mind.

I have just seen my Brother. He presents his love and duty ; and is setting out for his family in the country, who were all well when he saw them last. I desire my Mother to send me some shirts, a silk handkerchief or two, a

pair of shoes, and any thing that she thinks necessary, and I may at present forget. I have already bespoken a new suit of clothes, and a wig. Dr. Stonehouse, when he pressed me into this expedition, put five guineas into my hand, for which I am accountable. I propose to abide in the City all day to-morrow; and to visit my relations in the Country on monday; when my Brother intends, God willing, to bear me company. Any letters that may chance to come to me, be so kind as to transmit to me in a frank; two franks you will find in my study, on the top of my writing desk. I would not have Mary clean my Study, lest she should displace or lose any papers, of more importance than they appear to be. I can think of nothing more at present, needful to be mentioned; but conclude myself with duty to my Mother, and love to Sisters,

Hououred Sir,

Your dutiful Son,

J. HERVEY.

Saturday night.

On Christmas, &c.

London, Jan. 3, 1750.

Dear Sister,

I am now at Miles's lane, beginning the new year with my Brother and Sister. The parcel from Weston came safe last night; for which I am commissioned to return the united thanks of the family. Please to inform my Father that his edition of Whitby on the New Testament, has not the dissertation on the imputed righteousness of JESUS CHRIST. In which the Doctor sets himself to oppose the opinion of good Bishop Beveridge, and for which alone I borrowed a set of Mr. Rivington. I desired the loan of but one volume; but he was so genteel as to send me both.

Most people would think it too late, to wish you a happy Christmas. But I am inclined to believe, that it would not be improper to keep Christmas, in one sense, all the year round. I mean it would not be improper to keep up a grateful sense of the blessings, which at this season, we commemorate. This should be appropriated to no particular times; but be lively and warm in our hearts, in winter, and in summer, "from the flower till the grape is ripe."

Methinks if we could exercise gratitude or enjoy comfort, our blessed LORD's most important and delightful words, should frequently be in our minds, should never be out of our memory. *God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish but have everlasting life.*

God loved the world, apostate and rebellious as it was. Though we were void of all worthiness, full of every provocation, and altogether become abominable, yet the great eternal Majesty of heaven and earth vouchsafed, not only to spare us, but to love us. Was not this free goodness, unmerited mercy. A proof, that all our salvation, from the foundation to the top-stone, is of grace? God so loved fallen mankind! in such a manner, as no words can express, no thought can imagine, but his own transcendently rich gift could sufficiently declare. So as to give what was of more value, than all creatures, all worlds, all heavens, even his only begotten SON. GIVE HIM on purpose that he might take flesh, submit to infamy, and suffer death, for our sake. And by this meritorious humiliation, what—O! what has HE procured for poor sinners. HE

has procured, what comprehends our whole felicity. That *we shall not perish but have everlasting life*. Not be undone for ever; not be banished from the blissful presence of **God**; not be consigned over to unquenchable burnings; which is the recompense our iniquities deserve. But that we shall be admitted to the divine favour, be renewed by the divine spirit; and have, when this short hour of probation is over, the complete and endless fruition of the glorious godhead. This is the portion, not of all, but of those, that believe. *Whosoever believeth on me*, says our **SAVIOUR**. By believing, we are interested in **CHRIST**, and become partakers of his great salvation. **CHRIST'S** death is the *meritorious*, but faith is the *instrumental* cause, of our final happiness. Faith is, as it were, the eye that beholds, and the hand that applies, what the gracious Redeemer has obtained for us. It should therefore be our great concern, both to have faith, and to have it increased more and more. For this end, the scriptures are given, the holy spirit is promised, and the sacrament is administered. And for this I beseech the **God** and **Father** of our **LORD JESUS CHRIST**, that **HE** would “fulfil in you all the good pleasure of his will, *and the*

work of faith with power."

Present my best thanks to my Father and Mother for their kind letters, and good wishes. Mr. Piriam sends his compliments; dined with us; and, I suppose will spend the evening here. Bell is as brisk as ever; and—is not a little pleased with her Aunt's letter. Remember me to Mary and Stephen, and when you have an inclination to exercise your pen, tell me what you think of that TRUE FAITH, which our LORD recommeuds both to you, and to

Your affectionate Brother,

J. HERVEY

On some curious Fire-Works—On a new edition of "The Meditations," &c.

For

The Rev. Mr. Hervey.

Honoured Sir,

Your favour dated Dec. 31st is now before me; for which you will please to accept my thanks, and my mother likewise for hers. The money for Mr. Browne is not wanted as yet. When it is I hope my Brother will deposit it, till you can remit it. I think, I satisfied you about my borrowing Whitby's Exposition, in the letter to my Sister. I heartily wish

Mr. Edwards may please you, and edify the parish; may convince sinners of their want of CHRIST, bring the convinced to believe in CHRIST, and establish believers, in the faith of CHRIST; and O! may faith purify the heart, and work by love.—The night before last I was to sup with a gentleman whose house commanded a view of the Artillery ground, in which were exhibited some curious fire-works, in honour of the Prince of Wales's Birth-Day. They were elegant and entertaining; but did not answer my expectations. I find every thing finite fails upon the trial, and frustrates our wishes. But God is an infinite and boundless good; that more than answers, more than satisfies all the desires of the soul. The Psalmist seems to have a deep sense of both these truths when he says "whom have I in Heaven but thee! and there is none upon earth that I desire in comparison of thee." I am now at Mr. Whitefield's, but have lately been for about a fortnight at Miles's Lane. Mr. Rivington was with me this morning. He has advertised the next edition of my books, and has fixed upon the 31st instant for the day of publication. Then there will be five thousand volumes ready for sale, O; may they be five thousand trumpets to

proclaim far and near the glories of HIM who died for our sins, and rose again for our justification. If you enquire about my picture, Mr. Willis will be so kind as to inform you. I am quite tired of sitting to the painters. If you and my Mother think Mr. Thayer would accept of a couple of gallons of Rum, Brandy, or Shrub, I would very gladly make him a present; and when my Mother's stock of Shrub is out, she may command a fresh supply from

Your and her

Dutiful son,

J. HERVEY.

London, Jan. 23, 1750.

My duty to my Mother, and my love to my Sisters.

Notice of a blow that alarmed the Court, &c.

Honoured Sir,

Your favour of the 14th instant came to my hands in due time; for which you will please to accept my thanks. I heartily join with you in wishing that your leg may be speedily cured; and that the affections of us all may be weaned from this world of trouble, and fixed there where JESUS dwells, and true joys are to be found. I shall be very well pleased

to receive an account of all the money you have laid out on my account; and shall be equally ready to repay whatever you have disbursed. My account is written in short-hand, and contained in a small purse in the box that is locked up. To the best of my remembrance it stands thus, to old arrears £12 12s. 0d. To pieces of grey stuff for lining of gowns, bought at Whithorn's sale, the price of which my Mother can recollect, which was to be shared betwixt yourself and me. The half I think amounted to about seventeen shillings. Another article is the Visitation-fees; you can tell, having the receipts, what these things came to. I should be glad if you would pay Richard Welsh for shaving me. There were six or seven weeks deficient, but I would not make a deduction for them. Let him have the full pay, three shillings. I thank you for getting the half guinea of G——'s debt. You might secure him from any future demand of that little sum, by giving him a receipt.

You have heard, no doubt, of the blow that has alarmed the court. May it teach them and us, with a convincing and abiding energy teach us, "That all flesh is grass, and the goodliness thereof as the flower of the field. The grass

withereth, and the flower fadeth, but the word of our God endureth for ever." They that are born heirs to a crown must "inherit worms and creeping things." May we then be heirs of the promise; heirs of salvation; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with CHRIST!—My Brother and Sister send duty and love. 'Tis my Sister's birth-day. We have been drinking her health, and yours. Mrs. Peryer sends her compliments to you all. My Brother desires me to tell you, if you have any money to be remitted, it may be done by means of Mr. Alderman Agutter and his son Mr. Hilersden. My duty to Mother and love to Sister,

From,

Honoured Sir,

Your dutiful Son,

J. HERVEY.

March 21. 1750.

*On taking a ride in Enfield Chase—On hearing
Mr. Romaine preach—On a prescription—
His portrait, &c.*

To

The Rev. Mr. Hervey,

Rector of Weston,

Near Northampton.

Honoured Sir,

I took care to answer all your letters

by the very first return of the post, and will very readily write, as often as shall be agreeable to you. I thank you for your trouble in providing a supply for Collingtree. Mr. Willis acts like himself, with a friendly generosity. It grieves me to think, that I am not able to make any returns of his kindness. Grateful acknowledgements, I hope, you will transmit; and these are all that I can pay. I congratulate yourself and my Sister, on the continuance of your health; may you long enjoy this valuable blessing, and love that gracious God, who is the "strength of our life, and the length of our days!" I bless the Divine Providence, for removing in some measure, my Mother's disorder; and hope your next letter will bring me an account of her thorough recovery. Last week, I was at Tottenham for several days. One afternoon, we took a very pleasant ride into Enfield Chase. The air was hot, and made my spirits low, but we had some enlivening conversation, on the glorious perfections of that God, whose works we beheld. The coachman mistook his way; and kept us out till eight o'clock. But providence hung a lantern in the sky (the full moon I mean) and preserved us from misfortune, and from violence. May we be

sensible of the deliverance, and adore our great deliverer. On Sunday, I heard the celebrated Mr. Romaine preach. He once came to see you at Hardingstone, or rather called upon you with Mr. Shipway. He is now a very popular preacher; much admired, and, I think, deservedly. His text was Romans 5, v. 1. He showed us, 1st. What justification is. 2d. What is the nature of justifying faith. 3rd. How this faith is wrought in the soul. I wish my Sister would consider these points, and when she writes, favour me with her sentiments upon them. Mr. Romaine handles them as a preacher; but we should all know them, as christians; and all be saved by them, as candidates for heaven. I cannot say, that my health is at all bettered. I don't remember that I gave any such hint to Dr. Stonhouse. Going to church (St. Dunstan's) though I went in a coach, and dined at a Gentleman's house, near the church, fatigued me. At dinner I met a very compassionate and benevolent physician, who desired me to take daily some strengthening and restorative drops, of his own prescribing; from which he assured me I need be apprehensive of no danger, but, he hoped, I should receive considerable good. The next day he sent me a large

vial full of them; which I have begun to use. I have sat twice for my picture, and to-morrow the painter comes to give the finishing touches. The shadow of a shadow! May the gracious God, paint the image of his dear SON on my poor depraved heart.—The Artist is a German; said to be a fine hand.—My sister's excuse was not feigned, but real. She is in a fair way of bringing you another grand-child. Her little family is in good health. Bell is a prattling lass, and Betsy behaves very prettily. Considering how she was humoured, when a oneling, I think her behaviour is extraordinary. The mare I presume, has recovered from her hurt on the eye. My brother rides her, if I mistake not, to and from his country-house. He called upon me last night, and this morning; for Mr. Whitfield's house lies in his way. He has a little disorder, I suppose a cold, settled in his eyes. He has taken physic, and intends to lose a little blood, which I believe will remove it, and do him good in other respects. I have entertained thoughts of returning home very soon. But if you choose that I should stay, and make trial a little longer, I should be glad to have my manuscripts here. Some of them, I think, lie on the chair at the right hand of my

desk. There are others, but I forget where they are laid. If my sister can find any others, containing Dialogues or Letters between *The-ron* and *Aspasio*, I desire she will pack them up carefully and send them by the coach; and let me know before-hand by a line, that I may send for them, and where I may send. If I should want assistance after michaelmas, I should rather employ Mr. W—s than Mr. W—d. I hope Mrs. C. will remember the conversation we had in the great parlour, and more frequently seek unto her heavenly FATHER, both for the communication of his spirit, and the sanctification of her troubles. Her sovereign remedy is prescribed by the apostle, “If any be afflicted, let him pray.” My love to her and sister Molly, duty to yourself and Mother, concludes from

Honoured Sir,

Your dutiful Son,

J. HERVEY.

London, Sept. 11th, 1750.

On Sickness—His Portrait, &c.

To

The Rev. Mr. Hervey,

Rector of Weston,

near Northampton.

Honoured Sir,

Your favour of the 13th is now before

me. I thank you for your kind wishes relating to my health. I am the same languid creature in London as I was at Weston. The drops sit very well upon my stomach, and I think, cheer my spirits, but make no addition of strength to my enfeebled constitution. However, as you justly observe, so small a time is scarcely sufficient for a tolerable trial.

My brother I saw last night. His eyes are better, and in a day or two, I hope, will be quite well. The children also are upon the mending hand. I am now in town, but intend to go to Tottenham, if I live till the evening. I hope this will find my Mother perfectly recovered. A young lady with whom I was in company on Sunday night, was seized soon after with a malignant fever, and is now gone hence, and to be seen no more. How kind is the Divine Providence in giving us these warnings, and not making us examples to others! May we be found in CHRIST, clothed in his righteousness, and renewed by his Spirit; then we need fear no evil; to die will be gain. I am very sorry to hear of my sister's disorder. Hope God will direct you how to proceed, and accompany your management with his heavenly blessing. I would have her not be dejected, but often read,

and seriously meditate upon the 12th chapter of the Hebrews. God, the allwise God, afflicts her, because he loves her. . . . Afflicts her, to withdraw her affections from a vain, but enchanting world, and bring her to partake of that substantial happiness, described in the 22nd, 23rd, 24th verses. God deals with her, as with a dear child. Though he had one SON without sin, he never had a SON without sorrow. Psalm, *l. v.* 15. is a comfortable promise, and a proper direction for her.—When the picture is finished, you shall have as many of the mezzotinto prints as you please ; or the original drawing if you choose it. The manner of proceeding is this ; a large picture is drawn, in oil colours, such as those you have removed into your apple-chamber ; from this a smaller is taken to be a guide to the engraver. And from his copper-plate is struck off any number that is wanted. A generous gentleman promised to be at the whole expence of drawing and engraving, and give me the copper-plate, to make what use of it I pleased. The artist that draws the picture is sent over by some connoisseurs from Germany, to take a portrait of all the very eminent men in England. Among whom Mr. Whitefield is named ; whose picture has been drawn, and is

to be sent into Germany. He draws mine with no such view; only to furnish out a plate for some mezzotinto pieces: Rivington offered to defray the charge of drawing and engraving, provided the copper-plate and prints might be his own. But his offer coming after the gentleman's promise, was declined. You have not seen Mr. Willis very lately; he has favoured me with a letter, and will at your next interview inform you of the contents. If you send my MS. papers, please to look for them on the chair that is on the right hand of my desk; if you find elsewhere a bundle of papers containing conferences or letters between *Theron* and *Aspasio*, please to send them also. Please to send all the pieces of paper, written in shorthand or not that are to be found in the book that lies on the desk. No matter how confusedly these short hand notes are put up; I shall be able, I hope, to digest and regulate them. I like my quarters both in the city and country; am contented to stay, and wish to have the MSS. with me, because if I should not study, and proceed with the composition, I could shew what is already written to some friends, for their correction. Should not my sister come to London, if her leg under your regimen does

not get better? My sister Hervey would be very glad of her company, and often tells me she hopes she will come soon. I am writing to Mr. Willis, but shall not be able to finish before the Tottenham stage sets out. Must defer my acknowledgments to another post. When I will also write to you, and acquaint you with the state of our health. Hoping to receive a letter from you by the next mail, for we shall all be solicitous to know how my poor sister is. Committing her, and you, and all my relations to the mercies of the once dying, but now exalted **JESUS**, I remain,

With duty and love,

Honoured Sir,

Your dutiful Son,

J. HERVEY.

*On his Sister's illness—Complimentary Verses
on his Meditations, &c.*

To

The Rev. Mr. Hervey,

Rector of Weston,

near Northampton.

Honoured Sir,

Your favour of the 27th is now before me, and my sister in bed by my side. She had

a safe journey, and agreeable company. I came to-day before dinner, and my brother went to his family at Tottenham. Dr. N——s has been here; says the sore will not spread wider, as my sister apprehended; and does not doubt but cure it, if she will suffer herself to be confined in bed, and drink largely of sudorific liquors. This she has promised the Doctor to observe. He forbade all salt meats, and goose; but being Michaelmas-day, and lest, as he said, it should be ominous, he allowed her a bit of the latter, for the present instant. The draught prescribed, Mr. Bliss says is the same as before. I think you could not handsomely employ Mr. Frost, when Mr. Whalley had offered before, and been accepted. May the LORD make him a pastor after his own will, and enable him to teach his people the way of salvation! My Brother was well when he left us. But his eyes, I thought, seemed a little redder than ordinary. He does not return to town till Monday. We have had part of a goose, and drank your health; and while I am writing, perhaps you are drinking ours in a glass of punch. Ere long, I hope, we shall drink new wine in our heavenly FATHER'S Kingdom. One of the letters which my sister brought contained a complimentary

copy of verses upon my book, written by a young gentleman 19 years of age ; sent, I believe, from Ireland, under a fictitious name, but dated from St. George Molesworth.* How poor and empty a thing is the praise of men ! But, if we may be a means of edifying those, who commend us, and of bringing glory to that God, who gives us power to write ; this will be a real satisfaction. I hope to see my friend Hartley's Sermon in print ere long. I would have persuaded him to take for his text, "*Himself bare our sickness, and carried our infirmities.*" But, I find, he has chosen another. May the spirit of the living God accompany his discourse ! and then it will be pleasing, powerful, and edifying. I hope this will find you well, and Mother quite recovered. If her breath should continue to fail, sure she should have the best advice ; which I beseech the Great Physician to sanctify. My sister hopes you will excuse her not writing ; because the Doctor has forbid her to sit up in her bed ; at least to do this as little as possible. I hope you will also excuse the haste and incorrectness of her amanuensis ; as he is to go to Upper Moor-fields to night ; and

* Vide Verses prefixed to The Meditations.

it was almost dusk before he set pen to paper.
Our united duty waits upon yourself and mother
which is transmitted by,

Honoured Sir,

Your dutiful son,

J. HERVEY.

We hope to hear from you next post.

St. Michael's Day and Lane.

*On the uncertainty of Human Life—On the
painting and engraving of his portrait—
Dr. Nichols's offer to him of a Tutor-
ship and Curacy in Jamaica, &c.*

To

The Rev. Mr. Hervey,

Rector of Weston,

near Northampton.

Honoured Sir,

Last night I returned from Tottenham;
left my sister and her family in good health,
and am now at Miles's lane, to re-enter upon
my office of Secretary. The Doctor has been
here to-day; and found his patient's leg con-
siderably mended; and in a fair way of being
well in a little time. I believe she herself
begins to think so, and is more cheery in her

spirits as well as better reconciled to the orders of close confinement. Mary sends her duty, and has got rid of her complaints. Never was so indisposed as to be unfit for her business; or make it necessary to call in another nurse. My brother sits by me, reviewing his books, and settling his accounts. A pattern for all to follow, who know not, but this night they may be called to their last reckoning. We hope his eyes are much better; but they seem not to be quite well. We were all surprised at the account you give of poor P—l. 'Tis an awful Providence indeed, and much to be laid to heart. It naturally reminds us of St. James's admonition. "Go to now, ye that say, to-day, or to-morrow, we will go into such a place, and continue there a term of years; and buy, and sell and get gain; whereas, ye know not, what shall be on the morrow, for, what is your life? it is even a vapour that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away." I return you thanks for writing to Dr. Stonhouse on my business. He will pay my subscription, I doubt not, and I hope you will repay him, when he calls at Weston, and place it to my account. The original picture, I presume will be offered to me; and then I accept it, and present it to you.

I forget whether I told you the price. The drawing is to cost five guineas, and the mezzotinto copper-plate fifteen guineas. I have had the pleasure of conversing with Dr. Nichols. He has made me an offer, which many young clergymen would covet. To go over to Jamaica, and be tutor to a son of one of the most considerable persons in the island. For which I should be entitled immediately to a hundred pounds (sterling) a year, meat, drink, washing, and lodging; with an assurance of having, in a little time, a living of a hundred and fifty. I am greatly obliged to the Docter, but have taken leave to decline accepting the proposal. You say nothing of my Mother's health, from which I conclude that she is perfectly recovered. I have nothing more to add but duty and love, from all your children, and among them from,

Honoured Sir,

Your dutiful Son,

J. HERVEY.

To the Rev. Mr. Hervey,

Rector of Weston,

near Northampton.

Honoured Sir,

As my Brother is in London, and my

Sister in bed, it falls to my turn to give you an account of the state of our affairs. My Sister has punctually observed the Doctor's direction. Has kept her bed ever since Monday night. She bids me tell you, that her leg seems to get cleaner, and she hopes, is in a mending way. She has got her old nurse from London, and wants nothing that the cellar or the pantry can afford. But the bill of fare is scanty; the Doctor has forbid all kinds of flesh. She sleeps tolerably well, but the weather is very warm with us, and must be fainting to one that lies constantly in bed. My Sister, the mistress of the house, is in good health, and sends her duty to you and my Mother. She is very kind, and begrudges us nothing that we want, nothing that we wish. The children also are tolerably well. Bell grows a great talker. Billy comes on in his strength. Jemmy is a very hopeful child, with regard to his constitution. May they all, in due time, grow in wisdom as well as in stature, and in favour with God and man! My Sister has been at the linen-draper's and laid out for me about £7. I should be glad to know what demands you have upon me, that I may take care not to go beyond the balance. My brother began to cut his hay

on Monday, and has had such weather that it almost makes itself. This day they begin to carry. We present our united duty to yourself and my Mother. We hope, you enjoy a comfortable share of health. We wish, that the ever-blessed and all-sufficient REDEEMER may be to your souls "as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." I know of nothing else that occurs, but what always presents itself when I write to Weston, that

I am,

Honoured Sir,

your dutiful Son,

J. HERVEY.

Tottenham, June 6th 1751.

To

The Rev. Mr. Hervey,

Rector of Weston,

near Northampton.

Honoured Sir,

Last night I received your favour of the 25th, and this morning I sit down to return my thanks; my Sister is not yet released. There was last night a small speck, next to nothing, that was not quite skinned over. We hope to see it quite healed, when it is next opened:

which will be about 11 o'clock. I should have staid till then in order to have informed you of the state of her leg; but my Brother's servant is going to London, and he will take the letter to the post-office. And my Brother says, the letters sent from hence by the penny-post, are more liable to miscarry or be retarded. Therefore he advised me to write soon enough for his servant to bring. We all concur in advising my Sister, not to be too hasty in getting up. Rather to continue a day too long, than rise a day too soon: which advice, I believe, you would second, and I hope she will follow. Confinement, to be sure, is tedious and irksome; but one had better be a volunteer in suffering it for a day, than be constrained to endure it for several weeks more. My Brother always opens your letters, let them be directed to whom they will. So that he has read what relates to the cask and wine. And will I suppose ere long give you a satisfactory answer himself. Especially, as he left no directions with me, to say any thing about them. The business at Guild-Hall was to decide some litigated matters of no consequence, my Brother said. I think he told us, the trial for which he was impaneled as a jury-man lasted but five minutes. Yesterday

was with us pretty warm: We apprehended a return of hot weather. But this morning seems to be cool. You have fine weather for Boughton Fair; and which is a more valuable consideration, for making the hay. Fruitful seasons, I think, are mentioned by St. Paul, as the gift of God, and urged as a motive of gratitude. The parish will sustain a loss by Mary Abbot's death. I wish like old Simeon, she may see by faith the LORD'S CHRIST and so depart in peace. Mrs. Toovy has been very ill, and is reduced very low, by a miscarriage. But is on the mending hand, and likely to recover. I am pleased the White Horse is so well. May the voice of joy and health continue in your dwellings here! and may the fulness of joy, and pleasures for evermore, be your portion hereafter. In all these, may my Mother and all your other children be partakers! May some share of the latter fall to the lot through the infinitely rich grace of GOD in CHRIST JESUS, fall to the lot of,

Honoured Sir,

Your dutiful Son,

J. HERVEY.

Tottenham, June 27, 1751.

To

The Rev. Mr. Hervey,
Rector of Weston,
near Northampton.

Honoured Sir,

Writing to you is a pleasure, of which I have long been deprived. I desire to be thankful to the gracious God, that I now can re-enjoy it. I suppose my Sister has informed you, how ill I have been, Exceedingly ill indeed; and I cannot but wonder how my poor crazy constitution could weather such a storm. 'Twas the great JEHOVAH, who strengthened me when ill, and has now removed my disorder, and released me from my long confinement. Yesterday was the first time, I ventured, or indeed was able to come down stairs. I was obliged to lean upon my brother. But this day I made a shift to come down without help. My fever is entirely gone, but my poor foot, that was blistered, has a strange disorder. It looks red, is a little swelled, and is always uneasy. It pains me to set it upon the ground. I sit with it laid upon a chair. I fear the humours flow into it. I am still taking medicines; a draught at night when I go to bed, and another about noon. I believe the intention of these is prin-

cipally to prevent my sweating in the night, which I am very subject to, and which must be very prejudicial. Dr. Nesbit was exceedingly obliging and generous. Attended me with so much good nature, with so much constancy, and without taking any fee; I hope the LORD will reward him a hundred fold. O! that I may be ever thankful to the ever-blessed Restorer of health; and be enabled to devote to HIS honour the life which he has graciously preserved. My Sister desires her duty to you and my Mother. She has been kind and careful, beyond all that I could expect, dressed and undressed me with her own hands, and supplied me with every accommodation I could want or wish. I hope I shall always be grateful to her, and God will be ever gracious to her. My Brother always was so kind, as to carry me in his arms, several times, from my chair to the bed, when my knees were so feeble that I could not stand, and my foot so sore that I could not set it on the floor. May the God of all goodness carry him and his "as on eagle's wings." I trust, you and my Mother continue in health; I beg of you both to accept my duty; and beseech the God of grace to give you all joy and peace

in believing.

Your dutiful Son,

J. HERVEY.

To Miss Hervey.

Dear Sister,

I really forget whether I am your debtor or creditor in the article of correspondence. If I am the former, accept this as payment; if the latter, it is a free gift, and comes to wish you that best and greatest of gifts, which the Apostle mentions, Romans vi. 23.

I hope you sometimes recollect what used to be the subject of our discourse, when I bore a share in the conversation. **JESUS CHRIST**, that divine, illustrious, and everlasting friend of sinners, who bore pain, and reproach, and death, for our sake. O! how much I am grieved that I have spoken of him no more, and loved him no better! May we henceforth count every thing as dross and dung, for the excellency of the knowledge of **CHRIST JESUS OUR LORD!** My dear Sister, never let us harbour unkind thoughts of HIM. I have too often been tempted, under my long continued infirmities, to do him this injustice and dishonour; but let us be

assured, HE who spilt his blood for us, suffered the curse of the law for us, and endured the vengeance of GOD for us. HE can never order any thing for us, but what is wise, and good, and gracious. To his tender mercy I commit you, and remain

Your affectionate Brother,

J. HERVEY.

On the Death of his Grandfather.

Dear and honoured Madam,

Though I do not often write to you, yet I often think of you, and always pray for you. Particularly since it has pleased the LORD to take my honoured grandfather from you. I beseech HIM to sanctify this visitation to his surviving children. 'Tis the earnest desire of my heart, and my fervent request on my knees, that the death of our revered relation may be an effectual means of our living unto righteousness. For yet a little while and we also shall go to our long home; those that shall mourn for us will soon go about the streets. Is it not therefore infinitely reasonable for us, to make our calling and election sure; that so our final remove may be into everlasting hab-

itations, and that our remaining friends may not sorrow for us as men without hope? The dead, Madam, know this to be our highest wisdom, the best and happiest thing we can do; O! that the living, that the living would lay the same consideration to heart, that they too might be wise! If our dear deceased parent was permitted once more to revisit these earthly regions, O! how holy and heavenly would his own conversation be, how urgent and incessant his exhortations to others! Surely he would shew us by his example, what a mighty (though unknown and unregarded) meaning there is in that expression of our LORD's of "taking heaven by force." And as for us, if it were in the power of words, intreaties, or tears, I dare say he would even "compel us to come in." His departure I find was sudden, in obedience to a hasty, and at that time, unexpected summons: he went away, as we are assured he will come again "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." Now should God give him leave "to recover his strength, at least so much of it as would enable him to leave with us his parting last advice, how pressingly would he recommend to our choice and care, "the one thing needful!" Let us imagine him raising his venerable head

from the dust, and like the widow's son at Nain Luke vii. 15. "Sitting up and begining to speak." Let us represent to ourselves his eyes full of wonder and amazement; his accent and gesture full of a most pathetic and importunate vehemency; and his mouth full of words ten thousand times more awakening than these: "O! my children, that I had the tongue of men and of angels to tell you the things that I have seen! I have seen the shortness of time, and the astonishing never-ending lengths of eternity! No words are little enough to set forth the despicable meanness of this world and the things therein: and all are infinitely too little to describe the importance and worth of that eternal one, which will soon commence. The incorruptible crown, the exceeding and eternal weight of glory, the amiable, ravishing beauties of the King immortal, invisible—O! how unutterable are they! Who can count the perfections of God, or number the least part of the joys of the righteous? I can no more reach the skies with these withered feeble arms, than I can declare to you the wonders you will behold, the new and different thoughts you will have, when you are delivered from the burden of the flesh. But though I have not ability enough to declare

what I have found and feel, yet let me have interest and authority enough to prevail with you, my beloved children; prevail with you to be solicitous and in good earnest about the great salvation, which the LORD JESUS will reveal at his coming. The time that the youngest of you have to live, is no better than a span long; and even that span is continually upon the wing, speeding away, as an arrow that is shot, hasteneth to the mark. O! seize, therefore, and improve it as it passes, and as that advances nearer to its final period, so do you advance nearer and nearer to perfection. When a few more months and weeks are gone, God "will bring you, as he has me, to death, and to the house appointed for all living: work then, I beseech you, while you have day, for there is no repentance, no subduing your corruptions, no renewing your nature in the grave whither you are all hastening." My children, I am not afraid of your becoming profligate, blood-thirsty men, or sons of Belial. No, I am not in pain as concerning this matter, I know you abhor such excess of wickedness. The thing that I solely and greatly fear is, lest you should lose the prize for want of running and mending your pace: lest you should miss of the strait

gate, not because you seek not, but because you strive not to enter in thereat. O! how many millions of poor souls, has satan beguiled of their reward, by this destructive desire, by keeping them either ignorant of the true and saving religion, or else by keeping them indifferent and unconcerned about it. When you come into the world of spirits, it is not a bare and negative holiness, or a round of outward performances, but a new life, a thorough change of heart and temper that will avail you. As your treasure is in heaven, so let your conversation also be there, and your desires tending continually thither. You are all going apace to the HOLY GOD, and to stand a trial before HIM for eternal life or eternal death: therefore value nothing but what will recommend you to his approbation; prize and pursue things more or less, as they tend more or less to prepare you for that great account. Think not how much goodness will be sufficient to make you respected and reputable among your neighbours; but how much you will want and wish for when the pains of death overtake you. Always remembering that your one business on earth is, to recover the image of your CREATOR, and to be restored to the likeness of CHRIST.

If the same mind which was in HIM, be also in you ; if you have his holy and heavenly ends in view ; if you feel his charitable and divine dispositions in your breasts ; if your hopes and fears are dead to the things which are present, and alive to the invisible things that are to come ; if you are clothed in the wedding garment of a new, sanctified, regenerate nature—then may you humbly hope to enter into rest when you leave your bodies, and to enter into joy when the world shall be no more. I have many things to say unto you, but I may not declare them now. I hear a voice that calls me away, and must go to my appointed place. Pray earnestly for the enlightening spirit of the LORD, that you may see the things that belong to your peace. Consider your work, how great and difficult, and yet how necessary it is. I entreat and conjure you not to ‘sleep at it, or trifle with it,’ as do others ; but to give all diligence to accomplish it ‘before you go hence and be no more seen.’ Remember and do this, for your own sake, for my sake, for your dear Mother’s sake, that we may have comfort from you in the terrible day : that we may not be separated for ever by the impassable gulf, but may enter together into those blessed mansions

where will be no more parting or sorrow, but everlasting joy and pleasures for evermore. Adieu, my dear children, till we meet in the regions of paradise.”

*Letter from Dr. Cotton to the Rev.
James Hervey.*

St. Alban's, September 26, 1743.

Dear Sir,

I waited with impatience the return of my servant from Woburn; for it was nine at night when he reached this place; and my solicitude for his precious charge improved with the shades of evening. Many were my conjectures about the causes of this stay, but the frequent intimations I had of your ill health suggested to me a variety of fears. With great propriety I can say from Parnell's Hermit

“My bosom wrought
With all the travail of uncertain thought.”

I am exceedingly grieved (and I can assure you that Mrs. Cotton is a sincere partner with me in concern) at the mournful tale you tell of your declining strength. For it is a mournful tale to your friends, and you must permit them to think it such, whose happiness is deeply interested in your recovery.

Upon my word I am far from entertaining a disadvantageous thought of your temper from the seriousness of its turn. It would be a strange perverseness indeed to read vapours, spleen, and impatience in lines that breathe resignation, serenity, fortitude, and hope. No, the melancholy part is ours, and ours alone. For if reason determines the conduct of your friends, we should congratulate you upon your approach to a better state. A good man can never die too soon. He may indeed for the world, but he can't for himself, 'tis the period of his sorrows, the commencement of his joys, and the consummation of his wishes. 'Tis an admission into the brightest scenes, and the best company the eye ever beheld, or the hearing enjoyed.

I have now and then met with a weak mind that is scandalized at the gloom of your first Meditation. But I may venture to assert that the best cure of the melancholy which a sepulchre suggests, is a more frequent converse with the tomb. These are the thoughtless tribe of mortals, who when subjects of this universal concern are started, presently put that idle and impertinent interrogatory, "what must we be always thinking upon these things?" when they know in their hearts, that no such task is exacted

from them. But by their good will, they would never think upon them at all. And yet if a man were to take a voyage to a distant country, we should brand him as a fool or madman, if he did not make many previous enquiries about the manners and policies of the place he was bound to; if he took no thoughts about his voyage, nor examined the best charts, and provided himself with proper stores and tackle to secure his vessel against storms and high tides—if he were not very careful and solicitous, not only to make the port with safety and comfort, but to secure likewise the favour of the prince, and the friendship of the inhabitants.

My dear friend, I shall talk you down, and therefore shall take my leave of you, with assurance of great affection and esteem; and with a most grateful sense of the tenderness of your regards to me and my family. Let me only add that notwithstanding all I have said to the contrary, I am still so selfish, as to wish the continuance of your stay here, and should receive a most exquisite pleasure from an account of your improved health. Is such an interested desire compatible with the professions of a man who feels a secret joy in subscribing

himself,

Sir,

Your most sincere
and faithful servant,

N. COTTON.

From Samuel Fletcher to James Hervey.

How does my dearest friend? Is his health better established? Happy I know he is, who is conscious of the favour of God—who knows himself interested in the REDEEMER'S righteousness—May this knowledge be continually increasing till it arrives at the fullest assurance—may all the internal joys, the most uniform and exalted piety can give—may all the honours, which a series of the most virtuous actions can claim attend you through life—may the most lively faith in CHRIST JESUS, and the firmest dependance on HIS merits, sweeten the bitterness of death, and blunt every pointed dart of that King of Terrors, and in the future world, may the beatific vision of the ETERNAL GOD, bless you to endless ages.

Yours,

Most affectionately,

S. FLETCHER.



