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LIFE OF
P. HENRY.

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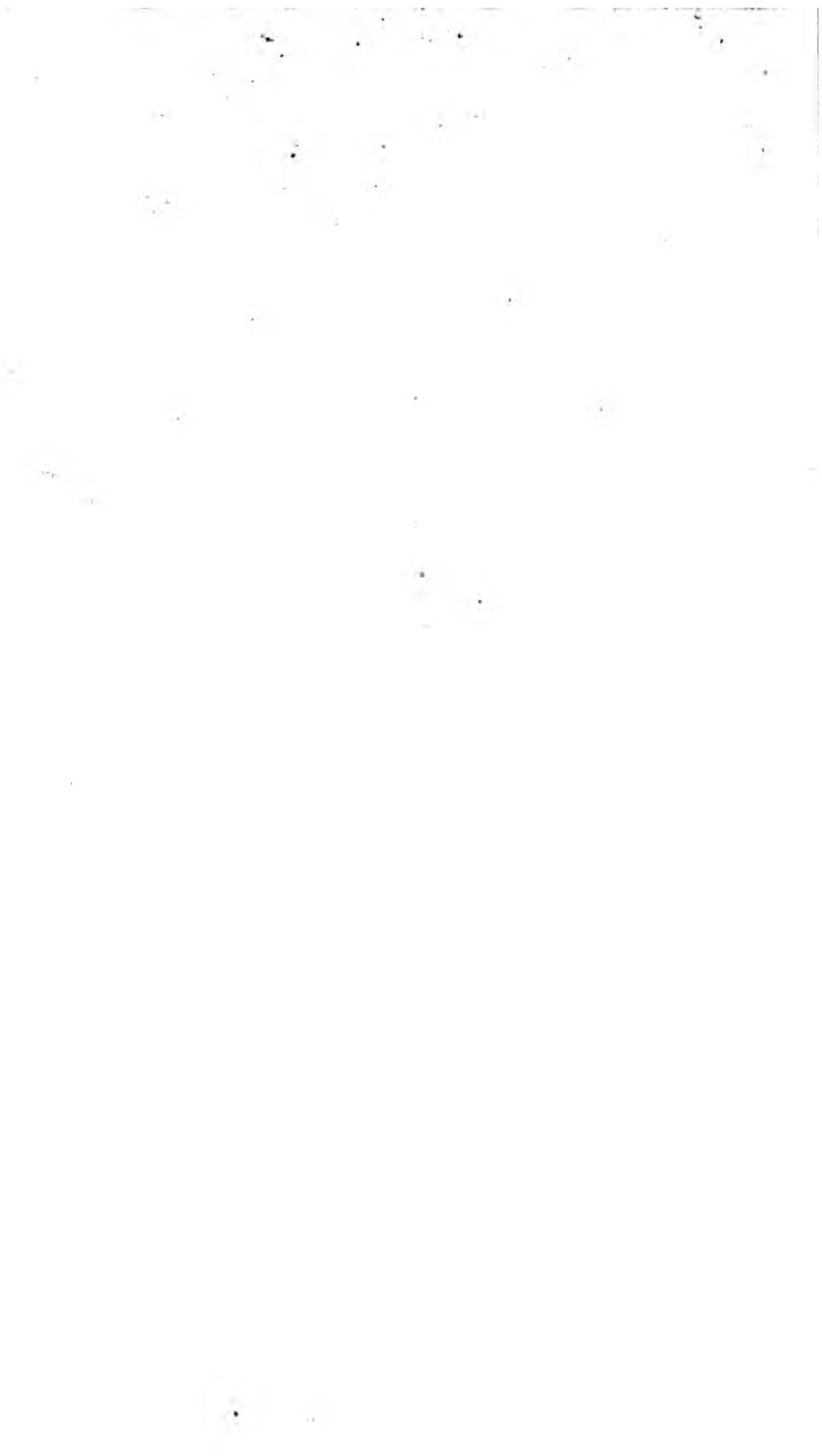


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CHRISTIAN BIOGRAPHY.

**THE LIFE OF THE
REV. PHILIP HENRY;**

BY HIS SON, REV. MATTHEW HENRY.

Abridged.

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THE LIFE OF THE
REV. PHILIP HENRY.

CHAP. I.

His Birth, Parentage, early Piety, and Education at School.

PHILIP HENRY was born at Whitehall, in Westminster, on Wednesday, August 24, 1631, being Bartholomew-Day. I find usually in his diary some pious remark upon the annual return of his birth-day. One year he notes, that the Scripture mentions but two who observed their birth-day with feasting and joy, and they were neither of them copies to be written after: namely, Pharaoh (Gen. xl. 20.) and Herod, (Matt. xiv. 6.) “But (says he) I rather observe it as a day of mourning and humiliation, because shapen in iniquity and conceived in sin.” When he had completed the thirtieth year of his age, he noted this, “So old and no older Alexander was when he had conquered the great world, but I have not yet subdued the little world, myself.” At his thirty-third year he has this humble reflection, “A long time lived to small purpose, what shall I do to redeem it?” At another, “I may mourn as Cæsar did, when he reflected upon Alexander’s early achievements, that others younger than I am have done much more than I have done for God, the God of my life.” And (to mention no more) when he had lived forty-two years he thus writes: “I would be loth to live it over again, lest, instead of making it better, I should make it worse; and besides, every year and day spent on earth is lost in heaven.” This last note reminds me of a

passage I have heard him relate of a friend of his, who, being asked how old he was, answered, "On the wrong side of fifty:" which (said Mr. Henry) "he should not have said;" for, if he was going to heaven, it was "the right side of fifty."

He always kept a will by him, and it was his custom yearly, upon the return of his birth-day, to review, and (if occasion were) to renew and alter it; for it is good to do that at a set time, which it is very good to do at some time. The last will he made bears date, "This 24th day of August, 1695, being the day of the year on which I was born, 1631, and also the day of the year on which by law I died, as did also near two thousand faithful ministers of Jesus Christ, 1662;" alluding to that clause in the Act of Uniformity, which disposed of the places and benefices of ministers not conforming, "as if they were naturally dead."

His father's name was John Henry, the son of Henry Williams, of Briton's Ferry, betwixt Neath and Swansea, in Glamorganshire. According to the old Welsh custom, the father's christian name was the son's surname. He had left his native country very young, unprovided for by his relations; but it pleased God to bless his ingenuity and industry with a considerable income afterwards, which enabled him to live comfortably, to bring up his children well, and to be kind to many of his relations; but public events making against him at his latter end, when he died he left little for his children, but God graciously took care of them. Providence brought this Mr. John Henry when he was young, to be the earl of Pembroke's gentleman, whom he served many years: the earl coming to be lord-chamberlain, preferred him to be the king's servant. He was first made keeper of the Orchard at Whitehall, and afterwards page of the Back Stairs to the King's second son, James, duke of York, which place obliged him to a personal attendance upon the duke in his chamber. He lived

and died a courtier; a hearty mourner for his royal master king Charles the first, whom he did not long survive. He continued, during all the war-time, in his house at Whitehall, though the profits of his place ceased. The king, passing by his door, under a guard, when he was going to Westminster, to that which was called his trial, enquired for his old servant, Mr. John Henry, who was ready to pay his due respects to him, and prayed God to bless his majesty, and to deliver him out of the hands of his enemies, for which the guard had like to have been rough upon him.

His mother was Mrs. Magdalen Rochdale, of the parish of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, in Westminster. She was a virtuous, pious gentlewoman, one that feared God above many. She was altogether dead to the vanities and pleasures of the court, though she lived in the midst of them. She looked well to the ways of her household; prayed with them daily, catechized her children, and taught them the good knowledge of the Lord betimes. He often mentioned, with thankfulness to God, his great happiness in having such a mother, who was to him as Lois and Eunice were to Timothy, acquainting him with the Scriptures from his childhood. As there appeared in him early inclinations both to learning and piety, she devoted him in his tender years to the service of God, in the work of the ministry. She died of a consumption, March 6, 1645, leaving behind her only this son and five daughters. A little before she died, she had this saying, "My head is in heaven, and my heart is in heaven; it is but one step more, and I shall be there too."

Prince Charles and the duke of York being nearly of his age, he was in his childhood an attendant upon them in their play; they were often with him at his father's house, and were wont to tell him what preferment he should have at court, as soon as he was fit for it. He kept a book to his dying day, which the

duke of York gave him ; and I have heard him regret the loss of two curious pictures, which he gave him likewise. Archbishop Laud took a particular kindness to him when he was a child, because he would be very officious to attend at the Water-gate (which was part of his father's charge in Whitehall) to let the archbishop through, when he came late from council, to cross the water to Lambeth.

These circumstances of his childhood he would sometimes speak of among his friends, not as glorying in them, but taking occasion from thence to bless God for his deliverance from the snares of the court ; in the midst of which it is so very hard to maintain a good conscience and the power of religion. The breaking up and scattering of the court, by the calamities of 1641, as it dashed the expectations of his court-preferments, so it prevented the danger of court-entanglements : and though it was not, like Moses', a choice of his own, when come to years, to quit the court ; yet, when he was come to years, he always expressed great satisfaction in his removal from it, and blessed God who chose his inheritance so much better for him.

Yet it may not be improper to observe here what was obvious, as well as amiable, to all who conversed with him ; namely, that he had the most sweet and obliging air of courtesy and civility that could be ; which some attributed, in part, to his early education at court. His mien and carriage were always so very decent and respectful, that it could not but win the hearts of all he had to do with. Never was any man further from rudeness and moroseness, which some scholars, and too many that profess religion, either wilfully affect, or carelessly allow themselves in, sometimes to the reproach of their profession. It is one of the laws of our holy religion, exemplified in the conversation of this good man, to honour all men. Sanctified civility is a great ornament to christianity.

It was a saying he often used, "Religion does not destroy good manners;" and yet he was very far from any thing of vanity in apparel, or formality of compliment in address; his conversation was all natural and easy to himself and others; and nothing appeared in him which a severe critic could call affected. This temper of his tended very much to the adorning of the doctrine of God our Saviour; and the general transcript of such an excellent copy, would do much towards the healing of those wounds, which religion has received in the house of her friends by the contrary.—But to return to his story.

The first Latin school he went to was at St. Martin's Church, under the teaching of Mr. Bonner. Afterwards he was removed to Battersea, where Mr. Wells was his school-fellow. The grateful mention which, in some of his papers, he makes of those who were the guides and instructors of his childhood and youth, brings to mind a French proverb to this purpose, "To father, teacher, and God all-sufficient, none can render equivalent."

In the year 1643, when he was about twelve years old, he was admitted into Westminster school, in the form under Mr. Thomas Vincent, then usher, of whom he would often speak, as a most able, diligent school-master; and one who grieved so much at the dulness and non-proficiency of any of his scholars, that, falling into a consumption, I have heard Mr. Henry say of him, that he even, "killed himself with false Latin."

Awhile after he was taken into the upper school, under Mr. Richard (afterwards Dr.) Busby. In October, 1645, he was admitted king's scholar, and was first of the election, partly by his own merit, and partly by the interest of the earl of Pembroke.

Here he profited greatly in school-learning, and all his days retained his improvements therein to admiration. When he was in years, he would readily

— quote passages out of the classic authors that were not common ; yet he rarely used any such things in his preaching, though sometimes (if very apposite) he inserted them in his notes. Here and before, his usual recreation at vacant times, was either reading the printed accounts of public occurrences, or attending the courts at Westminster-hall, to hear the trials and arguments there, which I have heard him say, he has often done to the loss of his dinner, and oftener of his play.

But let us speak of better things ; soon after the civil war began, there was a daily morning-lecture set up at the Abbey-church, between six and eight o'clock, and preached by seven members of the assembly of divines, in course: Mr. Marshal, Mr. Palmer, Mr. Herle, Dr. Staunton, Mr. Nye, Mr. Whitaker, and Mr. Hill. It was the request of his pious mother, to Mr. Busby, that he would give her son leave to attend that lecture daily, which he did, not abating any thing of his school exercise, in which he kept pace with the rest ; but only dispensing with his absence for that hour : and the Lord was pleased to make good impressions on his soul, by the sermons he heard there. His mother, also, took him with her every Thursday to Mr. Case's lecture at St. Martin's. On the Lord's day he sat under the powerful ministry of Mr. Stephen Marshal, in the morning at the New Chapel, in the afternoon at St. Margaret's Westminster, which was their parish-church. This minister, and ministry, he would to the last, speak of with great respect, and thankfulness to God, as that by which he was, through grace, in the beginning of his days, begotten again to a lively hope. I have heard him speak of it, as the saying of some wise men at that time, That if all the presbyterians had been like Mr. Stephen Marshal, and all the independents like Mr. Jeremiah Burroughs, and all the episcopalians like archbishop Usher, the breaches of the church would soon have been healed.

He also attended constantly upon the monthly fasts at St. Margaret's, where the best and ablest ministers of England preached before the house of commons; and the service of the day was carried on with great strictness and solemnity, from eight in the morning till four in the evening. It was his constant practice, from eleven or twelve years old, to write, as he could, all the sermons he heard, which he kept very carefully, and transcribed many of them.

At these monthly fasts, as he himself has recorded, he had often sweet meltings of soul in prayer, and confession of sin; many lively truths came home to his heart, and he daily increased in that wisdom and knowledge which is to salvation. Read his reflections upon this, which he wrote many years after: "If ever any child, such as I then was, between the tenth and fifteenth year of my age, enjoyed line upon line, precept upon precept, I did. And was it in vain? I trust not altogether in vain. My soul rejoiceth and is glad at the remembrance of it. The word distilled as the dew, and dropt as the rain. I loved it, and loved the messengers of it; their very feet were beautiful to me. And, Lord, what a mercy was it, that at a time when the poor country parts were laid waste, when the noise of drums and trumpets, and the clattering of arms was heard there, and the ways to Sion mourned, that then my lot should be where there was peace and quietness, and great plenty of gospel opportunities! Bless the Lord, O my soul. As long as I live, I will bless the Lord: I will praise my God while I have my being. Had it been only the restraint that it laid upon me, whereby I was kept from the common sins of other children and youth, such as cursing and swearing, sabbath-breaking and the like, I were bound to be very thankful: but that it prevailed through grace effectually to bring me to God, how much am I indebted, and what shall I render!"

Thus the dews of heaven softened his heart by degrees. From these early experiences of his own—

1. He would blame those who laid so much stress on people's knowing the exact time of their conversion, which he thought was with many not possible to do. Who can so soon be aware of the day-break, or of the springing up of the seed sown? The work of grace is better known in its effects than in its causes. He would sometimes illustrate this by that saying of the blind man to the Pharisees, who were so critical in examining the recovery of his sight: this and the other I know not concerning it, but "This one thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see," (John ix. 25.)

2. He would bear his testimony to the comfort and benefit of early piety, and recommend it to all young people as a good thing to bear the yoke of the Lord Jesus in youth. He observed concerning Obadiah, (and he was a courtier) that he "feared the Lord from his youth," (1 Kings xviii. 12;) and, it is said of him, ver. 3, that he "feared the Lord greatly." Those that would come to fear God greatly, must learn to fear him from their youth. No man did his duty so naturally as Timothy did (Phil. ii. 20), who from a child knew the Holy Scriptures. In dealing with young people, how earnestly would he press this upon them, "I tell you, you cannot begin too soon to be religious, but you may put it off too long." Manna must be gathered early; and He that is the first must have the first. He often inculcated (Eccl. xii. 1,) "Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth,"—in the original, "of thy choice," thy choosing days.

I remember a passage of his in a lecture-sermon, in the year 1674, which much affected many; he was preaching on that text, (Matt. xi. 30,) "My yoke is easy;" and, after many things insisted upon, to prove the yoke of Christ easy, he at last appealed to the experience of all that had drawn in that yoke. "Call

now, if there be any that will answer you, and to which of the saints will you turn? turn to which you will, and they will all agree that they have found wisdom's ways pleasantness, and Christ's commandments not grievous. I will here witness for one, who through grace has, in some poor measure, been drawing in this yoke now above thirty years; and has found it an easy yoke, and likes the choice too well to change."

3. He would also recommend it to the care of parents, to bring their children betimes to public ordinances. He would say, "That they are capable, sooner than we are aware, of receiving good by them." The scripture takes notice, more than once, of the little ones in the solemn assemblies of the faithful, (Deut. xxix. 11; Ezra x. 1; Acts xxi. 5.)

But it is time to return to Westminster-school, where, having begun to learn Christ, we left him in the successful pursuit of other learning, under the eye and care of that great master, Dr. Busby, who, on account of his parts and diligence, took a particular kindness to him, called him his child, and would sometimes tell him he should be his heir; and there was no love lost between them. Dr. Busby was noted for being a very severe schoolmaster, especially in the beginning of his time. But Mr. Henry would say, sometimes, that in so great a school there was need of strict discipline; so, for his own part, of the four years he was in the school, he never felt the weight of his hand but once, and then (he says in some of the remarks of his youth, which he wrote long after), "I deserved it for being monitor of the chamber, and according to the duty of this place, being sent to seek a truant, I found him, and, at his earnest request, I promised to say I could not find him, which I wickedly did." Next morning the truant coming under examination, was asked whether he saw the monitor, and he said "Yes, I did," at which Dr. Busby was much surprised, and turned his eyes upon the monitor,

with this word, "What thou, my son!" gave him correction, and appointed him to make a penitential copy of Latin verses; which when he brought, he gave him sixpence, and received him into his favor again.

Among the mercies of God in his youth, he has recorded a remarkable deliverance he had at Westminster-school, which was this: it was customary among the studious boys, for one, two, or more, to sit up the former part of the night at study, and when they went to bed about mid-night to call others at two or three o'clock, as they desired. His request was to be called at twelve, and being awaked, he desired his candle might be lighted, which stuck to the bed's head; but he fell asleep again, the candle fell, and burnt part of the bed and bolster before he awoke; but through God's good providence seasonable help came in, the fire was quenched, and he received no harm.

When he was at Westminster-school he was employed by Dr. Busby, as some others of the most ingenious and industrious of his scholars were, in reading Greek authors, to collect, by his direction, some materials for that excellent Greek grammar which he afterwards published.

But be the school ever so agreeable, youth is desirous to commence man by a removal from it. This step he took in the sixteenth year of his age. It was the ancient custom of Westminster-school, that all the king's scholars, who stood candidates for an election to the University, were to receive the Lord's supper the Easter before, which he did with the rest, in St. Margaret's Church at Easter, 1647. He would often speak of the great pains which Dr. Busby took with his scholars, that were to approach that solemn ordinance, for several weeks before, at stated times; with what skill and seriousness of application, and manifest concern for their souls, he opened to them the nature of the ordinance, and the work they had to do in it, and instructed them what was to be done

In preparation for it; this he made a business of, appointing them religious exercises, instead of their school exercises. What success this had through the grace of God upon young Mr. Henry, for whom the Doctor had a particular regard; read from his own hand. 'There had been treaties (says he) before, between my soul and Jesus Christ, with some weak overtures towards him; but then, then I think it was the match was made, the knot tied. Then I set myself in the strength of divine grace, about the work of self-examination, in order to repentance; and then I repented,—that is solemnly and seriously, with some poor meltings of soul, I confessed my sins before God, original and actual, judging and condemning myself for them, and casting away from me all my transgressions, receiving Christ Jesus the Lord, as the Lord my righteousness, and devoting and dedicating my whole self absolutely and unreservedly to his fear and service. After which, coming to the ordinance, there, there I received him indeed, and he became mine; I say mine. Bless the Lord, O my soul! Encouraged by this experience, I have myself (says he in one of his papers) taken like pains with divers others at their first admission to the Lord's table, and have through grace seen the comfortable fruits of it, both in my own children and others; to God be glory!'

He makes a very grateful mention of Dr. Busby's agency under God in this blessed work, in divers of his papers: "The Lord recompense it," says he, "a thousand-fold into his bosom!"

Thus, before his launching out into the world, was this great concern happily settled, which through grace he had, all his days, more or less the comfort of, in an even serenity of mind, and a peaceful expectation of the glory to be revealed.

May 17, 1647, he was chosen from Westminster-school to Christ's Church College, in Oxford.

CHAP. II.

His years spent at Oxford.

THOUGH Philip Henry was chosen to the University in May, yet being then young, under sixteen, and in love with his school-learning, he made no great haste thither. It was in December following, 1647, that he removed to Oxford. Some merciful providences in his journey, he being a young traveller, affected him much; and he used to speak of God's goodness to him in them, according to the impressions then made by them. He has recorded them with this thankful note, "That there may be a great mercy in a small matter;" as the care that was taken of him by strangers, when he fainted and was sick in his inn the first night; and his casual meeting with Mr. Annesley, son to the Viscount Valentia, (who was chosen from Westminster-school, at the same time,) when his other company, going another way, had left him alone, and utterly at a loss what to do. Thus the sensible remembrance of old mercies may answer the intention of new ones, which is to engage our obedience to God, and to encourage our dependance on him.

Being come to Oxford, he was immediately entered commoner of Christ's Church, where Dr. Samuel Fell was then dean; the tutor assigned to him and the rest of that election, was Mr. Underwood, a very learned ingenious gentleman.

His godfather, the Earl of Pembroke had given him ten pounds to buy a gown, to pay his fees, and to set out with. This in his papers he puts a mark upon, as a seasonable mercy on account of some straits, which providence, by the calamity of the times, had brought his father into. God had taught him from his youth that excellent principle, which he adhered to all his days, that "Every creature is that to us, which God

makes it to be, and no more;" and therefore, while many seek the ruler's favour, and so expect to make their fortunes, as they call it, seeing "Every man's judgment proceedeth from the Lord," it is our wisdom to seek His favour, who is the Ruler of rulers, and that is an effectual way to make sure our happiness.

To the proper studies of this place he now vigorously addressed himself; but still retained a great kindness for the classic authors, and the exercises he loved so well at Westminster-school.

He was admitted student of Christ's Church, March 24, 1647-8, by Dr. Henry Hammond, that great man, the sub-dean, who called him his godbrother, the Earl of Pembroke being his godfather also, and Prince Henry, the other, who gave him his name.

The visitation of the university by the parliamentary Commissioners, happened to be the next month. Oxford had been for a good while in the hands of the parliament, and no change made; but now the Earl of Pembroke, and several others thereunto appointed, went thither to settle things upon a new foundation. The account Mr. Henry in his papers gives of this affair, is to this purpose. The sole questions which the visitors proposed to each person, in every college, that had any place of profit, was this, "Will you submit to the power of the parliament in this present visitation?" which all were to answer in writing; and accordingly were either displaced or continued. Some cheerfully complied, others absolutely refused, among whom he would sometimes tell of one that was but of his standing, who gave in this bold answer; "I neither can nor will submit to the power of the parliament in this present visitation; I say I cannot; I say I will not, J. C." Others answered doubtfully, pleading youth and ignorance in such matters. Mr. Henry's answer was, "I submit to the power of the parliament in the present visitation, as far as I may with a safe conscience and without perjury." His reason for the last

salvo was, because he had taken the oath of allegiance and supremacy a little before, at his admission; which he was very jealous of doing any thing to contradict or infringe, according to the character of the good man, that "he fears an oath:" this made him sometimes signify a dislike of that practice of administering oaths to such as were scarcely past children, who could hardly be supposed to take them with judgment, as oaths should be taken. However this answer of his satisfied; and by the favour of the Earl of Pembroke he was continued in his student's place. But great alterations were made in that as in other colleges, very much, undoubtedly, to the hindrance and discouragement of the scholars, who came thither to get learning, not to judge of the rights of government. Dr. Samuel Fell, the dean, was removed, and Dr. Edward Reynolds, afterwards Bishop of Norwich, was put in his room; Dr. Hammond and all the canons, except Dr. Wall, were displaced; and Mr. Wilkinson, Mr. Pocock, and others of the parliament's friends, were preferred to their places. His thoughts of this in the reflection long after were, that milder methods might have done better, and would have been a firmer establishment to the new interest; but considering that many of those who were put out, being in expectation of a sudden change, which came not of many years after, were exasperating in their carriage towards the visitors, and that the parliament, who at this time were masters, had many of their own friends ready for university preferments, which, as Oxford had been from the beginning, a garrison for the king, they had long been kept out of, it was not strange if they took such strict methods. And yet, nothing being required but a bare submission, which might be interpreted but as crying quarter, he thought that it could not be said, the terms were hard: especially, says he, if compared with those of another nature imposed since.

Among other student-masters removed, his tutor, Mr. Underwood, was one, which he often bewailed as a loss to himself; for he was a good scholar, and one that made it his business to look after his pupils, who were very likely, by the blessing of God, to have profited under his conduct; but upon the removal of Mr. Underwood, he, with some others, were turned over to Mr. Finmore, who was then in the interest which was uppermost, and was afterwards prebendary of Chester; a person, as he notes, able enough, but not willing to employ his abilities for the good of those that were committed to his charge; towards whom he had little more than the name of a tutor. But it pleased God to give him an interest in the affections of a young man, an under-graduate then, and but two or three years his senior, from Westminster, one Mr. Richard Bryan, who took him to be his chamber-fellow, while he continued at Oxford, read to him, and directed him in his studies. Of this gentleman he makes very honourable mention, as one who was, through God's blessing, an instrument of much good to him. Mr. John Fell, also, the dean's son, afterwards himself Dean of Christ Church, and Bishop of Oxford, taking pity on him, and some others that were neglected, voluntarily read to them for some time; a kindness of which he retained a very grateful sense, and for which he much honoured that learned and worthy person.

Here he duly performed the college exercises, disputations every day, in term-time; themes and verses once a week, and declamations when it came to his turn; in which performances he frequently came off with great applause: and many of his manuscripts which remain, shew how well he improved his time there.

And yet in some reflections I find under his hand, written long after, wherein he looks back upon his

early days, he charges it upon himself, that for a good while after he came to the University, though he was known not to be inferior to any of his standing in public exercises, yet he was too much a stranger to that hard study which afterwards he became acquainted with; and that he lost a deal of time which might have been better improved. Thus he is pleased to accuse himself of that, which no one else did, or could accuse him of. But the truth is, in all the secret accounts he kept of himself, he appears to have had a very quick and deep sense of his own failings and infirmities, in the most minute instances; the loss of time; weakness and distraction in holy duties; not improving opportunities of doing good to others, and the like; lamentably bewailing these imperfections, and charging them upon himself, with as great expressions of shame and sorrow, and self-abhorrence and crying out as earnestly for pardon and forgiveness in the blood of Jesus, as if he had been the greatest of sinners. For though he was a man that walked very closely, yet withal he walked very humbly with God, and lived a life of repentance and self-denial. This reminds me of a sermon of his, which one might discern came from the heart, on that Scripture, (Rom. vii. 24.) “O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” “A strange complaint, (says he,) to come from the mouth of one who had learned in every state to be content. Had I been to have given my thoughts, concerning Paul, I should have said, O blessed man that thou art, who hast been in the third heaven, a great apostle, a spiritual father to thousands, &c. and yet a wretched man all this while, in his own account and esteem. He never complains thus of the bonds and afflictions that did abide him, the prisons that were frequent, the stripes above measure, but the body of death, that is, the body of sin, that was what he groaned under.” How

feelingly did he observe from thence, "That the remains of indwelling corruption are a very grievous burden to a gracious soul!"

But to return, it may not be amiss to set down the causes to which he ascribes his loss of time when he came first to the University. One was, that he was young, too young, and understood not the value of his opportunities, which made him advise his friends not to send their children too soon from school to the University, though they may seem ripe, in respect of learning, till they have discretion to manage themselves: while they are children, what can be expected but that they should mind childish things? Another was, that coming from Westminster-school, his attainments in school-learning were beyond what others generally had who came from other schools; so that he was tempted to think there was no need for him to study much, because it was so easy to him to keep pace with others; which, he said, Dr. Caldecotte, chaplain to the Earl of Pembroke, and his great friend, warned him of at his coming to Oxford. Another was, that there were two sorts of persons his contemporaries, some of the new stamp, that came in by the visitation, and were divers of them serious pious young men, but of small ability, comparatively, for learning; and for that reason he desired not to have much fellowship with them. But there were others of the old spirit and way, enemies to the parliament, and the reformation they made; and these were better scholars, but generally not better men. With them for awhile, he conversed most because of their learning: but he soon found it a snare to him, and that it took him off from the life of religion. But "for ever praised be the riches of God's free grace," says he, "that he was pleased still to keep his hold of me; and not to let me alone when I was running from him, but set his hand the second time, as the expression is, (Isa. xi. 11.) to snatch me "as a brand out of the fire." His recovery

from this snare he would call a kind of second conversion; so much was he affected with the preventing grace of God in it, and sensible of a double bond to be for ever thankful, as well as of an engagement to be watchful and humble.

At the latter end of the year 1648, he had leave given him to visit his father at Whitehall, with whom he stayed some time; there he was January 30th, 1648-9, when king Charles I. was beheaded, and with a very sad heart he saw that tragical blow given. Two things he observed and used to speak of, which, I know not whether any of the historians mention: one was, that when the blow was given, there was such a dismal groan among the thousands of people that were within sight of it, as he never heard before; and desired he might never hear the like again, nor see such a cause for it. The other was, that immediately after the stroke was struck, there was, according to order, one troop of soldiers marching from Charing-cross towards King-street, and another from King-street towards Charing-cross, purposely to disperse and scatter the people, and to divert the dismal thoughts which they could not but be filled with, by driving them to shift every one for his own safety. He did upon occasion testify his dislike of this unparalleled action, which he always said was a thing that could not be justified. For some years after King Charles II. came in, Philip Henry observed the day of humiliation for this sin, desiring that God would not lay the guilt of blood to the charge of the nation: but afterwards, finding to what purposes it was generally observed and improved, even to the reproaching and condemning, not only the innocent, but some of the excellent ones of the land; and noting that there is no precedent in Scripture of keeping annual days of humiliation for particular sins; especially after the immediate judgment is at an end, he took no further notice of it. But in his diary, he adds this tender remark, according to the spirit he

was of, "Yet good men no doubt may observe it to the Lord." (Rom. xiv. 6.) Thus he judged not, and why then should he be judged?

In the year 1650-1, he took his Bachelor of Arts degree, and he has recorded the goodness of God in raising him up friends, who helped him in the expenses. Such kindnesses have a peculiar sweetness in them to a good man, who sees and receives them as the kindness of God, and the tokens of his love.

He would often mention, with thankfulness to God, the great advantages he had in the University, not only for learning, but for religion and piety. Serious godliness was in reputation; and besides the public opportunities they had, there were many of the scholars who used to meet together for prayer, and christian conference, to the great confirming of one another's hearts, in the fear and love of God, and preparing them for the service of the church. I have heard him speak of the prudent method they took then about the University Sermons on the Lord's day in the afternoon: they used to be preached by the fellows of colleges in their course; but that being found not so much for edification, Dr. Owen, and Dr. Goodwin performed that service alternately, and the young Masters of Arts that were wont to preach them, had a lecture on Tuesday appointed them. The sermons he heard at Oxford he commonly wrote, not in the time of hearing, but when he came home, in his reflection upon them, which he found a good help to his memory.

In December 1652, he proceeded Master of Arts, and in January following preached his first sermon at South Hinksey, near Oxford, on John viii. 34. "Who-soever committeth sin, is the servant of sin." On this occasion he writes in his diary, what was the breathing in his heart towards God, "The Lord make use of me as an instrument of his glory, and his churches' good in this high and holy calling."

His great pains and improvement, notwithstanding

his extraordinary modesty and humility, had made him so well known in the University, that at the following act in July 1653, he was chosen out of all the masters of that year, to several honorable literary engagements.

Dr. Owen, who was then Vice-Chancellor, spoke with great commendation of his performances to some in the University afterwards, who only knew him by report: and I have heard a worthy divine, who was somewhat his junior in the University, and there a stranger to him, say, how much he admired these exercises, and loved him for them; and yet how much more he wondered, when he became acquainted with him in the country, that so polite an orator should become so profitable and powerful a preacher, and so readily lay aside the enticing words of man's wisdom, which were so easy to him.

There is a copy of Latin verses of his in print, among the poems which the University of Oxford published upon the peace concluded with Holland, in the year 1654, which shew him to be no less a poet than an orator.

He has noted it of some pious young men, that before they removed from the University into the country, they kept a day of fasting and humiliation for the sins they had been guilty of in that place and state. And in the visits he made afterwards to the University, he inserts into his book, as no doubt God did into his, "a tear dropt over my University sins."

CHAP. III.

His removal to Worthenbury, in Flintshire; his ordination to the ministry, and his exercise of it there.

WORTHENBURY is a little town on the river Dee, in that hundred of Flintshire which is separated some

miles from the rest of the county, and known by the name of the English Mailors; because though it is reputed to be in Wales, as pertaining to Flintshire, yet in language and customs it is wholly English, and lies mostly between Cheshire and Shropshire. Worthenbury was of old a parochial chapel belonging to the rectory of Bangor, but was separated from it in the year 1658 by the trustees for uniting and dividing of parishes, and was made a parish of itself. But what was then done being vacated at the Restoration, it came to be again an appurtenant to Bangor, till in the second year of the reign of King William and Queen Mary, it was by act of parliament separated, and made independent of Bangor.

The principal family in Worthenbury parish was that of the Pulestons of Emeral. The head of the family then was John Puleston, Serjeant-at-law, one of the Judges of the Common Pleas. To this family Mr. Henry came from Christ's Church, presently after he had completed his Master's degree, in 1653; ordered into that remote, and to him unknown, corner of the country, by that over-ruling providence which determineth "the bounds of our habitation." The Judge's lady was a person of more than ordinary parts and wisdom; in piety inferior to few, but in learning superior to most of her sex, which I could give instances of from what I find among Mr. Henry's papers, particularly an elegy she made upon the death of the learned Mr. John Selden, who was her great friend. Her agency brought Mr. Henry into the county. She wrote to a friend of hers, Mr. Francis Palmer, student of Christ's Church, to desire him to recommend to her a young man to be in her family, and to take the oversight of her sons, some of whom were ready for the University, and to preach at Worthenbury on the Lord's days, for which a very honourable encouragement was promised. Mr. Palmer proposed it to his friend Mr. Henry, who was willing

for one half year to undertake it, provided it might be required of him to preach but once on the Lord's day, and that some other supply might be got for the other part of the day; he being but twenty-two years of age, and newly entered upon that great work. Provided also, that he should be engaged for half a year only, not intending so soon to break off from an academical life, in which he so much delighted. But, preferring usefulness before his own private satisfaction, he was willing to make trial for a while, in the country; as one that sought not his own things, but the things of Jesus Christ, to whose service in the work of the ministry he had entirely devoted himself, bending his studies wholly that way. In the latter part of his time at Oxford, as one grown weary of that which, he used to say, he found little to his purpose, he employed his time mostly in searching the Scriptures, and collecting useful Scripture observations, which he made very familiar to him, and with which he was thoroughly furnished for this good work. He got a bible interleaved, in which he wrote short notes upon texts of Scripture as they occurred. He would often say, "I read other books, that I may be the better able to understand the Scripture." It was a stock of Scripture knowledge that he set up with, and with that he traded to good advantage. Though he was so great a master in the eloquence of Cicero, yet he preferred far before it that of Apollos, who was "an eloquent man, and mighty in the Scriptures." Acts xviii. 24.

He bid very fair at that time for University preferment; such was the reputation he had gained at the late act, and such his interest with Dr. Owen: but his heart was upon the salvation of souls, to which he postponed all his other interests.

In September 1653 he came down to Emeral, from whence a messenger was sent to Oxford to conduct him thither. Long after when it had pleased God to

settle him in that country, and to build him up into a family, he would often reflect upon his coming into it first; what a stranger he then was, and how far it was from his thoughts to have made his home in those parts; and passing over a brook that divides Flintshire and Shropshire, would sometimes very affectionately use those words of Jacob, "With my staff I passed over this Jordan, and now I am become two bands."

At Emeral he prayed in the family, was tutor to the young gentlemen, and preached once a day at Worthenbury; other help being procured for the other part of the day, according to his request. But it soon happened, that one Lord's day the supply that was expected failed, and he was necessitated, rather than there should be a vacancy, to preach twice; in which he found the promise so well fulfilled, "as thy day is, so shall thy strength be," and "to him, that hath, (that is, who useth what he hath,) shall be given, and he shall have abundance," that, to the great satisfaction of his friends there, from thenceforward he waved looking out for other help than what came from above; and would sometimes speak of this as an instance, "that we do not know what we can do till we have tried."

Here he applied himself to a plain and practical way of preaching, as one truly concerned for the souls of his hearers. He would say sometimes, "We study how to speak, that you may understand us. And I never think I can speak plain enough, when I am speaking about souls and their salvation." I have heard him say, he thought it did him good, that for the first half year of his being at Worthenbury, he had few books with him, which engaged him to a closer search of the Scripture and his own heart in studying sermons. What success his labours had in that parish, which, before he came to it, was accounted one of the most loose profane places in all

that country, may be gathered from part of a letter of Lady Puleston to him, at the end of the first half year after his coming to Emeral, when he was uncertain of his continuance there, and inclined to return to settle at Christ's Church.

“DEAR MR. HENRY,

“The indisposition that my sadness hath bred, and the stay of Mrs. V. here yesterday hindered my answering your last expressions. As to ordering the conversation, and persevering to the practice of those good intents, taken up while one is in the pursuit of a mercy, you and I will confer, as God gives opportunity, who also must give the will and the deed by his Spirit and by the rule of his word. As to begging that one thing for you, God forbid,” as Samuel said, “that I should cease to pray, &c” “This I am sure, that having wanted hitherto a good minister of the word among us, I have oft, by prayer and some tears, above five years, besought God for such a one as yourself: which having obtained, I cannot yet despair, seeing he hath given us the good means, but he may also give us the good end. And this I find, that your audience is increased three for one in the parish, (though in winter, more than formerly in summer) and five for one out of other places. And I have neither heard of their being in the ale-house on the Lord's day, nor ball-playing that day, which before you came was frequent. I think I can name four or five in the parish, that of formal christians are becoming or become real: but you know all are not wrought on at first by the word. God may call them at the latter part of the day, though not in this half year. It is a good sign, that most are loth to part with you; and you have done more good in this half year than I have discerned these eighteen years: but, however, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear, you have delivered your own soul. I have

prayed, and do pray, seeing God hath sent you, that you may be for his glory, and not for our condemnation."

It is easy to imagine what an encouragement this was to him, and what an inducement not to leave those, among whom God had thus owned him. However, that spring he returned to Oxford. The Lady Puleston soon after went thither, with her five sons, of whom she placed the two eldest under his charge, in the college. In the following vacation he went to London to visit his relations; and there in October he received a letter from Judge Puleston, with a very solemn and affectionate request, subscribed by the parishioners of Worthenbury, earnestly desiring his settlement among them, as their minister; which he was persuaded to comply with, having fixed to himself that good rule, in the turns of his life, "to follow providence, and not force it." So in the winter following he came down again, and settled with them. He continued in his student's place in Christ Church for two or three years, attending the service of it once a year; but disposing most of the profit of it for the use of poor scholars there.

The tithe of Worthenbury belonged to the Emeral family, paying some rent to the rector of Bangor. The tithe Judge Puleston was willing to give, clear of that charge, to the minister of Worthenbury for ever. But such was the peculiar and extraordinary kindness he had for Mr. Henry, upon the experience of his merits, that he chose rather, by deed of indenture, bearing date October 6, 1655, between himself and Mr. Henry, "In consideration of his being pleased to undertake the cure of souls, and to preach and teach, and perform other duties of divine service in the parish church of Worthenbury, (so the deed runs) to give, grant, and confirm, for himself and his heirs, unto the said Philip Henry, the yearly rent of one hundred pounds, charged upon all his messuages,

lands, and tenements, in the several counties of Flint, Denbigh, and Chester, to be paid quarterly, until such times as the said Philip Henry shall be promoted or preferred to some other spiritual or ecclesiastical living or preferment," with power of distress in case of non-payment. A hundred a year was more than Worthenbury tithes were worth at that time; and the manner of gift freed the maintenance from much of that loss and incumbrance which commonly attends the gathering of tithes.

He continued for some years in the Emeral family, where he laid out himself very much for the spiritual good of the family, even of the meanest of the servants, by catechising, repeating the sermons, and personal instruction; and he had much comfort in the countenance and conversation of the judge and his lady. Yet he complains sometimes in his diary of "the snares and temptations that he found there," especially because some of the branches of the family, who did not resemble their parents, were uneasy at his being there; which made him willing to remove to a house of his own. When Judge Puleston perceived this, in the year 1657, out of his abundant and continued kindness to him, he did at his own charge build him a very handsome house in Worthenbury, and settled it upon him by a lease, bearing date March 6, 1657, for threescore years, "if he should so long continue minister at Worthenbury, and not accept of better preferment."

He has noted in his diary, that the day the workmen began to build that house, Mr. Mainwaring, of Malpas, preached the lecture of Bangor, from Psalm cxxvii. 1, "Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it." "There never was truth more seasonable to any, than this was to me."—He has recorded it as his great care, that his affections might be kept loose from it, and that it might not inroach upon God's interest in his heart. When it

was finished he thus writes, "I do from my heart bless God, that no hurt or harm befel any of the workmen in the building of it." Thus was his maintenance settled at Worthenbury.

In the year 1659, he was by a writing of Judge Puleston collated, nominated, and presented to the church of Worthenbury, (and the powers that then were, having so appointed) he had an approbation thereof from the commissioners for approbation of public preachers.

Some little opposition was made to his settlement at Worthenbury by Mr. Fogg, then rector of Bangor, because he conceived it an intrenchment upon his right to Worthenbury, and thought it might prejudice his recovering it by course of law. I only mention this for the sake of the note he has upon it in his diary, which is this: "I do earnestly desire that the judge may give Mr. Fogg all reasonable satisfaction, that there may be no appearance of wrong to him, or any other, in this thing." And when Mr. Fogg insisted on it, that Mr. Henry should give it under his hand, that he desired the consent of the said Mr. Fogg to be minister of Worthenbury, he yielded to do it for peace-sake; and from thence forward there was an intimate and entire friendship between Mr. Fogg and him.

Being thus settled at Worthenbury, his next care was concerning ordination to the work of the ministry; to which he would see his call very clear, before he solemnly devoted himself to it.

Mr. Henry was very desirous of being ordained at Worthenbury, but the ministers were not willing to set such a precedent; however, that was one thing which occasioned the delay, so that he was not ordained till September 16, 1657. The manner of his ordination was according to the known directory of the assembly of divines, and the common usage of the presbyterians.

The following was the confession that he delivered:—

“The ground and rule of my faith towards God, is the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament; I believe they were written by holy men, immediately inspired by the Holy Ghost; having found the efficacy of them, in some measure, upon my own heart; I believe they are further able to make me wise to salvation.

Concerning God, I believe that he is, and that he is the rewarder of those that diligently seek him.

The trinity of persons in the unity of the God-head, I receive and own as a truth, I admire and adore as a mystery; though no man hath seen God at any time, yet the only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him, and what he hath declared concerning him, that I believe. I believe that God is a Spirit, for the Son hath said, “God is a Spirit.” I believe that he has life in himself. I believe all things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. I believe by his providence he preserves, guides, and governs all the creatures, according to the purpose of his own will, to his own glory; for the Father worketh hitherto, and the Son also worketh.

I believe he made man upright after his own image and likeness, which image consisteth in knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness, but man by sin lost it.

I believe we were all in the loins of our first parents, and that they stood and fell as public persons, and upon that account justly, without any colour of wrong, we bear our share, both in the guilt of their disobedience, and also the corruption of their nature following thereupon; so that we come into the world children of wrath, and heirs of the curse, one as well as another; enemies to God, hating him, and hated of him; averse to what is good, and prone to all manner of evil. Though all are born in this condition, yet there are some that do not die in it.

I believe there is a Mediator, and there is but one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus. Those whom the Father hath from everlasting pitched his love upon, and given to Christ, not because of works or faith foreseen, but merely of his free grace; for those I believe Christ was sent forth into the world, made of a woman, made under the law; for their sakes he sanctified himself, and became obedient to death, even the death of the cross; wherefore God also hath highly exalted him; and having raised him from the dead on the third day, set him at his own right hand, where he ever lives, to make intercession for those for whom he shed his blood. All these elect redeemed ones I believe are in due time, sooner or later, in their lives effectually called, washed, sanctified, justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

I believe the righteousness of Christ alone, apprehended by faith, is the matter of our justification before God; and that no flesh can stand in his sight upon any other terms; for he is the Lord our righteousness, and in him only the Father is well pleased.

I believe the work of sanctification, managed by the Spirit, who dwelleth in us, though in respect of parts it be complete, for the whole man is renewed; yet in respect of degrees it is not fully perfected till we come to glory; and I believe all that are justified shall be glorified, for we are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation.

I believe the gathering in and building up of saints, is the special end why pastors and teachers are appointed in the church; and that Jesus Christ, according to his promise, will be with them to the end of the world.

The Two Sacraments of the New Testament, Baptism and the Lord's Supper, I receive and own as signs and seals of the covenant of grace; the former

instituted by our Lord Jesus, as a sign and seal of our ingrafting into him, due of right to all the infants of believing parents, and but once to be administered; the other instituted by our Lord Jesus in the night wherein he was betrayed, to shew forth his death, and so seal the benefits purchased thereby to his church, and people, and to be often repeated.

When the body returns to the dust, I believe the soul returns to God that gave it: and that immediately it receives from him the sentence, according to what hath been done in the flesh, either "Come, inherit the kingdom prepared, or Depart accursed into everlasting fire."

I believe, besides this, a day of general judgment in the end of the world, wherein we must all appear before the tribunal of Jesus Christ; and that our bodies being raised by an Almighty power from the dust, shall be united to the same souls again, and shall partake with them in the same condition, either of happiness or misery, to all eternity. Those that have done good shall come forth unto the resurrection of life, and those that have done evil to the resurrection of damnation.

This is the sum and substance of my faith, into which I was baptized, and in which, by the grace of God, I will live and die."

Mr. Parsons then proposed certain questions to him, according to the instructions in the Directory, to which he returned answers as follow:—

Question 1. "What are your ends in undertaking the work and calling of a minister?"

Answer. As far as upon search and enquiry I can hitherto find, though there be that within me that would seek great things for myself (if indeed they were to be found in this calling) yet with my mind I seek them not. But the improvement of the talent which I have received in the service of the gospel, for the glory of God and salvation of souls, I hope

is in my eye, if there be any thing else, I own it not, I allow it not. While so many seek their own, it is my desire, and shall be my endeavour, to seek the things of Jesus Christ.

Q. 2. "What are your purposes, as to diligence and industry in this calling?"

A. I do purpose and resolve, by the help of God, to give myself wholly to these things; to prayer, reading, meditation, instant preaching in season and out of season; wherein I shall very gladly spend and be spent, if by any means I may both save myself and them that hear me. And when at any time I fail herein, I desire God by his Spirit, and my christian friends, neighbours and brethren, by seasonable reproof and admonition, to put me in mind of this engagement now made, in the presence of this great congregation.

Q. 3. "Do you mean to be zealous and faithful in the defence of truth and unity, against error and schism?"

A. I believe what the Spirit hath foretold, that in the last days, perilous times shall come wherein men will not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts shall heap unto themselves teachers. 'Tis my resolution, by the grace of Christ, to watch in all things; to contend earnestly for the faith; to hold fast the form of sound and wholesome words, even the words of the Lord Jesus, and the doctrine which is according to godliness; in meekness, as I am able, instructing those that oppose themselves: and for peace and unity, if my heart deceive me not, I shall rather choose to hazard the loss of any thing that is most dear to me, than be any way knowingly accessory to the disturbance of these in the churches of Christ?

Q. 4. "What is your persuasion of the truth of the reformed religion?"

A. My persuasion is, that the bishop of Rome is

that man of sin and son of perdition whom the Lord Jesus will consume with the spirit of his mouth, and whom he will destroy by the brightness of his coming. And the separation which our first reformers made, I do heartily rejoice in, and bless God for; for had we still continued to partake with him in his sins, we should in the end have partaken with him also in his plagues.

Q. 5. “What do you intend to do when the Lord shall alter your condition, and bring a family under your charge?”

A. When the Lord shall please in his providence to bring me into new relations, I hope he will give me grace to fill them up with duty. It is my purpose to wait upon him and to keep his way, to endeavour, in the use of means, that all that are mine may be the Lord's.

Q. 6. “Will you in humility and meekness submit to admonition and discipline?”

A. I believe it to be a duty incumbent upon all that profess the name of Christ to watch over one another, and that when any is overtaken in a fault, those that are spiritual are to set him in joint again with the spirit of meekness. It shall be my endeavour in the strength of Jesus Christ to walk without rebuke, and when at any time I step aside (for who is there that lives and sins not) I shall account the smiting of my brethren kindness, and their wounds faithful.

Q. 7. “What if troubles, persecutions, and discouragements arise, will you hold out to the end notwithstanding?”

A. Concerning this I am very jealous over my own heart, and there is cause; I find a great want of that zeal and courage for God which I know is required in a minister of the gospel; nevertheless, I persuade myself that no temptation shall befall me but such as is common to man, and that God who is faithful

will not suffer me to be tempted above that which I am able, but that with the temptation he will also make a way to escape, that I may be able to bear it. I promise faithfulness to the death ; but I rest not all in my promise to God, but in his to me ; “When thou goest through the fire, and through the water, I will be with thee.”

When this was done, Mr. Parsons prayed ; and in prayer, he and the rest of the presbyters laid their hands upon him, with words to this purpose : “Whom we do thus in thy name set apart to the work and office of the ministry.”

I have heard it said by those who were present at this solemnity, that Mr. Henry did in his countenance, carriage, and expression, discover such an extraordinary seriousness and gravity. and such deep impressions made upon his spirit, as greatly affected the auditory, and even struck an awe upon them.

Read the reflection upon it in his diary. “Methought I saw much of God in the carrying on of the work of this day. O how good is the Lord ! he is good and doth good ; the remembrance of it I shall never lose ; to him be glory. I made many promises of diligence, faithfulness, &c., but I lay no stress at all upon them, but on God’s promise to me, that he will be with his ministers always to the end of the world. Amen, Lord, so be it. Make good thy word unto thy servant, wherein thou hast caused me to put my trust.” And in another place, “I did this day receive as much honour and work, as ever I shall be able to know what to do with. Lord Jesus, proportion supplies accordingly.” Two scriptures he desired might be written in his heart, 2 Cor. vi. 4, 5, &c. ; and 2 Chron. xxix. 11.

Two years after, upon an occasion of his being present at an ordination at Whitchurch, he thus writes—
‘This day my ordination covenants, were in a special

manner renewed, as to diligence in reading, prayer, meditation, faithfulness in preaching, admonition, catechising, sacraments, zeal against error and profaneness, care to preserve and promote the unity and purity of the church, notwithstanding opposition and persecution, though to death. Lord, thou hast filled my hands with work, fill my heart with wisdom and grace that I may discharge my duty to thy glory, my own salvation, and the salvation of those that hear me. Amen.'

Let us now see how he applied himself to his work at Worthenbury. The sphere was narrow, too narrow for such a burning and shining light. There were then but forty-one communicants in that parish, and they were never doubled. Yet he had such low thoughts of himself, that he neither sought for a larger sphere, nor would hearken to any overtures of that kind: and withal, he had such high thoughts of his work, and the worth of souls, that he exerted as much diligence and vigour here, as if he had the over-sight of the largest and most considerable parish in the country.

The greatest part of the parish were poor tenants, and labouring husbandmen; but the souls of such, he used to say, are as precious as the souls of the rich, and to be looked after accordingly. His prayer for them was, "Lord, despise not the day of small things in this place, where there is some willingness, but much weakness." And thus he writes upon the Judge settling a handsome maintenance upon him:—"Lord, thou knowest, I seek not theirs, but them: give me the souls.——"

He was in labours more abundant to win souls; besides preaching, he expounded the scriptures in order, catechised and explained the catechism. At first he took into the number of his catechumens some that were adults, who, he found, wanted instruction; and when he had taken what pains he thought needful with them, he dismissed them from further attendance,

with commendation of their proficiency, and counsel to hold fast the form of sound words; and to be watchful against the sins of their age, to apply themselves to the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, and make ready for it; afterward he catechised none above seventeen or eighteen years of age.

He set up a monthly lecture there of two sermons, one he himself preached, and the other his friend Mr. Ambrose Lewis, of Wrexham, for some years. He also kept up a monthly conference in private from house to house, in which he met with the more judicious persons of the parish, and they discoursed familiarly together of the things of God, to their mutual edification, according to the example of the apostles, who, though they had the liberty of public places, yet taught also from house to house, (Acts v. 42; xx. 20.) That which induced him to set and keep up this exercise as long as he durst (which was till August 1660) was, that by this means he came better to understand the nature of his flock, and so knew better how to preach to them, and to pray for them, and they to pray one for another. If they were in doubt about any thing relating to their souls, that was an opportunity of getting satisfaction. It was likewise a means of increasing knowledge and love and other graces; and thus it abounded to a good account.

He was very industrious in visiting the sick, instructing them, and praying with them; and in this, he would say, he aimed to do good, not only to the sick, but also to their friends and relations that were about them.

He preached funeral sermons for all that were buried there, rich or poor, old or young, or little children; for he looked upon it as an opportunity of doing good. He called it, "setting-in the plough of the word, when the providence had prepared and softened the ground." He never took any money for that or any other ministerial performance, besides his

stated salary, for which he thought himself obliged to do his whole duty to them as a minister.

When he first administered the ordinance of the Lord's Supper there, he did it with great solemnity. After he had endcavoured, in his public preaching, to instruct them in the nature of that ordinance, he discoursed personally with all that gave up their names to the Lord in it, concerning their knowledge, experience, and conversation, their obligation to observe the law of Christ, and concerning brotherly admonition in case of scandal; and gave notice to the congregation who they were that were admitted; adding this, 'Concerning these, and myself, I have two things to say, 1st. As to what is past we have sinned: if we should say we have not, we should deceive ourselves, and the truth were not in us; and yet this withal we can say, and have said it, some of us with tears, We have grieved that we have sinned. 2dly, For the time to come we are resolved, by God's grace, to walk in new obedience; and yet seeing we are not angels, but men and women encompassed with infirmities and temptations, it is possible we may fall; but if we do, it is our declared resolution to submit to admonition and censure, according to the rule of the gospel.' He took care so to manage the admissions to that ordinance, that the weak might not be discouraged, nor the ordinance profaned. He would tell those whom he was necessitated to debar from the ordinance for ignorance, that if they were but truly willing, they might in a short time, by the blessing of God upon their diligent use of means, reading, prayer, and conference, get such a competent measure of knowledge, as to be able to discern the Lord's body. And those that had been scandalous, if they would but come and declare their repentance and resolutions of new obedience, they should be no longer excluded.

To give a specimen of his lively administrations of

that ordinance, let me transcribe the notes of his exhortation at the first sacrament that he ever administered, Nov. 27, 1659. I suppose they are but hints of what he enlarged more upon, for he had always a great fluency upon such occasions.

‘ Dearly beloved in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, we are met together this day about the most solemn and weighty service under heaven; we are come to a feast, where the feast-maker is God the Father; the provision, God the Son, whose flesh is meat indeed, and whose blood is drink indeed; the guests, a company of poor sinners, unworthy such an honour; the crumbs under the table were too good for us, and yet we are permitted to taste the provision upon the table; and that which makes the feast is, a hearty welcome: God the Father bids you welcome, to the flesh and blood of his Son; think you hear him saying to you, O believing souls, “Eat, O friends, drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved.” The end of this feast is to keep in remembrance the death of Christ, and our deliverance by it, and thereby to convey spiritual nourishment and refreshment to our souls. But withal, give me leave to ask you one question, What appetite have you for this feast? Are you come hungering and thirsting? such have a promise, “they shall be filled.” He filleth the hungry with good things, but the rich are sent empty away; a honey-comb to a full soul is no honey-comb.—Canst thou say as Christ said, “With desire I have desired to eat this?” In this ordinance here is Christ and all his benefits exhibited to thee. Art thou weak? here is bread to strengthen thee. Art thou sad? here is wine to comfort thee. What is it thou standest in need of?—a pardon? here it is sealed with blood; ‘take it by faith, as I offer it to you in the name of the Lord Jesus: “though thy sins have been as scarlet, they shall be as wool, if thou be willing and obedient.”’ It may be, here are some, that have been drunkards,

swearers, scoffers at godliness, sabbath-breakers, and what not? and God hath put into your hearts to humble yourselves, to mourn for, and turn from, all your abominations; O come hither, here is forgiveness for thee. What else is it thou wantest? O (says the poor soul) I would have more of the Spirit of grace, more power against sin, especially my own iniquity; why, here it is for thee: from the fulness that is in Jesus Christ we receive, and grace for grace, John i. 16. We may say as David did, (Psalm cviii. 7, 8.) "God hath spoken in his holiness," and then "Gilead is mine, and Manasseh is mine." So God hath spoken in his word, sealed in his sacrament, and then Christ is mine, pardon is mine, grace is mine, comfort is mine, glory is mine; here I have his bond to shew for it. This is to those among you that have engaged their hearts to approach unto God this day.

' But if there be any come hither with a false, unbelieving, filthy, hard heart, I do warn you seriously, and with authority, in the name of Jesus Christ, presume not to come any nearer to this sacred ordinance; you that live in the practice of any sin, or the omission of any duty against your knowledge and conscience; you that have any malice or grudge to any of your neighbours, leave your gift and go your ways; be reconciled to God, be reconciled to your brother, and then come!—Better shame thyself for coming so near, then damn thyself by coming nearer. I testify to those who say they shall have peace, though they go on still in their trespasses, that there is poison in the bread; take it and eat it at your own peril; there is poison in the cup too, you drink your own damnation: I wash my hands from the guilt of your blood, look you to it. On the other hand, you poor penitent souls that are lost in yourselves, here is a Christ to save you: Come, "O come ye that are weary and heavy laden, &c."'

His carriage towards the people of his parish was

very exemplary; condescending to the meanest, and conversing familiarly with them; bearing with the infirmities of the weak, and becoming all things to all men. He was exceedingly tender of giving offence, or occasion of grief to any; reminding himself in his diary upon such occasions, that the wisdom that is from above, is pure, and peaceable, and gentle, &c. Yet he plainly and faithfully reprov'd what he saw amiss in any, and would not suffer sin to pass unnoticed; mourning also for that which he could not mend. There were some untractable people in the parish, who sometimes caused grief to him, and exercised his boldness and zeal in reprov'g. Once hearing of a merry meeting at an ale-house on a Saturday night, he went himself and broke it up, and scattered them. At another time, he publicly witnessed against a frolic of some vain people, who on a Saturday night came to the church with a fiddle before them, and dressed it up with flowers and garlands, making it (as he told them) more like a play-house: and, was this their preparation for the Lord's day, and the duties of it? &c. He reminded them of Eccl. xi. 9. "Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth: but know thou—"

Many out of the neighbouring parishes attended upon his ministry, and some came from far, though sometimes he signified his dislike of it; so far was he from glorying in it. But they who had spiritual senses exercised to discern things that differ, would attend upon that ministry, which they found to be most edifying.

He was about eight years labouring in the word and doctrine of Worthenbury, and his labour was not altogether vain: he saw in many the desire of his soul, to the rejoicing of his heart; but with this particular dispensation which I have heard him sometimes speak of, that most or all of those in that parish, whom he was, through grace, instrumental of good to, died before he left it, or quickly after: so that

within a few years after his removal, there were very few of the visible fruits of his ministry there. Yet the opportunity he found there of doing more good, by having those that were his charge near him, made him all his days bear his testimony to parish-order, where it may be had upon good terms. From his experience here, (though he would say, we must do what we can, when we cannot do what we would;) he often wished and prayed for the opening of a door, by which to return to that order again.

He had not been long at Worthenbury, when he began to be taken notice of by the neighbouring ministers, as likely to be a considerable man. Though his extraordinary modesty and humility, which even in his youth he was remarkable for, made him to sit down with silence in the lowest place, and to say as Elihu, "Days shall speak;" yet his eminent gifts and graces could not long be hid, and a person of his merits could not but meet with those quickly, who said, "Friend, go up higher;" and so that scripture was fulfilled, Luke xiv. 10. He was often called upon to preach the weekly lectures, which were set up plentifully, and diligently attended in those parts; and his labours were generally very acceptable and successful. The people gave him the title of "Heavenly Henry," by which he was commonly known all the country over. His advice was sought for by many neighbouring ministers and christians; for he was one of those that found favour and good understanding in the sight of God and man. He was noted at his first setting out, as I have been told by one who was intimately acquainted with him, and with his character and conversation, for three things: 1. Great piety and devotion, and a mighty savor of godliness in all his converse. 2. Great industry in the pursuit of useful knowledge; he was particularly observed to be very inquisitive when he was among the aged and intelligent, hearing them, and asking them questions:

a good example to young men, especially young ministers. 3. Great self-denial, self-diffidence, and self-abasement: this eminent humility put a lustre upon all his other graces. This character of him reminds me of a passage I have heard him relate, as a check to the forwardness and confidence of young men, that once, at a meeting of ministers, a question of moment was started, to be debated among them; upon the proposal of it, a confident young man shoots his bolt presently. "Truly, (said he) I hold it so."—"You hold, sir? (said a grave minister) it becomes *you* to hold your peace."

Besides his frequent preaching of the lectures about him, he was a constant and diligent attendant upon those within his reach; and not only wrote the sermons, but afterwards recorded in his diary, what in each sermon reached his heart; affected him, and did him good; adding some proper pious ejaculations, which were the breathings of his heart, when he meditated upon, and prayed over the sermons. What a wonderful degree of piety and humility doth it evidence, for one of so great acquaintance with the things of God, to write, This I learnt out of such a sermon; and this was the truth I applied to myself out of such a sermon; and indeed something out of every sermon. His diligent improvement of the word preached, contributed more than any one thing, as a means to his great attainments in knowledge and grace. He would say sometimes, that one great use of week-day lectures was, that it gave ministers an opportunity of hearing one another preach, by which they are likely to profit, which they hear not as masters, but as scholars; not as censors, but as learners.

His great friend and companion, and fellow-labourer in the work of the Lord, was the worthy Mr. R. Steel, of Hanmer. With him he joined frequently at Hanmer and elsewhere, in christian conference, and in days

of humiliation and prayer, besides their meetings with other ministers at public lectures; after which it was usual to spend some time among themselves in set disputations in Latin. Thus, in those days, ministers made it their business to provoke one another to love and to good works.

In the beginning of his days he often laboured under bodily distempers; it was feared that he was in a consumption; some blamed him for taking so much pains about his ministerial work, and urged him to husband his strength; but he often reflected upon it with comfort afterward, that he was not influenced by such suggestions. He would sometimes say, "The more we do, the more we MAY DO in the service of God." When his work was more than ordinary, and bore hard upon him, he thus appealed to God; "Thou knowest, Lord, how well contented I am to spend and be spent in thy service; and if the outward man decay, O, let the inward man be renewed." Upon the return of his indisposition he expresses a great concern how to get spiritual good by it; to come out of the furnace, and "leave some dross behind;" for "it is a great loss to lose an affliction." He mentions it as that which he hoped did him good, that he was ready to look upon every return of distemper, "as a summons to the grave;" thus he learned to die daily. "I find," says he, "my earthly tabernacle tottering; and when it is taken down, I shall have a building in heaven, that shall never fail. Blessed be God the Father, and my Lord Jesus Christ, and the good Spirit of grace. Even so. Amen." This was both his strength and his song, under his bodily infirmities.

While he was at Worthenbury, he constantly laid by the tenth of his income for the poor, which he carefully and faithfully disposed of, in the liberal things which he devised, especially teaching poor children. And he recommended it as a good rule to lay *by* for charity, in proportion to the circumstances,

As it will then be easier to lay *out* in charity; we shall be more apt to seek for opportunities of doing good, when we have money lying by us, of which we have said, "This is not our own, but the poor's." To encourage himself and others to works of charity, he would say, "He is no fool, who parts with that which he cannot keep, when he is sure to be recompensed with that which he cannot lose." And yet to exclude all boasting of alms, he often expressed himself in those words of David, "Of thine own, Lord, have we given thee."

In the year 1658, the ministers of that neighbourhood, enlarged their correspondence with the ministers of North-Wales; and they had several meetings at Ruthin, and other places, that year, for the settling of a correspondence, and the promoting of unity, love, and good understanding among themselves, by entering into an association, like those some years before of Worcestershire and Cumberland, which, having been published, they made their pattern. They appointed particular associations; and, notwithstanding some of them were in their judgments episcopal, others congregational, and others classical, they agreed to lay aside the thoughts of matters in variance, that with one consent they might study, in their respective places, to promote the common interest of Christ's kingdom, and the common salvation of precious souls. He observed that this year, after the death of Oliver Cromwell, there was generally throughout the nation a great change in the temper of God's people, and a strong tendency towards peace and unity; as if they were by consent weary of their long clashings. In his diary he expresses his great rejoicing in this, and his hope that the time was at hand, when "Judah should no longer vex Ephraim, nor Ephraim envy Judah, neither should they learn war any more." Though these hopes were soon disappointed by a change of the scene, yet he would often

speaking of the experience of that and the following year in those parts, as a specimen of what may yet be expected, and therefore in faith prayed for, when the Spirit shall be poured out upon us from on high. But alas! "Who shall live when God doth this?" From that experience he likewise gathered this observation, that "it is not so much our difference of opinion that doth us the mischief, as the mismanagement of that difference."

In the association of the ministers, it was referred to Mr. Henry to draw up that part of agreement which concerned the worship of God, which task he performed to their satisfaction. His preface to it begins thus: 'Though the main of our desires and endeavours be after unity in the greater things of God; yet we judge uniformity in the circumstances of worship, a thing not to be altogether neglected by us; not only in regard of that influence, which external visible order hath upon the beauty and comeliness of the churches of Christ; but also, as it hath a direct tendency both to strengthen our hands in ministerial services, and to remove those prejudices which many have conceived even against religion and worship itself. We bless God from our very souls, for that whereunto we have already attained; and yet we hope something further may be done, in reference to our closer walking by the same rule, and minding the same things. The word of God is the rule which we desire and resolve to walk by in the administration of ordinances; and for those things wherein the word is silent, we think we may and ought to have recourse to christian prudence, and the practice of the reformed churches, agreeing with the general rules of the word.'

These agreements of theirs were the more likely to be for good, since here, as in Worcestershire, when they were in agitation, the ministers set apart a day of fasting and prayer among themselves to bewail

ministerial neglects, and to seek of God direction and success in their ministerial work. They met sometimes for this purpose at Mr. Henry's house, at Worthenbury.

One passage may not improperly be inserted here; that once, at a meeting of the ministers, being desired to subscribe a certificate concerning one whom he had not sufficient acquaintance with, he refused; giving this reason, "that he preferred the peace of his conscience before the friendship of all the men in the world."

Sept. 29, 1658, the lady Puleston died. "She was (said he) the best friend I had on earth; but my Friend in heaven is still where he was, and he will never leave me nor forsake me." He preached her funeral sermon from Isa. ii. 22, "Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils." He has noted this expression of hers not long before she died, "My soul leans to Jesus Christ; lean to me, sweet Saviour." About this time he writes, "A dark cloud is over my concerns in this family; but my desire is, that whatever becomes of me and my interest, the interest of Christ may still be kept on foot in this place. Amen, so be it." But he adds soon after, that saying of Athanasius, which he was used often to quote and take comfort from: "It is a little cloud, and will soon blow over"

About a year after, Sept. 5, 1659, Judge Puleston died, and all Mr. Henry's interest in the Emeral-family was buried in his grave. He preached the Judge's funeral sermon from Neh. xiii. 14. "Wipe not out my good deeds that I have done for the house of my God, and for the officers thereof;" the design of which was not to applaud his deceased friend; I find not a word in the sermon to that purpose: but he took occasion from the instance of so great a benefactor to the ministry, as the Judge was, to shew that deeds done for the house of God and the offices thereof,

are good deeds and to press people according to their ability and opportunity, to do such deeds. One passage in that sermon ought to be recorded; That it had been for several years the practice of a worthy gentleman in the neighbouring county, in renewing his leases, instead of making it a condition that his tenants should keep a hawk or a dog for him, to oblige them that they should keep a bible in their houses for themselves, and should bring up their children to learn to read and be catechised. This, said he, would be no charge to you, and it might oblige them to that, which otherwise they would neglect. "Some wished," says he in his diary, "that I had chosen some other subject for that sermon; but I approved myself to God; and if I seek to please men, I am not the servant of Christ." What personal affronts he received from some of the branches of that family at that time, need not be mentioned; but with what exemplary patience he bore them, ought not to be forgotten.

In March, 1658-9, he was very much solicited to leave Worthenbury, and accept the vicarage of Wrexham, which was a place that he had both a great interest in, and a great kindness for; but as he could not see his call clear from Worthenbury, he declined it. The same year he had an offer made him of a considerable living near London, but he did not consult with flesh and blood, nor seek great things for himself.

He was a hearty well-wisher to the return of the King, the spring following, in 1660, and much affected with the mercy of it. "While others rejoice carnally," said he, "Lord, help thy people to rejoice spiritually, in our public national mercies." It was upon that occasion that Mr. Baxter preached his sermon of "Right rejoicing," on Luke x. 20. But he and others soon saw cause to rejoice with trembling, and to sing both of mercy and judgment; for

about that time he has this melancholy remark, "Religion loses ground exceedingly, and profaneness gets it. Help, Lord!" However, he was very industrious to quiet the minds of some who were very uneasy at that great revolution; and that scripture yielded him much satisfaction, John iii. 35. "The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand." If Christ be not only Head of the church, but Head over all things to the church, we may be assured, that all things shall be made to work together for good to it. The text also, which the Lord put into his heart to preach upon, on the day of public thanksgiving for the king's restoration, was very comfortable to him: "The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord." (Prov. xxi. 1.) His sense of that great mercy of God to the nation, in the unbloody, peaceable, and legal settlement of King Charles II. upon the throne, was the same with that of multitudes, both ministers and others who were of the quiet in the land, who yet not long after suffered very hard things under him. Soon after the return of the King, he notes, how industrious some were to remove him from Worthenbury; on which he writes this, as the breathing of his soul towards God, "Lord, if it please thee, fasten me here as a nail in a sure place; if otherwise, I will take nothing ill which thou doest with me." When pressed by his friends more earnestly than before to accept of some other place; "Lord, (said he) mine eye is up unto thee; I am wholly at thy disposal; make my way plain before my face, because of mine enemies; my resolution is, to deny myself if thou callest me. Here, or any where, 'tis no great matter where I am."

There are two things further which I think it may be of use to give some account of in the close of this chapter. 1. Of the course of his ministry at Worthenbury; and 2. Of the state of his soul, and the communion he had with God in those years.

As to the subjects he preached upon, he did not use to dwell long upon a text. He would sometimes say, "Better one sermon upon many texts, that is, many scriptures opened and applied, than many sermons upon one text."

He used to preach in a fixed method, and linked his subjects in a sort of chain. He adapted his method and style to the capacities of his hearers, fetching his similitudes for illustration, from those things which were familiar to them. He did not shoot the arrow of the word over their heads in high notions, or the flourishes of affected rhetoric; nor under their feet by blunt and homely expressions; but to their hearts in close and lively applications. His delivery was very graceful and agreeable, neither noisy and precipitate on the one hand, nor dull and slow on the other. His doctrine dropped as the dew, and distilled as the soaking rain, and came with a charming pleasing power, such as many bore witness to, that have wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth.

When he went to Oxford, and preached before the university in Christ's-Church, as he did several times, his labours were very acceptable, and successful; particularly one sermon which he preached on Prov. xiv. 9. "Fools make a mock at sin;" for which, a young Master of Arts came to his chamber afterwards to return him thanks, and to acknowledge the good impressions, which divine grace, by that sermon, had made upon his soul, which he hoped he should never forget.

In his diary he frequently records the frame of his spirit in studying and preaching. Sometimes blessing God for signal help vouchsafed, and owning him the "Lord God of all his enlargements;" at other times, complaining of great deadness and straitness. "It is a wonder, (says he,) that I can speak of eternal things, with so little a sense of the reality of them. Lord,

strengthen that which remains, which is ready to die." And he once writes thus upon a studying day; "I forgot explicitly and expressly to crave help from God when I began, and the chariot-wheels drove accordingly. Lord, forgive my omissions, and keep me in the way of duty.

As to the state of his soul in these years, it should seem by his diary, that he was exercised with some doubts and fears concerning it. "I think, (says he,) never did any poor creature pass through such a mixture of hope and fear, joy and sadness, assurance and doubting, down and up, as I have done these years past." The notice of this may be of use to drooping christians, that they may know their case is not singular; and that if God, for a small moment, hide his face from them, he deals with them no otherwise than as he useth sometimes to deal with the dearest of his servants. It is affecting to hear a person that lived a life of communion with God, complaining of great straitness in prayer. He says, "No life at all in the duty; many wanderings: if my prayers were written down, and my vain thoughts interlined, what incoherent nonsense would there be! I am ashamed, Lord; I am ashamed, O pity, and pardon." He suspected the workings of pride, when he gave an account to a friend who enquired of him, concerning the success of his ministry, and he recorded it, with this ejaculation annexed, "The Lord pardon and subdue." This was a sign that he kept a very watchful eye upon the motions of his own heart.

He charges it upon himself in his diary, that he was present at a duty in the midst of many distractions, not tasting sweetness in it, &c. "When a fire is first kindled, (says he,) there is a deal of smoke and smother, that afterwards wears away; in young converts, there is much peevishness, forwardness, darkness: so it hath been with my soul, and so it is yet in a great measure. Lord, pity, and do not quench the smoking

flax; though as yet it do but smoke, let these sparks be blown up into a flame." He adds "Great mercies, but poor returns; signal opportunities, but small improvements." Such are his frequent complaints of himself. And, though few or none excelled him in profitable discourse, yet, in that, he often bewails his barrenness, and unprofitableness, saying, "Little good done or got such a day for want of a heart; 'tis my sin and my shame. O that I had wings like a dove."

Yet, when he wanted a faith of assurance, he lived by a faith of adherence. "Such a day (says he) a full resignation was made of all my concerns, into the hands of my heavenly Father; let him deal with me as seemeth good in his eyes; I am learning and labouring to live by faith; Lord, help my unbelief." Another time he notes, that many perplexing fears being upon his spirit, they were all silenced by that sweet word, which was seasonably brought to his remembrance, "Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer."

He very frequently kept days of fasting and humiliation in secret. Sometimes he observed these monthly, and sometimes only upon special occasions; but the memorandums in his diary, not only while he was at Worthenbury, but often afterwards, shew what sweet communion he had with God in those solemn duties, which no eye can witness, but his "who seeth in secret," and will "reward openly." He writes "Remember, O my soul, such a day, as a day of more than ordinary engagements entered into, and strong resolutions taken up for closer walking, and more watchfulness. O my God, undertake for me." And upon another of those days he notes, "If sowing in tears be so sweet, what then will the harvest be, when I shall reap in joy? Bless the Lord, O my soul, who forgiveth all thine iniquities, and will in due time heal all thy diseases."

CHAP. IV.

His Marriage, Family, Family-Religion, and the Education of his Children.

HE removed from Emeral, to the house in Worthenbury, which the Judge had built for him, in February, 1658-9, and then had one of his sisters with him to keep his house. No sooner had he a tent, but God had an altar in it. There he set up repetition on Sabbath-evenings, and welcomed his neighbours to it. His christian friends often, and sometimes his brethren in the ministry, kept days of fasting and prayer at his house. He used to tell people when they had built new houses, they must dedicate them; referring to Deut. xx. 5; and the title of Psalm xxx; that is, they must invite God to their houses, and devote them to his service.

Providence having thus brought him into a house of his own, soon after provided a help-mate for him. After long agitation, and some discouragement and opposition from the father, April 26, 1660, he married Katherine, the only daughter and heiress of Mr. Samuel Matthews, of Broad-oak, in the township of Iscoyd, in Flintshire. Mr. Matthews was a gentleman of a very competent estate; such a one as King James the First used to say, was the happiest lot of all others, which set a man below the office of a justice of peace, and above that of a petty constable. This was his only child: very fair and honourable overtures had been made for her disposal; but it pleased God so to order events, and to over-rule the spirits of those concerned, that she was reserved to be a blessing to this good man, in things pertaining "both to life and godliness."

The day before his marriage, he kept as a day of secret prayer and fasting. He used to say, Those who

would have comfort in that change of their condition, must see to it, that they bring none of the guilt of their single state into the married state. The presence of Christ at a wedding, will turn the water into wine; and he will come, if he be invited by prayer.

He took all occasions while he lived, to express his thankfulness to God, for the great comfort he had in this relation. "A day of mercy (so he writes on his marriage-day) never to be forgotten." "God had given him one (as he writes afterwards) every way his helper, in whom he had much comfort, and for whom he thanked God with all his heart." He writes in his diary, "April 26, 1680—This day we have been married twenty years, in which time we have received of the Lord more than twenty thousand mercies; to God be glory." His usual prayer for his friends in the married state, was according to his own practice, that they might be "mutually serviceable to each other's faith and holiness, and jointly serviceable to God's honour and glory."

Her father, though he put some hardships upon him in the terms, and had been somewhat averse to the match, yet, by Mr. Henry's great prudence, and God's good providence, was influenced to give a free consent to it; and with his own hand to give her in marriage. From this, as from other experiences, Mr. Henry had learned to say with assurance, "It is not in vain to wait upon God and keep his way." Mr. Matthews settled part of his estate before marriage upon them and their heirs; he lived about seven years after; and when he died, the remainder came to them. This competent estate, which Providence brought into his hand, was not only a comfortable support to him when he was turned out of his living, and when many faithful ministers of Christ were reduced to great poverty and straits; but it enabled him likewise, as he had opportunity, to preach the gospel freely, which he did to his dying day; and also to give for the relief of the

needy, in which he sowed plentifully, to a very large proportion of his income. He often blessed God that he had wherewith to do this : remembering the words of the Lord, how he said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

Such was his house, and such the vine which God graciously planted by the side of his house. By her God gave him six children, all born within less than eight years ; the two eldest, sons, John and Matthew : the other four, daughters, Sarah, Katherine, Eleanor, and Ann. His eldest son John died of the measles, in the sixth year of his age ; and the rest were in mercy spared to him.

The Lord having built him up into a family, he was careful and faithful in making good his solemn vow at his ordination, that "he and his house would serve the Lord." He would often say, "We are that really, which we are relatively. It is not so much what we are at church, as what we are in our families. Religion in the power of it will be family religion." In that his practice was very exemplary ; he was one that walked before his house in a perfect way, with a perfect heart, and therein behaved himself wisely. His constant care and prudent endeavour was, not only to put iniquity far from his tabernacle, but that where he dwelt, the word of Christ might dwell richly. If he might have no other church, yet he had a "church in his house."

He made conscience of closet-worship, and abounded in it, not making his family-worship an excuse for the omission of that. He has this affecting note in his diary, upon the removing of his closet, but from one room to another : "This day my new closet was consecrated, if I may say so, with this prayer :— "That all the prayers that ever should be made in it, according to the will of God, morning, evening, and at noon, ordinary or extraordinary, might be accepted of God, and obtain a gracious answer. Amen and amen."— It was the caution and advice which he frequently

gave to his children and friends ; “ Be sure you look to your secret duty ; keep that up whatever you do ; the soul cannot prosper in the neglect of it.” He observed, that “ apostacy generally begins at the closet-door. Secret prayer is first neglected, and carelessly performed, then frequently omitted, and after awhile wholly cast off ; and then farewell God and Christ and all religion.” He also advised, that secret duty be performed secretly, which was the admonition he gave to those who were imprudently loud in that duty.

Besides this, he and his wife constantly prayed together morning and evening ; and if they were together, at home or abroad, it was never intermitted. From his own experience of the benefit of this practice, he would take all opportunities to recommend it to those in that relation, as conducing very much to the comfort of it, and to their furtherance in that, which he would say, is their great duty ; to “ do all they can to help one another to heaven.” He would say, that this duty of husbands and wives, praying together, is intimated in that of the apostle, 1 Pet. iii. 7. where they are exhorted to “ live as heirs together of the grace of life, that their prayers, (especially their prayers together,) be not hindered ;” that nothing may be done to hinder them from praying together, nor to hinder them in it, nor to spoil the success of those prayers. This sanctifies the relation, and fetches in a blessing upon it ; makes the comforts of it the more sweet, and the cares and crosses of it the more easy ; and is an excellent means of preserving and increasing mutual love. Many to whom he has recommended his duty, have blessed God for him, and for his advice concerning it. When he was abroad and slept with any of his friends, he would remind them of his rule, that “ they who sleep together must pray together.” In the performance of this part of his daily worship he was usually short, but often much affected.

Besides these, he made conscience, and made a business of family-worship in all the parts of it ;

and in it he was uniform, steady, and constant, from the time that he was first called to the charge of a family, to his dying day; and according to his own practice, he took all occasions to press it upon others. His doctrine once from Josh. xxiv. 15, was, that "family-worship is family-duty." He would say sometimes, "if the worship of God be not in the house, write 'Lord have mercy upon us' upon the door, for there is a plague, a curse in it."* It is the opinion of Archbishop Tillotson, that "constant family-worship is so necessary to keep alive a sense of God and religion in the minds of men, that he sees not how any family that neglects it can in reason be esteemed a family of christians, or indeed to have any religion at all." How earnestly would Mr. Henry reason with people about this matter, and tell them what a blessing it would bring upon them, their houses, and all that they had. He that makes his house a little church, shall find, that God will make it a little sanctuary. It may be of use to give a particular account of this practice in this matter, because it was very exemplary. As to the time of it, his rule was, commonly the earlier the better, both morning and evening; in the morning, before worldly business crowded in, "Early will I seek thee:" he that is the First should have the first; nor is it fit that the worship of God should stand by and wait, while the world's turn is served. And, early in the evening, before the children and servants began to be sleepy; and therefore, if it might be, he would have prayer before supper, that the body might be the more fit to serve the soul in that service of God. And indeed, he industriously contrived all the circumstances of his family-worship, so as to

* It was customary to write "Lord have mercy upon us" on the doors of houses, when the family was infected with plague.—EDITOR.

make it most solemn, and most likely to answer the end. He always made it the business of every day, and not, as too many make it, a by-business. This being his fixed principle, all other affairs gave way to this. When some objected, that they could not get time for family-worship; he would tell them, that if they would put on christian resolution at first, they would not find the difficulty so great as they imagined; but after awhile, their other affairs would fall in easily and naturally with this; especially where there is that wisdom which is profitable to direct. Nay, they would find it to be a great preserver of order and decency in a family, and it would be like a hem to all their other business, to keep it from ravelling. He was ever careful to have all his family present at family-worship; though sometimes, living in the country, he had a great household; yet he would have not only his children, sojourners, and domestic servants, but his workmen, day-labourers, and all that were employed for him, if they were within call, to be present, to join with him in this service. As it was often an act of his charity to set them to work for him, so to that he added this act of piety, to set them to work for God; and usually when he paid them their wages, he gave them some good counsel about their souls. If any that should come to family-worship were at a distance, and must be staid for long, he would rather want them, than put the duty much out of time; and would sometimes say at night, "Better one away than all sleepy."

The performances of his family-worship were the same morning and evening. He observed that under the law, the morning and the evening lamb had the same meat-offering and drink-offering, Exod. xxix. 38—41. He always began with a short, but very solemn prayer, imploring the divine presence, assistance, and acceptance; particularly begging a blessing upon the word to be read, in reference to which

he often put up this petition, "That the same Spirit who indited the Scripture, would enable us to understand it, and to learn something out of it, that may do us good." He commonly concluded even this short prayer, as he did also his blessings before and after meat, with a doxology, as Paul upon all occasions, "To him be glory, &c." which is properly adoration, and is an essential part of prayer.

He next sang a Psalm, and commonly one of David's; and his usual way was to sing a whole Psalm throughout, though perhaps a long one, and to sing quick, yet with a good variety of proper and pleasant tunes: and that he might do so, usually the Psalm was sung without reading the lines, every one in the family having a book. He preferred this to the common way of singing, where it might conveniently be done, as more agreeable to the practice of the primitive church, and the reformed churches abroad; and by this means he thought the duty more likely to be performed "in the Spirit and with the understanding;" the sense being not so broken, nor the affections so interrupted, as in reading the lines. He would say, that a Scripture-ground for singing Psalms in families, might be taken from Psalm cxviii. 15. "The voice of rejoicing and salvation is in the tabernacle of the righteous."

He next read a portion of Scripture, taking the bible in order; and would sometimes blame those who only pray with their families, and do not read the Scripture. In prayer we speak to God; by the word he speaks to us. In the tabernacle the priests were every day to burn incense, and to light the lamps; the former representing the duty of prayer, the latter reading the word. Sometimes he would say, "Those do well that pray morning and evening in their families; those do better that pray and read the Scriptures; but those do best of all

that pray and read and sing psalms: and christians should covet earnestly the best gifts."

He advised reading the scripture in order: saying, "Wherever God has a mouth to speak, we should have an ear to hear; and the diligent searcher may find much excellent matter in those parts of scripture, which we are sometimes tempted to think might have been spared.

What he read in the family he always expounded, and exhorted all ministers to do so, as an excellent means of increasing their acquaintance with the scripture. His expositions were not so much critical, as plain, practical, and useful; and such as tended to answer the end for which the scriptures were written, which is to make us wise to salvation. Herein he had a peculiar excellence, performing that daily exercise with so much judgment, and at the same time with such facility and clearness, as if every exposition had been premeditated; and they were very instructive, as well as affecting to the auditors. His observations were many times very striking and uncommon. He generally reduced the passage read, to some heads, by such a distribution as the matter easily fell into. He often mentioned that saying of Tertullian, "I adore the fulness of the scriptures." When he had hit upon a useful observation that was new to him, he would sometimes say afterwards to those about him; "How often have I read this chapter, and never before now took notice of such a thing in it." He put his children to write these expositions; and when they were gone from him, the strangers that sojourned with him did the same. What collections his children had, though but broken and imperfect hints, were afterwards of use to them and their families. Some exposition of this nature, that is, plain and practical, and helping to raise the affections and guide the conversation by

the word, he often wished was published by some good hand, for the benefit of families. But such was his great modesty and self-diffidence, though few were more fit for it, that he would never be persuaded to attempt any thing of that kind himself.* As an evidence how much his heart was set upon having the word of God read and understood in families, take this passage out of his last will: "I give and bequeath to each of my four daughters Mr. Pool's English Annotations upon the Bible, in two volumes, of the last and best edition that shall be to be had at the time of my decease; together with Mr. Barton's last and best Translation of the Singing Psalms, one to each of them; requiring and requesting them to make daily use of the same, for the instruction, edification, and comfort of themselves and their families." But it is time we proceed to the method of his family-worship.

The chapter or psalm being read and expounded, he required from his children some account of what they could remember of it; and sometimes would discourse with them plainly and familiarly about it, that he might lead them into an acquaintance with it; and, if it might be, impress something of it upon their hearts.

He then prayed, and always kneeling, which he looked upon as the fittest and most proper posture for prayer; and he took care that his family should address themselves to the duty, with the outward expressions of reverence and composedness. He usually fetched his matter and expressions in prayer, from the chapter read, and the psalm sung, which was often very affecting, and helped much to excite

* This his wish was fulfilled to the utmost by his son Matthew Henry, in his well-known and excellent Expositions of the Bible.

praying graces. He sometimes observed in those psalms, where reference is had to the scripture-stories, as Psalm lxxxiii. and many others, that those who were well acquainted with the scriptures, would not need to make use of the help of "prescribed forms:" they are very necessary for those that cannot pray without them, but are unbecoming those that can; as a go-cart, he used to say, is needful to a child, or crutches to one that is lame, but neither of them agreeable to one that needs them not. In family-prayer he was usually most full in giving thanks for family-mercies, confessing family-sins, and begging family-blessings. He would sometimes be very particular in prayer for his family; if any were absent, they were sure to have an express petition put up for them. He used to observe, concerning Job, chap. i. 5, that he offered burnt-offerings for his children, "according to the number of them all," an offering for each child. He always observed at the annual return of the birth-day of each, to bless God for his mercy to him and his wife in that child; the giving of it, the comfort they had in it, &c. with some special request to God for it. Every servant and sojourner, at their coming into his family and going out, besides the daily remembrances of them, had a particular petition put up for them, according as their circumstances were. The strangers that were at any time within his gates, he was wont particularly to recommend to God in prayer, with much affection and christian concern for them and their affairs. He was daily mindful of those that desired their prayers for them, and would say sometimes, "It is a great comfort that God knows whom we mean in prayer, though we do not name them." Particular providences concerning the country, as to health or sickness, good or bad weather, or the like, he commonly took notice of in prayer, as there was

occasion, and would often beg of God to fit us for the next providence, whatever it might be. Nor did he ever forget to pray for the peace of Jerusalem. He always concluded family-prayer, both morning and evening, with a solemn benediction, after the doxology: "The blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be with us, &c." Thus did he daily "bless his household."

Immediately after the prayer was ended, his children together, with bended knees, asked a blessing of him and their mother; that is, desired them to pray to God to bless them: which blessing was given with great solemnity and affection; and if any of them were absent, they were remembered, "The Lord help you and your brother," or, "you and your sister that is absent."

This was his daily worship, which he never altered, unless as is after mentioned, though he went from home ever so early, or returned ever so late, or had ever so much business for his servants to do. He would say, that sometimes he saw cause to shorten the several parts; but he would never omit any of them; for if an excuse be admitted for an omission, it will be often returning. He was not willing, unless the necessity was urgent, that any should go from his house in a morning before family-worship; but upon such an occasion would remind his friends, that "prayer and provender never hinder a journey."

He managed his daily family-worship, so as to make it a pleasure and not a task to his children and servants; for he was seldom long, and never tedious in the service; the variety of the duties made it the more pleasant; so that none who joined with him had ever any reason to say, What a weariness is it! Such an excellent way he had of rendering religion the most sweet and amiable employment in the world; and so careful was he, like Jacob, "to drive, as the children could go," not putting "new wine into old

bottles." If some good people that mean well would do likewise, it might prevent many of those prejudices, which young persons are apt to conceive against religion, when the services of it are made a toil and a terror to them.

On Thursday evenings, (instead of reading,) he catechised his children and servants. On Saturday evenings, his children and servants gave him an account what they could remember of chapters expounded the week before, in order; each a several part, helping one another's memories for recollecting it. This he called "gathering up the fragments which remained, that nothing might be lost." He would say to them sometimes, as Christ to his disciples, "Have ye understood all these things?" If not, he explained them more fully. This exercise, which he constantly kept up, was both delightful and profitable, and being managed by him with much prudence and sweetness, helped to instil betimes into those about him, the knowledge and love of the holy scriptures.

When he had sojourners in the family, who were able to bear a part in such a service, he had commonly in the winter-time set weekly conferences on questions proposed, for their mutual edification and comfort in the fear of God; the substance of what was said, he himself took and kept an account of in writing.

But the Lord's day he called and counted the queen of days, the pearl of the week, and observed it accordingly. The fourth commandment intimates a special regard to be had to the Sabbath in families, "Thou, and thy son, and thy daughter," &c. It is "the Sabbath of the Lord in all your dwellings." In this, therefore, he was very exact, and abounded in the work of the Lord in his family on that day. Whatever were his public opportunities, which varied, as we shall find afterwards, his family religion on

that day was the same. Extraordinary sacrifices must never supersede the "continual burnt-offering, and its meat-offering." (Numb. xxviii. 15.) His common salutation of his family or friends, on the Lord's-day morning was that of the primitive christians: "The Lord is risen, he is risen indeed;" making it his chief business on that day to celebrate the memory of Christ's resurrection; and he would say, sometimes, "every Lord's day is a true christian's Easter-day." He took care to have his family ready early on that day, and was then larger in exposition and prayer, than on other days. He would often remember, that under the law the daily sacrifice was doubled on Sabbath-days, two lambs in the morning, and two in the evening. He had always a particular subject for his exposition on Sabbath-mornings; as the harmony of the Evangelists several times over; the Scripture-prayers; Old Testament prophecies of Christ. He constantly sung a psalm after dinner, and another after supper, on the Lord's-day. And in the evening, his children and servants were catechised and examined in the sense and meaning of the answers in the catechism, that they might not say it (as he used to tell them) like a parrot, by rote. Then the day's sermons were repeated, commonly by one of his children when they were grown up, and the family gave an account what they could remember of the word of the day, which he endeavoured to fasten upon them, as a nail in a sure place. In his prayers on the evening of the Sabbath, he was often more than ordinarily enlarged; as one that found not only God's service perfect freedom, but his work its own wages; and a great reward, not only *after* keeping, but (as he used to observe from Psalm. xix. 11.) *in* keeping God's commandments; a present reward of obedience in obedience. In that prayer he was usually very particular, in praying for his family, and all that

belonged to it. It was a prayer he often put up, that they might have grace to behave "as a minister, and a minister's wife, and a minister's children, and a minister's servants should behave, that the ministry might in nothing be blamed." He would sometimes, especially on Sabbath-evenings, be a particular intercessor for the towns and parishes adjacent; for Chester, Shrewsbury, Nantwich, Wrexham, Whitchurch, &c. those nests of souls, wherein there are so many, that cannot discern between their right hand and their left in spiritual things, &c. He closed his Sabbath-work in his family with singing Psalm cxxxiv, and after it, a solemn blessing of his household.

Thus was he prophet and priest in his own house; and he was king there too, ruling in the fear of God, and not suffering sin upon any under his roof. But many of his servants, by the blessing of God upon his endeavours, got those good impressions upon their souls, which they retained ever after; and blessed God with all their hearts, that ever they came under his roof. Few went from his service till they were married, and some after they had buried their yoke-fellows, returned to it again, saying, "Master, it is good to be here."

He brought up his children in the fear of God, with a great deal of care and tenderness; and did by his practice, as well as upon all occasions in discourses, condemn the indiscretion of those parents, who are partial in their affection to their children, making a difference between them. He observed that this often proved of ill consequence in families; and laid a foundation of envy, contempt, and discord, which turn to their shame and ruin. His carriage towards his children was very mild and gentle, as one who desired rather to be loved than feared by them. He was careful not to provoke them to wrath, nor to discourage them, as he was to

“bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.” He ruled indeed, and kept up his authority, but it was with wisdom and love, and not with a high hand. He allowed his children a great degree of freedom with him, which gave him the opportunity of reasoning them, not frightening them, into that which is good. He did much towards the instruction of his children in the way of familiar discourse, according to that excellent directory for religious education, (Deut. vi. 7.) “Thou shalt whet these things, (so the word is, which he said noted frequent repetition of the same things) upon thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thy house, &c.” which made them love home, and delight in his company, and greatly endeared religion to them.

He endeavoured to make the whole word of God familiar to them, especially the stories of Scripture, and to bring them to understand and love it, and then they would easily remember it. He used to observe from Psalm cxix. 93, “I will never forget thy precepts, for with them thou hast quickened me;” that we are then likely to remember the word of God, when it doth us good.

He was careful to bring his children betimes (when they were about sixteen years of age) to the ordinance of the Lord’s Supper, to “take the covenant of God upon themselves, and make their dedication to God their own act and deed;” and a great deal of pains he took with them, to prepare them for that great ordinance.

He not only taught his children betimes to pray, which he did especially by his own pattern, his method and expression in prayer being very easy and plain, but when they were young he put them upon praying together, and appointed them, and such of their age, as might occasionally be with them, to spend some time together on Saturdays in the afternoon, in reading good books, especially those for

children, and in singing and praying. He would sometimes tell them for their encouragement, that the God with whom we have to do, understands broken language; and if we do as well as we can in the sincerity of our hearts, we shall not only be accepted, but taught to do better: "To him that hath shall be given."

He sometimes set his children, in their reading the scriptures, to gather out such passages as they took most notice of, and thought most considerable, and write them down: though this performance was very small, yet the endeavour was of great use. He also directed them to insert in a book, which each of them had for the purpose, remarkable sayings, and stories, which they met with in reading such other good books as he put into their hands.

He took a pleasure in relating to them the remarkable providences of God, both in "his own time and in the days of old," which he said parents were taught to do by that appointment, (Exod. 26, 27.) "your children shall ask you in time to come, what mean you by this service?" and you shall tell them so and so.

What his pious care was concerning his children, and with what a godly jealousy he was jealous over them, take in one instance: when they had been for a week or fortnight kindly entertained at Boreatton, as they often were, he thus writes in his diary upon their return home, "My care and fear is, lest converse with such so far above them, though of the best, should lift them up, when I had rather they should be kept low." For he was very solicitous to teach his children, not to mind high things, not to desire them, not to expect them in this world, which was his own character.

We shall conclude this Chapter with another passage out of his diary, April 12, 1681. "This day fourteen years the Lord took my first-born son

from me, the beginning of my strength, with a stroke. In remembrance whereof my heart melted this evening; I begged pardon for the Jonah that raised that storm. I blessed the Lord that hath spared the rest. I begged mercy, mercy for every one of them, and absolutely and unreservedly devoted and dedicated them, myself, my whole-self, estate, interest, life, to the will and service of that God from whom I received all. Father, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, &c."

CHAP. V.

His ejectment from Worthenbury; his removal to Broad-Oak, and other events of the year 1672.

WE must now return to our history, and shall look back to the first year after his marriage, which was 1660, the year that King Charles the Second came in; a year of great changes and struggles in the land. Many of his best friends in Worthenbury parish were lately removed by death; the Emeral-family contrary to what it had been; and the same spirit, which that year revived over all the nation, was working violently in that country, namely, a spirit of great enmity to such men as Mr. Henry was. Worthenbury, upon the King's coming in, returned to its former relation to Bangor, and was looked upon as a chapelry dependant upon that. Mr. Robert Fogg had for many years held the sequestered rectory of Bangor, but now Dr. Henry Bridgman, son to the Bishop of Chester, and brother to the Lord-keeper Bridgman, returned to the possession of it, by which Mr. Henry was soon apprehensive that his interest at Worthenbury

was shaken: but thus he writes, "The will of the Lord be done. Lord, if my work be done here, provide some other for this people that may be more skilful, and more successful, and cut out work for me elsewhere; however, I will take nothing ill which God doth with me."

He laboured what he could to make Dr. Bridgman his friend, who gave him good words, was very civil to him, and assured him that he would never remove him, till the law did. But he must look upon himself as the Doctor's Curate, and depending upon his will, which kept him in continual expectation of a removal; however, he continued in his liberty there above a year, though in very precarious circumstances.

The grand question now on foot was, whether to conform or not. He used all possible means to satisfy himself concerning it, by reading and discourse, particularly at Oxford, with Dr. Fell, afterwards Bishop of Oxford, but in vain; his dissatisfaction remained; however, says he, "I dare not judge those that do conform, for who am I that I should judge my brother?" He has noted, that being at Chester, in discourse with the Dean, Chancellor, and others, about this time, the great argument they used to persuade him to conform was, that else he would lose his preferment; and what, said they, you are a young man, and are you wiser than the King and Bishops? but this is his reflection upon it afterwards, "God grant I may never be left to consult with flesh and blood in such matters!"

In September, 1660, Mr. Fogg, Mr. Steele, and Mr. Henry were presented at Flint Assizes for not reading the Common Prayer, though as yet it was not enjoined; but there were some busy people, that would out-run the law. They entered their appearance, and it fell; for the King's "declaration touching ecclesiastical affairs" came out soon after, which promised liberty, and gave hopes of settlement; but

the Spring Assizes afterwards, Mr. Steele and Mr. Henry were presented again. On this he writes, "Be merciful to me, O God, for man would swallow me up. The Lord shew me what he would have me to do, for I am afraid of nothing but sin."

It appears by the hints of his diary that he had melancholy apprehensions at this time about public affairs, seeing and hearing of so many faithful ministers disturbed, silenced, and ensnared; the ways of Sion mourning, and the quiet in the land treated as the troublers of it: his soul wept in secret for it: yet he joined in the annual commemoration of the King's restoration, and preached on Mark xii. 17. "Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's," considering (says he) that it was his right: also the sad posture of the civil government through usurpers, and the manner of his coming in, without bloodshed. He would all his days speak of this as a national mercy, but what he rejoiced in with a great deal of trembling for the ark of God. He would sometimes say, "That during those years, between forty and sixty, though on civil accounts there were great disorders, and the foundations were out of course, yet in the matters of God's worship, things went well; there was freedom, and reformation, and a face of godliness was upon the nation, though there were those that made but a mask of it. Ordinances were administered in power and purity, and though there was much amiss, yet religion, at least in the profession of it, did prevail. This, says he, we know very well, let men say what they will of those times."

In November, 1660, he took the oath of allegiance at Orton, before Sir Thomas Hanmer, and two other Justices, of which he left a memorandum in his diary, with this added, "God so help me, as I purpose in my heart to do accordingly." Nor could

any one more conscientiously observe that oath of God than he did, nor more sincerely promote the ends of it.

His annuity from Emeral was now withheld, because he did not read the Common Prayer, though as yet there was no law for reading it: hereby he was disabled to do what he had been wont, for the help and relief of others; and this he recorded as that which troubled him most under that disappointment; but he blessed God, that he had a "heart to do good, even when his hand was empty." When the Emeral family was unkind to him, he reckoned it a great mercy, which he gave God thanks for, that Mr. Broughton and his family, who were of considerable figure in the parish, continued their kindness and respects to him, and their countenance of his ministry, which he makes a grateful mention of more than once in his diary.

Many attempts were made in the year 1661, to disturb and ensnare him, and it was still expected that he would have been hindered. "Methinks, says he, "Sabbaths were never so sweet as they are, now we are kept at such uncertainties; now, a day in thy courts is better than a thousand: such a day as this, said he, of a sacrament-day that year, is better than ten thousand; O that we might yet see many such days."

He was advised by Mr. Radcliff, of Chester, and others of his friends to enter an action against Mr. Puleston for his annuity, and did so; but "concerning the success of it," says he, "I am not over solicitous; for though it be my due, (Luke x. 7.) yet it was not that which I preached for: God knows, I would much rather preach for nothing than not at all; and besides, I know assuredly, if I should be cast, God will make it up to me some other way."

After some proceedings he solicited Mr. Puleston to refer it; having learned, says he, that it is no disparagement but an honor, for the party wronged, to be first in seeking reconciliation. "The Lord, if it be his will, incline his heart to peace. I have now," says he, "two great concerns upon the wheel; one, in reference to my claims for time past, the other, as to my continuance for the future; the Lord be my friend in both; but of the two, rather in the latter! but many of greater gifts and graces than I are laid aside already; and when my turn may come, I know not; the will of God be done; he can do his work without us."

The issue of this affair was, to discharge Philip Henry from the Chapel of Worthenbury. He preached his farewell sermon on Phil. i. 27. "Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ." In which (as he says in his diary) his desire and design was rather to profit than affect. It matters not what becomes of me, whether I come unto you, or else be absent, but "let your conversation be as becomes the gospel." His parting prayer for them was, "The Lord, the God of the spirits of all flesh, set a man over the congregation." Thus he ceased to preach to his people there, but not to love them, and pray for them; and could not but think there remained some dormant relation between him and them.

As to the arrears of his annuity from Mr. Puleston when he was displaced; after some time Mr. Puleston was willing to give him 100*l.* which was much less than what was due, upon condition that he would surrender his deed of annuity, and lease of the house; this he for peace-sake was willing to do, and so lost the benefit of Judge Puleston's great kindness to him. This was not completed till September, 1662, until which time he continued in the house at Worthenbury, but never preached so much as once in the church, though there were vacancies several times.

Mr. Richard Hilton was immediately put into the curacy of Worthenbury by Dr. Bridgman. Mr. Henry went to hear him, as long as he continued at Worthenbury. He kept up his correspondence with Mr. Hilton : and, (as he says in his diary,) endeavoured to possess him with right thoughts of his work, and advised him the best he could in the soul-affairs of that people ; which, says he, “ he seemed to take well ; I am sure I meant it so, and the Lord make him faithful ! ”

Immediately after he was silenced and removed from Worthenbury, he was solicited to preach at Bangor, and Dr. Bridgman was willing to permit it occasionally ; and intimated to his curate there, that he should never hinder it ; but Mr. Henry declined it. Though his silence was his great grief, yet such was his tenderness, that he was not willing to discourage Mr. Hilton at Worthenbury, by drawing so many of the people from him, as would certainly have followed him to Bangor ; but (says he) “ I cannot get my heart into such a spiritual frame on sabbath-days now as formerly ; which is both my sin and my affliction. Lord, quicken me with quickening grace.”

When the King was restored, and shewed, as many thought, so good a temper, some of his friends were very earnest with him to revive his acquaintance and interest at court, which it was thought he might easily do. It was reported in the country, that the Duke of York had enquired after him ; but he heeded not the report, nor would he be persuaded to make any addresses that way. “ For,” says he, “ my friends do not know so well as I, the strength of temptation, and my own inability to deal with it. Lord, lead me not into temptation.”

He was greatly affected with the temptations and afflictions of many faithful ministers of Christ at this time, by the pressing of conformity ; and kept many private days of fasting and prayer in his own house, seeking to turn away the wrath of God from the land.

He greatly pitied some, who by the urgency of friends, and the fear of want, were over-persuaded to put a force upon themselves in their conformity. The Lord keep me, says he, in the critical time.

He preached occasionally in divers neighbouring places, till Bartholomew-day, 1662, the day, says he, "which our sins have made one of the saddest days to England, since the death of Edward the VIth ; but even this for good, though we know not how, nor which way." He was invited to preach at Bangor on the black Bartholomew-day, and prepared a sermon on John vii. 37. "In the last day, that great day of the feast," &c. but was prevented from preaching it; and was loath to strive against so strong a stream.

His moderation in his non-conformity was very exemplary and eminent, and had a great influence upon many, to keep them from running into an uncharitable and schismatical separation; which, upon all occasions, he bore his testimony against. In church-government, he desired and wished for archbishop Usher's reduction of episcopacy. He thought it lawful to join in the Common Prayer in public assemblies, and practised accordingly; and endeavoured to satisfy others concerning it. He was much afraid of extremes, and solicitous for nothing more than to maintain and promote christian love and charity among professors.

But to proceed in his story. At Michaelmas, 1662, he left Worthenbury, and came with his family to Broad-Oak. Being cast by divine Providence into this new place and state of life, his care and prayer was, that he might have "grace and wisdom to manage it to the glory of God, which (says he) is my chief end." Within three weeks after his coming hither, his second son was born, which we mention for the sake of his remark upon it; "We have no reason to call him Benoni, I wish we had none to call him Ichabod." And on the day of his family-thanksgiving for that mercy, he writes, "We have reason to rejoice

with trembling, for it goes ill with the church and people of God ; and reason to fear worse, because of our sins, and our enemies' wrath."

For several years after he settled at Broad-Oak, he and his family went constantly on Lord's-days to the public worship at Whitewell-chapel, which was near, when there was any supply there; and if none, then to Tylstock, where Mr. Zachary Thomas continued for about half a year, and that place was a little sanctuary: when that spring failed, he usually went to Whitchurch. He did not preach for a great while, unless occasionally, when he visited his friends, or to his own family on Lord's-days, when the weather hindered them from going abroad. He comforted himself, that sometimes, in going to public worship, he had an "opportunity of instructing and exhorting those that were in company with him by the way," according as he saw they had need; in this his lips fed many, and his tongue was as choice silver. He acted according to that rule which he often laid down to himself and others, that "when we cannot do what we would, we must do what we can, and the Lord will accept us in it." He made the best of the sermons he heard in public. "It is a mercy," says he, "we have bread, though it be not, as it hath been, of the finest wheat." Those are froward children who throw away the meat they have, if it be wholesome, because they have not what they would have. When he met with preaching that was weak, his note is, "That is a poor sermon indeed, out of which no good lesson may be learned." He had often occasion to remember that verse of Mr. Herbert:

"The worst speak something good; if all want sense,
God takes the text, and preacheth patience."

Nay, and once he says, he could not avoid thinking of Eli's sons, who "made the sacrifices of the Lord to be abhorred;" yet he went to bear his testimony to

public ordinances; "For still," says he, "the Lord loveth the gates of Zion, more than all the dwellings of Jacob; and so do I." Such, then, were his sentiments of things, expecting that God would yet open a door of return to former public liberty, which he much desired and prayed for. In hopes of that, he was unwilling to fall into the stated exercise of his ministry, as indeed the sober nonconformists in those parts generally were: but it was his grief and burden, that he had not an opportunity of doing more for God. He had but few opportunities of usefulness; but he was very diligent and faithful to improve them. When he visited his friends, how did he lay himself out to do them good! Being asked once, where he made a visit, to expound and pray, which his friends returned him thanks for, he thus writes upon it, "They cannot thank me so much for my pains, but I thank them more, and my Lord God, especially, for the opportunity." Read his conflict with himself at this time:— "I own myself a minister of Christ, yet do nothing as a minister; what will excuse me? Is it enough for me to say, Behold, I stand in the market-p'ace, and no man hath hired me?" And he comforts himself with this appeal; "Lord, thou knowest what will I have to thy work, public or private, if I had a call and opportunity; and shall this willing mind be accepted?" Surely this is a melancholy consideration, and lays a great deal of blame somewhere, that such a man as Mr. Henry, so well qualified with gifts and graces for ministerial work, and in the prime of his days for usefulness, should be so industriously thrust out of the vineyard as a useless and unprofitable servant. This is for a lamentation; especially since it was not his case alone, but the lot of so many hundreds of the same character.

In these circumstances of silence and restraint, he took comfort himself, and administered comfort to others, from that scripture, Isa. xvi. 4. "Let mine

outcasts dwell with thee, Moab." God's people may be an outcast people, cast out of men's love, their synagogue, their country; but God will own his people when men cast them out; they are out-casts, but they are his, and somewhere or other he will provide a dwelling for them. There were many worthy able ministers in those parts turned out, both from work and subsistence, that had not such comfortable support for the life that now is, as Mr. Henry had; for whom he was most affectionately concerned, and to whom he shewed kindness. There were computed within a few miles round him, so many ministers turned out to the wide world, stripped of all their maintenance, and exposed to continual hardships, as with their wives and children, having most of them numerous families, made up above a hundred, that lived upon Providence. Yet, though oft reduced to want and straits, they were not forsaken, but were enabled to rejoice in the Lord, and to joy in the God of their salvation notwithstanding: to them the promise was fulfilled, Psalm xxxvii. 3, "So shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed."

One observation Mr. Henry made, not long before he died, when he had been young, and then was old, "That, though many of the ejected ministers were brought very low, had many children, were greatly harassed by persecution, and their friends generally poor and unable to support them, yet in all his acquaintance he never knew, nor could remember to have heard of, any non-conformist minister in prison for debt."

In October, 1663, Mr. Steele and Mr. Henry, and some other of their friends, were taken up and brought prisoners to Hanmer, under pretence of some plot, said to be on foot against the government: there they were kept under confinement some days; on which he writes—"It is sweet being in any condition with a clear conscience. The sting of death is sin, and so of

imprisonment also. It is the first time I ever was a prisoner; but perhaps it may not be the last. We felt no hardship; but we know not what we may." They were, after some days, examined by the deputy-lieutenants, charged with they knew not what, and so dismissed, finding verbal security to be forthcoming upon twenty-four hours notice. Mr. Henry returned to his tabernacle with thanksgivings to God, and a hearty prayer for his enemies, that God would forgive them.

In the beginning of the year 1665, when the act for a royal aid came out, the commissioners for Flintshire were pleased to nominate Mr. Henry sub-collector of the said tax for the township of Iscoyd, and Mr. Steele for the township of Hanmer. They intended thereby to put an affront and disparagement upon their ministry, and to show that they looked upon them but as laymen. His note upon it is, "It is not a sin which they put us upon, but it is a cross; and a cross in our way; and therefore to be taken up and borne with patience. When I had better work to do, I was wanting in my duty about it; and now this is put upon me, the Lord is righteous." He procured the gathering of it by others, only took account of it, and saw it duly done; and deserved, as he says he hoped he should, that inscription mentioned in Suetonius, "To the memory of an honest publican."

In September, 1665, he was again, by warrant from the deputy-lieutenants, carried prisoner to Hanmer, as was also Mr. Steele and others. He was examined about private meetings: some such, but private, indeed, he owned he had been present at of late in Shropshire, but the occasion was extraordinary; the plague was at that time raging in London, and he, and several of his friends having near relations there, thought it time to seek the Lord for them, and this was imputed to him as his crime. He was likewise charged with administering the Lord's Supper, which he denied, having never administered it since he was

disabled by the act of uniformity. After some days confinement, seeing they could prove nothing against him, he was discharged upon recognizance of twenty pounds, with two sureties, to be forthcoming upon notice, and to live peaceably. "But," says he, "our restraint was not strict, for we had liberty of prayer and conference together, to our mutual edification: thus, out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong, sweetness, and we found honey in the carcass of the lion." It was but a little before this, that Mr. Steele, setting out for London, was, by a warrant from the justices, under colour of the report of a plot, stopped and searched, and finding nothing to accuse him of, they seized his almanack, in which he kept his diary for that year; and it not being written very legibly they made what malicious readings and comments upon it they pleased, to his great wrong and reproach, though to all sober and sensible people, it discovered him to be a man, who kept a strict watch over his own heart, and who husbanded his time; and many said they got good by it, and should love him the better for it. This event made Mr. Henry somewhat more cautious and sparing in the records of his diary, when he saw "Evil men dig up mischief."

At Lady-day, 1666, the five-mile-act commenced, by which nonconformist ministers were forbidden, upon pain of six months imprisonment, to come, or be, within five miles of any corporation, or place, where they had been ministers, unless they would take an oath; of which Mr. Baxter says, it was credibly reported that the earl of Southampton, then lord high treasurer of England, said, "No honest man could take it."

On March 25, the day when that act took place, he thus writes: "A sad day among poor ministers up and down this nation; who by this act of restraint are forced to remove from among their friends, acquaintance, and relations, and sojourn among strangers, as

it were in Mesech, and in the tents of Kedar. But there is a God that tells their wanderings, and will put their tears, and the tears of their wives and children into his bottle: are they not in his book? The Lord be a little sanctuary to them, and a place of refuge from the storm and tempest, and pity those places, from which they are ejected, and come and dwell where they may not."

He wished their removes might not be figurative of evil to these nations, as Ezekiel's were, Ezek. xii. 1, 2, 3. This severe dispensation forced Mr. Steele and his family from Hanmer, and so he lost the comfort of his neighbourhood; but withal it drove Mr. Lawrence from Baschurch to Whitchurch parish, where he continued till he was driven thence too.

Mr. Henry's house at Broad Oak was but four reputed miles from the utmost limits of Worthenbury parish: but he got it measured, and accounting 1760 yards to a mile (according to the statute 35 Eliz., cap 6.) it was found to be just five miles and threescore yards, which one would think might have been his security. But there were those near him who were ready to stretch such laws to the utmost rigour, under pretence of construing them in favour of the King, and therefore would have it to be understood of reputed miles. This obliged him for some time to leave his family, and sojourn among his friends, to whom he endeavoured, wherever he came, to impart some spiritual gift. At last he ventured home, presuming, among other things, that the warrant by which he was made collector of the royal aid, while that continued, would secure him, according to a proviso in the last clause of the act: when the gentlemen perceived this, they discharged him from that office, before he had served out the time.

He was much affected that the burning of London happened so soon after the nonconformists were banished out of it. He thought it was in mercy to

them that they were removed before that desolating judgment came; but that it spoke aloud to our governors, "Let my people go that they may serve me, and if ye will not, behold thus and thus I will do unto you." This was the Lord's voice crying in the city.

In the beginning of the year 1667, he removed with his family to Whitchurch, and dwelt there above a year, except that for one quarter of a year, about harvest, he returned to Broad-Oak. His remove to Whitchurch was partly to quiet his adversaries, who were ready to quarrel with him upon the five-mile act, and partly for the benefit of the school there for his children.

There, in April following, he buried his eldest son, not quite six years old, a child of extraordinary forwardness in learning, and of a very tractable disposition. This was a great affliction to the tender parents.

Many years after, he said, he thought he applied to himself at that time, but too sensibly, that scripture, Lam. iii. 1. "I am the man that hath seen affliction." And he would say to his friends upon such occasions, "Losers think they may have leave to speak; but they must take care what they say, lest, speaking amiss to God's dishonour, they make work for repentance, and shed tears that must be wept over again." He observed concerning this child, that he had always been very patient under rebukes, "The remembrance of which," says he, "teacheth me now how to carry it under the rebukes of my heavenly Father." His prayer under this providence was, "Shew me, Lord, shew me wherefore thou contendest with me. Have I over-boasted, over-loved, over-prized?" A Lord's-day intervening between the death and burial of the child, "I attended," said he, "on public ordinances, though sad in spirit, as Job, who after all the evil tidings that were brought him, whereof death of children was the last and heaviest, yet fell down and worshipped." And he would often say, upon such occa-

sions, "that weeping must not hinder sowing." Upon the interment of the child, he writes, "My dear child, now mine no longer, was laid in the cold earth; not lost, but sown to be raised again a glorious body; and I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me." A few days after, his dear friend, Mr. Lawrence, then living in Whitchurch parish, buried a daughter that was grown up, very hopeful, who gave good evidence of a work of grace wrought upon her soul: "How willing," says he, "may parents be to part with such when the Lord calls; they are not lost, but gone before." And he has this further remark, "The Lord has made his poor servants, that have been often companions in his work, now companions in tribulation, the very same tribulation; me for my sin, him for his trial."

While he lived at Whitchurch, he attended constantly upon the public ministry, and there, as ever, he was careful to come at the beginning of the service, which he attended upon with reverence and devotion; standing all the time, even while the chapters were read. In the evening of the Lord's day, he spent some time in instructing his family, to which a few of his friends and neighbours in the town would sometimes come in; and it was a little gleam of opportunity, but very short; for, as he notes, "He was offended at it, who should rather have rejoiced; if by any means the work might be carried on in his people's souls."

In this year, I think, was the first time that he administered the Lord's Supper (very privately to be sure) after he was silenced by the act of uniformity; and he did not do it without mature deliberation. A fear of separation kept him from it so long. What induced him to it at last, I find thus under his own hand: "I am a minister of Christ, and as such I am obliged, by virtue of my office, by all means to endeavour the good of souls. Now here is a company of

serious Christians, whose lot is cast to live in a parish where there is one set over them, who preaches the truth; and they come to hear him, and join with him in other parts of the worship; only, as to the Lord's Supper, they scruple the lawfulness of the gesture of kneeling; and he tells them his hands are tied, and he cannot administer it unto them in any other way; wherefore they come to me, and tell me they earnestly long for that ordinance; and there is a competent number of them, and opportunity to partake; and how dare I deny this request of theirs, without betraying my ministerial trust, and incurring the guilt of a grievous omission?"

In February, 1667-8, Mr. Lawrence and he were invited by some of their friends to Betley, in Staffordshire, and, there being some little public connivance at that time, with the consent of all concerned, they adventured to preach in the church, one in the morning, and the other in the afternoon of the Lord's-day, very peaceably and profitably. This was soon reported in the House of Commons by a member of Parliament, with these additions, that they tore the Common-prayer book, trampled the surplice under their feet, pulled the minister of the place out of the pulpit, &c. reports which there was not the least colour for. But that story, with some others equally false, produced an address of the house to the King, to issue out a proclamation, for putting the laws in execution against papists and nonconformists, which was issued out accordingly; though the King, at the opening of the session, a little before, had declared his desire, that "some course might be taken, to compose the minds of his Protestant subjects in matters of religion;" which had raised the expectations of some, that there would be speedy enlargement; but Mr. Henry noted upon it, "We cannot expect too little from man, nor too much from God."

And here it may be very pertinent to observe, how

industrious Mr. Henry was at this time, when he and his friends suffered such hard things from the government, to preserve and promote a good affection to it notwithstanding. It was commonly charged at that time upon the nonconformists in general, especially from the pulpits, that they were all a factious turbulent people, and, as was said of old, (Ezra iv. 15.) "hurtful to kings and provinces;" that their meetings were for sowing sedition and discontent, and the like. There is some reason to think, that one thing intended by the hardships put upon them was to drive them to this. "There is a way of making a wise man mad." But how peaceably they carried themselves, was manifest to God, and to the consciences of many. For an instance of it, it will not be amiss to give some account of a sermon which Mr. Henry preached in some very private meetings, such as were called seditious conventicles, in the year 1669, when it was a day of treading down, and perplexity: it was on that text, Psalm xxxv. 20. "Against them that are quiet in the land." Whence, though not to curry favour with rulers, for, whatever the sermon was, the very preaching of it, had it been known, must have been severely punished; but purely out of conscience towards God, he taught his friends this doctrine, "That it is the character of the people of God, that they are a quiet people in the land." This quietness he described "to be an orderly, peaceable subjection to governors and government in the Lord. We must maintain a reverent esteem for them, and their authority, in opposition to despising dominions; we must be meek under severe commands and burdensome impositions, not murmuring and complaining, as the Israelites against Moses and Aaron; but take them up as a cross in our way, and bear them, as we do foul weather. We must not speak evil of dignities, nor revile the ruler. Paul checked himself for this saying, I did not consider it, if I had, I would not have said so. We

must not traduce their government, as Absalom did David's. Great care is to be taken, how we speak of the faults of any, especially of rulers. The people of God make his word their rule, and by that they are taught, 1. that magistracy is God's ordinance, and magistrates God's ministers; that by him kings reign, and the powers that be, are ordained by him. 2. That they, as well as others, are to have their dues, honour, fear, and tribute. 3. That their lawful commands are to be obeyed, and that readily and cheerfully. That the penalties inflicted for not obeying unlawful commands are patiently to be undergone. This is the rule, and as many as walk according to this rule, "Peace shall be upon them," and there can be no danger of their unpeaceableness. They are taught to pray for kings, and all in authority, and God forbid we should do otherwise; yea, though they persecute us. Peaceable prayers bespeak a peaceable people. If some, professing religion, have been unquiet, their unquietness hath given the lie to their profession. Quietness is our badge, it will be our strength, our rejoicing in the day of evil; it is pleasing to God, it may work upon others. The means he prescribed for the keeping us quiet, were to get our hearts filled with the knowledge and belief of these two things: 1. That "the kingdom of Christ is not of this world:" many have thought otherwise, and it has made them unquiet. 2. "That the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God;" he needs not our sin to bring to pass his own counsel. We must mortify unquietness in the causes of it. We must always remember the oath of God: the oath of allegiance is an oath of quietness: and we must beware of the company and converse of those who are unquiet: though deceitful matters be devised, yet we must be quiet still; nay, be so much the more quiet. I have been thus large in gathering those hints out of that sermon, which he took all occasions, in other sermons, to inculcate, as all his brethren

likewise did, that, if possible, it may be a conviction to the present generation ; or, however, may be a witness in time to come, that the nonconformist ministers were not enemies to Cæsar, nor troublers of the land ; nor their meetings any way tending to the disturbance of the public peace ; but purely designed to help to repair the decays of christian piety. All that knew Mr. Henry, knew very well that his practice, all his days, was consonant to these his settled principles.

In May, 1668, he returned with his family from Whitchurch to Broad-Oak, which, through the good hand of his God upon him, continued his settled home, without any remove from it, till he was removed to his long home about twenty-eight years after. The severity of the five-mile-act began now a little to be abated, at least in the country ; and he was desirous to be more useful to the neighbours, among whom God had given him an estate, than he could be at a distance from them ; by relieving the poor, employing the labourers, especially by instructing the ignorant, and helping as many as he could to heaven. He made that scripture his standing rule, and wrote it in the beginning of his book of accounts, Prov. iii. 9, 10, "Honour the Lord with thy substance," &c. And having set apart a day of secret prayer and humiliation, to beg of God a wise and an understanding heart, and to drop a tear, as he expresses it, "over the sins of his predecessors in that estate," he laid out himself very much in doing good. He was very serviceable upon all accounts in the neighbourhood ; and, though it took up a great deal of his time, and hindered him from his beloved studies, yet it might be said of him, as bishop Burnet said of Archbishop Tillotson, in his sermon at his funeral, that he "chose rather to live to the good of others than to himself ; and thought, that to do an act of charity, or even of tenderness and kindness, was of more value, both in itself and in the sight

of God, than to pursue the pompous parts of learning, how much soever his own genius might lead him to it."

He was very useful in the common concerns of the township and country, in which he was a very prudent counsellor. It was, indeed, a narrow sphere of activity, but, such as it was, "To him," (as to Job,) "men gave ear and waited, and kept silence at his counsel, after his words they spake not again:" and many of the neighbours, who respected him not as a minister, loved and honoured him as a knowing, prudent, and humble neighbour. In the concerns of private families he was very far from busying himself, and further from seeking his own interests; but he was very much engaged, advising many about their affairs, and the disposal of themselves and their children, arbitrating and composing differences between relations and neighbours, in which he had an excellent faculty, and often good success; inheriting the blessing entailed upon the peace-makers. References have been sometimes made to him by rule of Court, at the assizes, with consent of parties. He was very affable, and easy of access, and admirably patient in hearing every one's complaint; which he would answer with so much prudence and mildness, and give such apt advice, that many a time to consult with him, was to ask counsel at Abel, and so to end the matter. He observed, that in almost all quarrels, there was a fault on both sides; and that generally they were most in fault, who were most forward and clamorous in their complaints. One making her moan to him of a bad husband, that in this and the other instance was unkind: "And, sir," said she, after a long complaint, which he patiently heard, "what would you have me to do now?" "Why, truly," says he, "I would have you to go home, and be a better wife to him, and then you will find that he will be a better husband to you." Labouring to persuade one to forgive an injury that was done him, he urged this,

“Are you not a Christian?” And followed that argument so close, that at last he prevailed.

He was very industrious, and often successful, in persuading people to “recede from their right, for peace-sake;” and he would for that purpose tell them Luther’s story of the two goats, which met upon a narrow bridge over a deep water; they could not go back, and durst not fight; after a short parley, one of them lay down, and let the other go over him, and no harm was done. He would likewise relate a remarkable story, worthy to be here inserted, concerning a good friend of his, Mr. Thomas Yate, of Whitchurch, who in his youth was greatly wronged by an unjust uncle of his portion, which was two hundred pounds: when he grew up, his uncle shuffled with him, and would give him but forty pounds; and he had no way of recovering his right but by law; but before he would engage in that, he was willing to advise with his minister, the famous Dr. Twiss, of Newbury: the counsel he gave him, all things considered, was, for peace-sake, and for the preventing of sin, snares, and trouble, to take the forty pounds rather than contend; “And Thomas,” said the Doctor, “if thou dost so, assure thyself, that God will make it up to thee and thine some other way; and they that defraud thee will be the losers by it at last.” He did so; and it pleased God so to bless that little which he began the world with, that when he died in a good old age, he left his son possessed of some hundreds a year, and he that wronged him fell into decay.

Many very pious worthy families in the country would say of Mr. Henry, that they had no friend like-minded, who did naturally care for their state, and so affectionately sympathize with them, and in whom their hearts could safely trust. He was very charitable to the poor, and was full of alms-deeds, which he did, as is said of Tabitha, Acts ix. 36, not which he said he would do, or which he put others on to do: but

dispersing abroad and giving to the poor, seeking and rejoicing in opportunities of that kind. When he gave an alms for the body, he usually gave also a spiritual alms, some good word of counsel, reproof, instruction, or comfort, as there was occasion; and in accommodating these to the persons he spoke to, he had very great dexterity.

He was very forward to lend money freely, to any of his poor neighbours that had occasion, and would sometimes say, that in many cases there was more charity in lending than in giving, because it obliged the borrower both to honesty and industry.

Such was his prudence, patience, and peaceableness, that in all the time he was at Broad-Oak, he never sued any, nor ever was sued, but was instrumental in preventing many vexatious law-suits among his neighbours. He used to say, "There are four rules to be duly observed in going to law:—1. We must not go to law for trifles; as he did who said, he would rather spend a hundred pounds in law than lose a pennyworth of his right. 2. We must not be rash and hasty in it, but try all other means possible to compose differences; wherein he that yields most, as Abraham did to Lot, is the better man; and there is nothing lost by it in the end. 3. We must see that it be without malice or desire of revenge. If the undoing of our brother be the end of our going to law, as it is with many, it is certainly evil, and it speeds accordingly. 4. It must be with a disposition to peace, whenever it may be had, and an ear open to all overtures of that kind."

Four rules he sometimes gave to be observed in our converse with men: "Have communion with few; be familiar with one; deal justly with all; speak evil of none."

He made it the diversion of his vacant hours, to oversee his gardens and fields. His care of this kind was an act of charity to poor labourers whom he em-

ployed, a good example to his neighbours, and for the comfort of his family. While thus engaged, his time was excellently improved for spiritual purposes, by occasional meditations; hints of which there are often in his diary, as those who conversed with him had many in discourse. He used to say, that many Scripture-parables and similitudes are taken from the common actions of this life, that when our hands are employed about them, our hearts may the more easily pass through them to divine and heavenly things. I have heard him often blame those, whose irregular zeal in the profession of religion, makes them neglect their regular business, and let the house drop through; the affairs of which, the good man will order with discretion. He would tell sometimes how a pious woman was convinced of this her fault, by means of an intelligent godly neighbour; who, coming into the house, and finding the woman, far in the day, in her closet, and the house sadly neglected, said "What, is there no fear of God in this house?" which much startled and affected the good woman, who overheard him. He would often say, "Every thing is beautiful in its season, and that it is the wisdom of the prudent, so to order the duties of their general callings as Christians, and those of their particular callings in the world, as that they may not clash or interfere. I have observed it from Eccles. vii. 16. That there may be over-doing in well-doing."

I cannot omit one little passage in his diary, because it may be instructive. When he was desired to be bound for one that had, upon a particular occasion, been bound for him, he writes, "Solomon says, He that hateth suretyship is sure;" but he says also, "He that hath friends must shew himself friendly." But he always cautioned those that became sureties, not to be bound for more than they knew themselves able to pay, and would be willing to pay, if the principal failed.

He was very tender and compassionate towards poor strangers and travellers, though his candour and charity were often imposed upon by cheats and pretenders, whom he was not apt to be suspicious of; but would say in the most favourable sense, "Thou knowest not the heart of a stranger." If any asked his charity, whose representation of their case he did not like, or who he thought did amiss to take that course, he would first give them an alms, and then mildly reprove them; labouring to convince them that they were out of the way of duty, that they could not expect God should bless them in it; and would not chide, but reason with them. He would say, if he should tell them of their faults, and not give them an alms, the reproof would look only like an excuse to deny his charity, and would be rejected accordingly.

In a word, his greatest care about the things of this world was, how to do good with what he had, and to devise liberal things; desiring to make no other accession to his estate, but only that blessing which attends beneficence. He firmly believed (though it should seem few do) that what "is given to the poor, is lent to the Lord," who will pay it again, in kind or kindness; and that religion and piety is the best friend to outward prosperity, and he found it so; for it pleased God abundantly to bless his habitation, and to "make a hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he had on every side." Though he did not delight himself in the abundance of wealth, yet, which is far better, he delighted himself in the abundance of peace. All that he had and did observably prospered, so that the country oftentimes called his family, "a family which the Lord had blessed." His comforts of this kind were (as he used to pray they might be) "oil to the wheels of his obedience," and in the use of those things he served the Lord his God with "joyfulness and gladness of heart."

yet still mindful of, and "grieved for, the afflictions of Joseph." He would say sometimes, when he was in the midst of the comforts of this life, as that good man who exclaimed, 'All this, and heaven too! surely then we serve a good Master.' Thus did the Lord bless him, and make him a blessing; and this abundant grace, through the thanksgiving of many, redounded to the glory of God.

Having given this general account of his circumstances at Broad-Oak, we shall now go on with his story, especially as to the exercise of his ministry there, and thereabouts; for that was his business on which he was intent, and to which he wholly gave himself, taking other things by the bye. After his settlement at Broad-Oak, whenever there was preaching at Whitewell-chapel (as usually there was on saint's-days in the month) he constantly attended there with his family; was usually with the first, and reverently joined in the public service. He often invited the minister to dine with him; after dinner he sang a psalm, repeated the morning sermon, and prayed; and then attended in like manner in the afternoon. In the evening he preached to his own family; and perhaps two or three of his neighbours would drop in to him. On those Lord's-days when there was no preaching at the chapel, he spent the whole day at home; and many an excellent sermon he preached, when there were only four besides his own family, and perhaps not so many, according to the limitation of the conventicle-act.

In the time of trouble and distress, by the conventicle-act, in 1670, he kept private, and stirred little abroad, being loth to offend those who were in power, and judging it prudent to gather in his sails when the storm was violent. He then observed, as that which he was troubled at, "That there was a great deal of precious time lost among professors, when they came together, in discoursing of their adventures to meet,

and their escapes, which he feared tended more to set up self, than to give glory to God." Also in relating how they got together, and such a one preached, but little enquiring what spiritual benefit and advantage was reaped from it. He observed, we are apt to make the circumstances of our religious services, more the matter of our discourse, than the substance of them. His settled principle, which he took all occasions to mention, was, "In those things wherein all the people of God are agreed, I will spend my zeal; and wherein they differ, I will endeavour to walk according to the light which God hath given me, and charitably believe that others do so too."

CHAP. VI.

His liberty by the indulgence in 1672, and thenceforwards, to the year 1681.

NOTWITHSTANDING the severe act against conventicles, in the year 1670, yet the nonconformists in London ventured to set up meetings in 1671, and were connived at; but in the country there was little liberty taken, till the King's declaration of March 15, 1671-2 gave countenance and encouragement to it. What were the secret springs that produced that declaration, time discovered;* however, it was to the poor dissenters as life from the dead, and gave them some reviving in their bondage. But it was so precarious a liberty, that it should never be said, those people were hard to be pleased, who were so well pleased with that, and thanked God who put such a thing into the King's heart. The tenor of that declaration was this: "In consideration of the inefficacy of rigour, tried for

* To favour the Romanists.—ED.

divers years, and to invite strangers into the kingdom, ratifying the establishment of the Church of England, it suspends penal laws against all nonconformists and recusants, promiseth to licence separate places for meetings; limiting papists only to private-houses."

On this Mr. Henry writes, "It is a thing diversely resented, as men's interests lead them: the conformists displeased, the presbyterians glad, the independents very glad, the papists triumph. The danger is, lest the allowing of separate places help to overthrow our parish order, which God hath owned, and thus divisions and animosities rise among us, which every honest man would rather should be healed. We are put hereby into three difficulties, either to turn independents in practice, or to strike in with the conformists, or to sit down in former silence and sufferings (and silence he accounted one of the greatest sufferings) till the Lord shall open a more effectual door." That which (he says) he then heartily wished for, was, "That those who were in place, would admit the sober nonconformists to preach sometimes occasionally in their pulpits; by which means he thought prejudices would in time wear off on both sides, and they might mutually strengthen each others hands against the common enemy, the papists; who, he foresaw, would fish best in troubled waters." This he would choose, much rather than to keep a separate meeting: but it could not be had; no, not so much as leave to preach at Whitewell chapel when it was vacant, as it often was, though it were three long miles from the parish church. He found that some people, the more they are courted, the more coy they are; however, the overtures he made to this purpose, and the slow steps he took about setting up a distinct congregation, yielded him satisfaction in the reflection, when he could say, we would have been united, and they would not.

It was several weeks after the declaration came out,

that he received a licence to preach, as Paul did, in his own house, and elsewhere, "no man forbidding him." This was procured for him by some of his friends at London, without his knowledge, and came to him altogether unexpectedly. The use he made of it was, that what he did before to his own family, and in private, the doors being shut for fear, he now did more publicly; opened his doors, and welcomed his neighbours, to partake of his spiritual things: only one sermon in the evening of the Lord's-day, when there was preaching at Whitewell chapel, where he still continued his attendance with his family and friends; but when there was not, he spent the whole day, at public time, in the proper services of it, exposition of the Scriptures read, and preaching, with prayer and praise. This he did gratuitously; receiving nothing for his labours, either at home or abroad, but the satisfaction of doing good to souls, which was his meat and drink, with the trouble and charge of entertaining many of his friends, which he did with much cheerfulness. He would say, he sometimes thought that the bread even multiplied in breaking, and he found that God abundantly blessed his provision, with that blessing, which as he used to say, "will make a little go a great way." He was wont to observe, for the encouragement of such as had meetings in their own houses, which sometimes drew upon them inconveniences, "That the ark is a guest, that always pays well for its entertainment." And he noted, that when Christ had borrowed Peter's boat to preach a sermon out of it, he presently repaid him for the loan with "a great draught of fishes."

He had many thoughts of heart concerning this use he made of the liberty, not knowing what would be in the end hereof; but after serious consideration, and many prayers, he saw his way very plain, and addressed himself with all diligence, to improve this gale of opportunity. Some had dismal apprehensions of

the issue of it; and that there would be an after-reckoning. "But," said he, "let us mind our duty, and let God alone to order events, which is his work, not ours."

It was a seasonable word which he preached at that time for his own encouragement, and the encouragement of his friends, from Eccl. xi. 4. "He that observeth the wind shall not sow, and he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap." Those that are minded either to do good, or get good, must not be frightened with seeming difficulties and discouragements. Our work is to sow and reap, to do good and get good; let us mind that, and let who will mind the winds and clouds. "A lion in the way, a lion in the streets;" a very unlikely place, he would say, for lions to be in, and yet it serves the sluggard for an excuse.

While this liberty lasted, he was "in labours more abundant;" many lectures he preached abroad in Shropshire, Cheshire, and Denbighshire, laying out himself exceedingly for the good of souls, spending and being spent in the work of the Lord. And of that neighbourhood, and of that time it was said, that "this and that man was born" again, then and there; and many there were who asked the way to Sion, with their faces thitherwards, and were not proselyted to a party, but savingly brought home to Jesus Christ. I mean this; such as had been vain and worldly, and careless, and unmindful of God and another world, became sober and serious, and concerned about their souls and a future state. This was the "conversion of souls," aimed at, and laboured after and through grace, not altogether in vain. Whatever lectures were set up in the country round, it was still desired that Mr. Henry should begin them, which was thought no small encouragement to those who were to carry them on; and very happy he was, both in the choice and management of his subjects at such opportunities, seeking to find out acceptable words. **Take**

one specimen of his address, when he began a lecture with a sermon, on Heb. xii. 15. "I assure you, says he, and God is my witness, I am not come to preach, either sedition against the peace of the state, or schism against the peace of the church, by persuading you to this or that opinion or party; but as a minister of Christ, who has received mercy from the Lord to desire to be faithful, my errand is to exhort you to a'l possible seriousness, in the great business of your eternal salvation, according to my text; which, if the Lord will make as profitable to you, as it is material, and of weight in itself, neither you nor I shall have cause to repent our being here to-day; looking diligently, lest any of you fail of the grace of God. If it were the last sermon I were to preach, I know not how to take my aim better to do you good."

In doing this work, he often said, that he looked upon himself, but as an assistant to the parish-ministers, in promoting the' common interests of Christ's kingdom, and the common salvation of precious souls, by the explication and application of those great truths, wherein we are all agreed. He would compare the case to that in Hezekiah's time, when the Levites helped the Priests to kill the sacrifices, which was something irregular, but the exigence of affairs called for it; the Priests being too few, and some of them not so careful as they should have been, to sanctify themselves. (2 Chron. xxix. 34.) Wherever he preached, he usually prayed for the parish-minister, and for a blessing upon his ministry. He has often said how well pleased he was, when, after he had preached a lecture at Oswestry, he went to visit the minister of the place, Mr. Edwards, a worthy good man; and told him, he had been sowing a handful of seed among his people; and had this answer, "That's well, the Lord prosper your seed and mine too! there is need enough of us both." And another worthy conformist that came privately to hear him,

but was reprimanded for it by his superiors, told him afterwards with tears, that "his heart was with him."

His heart was wonderfully enlarged in his work at this time ; and God remarkably owned him, setting many seals to his ministry, which much confirmed him in what he did. He has this observable passage in his diary, about this time, which he recorded for his after benefit, and the example of it may be instructive. "Remember, that if trouble should come hereafter, for what we do now in the use of present liberty, I neither shrink from it, nor sink under it ; for I do therein approve myself to God, and to my own conscience, in truth and uprightness ; and the Lord, whom I serve, can and will certainly, both bear me out, and bring me off with comfort in the end. I say, remember, and forget it not, this 24th day of March, 1672-3."

It was at the beginning of this liberty, that the society at Broad-Oak commenced ; made up, besides the neighbourhood, of some out of Whitchurch, and Whitchurch-parish, who had been Mr. Porter's people ; some out of Hanmer-parish, who had been Mr. Steele's, and some out of the parishes of Wem, Prees, and Ellesmere ; persons generally of very moderate and sober principles, quiet and peaceable lives, and hearty well-wishers to the King and government. They were not rigid or schismatical in their separation, but willing to attend, though sometimes with difficulty and hazard, upon those administrations which they found most lively, edifying, and helpful to them, in the great business of working out their salvation. To this society he would never call himself a pastor, nor was he willing they should call him so ; but a helper, and a minister of Christ for their good. He would say, "That he looked upon his family only as his charge, and his preaching to others was but accidental ; and if they came, he could no more turn

them away, than he could a poor hungry man, who came to his door for an alms. And being a minister of Jesus Christ, he thought himself bound to preach the gospel, as he had opportunity.

Usually once a month he administered the ordinance of the Lord's Supper. Some of his opportunities of that kind he sets a particular remark upon, as comfortable days, on which he found it good to draw near to God. When about the year's end there was a general expectation of the cancelling the indulgence, he has this note upon a "precious sabbath and sacrament-day," as he calls it; "Perhaps this may be the last; Father, thy will be done; it is good for us to be at such uncertainties, for now we receive our liberty from our Father, fresh every day, which is the sweetest of all."

In the years 1677, 1678, and 1679, in the course of his ministry at Broad-Oak, he preached over the Ten Commandments, and largely opened from other texts of scripture the duties required, and sins forbidden, in each commandment. For, though none delighted more in preaching Christ and gospel-grace, yet he knew, that Christ came not to destroy the law and the prophets, but to fulfil them; and that, though we are not under the law, as a covenant, yet we are under it as a rule; under a law to Christ. He was very large and particular in pressing second-table duties, as essential to Christianity. We have known those, said he, that have called preaching on such subjects, good moral preaching; but let them call it as they will, I am sure it is necessary, and as much now as ever." How earnestly would he press the necessity of righteousness and honesty, in the whole conduct. "A good Christian, (he used to say,) will be a good husband, a good father, a good master, a good subject, a good neighbour, and so on in other relations." How often would he urge to this purpose, that it is the will and command of the great God,—the character of all the citizens

of Sion,—the beauty and ornament of our Christian profession,—and the surest way to thrive and prosper in the world. “Honesty is the best policy.” He would say, that these are things in which the children of this world are competent judges. They that know not what belongs to faith and repentance, and prayer, yet know what belongs to making an honest bargain: they are the parties concerned, and oftentimes are themselves careful in those things; and therefore those who profess religion, should walk very circumspectly, that the name of God and his doctrine should not be blasphemed, nor religion wounded through their sides. Thus he preached, and his constant practice was a comment upon it. He was more than ordinarily enlarged in urging his hearers to “speak evil of no man,” from Tit. iii. 2. If we can say no good of persons, we must say nothing of them. He gave it as a rule, “Never to speak of any one’s faults to others, till we have first spoken of them to the offender himself.” He was himself an eminent example of this rule. Some that conversed much with him, have said, that they never heard him speak evil of any one; nor could he bear to hear any spoken evil of, but often drove away a backbiting tongue with an angry countenance. He was known to be as faithful a patron of offenders before others, as he was a faithful reprover of them to themselves.

Whenever he preached on moral duties, he would always have something of Christ in his sermon: either his life, as the great pattern of his duty; or his love, as the great motive to it; or his merit, as making atonement for the neglect of it.

In the year 1680, he preached on the doctrines of faith and repentance, from several texts of Scripture. He used to say, that he had been told concerning the famous Mr. Dod, that some called him in scorn, “Faith and repentance,” because he insisted so much

upon these two, in his preaching. "But," said he, "if this be to be vile, I will yet be more vile, for faith and repentance are all in all in Christianity." Concerning repentance he has sometimes said, "If I were to die in the pulpit, I would desire to die preaching repentance; and if I die out of the pulpit, I would desire to die practising it." And he had often this saying concerning it: "He that repents every day, for the sins of every day, will, when he comes to die, have but the sins of one day to repent of. Even reckonings make long friends."

That year also, and the year 1681, he preached on the duties of hearing the word and prayer; of the former, from the parable of the sower; of the latter, from the Lord's Prayer. He looked upon the Lord's Prayer, to be not only a directory or pattern for prayer, but proper to be used as a form; and accordingly he used it, both in public and in his family. He thought it was an error on the one hand, to lay so much stress upon it, as some do, who think no solemn prayer accepted, nor any solemn ordinance or administration of worship complete without it. He thought it an error on the other hand not to use it at all: for it is a prayer, a compendious, comprehensive prayer, and may be of use to us, at least as much as other Scripture Prayers. But he thought it a much greater error to be angry at those that do use it, to judge and censure them, and for no other reason to conceive prejudices against them and their ministry. "A great strait, says he, poor ministers are in, when some will not hear them, if they do not use the Lord's Prayer, and others will not hear them if they do. What is to be done in this case? We must walk according to the light we have, and approve ourselves to God, either in using or not using it, and wait for the day when God will mend the matter; which I hope he will do in his own time."

He was in the close of his exposition of the Lord's Prayer, when a dark cloud was brought upon his assemblies, and he was necessitated to contract his public labours.

CHAP. VII.



The rebukes he lay under at Broad-Oak, betwixt the years 1680, and 1687.

IN the beginning of the year 1681, in April and May, the country was greatly afflicted by an extreme drought: some serious people proposed that there should be some time set apart for fasting and prayer, in a solemn assembly upon this occasion. The connivance of authority was presumed upon, because no disturbance of meetings was heard of at London, or any where else. Mr. Henry was desired to come and give his assistance at that day's work. He asked, upon what terms they stood with the neighbouring justices; and, it was answered, "Well enough." The drought continued in extremity: some that had not used to come to such meetings, came thither, upon the apprehension they had of the threatening judgment, which the country was under. Mr. Henry prayed and preached on Psalm lxvi. 18. "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me;" whence his doctrine was, that "Iniquity regarded in the heart, will certainly spoil the success of prayer." When he was in the midst of his sermon, closely applying this truth, Sir T. V. of Hodnet, and Mr. M. of Ightfield, two justices of the peace for Shropshire, with several others of their retinue, came suddenly upon them, disturbed them, set guards upon the house-door, and came in themselves; severally rallied all they knew, reflected upon the House of Commons, and the vote they had passed, concerning the present unseasonableness

of putting the laws in execution against Protestant dissenters, as if in so voting, they had acted beyond their sphere, as they did, who took away the life of King Charles. They diverted themselves with very abusive and unbecoming talk, swearing, cursing, and reviling bitterly. Being told the occasion of the meeting was to seek to "turn away the anger of God from us" in this present drought, it was answered, "Such meetings as these were the cause of God's anger." While they were thus entertaining themselves, their clerks took the names of those that attended, in all, about one hundred and fifty, and so dismissed them for the present. Mr. Henry has noted, in the account he kept of this event, that the justices came to this work, from the ale-house upon Prees-heath, about two miles off, to which, and the bowling-green adjoining, they with other justices, gentlemen, and clergymen of the neighbourhood, had long before obliged themselves to come every Tuesday, during the summer-time, under the penalty of twelve-pence a time if they were absent; and there to spend the day in drinking and bowling. This was thought to be as much more to the dishonour of God, and the scandal of the Christian profession, as cursing, swearing, and drunkenness, are worse than praying, singing Psalms, and hearing the word of God. After the feat done, they returned to the ale-house, and made themselves and their companions merry with calling over the names they had taken, making their reflections as they saw cause, and recounting the particulars of the exploit. There was one of the company, whose wife happened to be present at the meeting, and her name taken among the rest: when they upbraided him with this, he answered, that she had been better employed than he, and if Mr. Henry might be admitted to preach in a church, "he would go a great many miles to hear him." For these words he was forthwith expelled their company, and never more allowed to shew his face

at that bowling-green; to which he replied, If they had so ordered long ago, it had been a great deal better for him and his family. Two days after, they met at Hodnet, where, upon the oath of two witnesses, who, it was supposed, were sent on purpose to inform, they signed and sealed two records of conviction. By one record they convicted the master of the house, and fined him twenty pounds, and five pounds more as a constable of the town that year; and with him all the persons present, whose names they had taken, and fined them five shillings each, and issued out warrants accordingly. By another record, they convicted the two ministers, Mr. Bury, and Mr. Henry. The act makes it only punishable to "preach or teach" in any such conventicle; and yet they fined Mr. Bury twenty pounds, though he only prayed, and did not speak one word in the way either of preaching or teaching, not so much as "Let us pray:" however, they said, "Praying was teaching," and right or wrong, he must be fined; though his great piety, peaceableness, and usefulness, besides his deep poverty, might have pleaded for him, against so palpable an act of injustice. They took seven pounds from him, and laid it upon others, as they saw cause; and, for the remaining thirteen pounds, he being utterly unable to pay it, they took from him, by distress, the bed which he lay upon, with blanket and rug; also another feather bed, nineteen pair of sheets, most of them new; of which he could not prevail to have one pair returned for him to lie in; also books, to the value of five pounds, besides brass and pewter. And though he was at this time perfectly innocent of that heinous crime of "preaching and teaching," with which he was charged, yet he had no way to right himself, but by appealing to the justices themselves in quarter-sessions, who would be sure to affirm their own decree, as the justices in Montgomeryshire had done not long before in a like case, especially when

it was to recover to themselves treble costs. So the good man sat down with his loss, and "took joyfully the spoiling of his goods; knowing in himself, that he had in heaven a better, and an enduring substance."

But Mr. Henry, being the greatest criminal, and having done the most mischief, was fined forty pounds. The pretence of which was this: in the year 1679, Oct. 15, Mr. Kynaston, of Oatly, a justice of peace in Shropshire, meeting him and some others coming, as he supposed, from a conventicle, was pleased to record their conviction, "upon the notorious evidence and circumstance of the fact." The record was filed at Shrewsbury the next Sessions; but no notice was sent of it, either to Mr. Henry, or the justices of Flintshire; nor any prosecution upon it, against any of the parties; the reason of which Mr. Henry, in a narrative he wrote of this affair, supposes to be, not only the then favourable posture of public affairs towards dissenters, but also the particular prudence and lenity of Mr. Kynaston, so that having never smarted for this, he could not be supposed to be deterred from the like offence; nor, if he were wronged in that first conviction, had he ever any opportunity of making his appeal. However, the justices thought that first record sufficient to give denomination to a second offence, and so he came to be fined double. This conviction, according to the direction of the act, they certified to the next adjoining justices of Flintshire, who had carried themselves with great temper and moderation towards Mr. Henry, and never given him any disturbance; though, if they had been so minded, they had not wanted opportunities; but they were now necessitated to execute the sentences of the Shropshire justices. He was much pressed to pay the fine, which might prevent his own loss, and the justices trouble. But he was not willing to do it; partly because he would not encourage such prosecutions, nor voluntarily reward the informers for that, which he thought they should rather be punished

for ; and partly, because he thought himself wronged in the doubling of the fine. Whereupon his goods were distrained upon and carried away. As the warrant gave them no authority to break open doors, nor their watchfulness any opportunity to enter the house, they carried away thirty-three cart-loads of goods without doors, corn cut upon the ground, hay, coals, &c. This made a great noise in the country, and raised the indignation of many, against the decrees which prescribed this grievousness ; while Mr. Henry bore it with his usual evenness and serenity of mind. He did not boast of his sufferings, or make any great matter of them ; but would often say, " Alas, this is nothing to what others suffer, nor to what we ourselves may suffer before we die : " and yet he rejoiced and blessed God that it was not for debt, nor for evil doing, that his goods were carried away. And, says he, " While it is for well-doing that we suffer, they cannot harm us. " Thus he writes in his diary upon it, " How oft have we said that changes are at the door, but, blessed be God, there is no sting in this. " He frequently expressed the assurance he had, that, whatever damage he sustained, " God is able to make it up again : " and, as he used to say, though we may be losers for Christ, we shall not be losers by him in the end. He had often said, that his preaching was likely to do the most good when it was sealed by suffering ; and, " if this be the time (says he) welcome the will of God ; even this also shall turn to the furtherance of the gospel of Christ. "

Soon after this, was the assizes for Flintshire, held at Mold, where Sir George Jeffries, then chief-justice of Chester, afterwards Lord Chancellor, sat judge. He did not in private conversation seem to applaud what was done in this matter, as was expected ; whether out of a private pique against some that had been active in it, or for what other reason is not known ; but it was said that he pleasantly asked some of the gentlemen, by

what new law they pressed carts, as they passed along the road, to carry away goods distrained for a conventicle? It was also said, that he spoke with some respect of Mr. Henry; saying, he knew him and his character well, that he was a great friend of his mother, Mrs. Jeffries, of Acton, near Wrexham, a very pious woman; and that sometimes, at his mother's request, Mr. Henry had examined him in his learning, when he was a school-boy, and commended his proficiency. It was much wondered at by many, that of all the times Sir George Jefferies went that circuit, though it is well known what was his temper, and the temper of that time, he never sought any occasion against Mr. Henry, nor took the occasions that were offered, nor countenanced any trouble intended him, though he was the only nonconformist minister in Flintshire.

Mr. Henry, at the next assizes after he was distrained upon, was presented by one of the high constables: 1. for "keeping a conventicle at his house;" and 2. for saying, "That the law for suppressing conventicles ought not to be obeyed, and that there was never a tittle of the word of God in it." The latter presentment was altogether false. He had, indeed, in discourse with the high constable, when he insisted so much upon the law, which required him to be so rigorous in the prosecution, objected, that "All human laws were not to be obeyed, merely because they were laws." But as to any such reflections upon the law he suffered by, he was far from it, and had prudence enough to keep silence at that time; for it was an evil time, when so many were made "offenders for a word." But these presentments met with so little countenance from Judge Jefferies, that Mr. Henry only entered his appearance in the prothonotary's office, and they were no more heard of; wherein he acknowledged the hand of God, who turneth the hearts of men, "as the rivers of water."

In the same year, 1681, happened a public discourse at Oswestry, between Dr. William Lloyd, then bishop of St. Asaph, afterwards bishop of Coventry and Lichfield, and some nonconformist ministers, of whom Mr. Henry was one.

Mr. Henry, who was utterly a stranger to the bishop, pressed hard to have had the discourse in private, before a select number; but it would not be granted. He also desired his lordship, that it might not be expected from him, being of another diocese, to concern himself in the discourse, but only as a hearer: "Nay, Mr. Henry (said the bishop), it is not the concern of my diocese alone, but it is the common cause of religion; and therefore I expect you should interest yourself in it, more than as a hearer." His lordship was pleased to promise, that nothing which should be said by way of argument, should be any way turned to the prejudice of the disputants, nor any advantage be taken of it to give them trouble. There were present divers of the clergy and gentry of the country, with the magistrates of the town, and a great number of people; if this could have been avoided, it would have been preferred by Mr. Henry, who never loved any thing that made a noise, being herein like his Master, who did "not strive nor cry." The discourse began about two o'clock in the afternoon, and continued till between seven and eight at night. It was managed with a great deal of liberty, and not under the strict laws of disputation, which made it hard to give any tolerable account of the particulars of it. The arguments on both sides, may better be fetched from books written on the subject, than from such a discourse. The bishop managed his part of the conference with a great deal of gravity, calmness, and evenness of spirit; and therein gave an excellent pattern to all in such stations. Mr. Henry's remark upon this affair in his diary is this: "That whereas many reports went abroad far and near concerning it, every one passing his judgment upon the

result of it as he stood affected; for my own part, upon reflection, I find I have great reason to be ashamed of my manifold infirmities and imperfections; and yet do bless God, that seeing I could manage it no better, to do the truth more service, there was not more said and done to its disservice; to God be glory." Some who were adversaries to the cause Mr. Henry pleaded, though they were not convinced by his arguments, yet by his great meekness and humility, and that truly christian spirit which appeared so evidently in the whole management, were brought to have a better opinion of him, and the way in which he walked.

The conference broke off a little abruptly; the bishop and Mr. Henry, being somewhat close at an argument, in the recapitulation of what had been discoursed of, Mr. Jonathan Roberts whispered to Mr. Henry, "Pray, let my lord have the last word." A justice of peace upon the bench over-hearing this, presently replied, "You say my lord shall have the last word, but he shall not, for I will; we thank God we have the sword of power in our hands, and by the grace of God we will keep it, and it shall not rust; and I hope every lawful magistrate will do as I do; and look to yourselves, gentlemen, by the grace of God I will root you out of the country." To which a forward man in the crowd said, "Amen, throw them down stairs." This the bishop heard with silence, but the mayor of the town took order for their safety.

Two days after this discourse, the bishop wrote a very obliging letter to Mr. Henry, to signify how very much he was pleased with the good temper and spirit that he found in him at Oswestry; that he looked upon him, as one that intended well, but laboured under prejudices; and desired further acquaintance and conversation with him; particularly that he would come to him immediately at Wrexham. About three months after, he sent for him to Chester; in both which interviews a great deal of discourse, with much free-

dom, passed between them in private, in which they seemed to vie in nothing more than in candour and obligingness, shewing to each other all meekness. The bishop was pleased to shew him his plan for the government of his diocese, and the method he intended to take in church-censures: this Mr. Henry very well approved of; but pleasantly told his lordship, he hoped he would take care that Juvenal's verse should not be again verified:

“Clipt the dove's wings, and gave the vulture's course.”

DRYDEN.

which the bishop smiled at, and told him, he would take care it should not. His lordship, observing his true catholic charity and moderation, told him he did not look upon him as a schismatic; but only as a separatist; and that if he were in his diocese, he did not question but he should find out some way to make him useful. But all his reasonings could not satisfy Mr. Henry's conscience of the lawfulness of being re-ordained and conforming. The bishop, for some years after, when he came that way towards London, either called on Mr. Henry at his house, or sent for him to Whitchurch, and still with all expressions of friendship.

The trouble which Mr. Henry was in, about the meeting at Weston, obliged him for awhile, to keep his sabbaths privately at home; but in the year 1682, he took a greater liberty, and many flocked to him on Lord's-days, through the kind connivance of neighbouring magistrates. But in the year 1683, when the meetings were generally suppressed through the kingdom, he was again necessitated to act more privately, and confine his labours more to his own family, and his friends that visited him. He continued his attendance at Whitewell-chapel as usual; and when he was abridged of his liberty, he often blessed God for his quietness. Once when the curate preached a bitter sermon against dissenters, on a Lord's-day morning

some wondered that Mr. Henry would go again in the afternoon, for the second part. "But (says he), if he doth not know his duty, I know mine; and I bless God, I can find honey in a carcass."

In this time of "treading down, and of perplexity," he stirred little abroad; being forced, as he used to express it, "to throw the plough under the hedge;" but he preached constantly at home, without disturbance. He often comforted himself with this, "When we cannot do what we would, if we do what we can, God will accept of us; when we cannot keep open shop, we must drive a secret trade." And he would say, "There is a mean, if we could hit it, between fool-hardiness and faint-heartedness." While he had some opportunity of being useful at home, he was afraid he should prejudice that by venturing abroad. One of his friends in London, earnestly soliciting him to make a visit thither in this time of restraint in the country, he thus wrote to him—"I should be glad once more to kiss my native soil, though it were but with a kiss of valediction: but my indisposedness to travel, and the small prospect there is of doing good to countervail the pains, are my prevailing arguments against it. I am here, it is true, buried alive; but I am quiet in my grave, and have no mind to be a walking ghost. We rejoice, and desire to be thankful, that God hath given us a home; and continued it to us, when so many, better than we, have not where to lay their head, having no certain dwelling-place. (It was at the time of the dispersion of the French Protestants.) Why are they exiles, and not we? They strangers in a strange land, and not we? We must not say, we will die in our nests, lest God say, nay; nor, we will multiply our days as the sand, lest God say, this night, &c. Our times and all our ways are at his disposal, absolutely and universally; and it is very well they are so."

At the time of the duke of Monmouth's descent,

and the insurrection in the West, in the year 1685, Mr. Henry, as many others, pursuant to a general order of the lord-lieutenant, for securing all suspected persons, and particularly all nonconformist ministers, was taken up by a warrant from the deputy-lieutenants, and sent under a guard to Chester castle, where he was about three weeks a close prisoner. He was lodged with some gentlemen and ministers that were brought thither out of Lancashire, who were all strangers to him ; but he had great comfort in the acquaintance and society of many of them.

He often spoke of this imprisonment, not as matter of complaint, but of thanksgiving ; and blessed God he was “ in nothing uneasy all the while.” In a sermon to his family, the day after he came home, he largely and affectionately recounted the mercies of that providence : as for instance, “ That his imprisonment was for no ill cause : it is guilt that makes a prison. That it was his security in a dangerous time. That he had good company in his sufferings, who prayed and read the scriptures together, and discoursed to their mutual edification. That he had health there ; not “ sick, and in prison.” That he was visited and prayed for by his friends. That he was very cheerful and easy in his spirit ; many a time asleep and quiet, when his adversaries were disturbed and unquiet. That his enlargement was speedy and unsought for ; and that it gave occasion to the magistrates who committed him, to give it under their hands, that they had nothing in particular to lay to his charge ; and especially that it was without a snare, which was the thing he feared more than any thing else.

It was a surprise to some who visited him in his imprisonment, and were big with expectations of the duke of Monmouth’s success, to hear him say, “ I would not have you flatter yourselves with such hopes, for God will not do his work for us in these nations by

that man; but our deliverance and salvation will arise some other way."

It must not be forgotten how ready, yea, studious and industrious, he was, to serve and oblige those who had been any way instruments of trouble to him, as far as he had power and opportunity; so well had he learnt that great lesson of forgiving and loving enemies; of this it were easy to give instances.

When a gentleman, who had sometimes been an instrument of trouble to him, had occasion to make use of his help to give him light into a cause he had to be tried, Mr. Henry was very ready to serve him; and though he might have declined it, and it was somewhat against his own interest too, yet he appeared as a witness for him; which so won upon the gentleman, that he was afterwards more friendly to him. Mentioning in his diary the death of a gentleman in Shropshire, he notes, that he had been his professed enemy; but, says he, "God knows, I have often prayed for him."

Some have wondered to see in how courteous and friendly a manner he would speak to such as had been any way injurious to him, when he met with them; being as industrious to manifest his forgiveness of wrongs, as some are to discover their resentment of them. It was said of Archbishop Cranmer, that the way to have him one's friend, was to do him an unkindness; and it might be said of Mr. Henry, that doing him an unkindness would not make him one's enemy. This reminds me of an exemplary passage, concerning his worthy friend, Mr. Edward Lawrence: once going with some of his sons, by the house of a gentleman who had been injurious to him, he charged them, that they should never think or speak amiss of that gentleman for the sake of any thing he had done against him; but whenever they went by his house, should lift up their hearts in prayer to God for him and

his family. And who is he that will harm those, who are thus followers of Him that is good, in his goodness? It is almost the only temporal promise in the New Testament, which is made to the meek, Mat. v. 5, that "they shall inherit the earth;" the meaning whereof, Dr. Hammond, in his Practical Catechism, takes to be especially this, "That in the ordinary dispensation of God's providence, the most mild and quiet people are most free from disturbance. Those only have every man's hand against them, who have theirs against every man."

CHAP. VIII.

The last Nine Years of his Life, in Liberty and Enlargement, at Broad-Oak, from the year 1687.

IN the latter end of the year 1685, when the stream ran so very strong against the dissenters, Mr. Henry, being in discourse with a very great man of the church of England, mentioned King Charles's indulgence in 1672, as that which gave rise to his stated preaching in a separate assembly; and added, if the present king James should in like manner give me leave, I would do the same again: to which that great man replied, "Never expect any such thing from him; for take my word for it, he hates you nonconformists in his heart." "Truly (said Mr. Henry) I believe it, and I think he doth not love you of the church of England neither." It was then little thought, that this right reverend person should have the honour, as he had soon after, to be one of the seven bishops committed to the tower by king James; as it was also far from any one's expectation, that the said king James should so quickly give liberty to the nonconformists. But we live in a world, wherein we are to think nothing strange; nor be surprised at any turn of the wheel, or "course of nature," as it is called, James iii. 6.

The measures then taken by king James's court and council were soon laid open, not only to view, but to contempt; being in a short time, by the overruling providence of God, broken and defeated. However, the indulgence granted to dissenters in April, 1687, must needs be a reviving to those, who for so many years had lain buried in silence and restraint. None who will suppose the case their own, can wonder that they should rejoice in it; though the design of it being manifest, they could not but "rejoice with trembling." Mr. Henry's sentiments of it were, "Whatever men's ends are in it, I believe God's end in it is to do us good."

Many said, Surely the dissenters will not embrace the liberty which is intended only for a snare to them. Mr. Henry read and considered the Letter of Advice to the Dissenters, at that juncture; but concluded, "Duty is ours, and events are God's." He remembered the experience he had had of the like in king Charles's time; and that it did good, and no hurt; and why might not this do so too? "All power is for edification, not for destruction." Did Jeremiah sit still in the court of the prison, because he had his discharge from the King of Babylon? Nay, did not Paul, when he was presented by his countrymen for preaching the gospel, appeal to Cæsar, and find more kindness at Rome than he did at Jerusalem? In short, the principle of his "conversation in the world" being not fleshy wisdom, or policy, but the grace of God," and particularly the grace of "simplicity and godly sincerity," he was willing to make the best of that which was, and to hope the best of the design and issue of it. Doubtless it was intended to introduce popery; but it is certain that nothing could arm people against popery more effectually, than the plain and powerful preaching of the gospel; and thus they who granted that liberty, were out-shot in their own bow, which manifestly appeared in the event. And as

those did good service to the Protestant religion among scholars, who wrote so many learned books against popery at that time, so those ministers did no less service among the common people, who are the strength and body of the nation, that preached so many good sermons to arm their hearts against that strong delusion : this Mr. Henry took all occasions to do, as the rest of the nonconformists generally did. How often would he commend his hearers, as Dr. Holland, divinity-professor in Oxford, was wont to do, “to the love of God, and the hatred of popery !”

Besides his preaching professedly to discover the errors and corruptions of the Church of Rome, which he would have taken occasion to do more fully, had he seen those he preached to, in any immediate danger of the infection, there could not be a more effectual antidote against popery, than instructing and confirming of people in the truth, as it is in Jesus ; and advancing the knowledge of, and a value and veneration for, the Holy Scriptures ; to which, how much Mr. Henry in his place did contribute, all that knew him will bear record. He used to observe, that the fall of Babylon followed, upon the free and open preaching of the everlasting gospel, Rev. xiv. 6—8. He apprehended this liberty likely to be of very short continuance, and to end in trouble. He thought, that his not using it, would not help to prevent the trouble ; but, that his vigorous improvement of it would help to prepare for the trouble ; therefore he set himself with all diligence, to make the best use of this gleam, both at home and abroad, on Sabbath-days, and week-days, to his power, yea, and beyond his power.

The great subject of debate at this time in the nation, was concerning the repeal of penal laws and tests. Mr. Henry’s thoughts were, that if those against the dissenters were all repealed, he would rejoice in it, and be very thankful both to God and man ; for he would sometimes say, without reflection upon

any, he could not but look upon them as a national sin: as for those against the papists, if our lawgivers see cause to repeal them in a regular way, I will endeavour, said he, to make the best of it, and to say, "The will of the Lord be done."

When King James came in his progress into that country, in September 1687, to court the compliments of the people, Mr. Henry joined with several others, in and about Whitchurch, Nantwich, and Wem, in an address to him, which was presented when he lay at Whitchurch; the purport of which was, not to sacrifice their lives and fortunes to him and to his interest, but only to return him thanks for the liberty they had, with a promise to demean themselves quietly in the use of it.

Some time after, commissioners were sent into the country, to enquire after the trouble that dissenters had sustained by the penal laws; and how the money that was levied upon them was disposed of; little of it being paid into the Exchequer. They sent to Mr. Henry to have an account of his sufferings: he returned answer by letter, that he had indeed been fined some years before, for a conventicle, distrained upon, and his goods carried away, which all the country knew, and to which he referred himself. But being required particularly to give account of it upon oath, he said though he could be glad to see such instruments of trouble legally removed, yet he declined giving any further information concerning it; having, as he wrote to the commissioners, "long since, from his heart, forgiven all the agents, instruments, and occasions of it; and having purposed never to say any thing more of it."

It was on Tuesday, June 14, 1681, that he was disturbed at Weston, in Shropshire, when he was preaching on Psalm lxvi. 18; and on Tuesday, June 14, 1687, that day six years, he preached there again without disturbance, finishing what he was then prevented

from delivering, concerning prayer and thanksgiving, from verses 19, 20, "But verily God hath heard me,—blessed be God!"—This seventh year of their silence and restraint proved, through God's wonderful good providence, the year of release.

In May 1688, a new commission of the peace came down from the county of Flint, in which, by whose interest or procurement was not known, Mr. Henry was nominated a justice of peace for that county. It was no small surprise to him, to receive a letter from the clerk of the peace, directed to Philip Henry, Esquire, acquainting him with it, and appointing him when and where to come to be sworn. To which he returned answer, that he was very sensible of his unworthiness of the honour, and unfitness for the office which he was nominated to, and therefore desired to be excused: he was so, and did what he could, that it might not be spoken of in the country.

For two years after this liberty began, Mr. Henry continued his attendance at Whitewell chapel; and preached at his own house, only when there was no supply there, and in the evening of those days when there was. For doing thus, he was greatly clamoured against, by some of the rigid separatists, and called a dissembler, and one that halted between two, and the like. Thus, as he notes in his diary, one side told him he was the author of all the mischief in the country, in drawing people from the church; and the other side told him he was the author of all the mischief, in drawing people to the church: and "which of these (said he) shall I seek to please? Lord, neither, but thyself alone, and my own conscience; and while I can do that, I have enough."

In a sermon at Whitewell chapel, one Lord's-day in the afternoon, where he, his family, and many of his congregation were attending, much was said, with some keen reflections, to prove the dissenters

schismatics, and in a damnable state. When he came immediately after to preach at his own house, before he began his sermon, he expressed himself to this purpose: "Perhaps some of you may expect now, that I should say something in answer to what we have heard, by which we have been so severely charged; but truly, I have something else to do;" and so, without any further notice taken of it, went on to preach "Jesus Christ and him crucified."

It was with some fear and trembling that Mr. Henry received the tidings of the Prince of Orange's landing, November 5, 1688, as being somewhat in the dark concerning the clearness of his call, and dreading what might be the consequence of it. He used to say, "Give peace in our time, O Lord," was a prayer that he would heartily say his Amen to. But when secret things were brought to light, and a regular course was taken to fill the vacant throne with such a King and Queen, none rejoiced in it more heartily than he did. He celebrated the national thanksgiving for that great deliverance, with a sermon on that text, Rom. viii. 31, "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?"

Soon after that happy settlement, there were overtures made towards a comprehension of the moderate dissenters with the Church of England. This Mr. Henry most earnestly desired, if it could be had upon any terms less than sinning against his conscience; for never was any more averse to that which looked like a separation than he was, if he could possibly have helped it. His prayers were constant, and his endeavours as he had opportunity, that there might be some healing methods found out and agreed upon. But it is well known what was the cry of the clergy at that time. That forasmuch as the oaths, subscriptions, and ceremonies, were imposed only to keep out such men, they would never consent to their removal, to let them in again. This temper and

resolve, so contrary to what might have been expected, upon that happy and glorious revolution, did a little alter his sentiments in that matter; and he saw himself perfectly driven from them. Despairing, therefore, to see an accommodation, he set himself the more vigorously to improve the present liberty. In June, 1689, the act of indulgence passed, which not only tolerated, but allowed dissenters' meetings, and took them under the protection of the government.

Soon after which, as the ministers that preached at Whitewell chapel were uncertain in their coming, which kept his meeting at Broad-Oak at like uncertainties, to the frequent disappointment of many of his hearers that came from far, he was at last prevailed on to preach, at public time, every Lord's day: this he continued to do while he lived, much to his own satisfaction, and the satisfaction of his friends; yet he never in the least changed his judgment, as to the lawfulness of joining in the Common-prayer, but was still ready to do it occasionally.

It may be of use to give some account how he managed his ministerial work in the latter part of his time, wherein he had as signal tokens of the presence of God with him as ever; enabling him to "bring forth fruit in old age." Though what he did, he still did gratuitously, and would do so, yet he was not willing to have any constant assistance, nor had he any; so much was he in his element, when he was about his Master's work: it was his meat and drink to do it.

1. As to his constant Sabbath-work, he was uniform, and abundant in it. He began his morning family worship on the Lord's days at eight o'clock, when he read and expounded pretty largely, sang a psalm, and prayed; and many strove to come time enough to join with him in that service. He began in public just at nine o'clock, winter and summer. His meeting-place was an out-building of his own, near his house, fitted up very decently and conveniently for the purpose.

He began with prayer, then he sang the 100th Psalm, without reading the lines, next he read and expounded a chapter in the Old Testament in the morning, and the New Testament in the afternoon. He looked upon the public reading of the Scriptures in religious assemblies, to be an ordinance of God; and that it tended very much to the edification of people, to have what is read expounded to them. The bare reading of the word he used to compare to the throwing of a net into the water; but the expounding of it, is like the spreading out of that net, which makes it the more likely to catch fish; especially as he managed it with practical profitable observations. Some that have heard him read a chapter with this thought, how will he make such a chapter as this useful to us, have been surprised with such pertinent useful instructions, as they have owned to be as much for their edification as any sermon. And commonly when he had expounded a chapter, he would desire them when they came home, to read it over, and recollect some of those things that had been spoken to them out of it.

In expounding the Old Testament, he industriously sought for something in it concerning Christ. Take one instance: the last Sabbath that he spent with his children at Chester, in the public morning worship, he read and expounded the last chapter of Job: after he had gone through the chapter, and observed what he thought fit out of it, he expressed himself to this purpose: "When I have read a chapter in the Old Testament, I then enquire what there is in it that points at Christ, or is any way applicable to him. Here is in this chapter a great deal of Job; but is there nothing of Christ here? Yes; you have heard of the patience of Job, and have in him seen the end of the Lord. This in Job is applicable to Christ, that after he had patiently gone through his sufferings, he was appointed an intercessor for his unkind friends." ver. 8, Go to my servant Job, and my servant Job shall

pray for you, for him will I accept. "If any one hath an errand to God, let him go to Jesus Christ, and put it into his hand; for there is no acceptance to be hoped for with God, but by him, who is his beloved Son; not only *with* whom he is well pleased, but *in* whom, namely, with us in him: he hath made us accepted in the Beloved."

After the exposition of the chapter he sang a psalm, and commonly chose a psalm suitable to it, and would briefly tell his hearers how they might sing that psalm with understanding, and what affections of soul should be working towards God, in singing it; his hints of that kind were of great use, and contributed much to the right performance of that service. He often said, "The more singing of psalms there is in our families and congregations, on Sabbath-days, the more like they are to heaven, and the more there is in them of the everlasting sabbath."

After the sermon in the morning, he sang the 117th Psalm, without reading the lines. He intermitted at noon about an hour and a half, and on sacrament-days not so long; in which time he only took a little refreshment in his study, yet many of his friends partook of his temporal as well as spiritual things; as those did that followed Christ, of whom he was careful lest they should "faint by the way." The morning sermon was repeated, by a ready writer, to those that stayed in the meeting-place, as many did, and when that was done, he began the afternoon exercise; in which he not only read and expounded a chapter, but catechized the children, and expounded the catechism briefly before sermon. Thus did he go "from strength to strength," and from duty to duty, on Sabbath-days, running the ways of God's commandments with an enlarged heart. The variety and vivacity of his public services, made them exceedingly pleasant to all that joined with him, who never had cause to complain of his being tedious. He used to say, "Every minute of

sabbath-time is precious, and none of it is to be lost ;” and that he scarcely thought the Lord’s day well spent, if he were not weary in body at night ; wearied *with* his work, but not weary *of* it, as he used to distinguish. He would sometimes say to those about him, when he had gone through the duties of a sabbath, “ Well, if this be not the way to heaven, I do not know what is.” In pressing people to number their days, he would especially exhort them to number their Sabbath-days ; how many they have been, how ill they have been spent, how few may remain, that they may be spent better : and to help in the account he would say, that “ For every twenty years of our lives, we enjoy above a thousand sabbaths,” which must all be accounted for in the day of reckoning.

His constant preaching was very substantial, elaborate, and greatly to edification. He used to say, He could not starch in his preaching ; that is, he would not ; as knowing that where the language and expression is stiff, forced, and fine, as some call it, it does not reach the greatest part of the hearers. When he grew old he would say, Sure he might now take a greater liberty to talk in the pulpit ; that is, to speak familiarly to the people ; yet to the last he abated not in his preparations, nor ever delivered any thing raw and undigested ; much less any thing unbecoming the gravity and seriousness of the work. If his preaching was talking, it was talking to the purpose. His sermons were not common-place, but, even when his subjects were the most plain and trite, his management of them was usually peculiar and surprising. In those years, as formerly, he kept for the most part in a method for subjects, and was very seldom above one sabbath upon a text. His constant practice was, as it had been before, when he concluded a subject, to spend one sabbath in a brief rehearsal of the substance of many sermons which he had preached upon it ; which he called the clinching of the nail, that it might be as a

nail in a sure place. So very industrious was he, and no less ingenious in his endeavours, that his hearers might be "able, after his decease, to have these things always in remembrance," (2 Pet. i. 15); and, by the blessing of God, the effect did not altogether disappoint his expectation. In the latter years of his ministry, he often contrived the heads of sermons to begin with the same letter, or rather two and two of a letter; but he did not at all seem to affect or force it; only if it fell naturally and easily, he thought it a good help to memory, and of use, especially to the younger sort. And, he would say, the chief reason why he did it, was, because it is frequently observed in Scripture, particularly the book of Psalms: and though it is not a fashionable ornament of discourse, if it be a Scripture-ornament, that is sufficient to recommend it, at least to justify it against the imputation of childishness. But the excellency of his sermons lay chiefly in the enlargements, which were always very solid, grave, and judicious; but in expressing and marshalling his heads, he often condescended below his own judgment, to help his hearers' memory. He made short memorandums of some of his subjects, when he had finished them, in verse, a distich or two upon each sabbath's work; and gave them in writing to the young ones of his congregation, many of whom wrote them, learned them, and profited by them.

He constantly celebrated the Lord's Supper in his congregation once a month, and always to a considerable number of communicants. His administration of this ordinance was very solemn and affecting. Such as desired to be admitted to the Lord's Supper, he first discoursed with concerning their spiritual state, and how the case stood between God and their souls: not only to examine them, but to instruct, teach, and encourage them, as he saw occasion; gently leading those whom he discerned to be serious, though weak and timorous. He usually discoursed with them more

than once, as finding precept upon precept, and line upon line necessary ; but he did it with such mildness, humility, tenderness, and endeavour to make the best of every one, as greatly affected and won upon all. He was herein like our great Master, who “ can have compassion on the ignorant, and doth not despise the day of small things.”

But his admission of young people, out of the rank of catechumens into that of communicants, had a peculiar solemnity in it. When such as he catechised grew up to years of discretion, if he observed them to be intelligent and serious, he marked them out to be admitted to the Lord’s Supper. When he had a competent number of such, twelve or fifteen perhaps, or more, he ordered each of them to come to him severally, and discoursed with them of things belonging to their everlasting peace ; put it to their choice whom they would serve ; and endeavoured to affect them with those things with which by their catechism they had been made acquainted ; drawing them with the cords of love into the way, which is called holy. For several Lord’s days he catechised them in public. Then he appointed a day in the week before the ordinance ; when in a solemn assembly on purpose, he prayed for them, and preached a sermon to them, proper to their age and circumstances ; and so the following sabbath they were all received together at the Lord’s Supper. He has recorded in his diary, upon one of these occasions, as his heart’s desire and prayer for those who were thus admitted ; “ That it might be as the day of their espousals to the Lord Jesus, and that they might each of them have a wedding garment.”

The discipline he observed in his congregation was not such as he could have wished for, but the best he could get, considering what a scattered flock he had, which was his trouble, but it could not be helped. But whatever offence or breaches of christian peace happened, Mr. Henry’s peculiar excellency lay in restoring with the spirit of meekness ; which, with his

great prudence, love, and condescension, so much commanded the respect of his people, and won upon them, that there was universal satisfaction in all his management; and it might truly be said of him, as of David (2 Sam. iii. 36,) that "whatsoever he did pleased all the people." This is an instance and evidence, that those ministers who rule by love and meekness, act according both to the letter and spirit of the Holy Scripture. "How forcible are right words!" Job vi. 25.

He was very strict and serious in observing the public fasts appointed by authority, and called them a delight. He had seldom any one to assist him in carrying on the duties of those days. He began about nine o'clock, and never left the pulpit till about four in the afternoon, spending all that time in praying, expounding, singing, and preaching, to the admiration of all that heard him, who were generally more on such days than usual. And he was sometimes observed to be more warm and lively towards the latter end of the duties of a fast-day than at the beginning; as if his spirit was more willing and enlarged when the flesh was most weak. In all his performances on public fast-days, he attended to what was the proper work of the day. His prayers and pleadings with God, on those days, were especially for national mercies, and the pardon of national sins. How excellently did he "order the cause before God, and fill his mouth with arguments," in his large and particular intercessions for the land, for the king, the government, the army, the navy, the church, and French protestants, &c. "It is most proper (said he), to preach of Christ on Lord's days, to preach of sin on fast-days, and to preach duty on both. Hypocrisy in hearers, and flattery in preachers, (as he would sometimes say,) is bad at any time, but it is especially abominable upon a day of humiliation."

He preached a great many lectures in the

neighbourhood, some stated, some occasional, in supplying which he was very indefatigable. He has sometimes preached a lecture, rode eight or nine miles, and preached another, and the next day two more. To quicken himself to diligence, he would often say, "Our opportunities are passing away, and we must work while it is day, for the night cometh." He took all occasions in his lectures abroad, to possess the minds of people with sober and moderate principles, and to stir them up to the serious regard of those things wherein we are all agreed. "We are met here together," said he in an exhortation with which he often began his lecture, "not because we think ourselves better than others, but because we desire to be better than we are."

He was very happy in the choice of subjects for his week-day lectures. At one which was stated, he preached against errors in general, from James i. 16, "Do not err, my beloved brethren:" particularly from divers other scriptures he shewed, that we must not err concerning God and Christ, and the Spirit; concerning sin and repentance, faith and good works; concerning God's ordinances; concerning grace and peace, and afflictions and prosperity, and the things of the life to come. At the monthly lectures at his own house, he chose to preach upon the four last things—Death and Judgment, Heaven and Hell, in many particulars; but commonly with a new text for every sermon. When he had in many sermons finished the first of the four, one that used to hear him sometimes, enquiring of his progress in his subject, asked him if he had done with death, meaning his subject concerning death, to which he pleasantly replied, "No, I have not done with him yet; I must have another turn with him, and he will give me a fall; but I hope to have the victory at last." He would sometimes remove the lectures in the country from one place to another, for the benefit of those who could not travel. Once,

having adjourned a lecture to a new place, he began it with a sermon on Acts xvii. 6, "These men, that have turned the world upside down, are come hither also;" in which he shewed how false the charge is, as they meant it; for religion doth not disturb the peace of families or societies, doth not cause any disorder or unquietness, &c. And yet in another sense there is a great truth in it; that when the gospel comes in power to any soul, it "turns the world upside down" in that soul, such is the change it makes there. All this he did gratuitously, not being burdensome to any; nay, he was best pleased when nothing was got for his entertainment at the places where he preached, but he came home, though some miles, fasting; it was a trouble to him to see his friends careful about much serving, though it was out of their respect to him.

As he was an excellent preacher himself, so he was an exemplary hearer of the word when others preached, though every way his inferiors; so reverent, serious, and attentive was he in hearing, and so observant of what was spoken. I have heard him say, that he knew one, and I suppose it was as Paul knew a man in Christ, who could truly say, to the glory of God, that for forty years he had never slept at a sermon. He was diligent also to improve what he had heard by meditation, repetition, prayer, and discourse. He was a very great encourager of young ministers who were humble and serious, though their abilities and performances were mean. He has noted in his diary this saying of a godly man, a hearer of his, as that which affected him, 'I find it easier to go six miles to hear a sermon, than to spend one quarter of an hour in meditating upon it and praying it over in secret, as I should, when I come home.'

In the years 1687, and in 1688, he married all his five children; the three eldest in four months time, in the year 1687, and the other two in a year and a half

after ; so many swarms (as he used to call them) out of his hive ; and all not only with his full consent, but to his abundant comfort and satisfaction. He would say, he thought it the duty of parents to study to oblige their children in that affair. And though no children could be more easy and at rest in a father's house than his, yet he would sometimes say concerning them, as Naomi to Ruth (*ch.* iii. 1,) " Shall I not seek rest for thee?" Two advices he used to give to his children and others, in their choice of that relation, namely, " Keep within the bounds of profession, such as one may charitably hope is from a good principle ; and look at suitableness, in age, quality, education, temper, &c." He would commonly say to his children, with reference to that choice, " Please God and please yourselves, and you shall never displease me ;" and he greatly blamed those parents, who concluded matches for their children without their consent. He never aimed at great things in the world for his children, but sought for them, in the first place, the kingdom of God and the righteousness thereof. He used to mention this saying of a pious gentlewoman, who had many daughters, " The care of most people is, how to get good husbands for their daughters ; but my care is to fit my daughters to be good wives ; and then let God provide for them." In this as in other things, Mr. Henry steered by the principle, " That a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things he possesseth." And it pleased God so to order it, that all his children were disposed of, into circumstances very agreeable and comfortable, both for life and godliness. He was greatly affected with the goodness of God to him therein ; without any forecast or contrivance of his own. " The country," says he in his diary, " take notice of it ; what then shall I render?"

All his four daughters were married at Whitewell-Chapel, and he preached a wedding-sermon for each

of them, in his own family afterwards. He would often tell his friends, that those who desire, in the married condition, to live in the favour of God, must enter upon that condition in the fear of God ; for it is an ill omen to stumble at the threshold. He had much comfort in all his children and their yoke-fellows, especially as four of the five families which branched out of his, were by Divine Providence settled at Chester.

His youngest daughter was married April 2, 1688, the same day of the year and week, as he observes in his diary, and in the same place that he was married to his dear wife, twenty-eight years before ; upon which this is his remark, " I cannot desire for them, that they should receive more from God than we have received, in that relation and condition ; but I would desire, and do desire, that they may do more for God in it, than we have done." His usual compliment to his new-married friends, was, " Others wish you all happiness, I wish you all holiness, and then there is no doubt but you will have all happiness."

When the marriage of the last of his daughters was concluded on, he thus writes : " Is Joseph gone, and Simeon gone, and must Benjamin go also ? We will not say that all these things are against us, but for us. If we must in this merciful way be bereaved of our children, let us be bereaved ; and God turn it for good to them ; as we know he will, if they love and fear his name." And when he parted with her to the house of her husband, he thus writes : " We have sent her away, not as Laban said he would have sent his daughters away, with mirth, and songs, with tabret and harp, but with prayers and tears, and hearty good wishes ; and now, (says he in his diary,) we are alone again, as we were in our beginning ; God be better to us than twenty children !" Upon the same occasion he thus writes to a dear relation ; " We are now left as we were, one and one, and yet but one · the Lord, I trust,

who has brought us thus far, will enable us to finish well; and then all will be well, and not till then."

He often mentioned as a matter of his great comfort, and his desire that it might continue, the love and unity that was among his children; and that, as he writes, the transplanting of them into new relations, had not lessened that love, but rather increased it; for this he often gave thanks to the God of love; noting from Job i. 4, that the children's love to one another is the parent's comfort and joy. In his last will, this is the prayer which he puts up for his children, "That the Lord would build them up in holiness, and continue them still in brotherly love, as a bundle of arrows which cannot be broken."

When his children were removed from him, he was a daily intercessor at the throne of grace for them and their families. Still the burnt-offerings were offered according to the number of them all. He used to say, "Surely the children of so many prayers will not miscarry." Their particular circumstances of affliction and danger, were sure to be mentioned by him with suitable petitions. The greatest affliction he saw in his family, was the death of his dear daughter-in-law, Catharine, the only daughter of Samuel Hardware, Esq. who, about a year and a half after she was transplanted into his family, to which she was the greatest comfort and ornament imaginable, died of the small-pox in child-bed, upon the thanksgiving-day for King William's accession, Feb. 14, 1689. She died but a few weeks after Mr. Henry had married the last of his daughters, upon which marriage he had said: "Now, we have a full lease; and God only knows which life will drop first." She comforted herself in the extremity of her illness with this sentiment, "Well, when I come to heaven, I shall see that I could not have been without this affliction." She had been for some time before under some fears as to her spiritual state, but

the clouds were through grace dispelled, and she finished her course with joy, and a cheerful expectation of the glory to be revealed. When she lay ill, Mr. Henry being in fear, not only for her, but the rest of his children in Chester, who had none of them past that perilous distemper, wrote thus to his son, on the evening of the Lord's day; "I have just done the public work of this day, wherein, before some scores of witnesses, many of whom, I dare say, are not a little concerned for you, I have absolutely, freely, and unreservedly given you all up to the good-will and pleasure of our heavenly Father, waiting what he will do with us; for good I am sure we have received, and shall we not receive evil also?" He preached at Chester, upon occasion of that sad breach in his family, on Job x. 2. "Shew me wherefore thou contendest with me."

When two of his children lay dangerously ill, after he had been earnestly praying for them, he wrote thus in his diary: "If the Lord will be pleased to grant me my request this time concerning my children, I will not say, as the beggars at our door used to do, I will never ask any thing of him again; but on the contrary, he shall hear oftener from me than ever; and I will love God the better, and love prayer the better, as long as I live." He used to say, Tradesmen take it ill, if those who are in their books go to another shop; and while we are so much indebted to God for past mercies, we are bound to attend him for further mercies.

As he was an intercessor for his children, at the throne of grace, so he was upon all occasions a remembrancer to them, both by word and letter, to quicken them to what is good. How often did he inculcate this upon them: "Love one another, and the God of love and peace will be with you. Do all you can, while you are together, to help one another to heaven, that you may be together there for ever, and with the Lord." When the families of his children were in

health and peace, he wrote thus to them: "It was one of Job's comforts in his prosperity, that his children loved one another, and feasted together: the same is ours in you, which God continue. But you will not be offended, if we pray that you may none of you 'curse God in your hearts.' Remember the wheel is always in motion, and the spoke that is uppermost will be under, and therefore mix trembling always with your joy."

He much rejoiced in the visits of his children, and made that the subject of his thanksgiving, as he did other things, which were the matter of his rejoicing. His usual saying at parting, was, "This is not the world we are to be together in, and it is well it is not; but there is such a world before us." And his usual prayer was, "That our next meeting might be either in heaven, or further on in our way towards it."

He had in eight years time, twenty-four grandchildren born, some by each of his children, concerning whom he would often bless God, that they were all "the sealed ones of the God of heaven, and enrolled among the lambs." On the birth-day of his second grand-child, at a troublesome time as to public affairs, he thus writes, "I have now seen my children's children, let me also see peace upon Israel; and then I will say, Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart." Some were much affected, when he baptized two of his grand-children together at Chester, publicly, and preached on Gen. xxxiii. 5. "They are the children which God hath graciously given thy servant." He observed in what a pious, gracious manner Jacob speaks. He had spoken good sense, if he had only said, "They are my children;" but then he had spoken like Jacob, like one that had seen the face of God. Though our speech be not always of grace, yet it must be always *with* grace. There is a kind of language, the air of which speaks the language of Canaan: Christians should speak like Christians.

Soon after his children were married, his house was filled again with the children of several of his friends, whom he was, by much importunity, persuaded to take to board with him. All that knew him, thought it very desirable that such a master of a family, should have a large one. He was at first almost necessitated to it, by the death of his friend and kinsman, Mr. Benyon of Ash, who left his children to his care. Some he took gratuitously, or for small consideration; and when, by reason of the advances of age he could not go about doing good so much as he had done, he laid out himself to do the more at home. He kept a teacher to attend to their school-learning; and they had the benefit, not only of his inspection in that, but, which was much more, of his family-worship, sabbath-instructions, catechising and daily converse. Nothing but the hopes of good to the rising generation, could have prevailed with him to take this trouble upon him. He would often say, "We have a busy house, but there is a rest remaining. We must be doing something in the world while we are in it; but this fashion will not last long; methinks I see it passing away."

Some who had gone through a course of university-learning, at private academies, desired to spend some time in his family, before their entrance upon the ministry; that they might have the benefit, not only of his public and family-instructions, but of his learned and pious converse, in which, as he was thoroughly furnished for it, he was very free and communicative. The great point he pressed upon those who intended to be ministers, was to study the scriptures, and make them familiar. For this purpose he recommended to them the study of Hebrew, that they might be able to search the scriptures in the original. He also advised them to the use of an interleaved Bible, wherein to insert such expositions and observations, as occur occasionally in sermons or other books; which he would say, are sometimes more happy and considerable,

than those which are found in the professed commentators. When some young men desired the happiness of coming into his family, he would tell them, "You come to me, as Naaman to Elisha, expecting that I should do this and the other for you; but alas, I can but say as he did, 'Go, wash in Jordan;' go, study the scriptures. I profess to teach no other learning but the scripture-learning." It was but a little before he died, that in reading Isa. l. he observed from ver. 4, "The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned, &c." that the true learning of a gospel minister consists not in being able to talk Latin fluently, and to dispute in philosophy, but in being able to "speak a word in a season" to weary souls. He that knows how to do that well, is a learned minister.

CHAP. IX.

His Sickness, Death, and Burial.

IN the time of his health, he made death very familiar to himself, by frequent and pleasing thoughts and meditations of it; and endeavoured to make it so to his friends by speaking often of it. His letters and discourses shewed his constant expectation of death; thus did he learn to die daily: and it is hard to say, whether it was more easy to him to speak, or uneasy to his friends to hear him speak, of leaving the world. This reminds me of a passage I was told by a worthy Scotch minister, Mr. Patrick Adair, that visiting Mr. Durham, of Glasgow, in his last sickness, which was long and lingering; he said to him, Sir, I hope you have so set all in order, that you will have nothing else to do but to die: "I bless God," said Mr. Durham, "I have not had that to do neither these many years."

Such is the comfort of dying daily, when we come to die indeed.

Mr. Henry's constitution was tender, and yet by the blessing of God upon his great temperance, care of his diet, and moderate exercise by walking in the air, he for many years enjoyed a good measure of health, which he used to call, "The sugar that sweetens all temporal mercies;" for which, therefore, we ought to be very thankful, and of which we ought to be very careful. He had sometimes violent fits of the cholic, which would be very afflictive for the time. Towards his latter end he was sometimes distressed with a pain, which his doctor thought might arise from the stone. Being once recovered from a sharp fit, he said to one of his friends, that asked him how he did, "He hoped, by the grace of God, he should now be able to give one blow more to the devil's kingdom;" and often professed, he did not desire to live a day longer than he might do God some service. He said to another, when he perceived himself recovering, "Well, I thought I had been putting into harbour, but find I must to sea again." He was sometimes suddenly taken with fainting fits, which when he recovered from, he would say, "Dying is but little more."

When he was in the sixty-third year of his age, he numbered the days of it, from August 24, 1693, to August 24, 1694: when he had finished it he thus wrote in his diary: "This day finishes my commonly dying year, which I have numbered the days of; and should now apply my heart more than ever to heavenly wisdom." He was much pleased with that expression of our English liturgy, in the office of burial, and frequently used it, "In the midst of life we are in death."

The increasing infirmities of age very little abated his vigour and liveliness in preaching, but he seemed to renew his youth as the eagle's; as those that are

“planted in the house of the Lord, who still bring forth fruit in old age;” not so much to show that they are upright, as “to show that the Lord is upright,” Psalm xcii. 14, 15. But in his latter years, travelling was very troublesome to him, and he would say, as Mr. Dod used to do, that when he thought like Samson, to shake himself as at other times, he found his hair was cut. His sense of this led him to preach an occasional sermon not long before he died, on John xxi. 18. “When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself.” &c. Another occasional sermon he preached when he was old, for his own comfort, and the comfort of his aged friends, on Psalm lxxi. 17, 18. “O God, thou hast taught me from my youth,” &c. He observed there, that it is a blessed thing to be taught of God from our youth; those that have been thus taught, ought to declare his wondrous works all their days; and those that have done this, may comfortably expect, that when they are old He will not forsake them.

For some years before he died, he used to complain of habitual weariness, contracted, he thought, by standing to preach immediately after riding, sometimes very uneasily, and in inconvenient places. He would say, every minister was not cut out for an itinerant; and sometimes the manifest attention and affection of people in hearing, led him to enlarge both in length and fervency, more than his strength could bear. Not many months before he died, he wrote thus to a relation, who enquired concerning his health, “I am always habitually weary, and expect no other, till I lie down in the bed of spices; and, blessed be God! so the grave is to all the saints.” While some of his friends persuaded him to spare himself, he would say, “It’s time enough to rest when I am in the grave; what were candles made for, but to burn?”

It does not appear that he had any particular presages of his death; but there were many instances of

his actual gracious expectation of it, more than ordinary for some time before. The last visit he made to his children in Chester, was in July, 1695, almost a year before he died, when he spent a Lord's-day there, and preached on Philemon 25. "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit." By "grace," he understood, not so much the good-will of God towards us, as the good work of God in us, called the grace of Christ, both because he is the author and finisher of it, and because he is the pattern of it. Now "the choicest gift we can ask of God for our friends is, that this grace of our Lord Jesus Christ may be with their spirits: how earnest therefore should we be in praying to God for grace, both for ourselves and for our relations!" The Thursday following being kept as a fast in his son's congregation at Chester, he preached on Luke xix. 41. "He beheld the city and wept over it," which proved his farewell to the town, as the former was his farewell to his friends and relations in it.

Not many weeks before he died, he wrote thus to one of his children, "We are well here, thanks be to God, and are glad to hear that you and yours are well also: God in mercy continue it! but why should we be well always? Do we deserve it? Are there no mixtures in our obedience? Are there any persons or families, at whose door sickness and death never knocked? Must the earth be forsaken for us, or the rock removed out of its place? Is it not enough that we be dealt with according to the manner of men? and that we have a promise, that it shall end well, everlastingly well?"

To another of his children, about the same time he writes, 'We are sensible that we decline apace, but the best of it is, that as time goes, eternity comes; and we are in good hope, through grace, that it will be a comfortable eternity.'

In April, 1696, a few weeks before he died, his

son's father-in-law, Robert Warburton, Esq. was gathered to his grave in peace, in a good old age: upon the tidings of his death, Mr. Henry wrote thus to his son: "Your fathers, where are they? your father-in-law gone, and your own father going; but you have a good Father in heaven, who lives for ever." He was wont sometimes to subscribe his letters, "Your ever-loving, but not ever-living father."

It was not a month before he died, that in a letter to his friend and brother, Mr. Tallents, of Shrewsbury, he had this passage: 'Methinks it is strange, that it should be your lot and mine, to abide so long on earth by the stuff, when so many of our friends are dividing the spoil above; but God will have it so; and to be willing to live in obedience to his holy will, is as true an act of grace, as to be willing to die when he calls, especially when life is labour and sorrow. But when it is labour and joy, service to his name, and some measure of success and comfort in serving him; when it is to stop a gap, and stem a tide, it is to be rejoiced in; it is heaven upon earth; nay, one would think, by the Psalmist's oft repeated plea, Psalm vi. xxx. lxxxviii. cxv. cxviii., that it were better than to be in heaven itself; and can that be?'

A little before his sickness and death, he had several of his children, and his children's children about him, at Broad-Oak, with whom he was much refreshed, and very cheerful? but often spoke of the fashion he was in, as passing away; and told them, he should be there but awhile to bid them welcome. He was observed frequently in prayer, to beg of God, that "he would make us ready for that, which would come certainly, and might come suddenly" One asked him how he did, he answered, "I find the chips fly off apace, the tree will be down shortly."

The last time he administered the Lord's Supper, a fortnight before he died, he closed the administration with that Scripture, 1 John iii. 2. "It doth not yet

appear what we shall be;" not yet, but it will shortly.

The sabbath but one before he died, being in the course of his exposition come to that difficult part of Scripture, the xlth of Ezekiel, and the following chapters; he said he would endeavour to explain those prophecies to them; and added, "If I do not now, I never shall:" and he observed, that the only prophetic sermon which our Lord Jesus preached, was but a few days before he died. This, many of his hearers not only reflected upon afterwards, but took notice of at that time with concern, as having something in it more than ordinary.

On the Lord's Day, June 21, 1696, he went through the work of the day with his usual vigour and liveliness. He was then preaching over the first chapter of St. Peter's Second Epistle, and was that day on those words, "Add to your faith virtue," ver. 5. He took virtue for christian courage and resolution in the exercise of faith; and the last thing he mentioned, in which Christians have need of courage, was in dying; for, as he often used to say, "It is a serious thing to die, and to die is a work by itself." That day he gave notice, both morning and afternoon, with much affection, of the public fast, which was appointed by authority the Friday following, June 26, pressing his hearers, as he used to do upon such occasions, to come in a prepared frame, to the solemn services of that day.

The Tuesday following, June 23, he rose at six o'clock, according to his custom, after a better night's sleep than ordinary, and in his wonted health. Between seven and eight o'clock he performed family-worship in the usual manner; he expounded very largely, the former half of the civth Psalm, and sang it, but was shorter in prayer than usual, being then (as it was thought) taken ill. "Blessed is that servant, whom his Lord when he comes, shall find so doing!"

Immediately after prayer he retired to his chamber, not saying any thing of his illness, but was soon after found upon his bed in great extremity of pain, in his back, breast, and bowels; it seemed to be a complicated fit of the stone and cholic, with very great extremity. The means used to give him relief were ineffectual; he had not the least intermission or remission of pain, neither up, nor in bed, but was in a continual agony. He said sometimes, "God's Israel may find Jordan rough; but there is no remedy; they must go through it to Canaan;" and he would speak of a good man who used to say, he was not so much afraid of death as of dying. We know they are not the godly people, part of the description of whose condition it is, that there are no bands in their death: and yet the end of the godly is peace, their death gain, and they have hope in it.

In this extremity he was still looking up to God, and calling upon him who is a present help in the needful hour. When the violence of his pain forced groans and complaints from him, he would presently correct himself with a patient and quiet submission to his heavenly Father, and a cheerful acquiescence in his will. "I am ashamed, said he, of these groans; I want virtue, O for virtue now, when I have need of it! (referring to his subject the Lord's Day before.) Forgive me that I groan thus, and I will endeavour to silence them; but indeed 'my stroke is heavier than my groaning.' It is true that Mr. Baxter said in his pain, there is no disputing against sense. It was his trouble, as it was Mr. Baxter's, that by reason of his bodily pain, he could not express his inward comfort; however, with that, God graciously strengthened him in his soul. He said to those about him, they must remember what instructions and counsels he had given them when he was in health; for now he could say but little to them, only refer them to what he had said, as to that which he would live and die by.

It was two or three hours after he was taken ill,

before he would suffer a messenger to be sent to Chester for his son, and the doctor, saying he should either be better or dead before they could come, but at last said, as the prophet did to his importunate friends, "Send." About eight o'clock that evening they came, and found him in the same extremity of pain, which he had been in all day. And nature, being spent with his constant and indefatigable labours in the work of the Lord, now sank under its burden, and was quite disabled to grapple with so many hours incessant pain. What further means were then used proved fruitless. He apprehended himself going apace, and said to his son, when he came in, "O son, you are welcome to a dying father! I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand." His pain continued very acute, but he had peace within. "I am tormented (said he once), but blessed be God! not in this flame;" and soon after "I am all on fire," when, at the same time, his extreme parts were cold, but presently added, "Blessed be God! it is not the fire of hell." To some of his neighbours who came in to see him, he said, "O make sure work for your souls, by getting an interest in Christ while you are in health; for if I had that work to do now, what would become of me? but I bless God I am satisfied." It was a caution he was often wont to give, "See to it, that your work be not undone, when your time is done, lest you be undone for ever."

Towards ten or eleven o'clock that night, his pulse and sight began to fail; of the latter he himself took notice, and inferred from it the near approach of his dissolution. He took an affectionate farewell of his dear yoke-fellow, with a thousand thanks for all her love, care, and tenderness; and left a blessing for all his dear children, their dear yoke-fellows, and little ones, that were absent. He said to his son, who sat under his head; "Son, the Lord bless you, and grant that you may do worthily in your generation, and be more

serviceable to the church of God than I have been." Such was his great humility to the last. And when his son replied, "O, Sir, pray for me, that I may but tread in your steps;" he answered, "Yea, follow peace and holiness, and let them say what they will." More he would have said, to bear his dying testimony to the way in which he had walked, but nature was spent, and he had not strength to express it.

His understanding and speech continued almost to the last breath, and in his dying agonies he was still calling upon God, and committing himself to him. The last words he said, when he found himself ready to depart, were, "O death, where is thy ——" ? with that his speech faltered, and within a few minutes (after about sixteen hours illness) he quietly breathed out his precious soul, into the hands of his dear Redeemer, whom he had trusted, and faithfully served in the work of the ministry, about forty-three years. He departed betwixt twelve and one o'clock in the morning of June 24, 1696, Midsummer-day, in the sixty-fifth year of his age. Happy, thrice happy he, to whom such a sudden change was no surprise, and who could triumph over death, as a stingless, disarmed enemy, even when he made so fierce an onset! He had often spoken of it as his desire, that if it were the will of God, "he might not outlive his usefulness;" and it pleased God to grant him his desire, and to give him a short passage from the pulpit to the kingdom; from the height of his usefulness, to receive the recompense of reward.

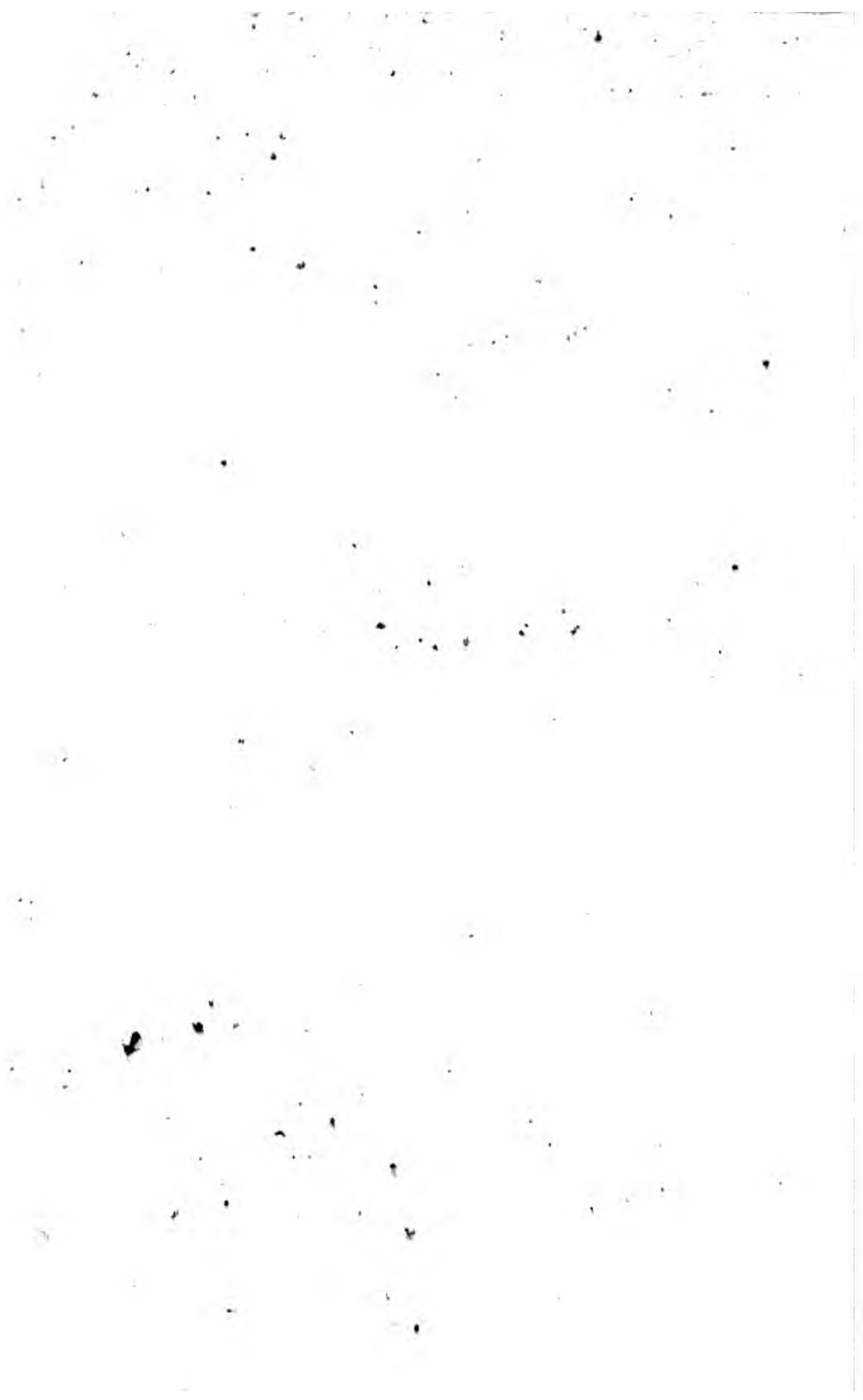
After the account we have given of his great usefulness, it is easy to imagine what sorrow and mourning there was among his friends, when they heard that the Lord had taken away their master from their head. One that lived so much desired, could not but die much lamented.



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