

THE JOURNAL
OF
JOHN BANKS

ORIGINALLY ENTITLED:

THE JOURNAL OF THE LABOURS, TRAVELS, AND SUFFERINGS IN THE GOSPEL
OF THAT FAITHFUL MINISTER OF JESUS CHRIST

JOHN BANKS

WITH A COLLECTION OF HIS EPISTLES, AND PAPERS, WRITTEN IN TESTIMONY OF THE TRUTH, AND
PUBLISHED ACCORDING TO HIS DESIRE IN HIS LIFETIME, FOR FUTURE SERVICE.

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PREFACE

BY WILLIAM PENN

Friendly Reader,

The labors of the servants of God ought always to be precious in the eyes of his people, and for that reason the very fragments of their services are to be gathered up for edification. It is this which induces us to exhibit the following pages to public view, as well as the hope that it may please God to make them profitable to such as seriously peruse them.

We have always found the Lord ready to second the services of his worthies upon the spirits of their readers, not permitting that which is his own to go without a voucher in every conscience. I mean those divine truths which it has pleased him to reveal by his own blessed Spirit, without which no man can rightly perceive the things of God or be spiritually-minded, which is life and peace. This indeed is the only saving evidence of heavenly truths, which made that excellent apostle say, “We know that we are of God, and that the whole world lies in wickedness.”

In that day, true and undefiled religion before God and the Father consisted in visiting the fatherless and widows in their affliction and keeping unspotted from the world, not merely a godly tradition of what others have enjoyed, but the experiential enjoyment and knowledge thereof by the operation of the Divine power in their own hearts, which makes an inward Jew and an accomplished Christian, whose praise is not of men but of God.

Such are Christians of Christ's making, who can say with the apostle, “It is not we that live, but Christ that lives in us,” dying daily to self and rising up through faith in the Son of God to newness of life. Here formality bows to reality, memory to feeling, letter to Spirit, and form to power; which brings to the regeneration, without which no man can inherit the kingdom of God, and by which he is enabled in every state to cry Abba, Father.

You will see a great deal of this in the following author's writings, and that he rightly began with a just distinction between true wisdom and the fame of wisdom, between what was of God and taught by God, and what was of man and taught by man—which last at best is but a sandy foundation for religion to be built upon, or rather the faith and hope of man in reference to religion and salvation by it.

Oh! that none who make profession of the dispensation of the Spirit may build apart from the work of Jesus Christ in their own souls in reference to his prophetic, priestly, and kingly offices. For God his Father gave him as a tried stone, elect and precious, to build by and upon, in which great and glorious truth we do most humbly beseech the Almighty, who is the God of the spirits of all flesh, the Father of lights and spirits, to ground and establish all his visited and convinced ones, that so they may grow up unto a holy house and building to the Lord. So shall purity, peace, and charity abound in the house and sanctuary which he has pitched and not man.

As to this worthy man, the author of the following treatises, I may say that his memorial is blessed,

having known him above forty-four years. He was a heavenly minister of experiential religion, of a sound judgment and pious practice, valiant for truth upon the earth, and ready to serve all in the love and peace of the Gospel. He was among the first in Cumberland who received the glad tidings of it and then readily gave up, with other brethren, to declare unto others what God had done for their souls.

Thus I first met him, and as I received his testimony through its savor of life, so I was kindly encouraged by him in the belief of the blessed doctrine of the light, spirit, grace, and truth of Christ in the inward parts, reproofing, instructing, reforming, and redeeming those souls from the evil of the world, who were obedient thereunto. He was a means of strength to my soul in the early days of my conviction, together with his dear and faithful brother and fellow-traveler, John Wilkinson of Cumberland, formerly a very zealous and able Independent minister.

Before I take my leave of you, reader, let me advise you to hold your religion in the Spirit, whether you pray, praise, or minister to others. Go forth in the ability that God gives you. Presume not to awaken your Beloved before his time. Be not your own in your performances, but the Lord's, and you shall not hold the truth in unrighteousness, as too many do, but according to the oracle of God, who will never leave nor forsake those who will take counsel of him; which that all God's people may do, is, and has long been, the earnest desire and fervent supplication of their and your faithful friend in the Lord Jesus Christ,

William Penn

London, the 23rd of the Twelfth month, 1711.

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Showing the manner of my education and convincement, how I came to receive the knowledge of God, and of his blessed truth; the travail of my soul under judgment; how I came through the same, to obtain mercy at the Lord's hand for sin and transgression: and how in his time, I was called forth into the ministry; of my travels and exercises in that work and service; together with my imprisonments and sufferings: also an abstract of letters to my wife, children, and servants, and my wife's to me.

I came of honest parents—my father's name was William, and my mother's name Emme. I was their only child, born in Sunderland, in the parish of Issell, in the county of Curnberland; and my father having no real estate of his own, took land to farm; and by trade was a felt-monger and glover.

In some years after, he removed within the compass of Pardshaw meeting, where both my parents received the truth some time after me, and lived and died in it, according to their measures. To this

meeting I belonged above forty years.

Though my parents had not much of this world's riches, yet according to their ability and the manner of the country, they brought me up well, and in good order; and were careful to restrain me from such evils as children and youth are apt to run into; and especially my dear mother, she being a zealous woman. Their care therein for my good, had a good effect on me; and so will it have, we may hope, on all who perform their duty as they ought to their children; if not, they will, it is feared, be found guilty in the day of account.

I was put to school when I was seven years of age and kept there until I was fourteen; in which time I learned both English and Latin, and could write well. When I was fourteen years of age, my father put me to teach school one year at Dissington; and after that at Mosser Chapel near Pardshaw, where I read the Scriptures to people who came there on the first-day of the week, and the homily, as it is called, and also sung psalms and prayed. I had no liking to the practice; but my father, with other people, persuaded me to it.

For this service my wages from the people was to be twelve pence a year from every house, of those who came there to hear me, and a fleece of wool, and my table free, besides twelve pence a quarter for every scholar I had, being twenty-four. This chapel is called a chapel of ease, the parish steeple-house being some miles off. Amongst the rest of the people who were indifferent where they went for worship, came one John Fletcher, a great scholar, but a drunken man; and he called me aside one day, and said, "I read very well for a youth; but I did not pray in form, as others used to do," and that he would teach me how to pray; and send it me in a letter, which he did.

When it came, I went out of the chapel and read it; and when I had done, I was convinced of the evil thereof, by the light of the Lord Jesus, which immediately opened to me the words of the apostle Paul concerning the Gospel he had to preach, that he had it not from man, neither was he taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. In answer to which it rose in me: "But you have this prayer from man, and are taught it by man, and he one of the worst of many." So the dread of the Lord fell upon me, with which I was struck to my very heart, and I said in myself, I shall never pray on this wise. It opened in me, "Go to the meeting of the people in scorn called Quakers, for they are the people of God:" and so I did the next first-day after, which was at Pardshaw.

This being before the end of the year, when I was to receive wages of the people for such service as I did, I could take none of them, being convinced of the evil thereof; nor did I ever read any more at the chapel. When about sixteen years of age, in the tenth month, 1654, it pleased the Lord to reach to my heart and conscience, by his pure living Spirit, in the blessed appearance thereof in and through Jesus Christ; whereby I received the knowledge of God, and the way of his blessed truth, by myself alone in the field, before I ever heard any one called a Quaker preach; and before I was at any of their meetings. But the first-day that I went to one, which was at Pardshaw, as aforesaid, the Lord's power so seized upon me in the meeting, that I was made to cry out in the bitterness of my soul, in a true sight and sense

of my sins, which appeared exceeding sinful: and the same day, as I was going to an evening meeting of God's people, scornfully called Quakers, by the way, I was smitten to the ground with the weight of God's judgment for sin and iniquity which fell heavy upon me, and I was taken up by two Friends. Oh! the godly sorrow that took hold of me that night in the meeting; so that I thought in myself every one's condition was better than mine. A Friend, who was touched with a sense of my condition and greatly pitied me, was made willing to read a paper in the meeting, which was so suitable to my condition, that it helped me a little, and gave some ease to my spirit. I was now very much bowed down and perplexed, my sins being set in order before me; and the time I had spent in wildness and wantonness, out of the fear of God, in vanity, sport, and pastime, came into my view and remembrance. The book of my conscience was opened, for I was by nature wild and wanton; and though there were good desires stirring in me many times, and something that judged me and reprov'd me, and often strove with me to restrain me from evil, yet not being sensible what it was, I had got over it.

I was like those who make merry over the witness of God, even the witness and testimony of his Holy Spirit, in and through Jesus Christ his Son, made known in God's great love to the sons and daughters of men. This was that, whereby the Lord many times strove with me, until at last he prevailed upon me. So that I may say, as a true witness for God, and the sufficiency of his power and quickening spirit, I did not only come to be convinced by the living appearance of the Lord Jesus, of the vanity, sin, and wickedness which the world lies in, and that I was partaker thereof; but by taking heed thereto, through watchfulness and fear, I came to be sensible of the work thereof in my heart, in order to subdue and bring down the wild nature in me, and to wash and cleanse me from sin and corruption, that I might be changed and converted. But before I came to witness this work effected, oh the days and nights of godly sorrow and spiritual pain I travelled through for some years! The exercise I was under bore so hard, both upon my body and mind, that I left off the practice of teaching school, which, although good and lawful, yet was not agreeable to me in my condition then. I put myself to learn my father's trade, with something of husbandry, which I followed with diligence; and lived with my parents, who some time after, came to receive the truth, which was great rejoicing to my soul. As I travelled under the ministration of condemnation and judgment, for sin and transgression, great was the warfare I had with the enemy of my soul, who, through his subtlety, sought to betray me from the simplicity of the truth, and to persuade me to despair, as though there was no mercy for me; yet in some small measure, I knew the Lord had showed mercy to me, which he mixed with judgment, for my sins past. But the experience I had gained in the travail of my soul, and the faith begotten of God in my heart, strengthened me to withstand the enemy and his subtle reasonings.

I overcame the wicked one, through a diligent waiting in the light, and keeping close to the power of God, waiting upon him in silence among his people, in which exercise my soul delighted.

Oh! the comfort, and divine consolation we were made partakers of in those days; and in the inward sense, and feeling of the Lord's power and presence with us, we enjoyed one another, and were near and dear one unto another. But it was through various trials and deep exercises, with fear and trembling, that thus we were made partakers. Blessed and happy are they who know what the truth has cost

them, and hold it in righteousness. Waiting diligently in the light, and keeping close to the power of God, which is therein received, I came to experience the work thereof in my heart, in order to effect my freedom from bondage, which by degrees went on and prospered in me, and so I gained ground more and more against the enemy of my soul, through faith in the power of God; without which no victory is obtained.

My prosperity in the truth I always found was by being faithful to the Lord, in what he manifested, though but in small things; unfaithfulness in which, is the cause of loss and hurt to many in their growth in the truth.

After I had passed through great tribulation, weeping and mourning in woods and solitary places alone, where I often desired to be, I came to more settlement in my spirit, and peace began to spring in my soul; where trouble and sorrow had been. Then at times, I would be ready to think, that I should not again meet with such combats and besetments by the enemy of my soul, as I had passed through. But the more I grew in experience of the dealings of the Lord with me; so much the more did the enemy transform himself, and as he could not prevail by his former presentations, so in his subtlety, he would invent new ones. Thus I came clearly to see that it was not safe for me to sit down satisfied with what I had passed through, or the victory I had already obtained; but to travel on in faith and patience, and watch diligently in the light of Jesus Christ, where the true power is still received. For notwithstanding the many deliverances, and strength, and victory, I had experienced, the Lord, according to the greatness of his wisdom, was pleased to make me sensible of my own weakness, and that there was no strength to stand, nor place of safety for me to abide in, but in his power, and under a sense thereof, I was humbled, bowed, and laid low.

Wherefore I took up a godly resolution in his fear, "I will rely upon the sufficiency of your power, O Lord, forever." About six years after I had received the truth, through great exercise and godly sorrow, I came to be settled in the power of God, and made weighty in my spirit thereby; and had some openings from the Spirit of Truth, in silent waiting upon the Lord; which tended to minister comfort and satisfaction to my soul, in a renewed experience of the dealings of the Lord with me; and the Lord opened my mouth with a testimony in the fresh spring of life, that I was to give forth to his children and people.

Oh! then a great combat I had through reasoning, that I was but a child, and others were more fit and able to speak, than I. But the Lord, by his power, brought me into willingness, and with fear and trembling I spoke in our blessed meetings.

At one time, as I was sitting in silence waiting upon the Lord, in a meeting of Friends, upon Pardshaw Crag, a weighty exercise fell upon my spirit, and it opened in me, that I must go to the steeple-house at Cockermouth, which was hard for me to give up to. But the Lord by his power, made me shake and tremble, and by it I was made willing to go, but when I had given up to go, I would have known what I was to do there, which was the cause, that for a little time, I was shut up within myself, and was in some measure darkened; so that I cried unto the Lord, that if it was his will I should go, I would give

up. And being made sensible it was, I went in faith and quietness of mind and spirit. As I was going, it appeared to me, as if the priest had been before me; and it opened in me to say to him, "If you be a minister of Christ, stand to prove your practice; and if it be the same as the apostles and ministers of Christ, in doctrine and practice, I will own you; but if not, I am sent of God this day, to testify against you." And so soon as I entered the place where the hireling priest, George Larcum, was preaching, he cried out, "There is one come into the church like a mad-man, with his hat on his head. Churchwardens, put him out!" For he could not preach after I came into the steeple-house. So they put me forth, as he bid them. This was in Cromwell's time, and not long after the government was changed and he himself turned out of the place. Some time after I was put forth, I was moved of the Lord to go in again, and had strength given me to stay until the priest had done; but his preaching was burdensome and confused. Then, with the words aforesaid, I opened my mouth, in the fear of God, which made the hireling go out with all the haste he could, at a contrary door than he used to do; and the people were in a great uproar, some to beat me, and some to save me from being beat.

When they had haled me out of the house, I was enabled by the power of God, to declare the truth amongst the people and to manifest the deceiver they followed: and having obeyed the requirings of the Lord, I came away in sweet peace and spiritual comfort in my heart.

At a certain time being at a meeting of Friends upon the Howhill, near Coldbecke, in Cumberland, George Fletcher of Hutton Hall, a justice of the peace, so called, came into the meeting in a rude manner, riding among Friends, who were sitting upon the ground, and trod with his horses feet upon a woman's gown, I was moved of the Lord, to kneel down to prayer, at the head of his horse; and as a wicked persecutor of God's people, he struck me bitterly over my head and face with his horse-whip. When he saw he could not move me, he called his man, being near by, to take me away; who came in great fury, and took me by the hair of my head, and drew me down the hill; but I got upon my feet, and said to his master, "Do you pretend to be a justice of peace, and break the peace; and disturb, persecute, and abuse God's peaceable people, and set your servant so to do?" He said, we should know he was a justice of peace before he had done with us; could no place serve us to meet in, but under his nose? Yet it was at a great distance from his dwelling, upon the common.

He committed me and three more, to the common jail at Carlisle; it being at the time when that act was in force, which imposed a penalty of five pounds for the first offense; ten pounds for the second; and for the third, banishment. By his warrant he caused one cow and a horse, worth six pounds ten shillings, to be distrained of my father, with whom I lived, for my fine of five pounds; it being the first offense (so adjudged by him,) and kept me in prison some weeks too. George Martin, a wicked hard hearted man, being jailer, put us in the common jail, for several days and nights, without either bread or water; because we could not satisfy his covetous desire, by giving him eight pence a meal for our meat; so he threatened, when he put us in the common jail, that he would see how long we could live there without meat; and allowed none that he could hinder, neither would he allow any of our friends, to bring us any bedding, not so much as a little straw. We had no place to lie on, but the prison window, upon the cold stones, the wall being thick, there was room for one at a time; and when he saw he could

not prevail, notwithstanding his cruelty, he removed us from the common jail, into a room in his own house, where he had several Friends prisoners, for non-payment of tithes, at the suit of the said George Fletcher.

The jailer was often cruel, wicked and abusive in his behavior to Friends; but in a few years he was rewarded according to his doings; for he himself was cast into prison for debt, and so ended his days.

When the quarter sessions began, which was in about two weeks after our commitment, at Carlisle, we were called and examined by one Philip Musgrove, of the said city, called a justice, an old persecutor, who, under a great pretense of love to us, said that if we would but conform, and come to the church, they would show us all the favor they could; and when any one of us would have answered his questions or proposals, he would say, we must be silent, except we would conform, for we might not preach there, but would tauntingly say, "When you are banished beyond the seas, then you may preach there." One of us replied, "We were not afraid to be banished beyond the seas; for we did believe, and had good cause so to do, that the Lord our God, whom we worship and serve, and who by his great power had preserved us all along until now, on this side the sea, would also preserve us on the other side, as we stood faithful in our testimony for him."

We were set at liberty that sessions; goods being taken for all our fines; but the sheriff for the county, Willfrid Lawson, of Issel Hall, being there, said to the jailer, "If they will not pay fees, put them into the common jail again, and keep them there until they rot." So the jailer put us into the common jail again, because we could not pay him fees; where was a Bedlam-man, and four with him for theft and two notorious thieves, called Redhead and Wadelad; two moss troopers, for stealing cattle; and a woman, for murdering her child.

Several of the relations and acquaintances of these, were allowed to come to see them, after the sessions was over, who gave them so much drink, that most of them were basely drunk; and the prison being a very close nasty place, they did so abuse themselves and us with their filthiness, that it was enough almost to stifle some of us. On the morrow, we let the jailer know how we were abused, whereupon he bid the turnkey bring us to the room where we were before; saying he scorned to keep us there, for we were honest men, setting our religion aside. One of us answered, "If the tree be good, the fruit cannot be evil." So in a little time after we had been in his house, he gave us our liberty, without paying fees.

This was in the fifth month, 1663.

Here follow some letters I wrote while I was a prisoner at Carlisle.

Dear Father and Mother,

My duty is hereby remembered to you; and my dear and tender love, both naturally and spiritually, does hereby reach unto you both: and as you are faithful according to what the Lord has

made known unto you, by his pure light, the Lord will preserve you. “Dear parents, as it is thus ordered, that I am called to suffer, for no other cause, than worshipping God among his people, I desire you to be content, and do not murmur or complain: but live in love, quietness, and all unity with each other, that the blessing of the Lord may be upon you, and prosper what you go about; for they that truly fear the Lord, shall lack no good thing. Let your faith stand here, dear hearts, and be patient, and content in your minds, and not too much concerned for me and my welfare; for I am persuaded, feeling the evidence of Truth in my heart, that I suffer not for evil-doing, but for obeying the requirings of the Lord: yes, for worshipping and serving him in spirit and in truth; so that it is, and shall be well with me, as I keep faithful unto the end. Be not at all dejected, or cast down in mind concerning me: but rather rejoice with me, that the Lord has not only counted us worthy to believe in his name, but also to suffer for the same.

From the house of our friend, Mungo Bewly, one of the prisoners, (being five) where the constables are ready to take us away to prison, in the city of Carlisle in Cumberland, the 8th day of the Fifth month, 1663.

Your obedient son,

John Banks

My second letter to my parents; with a few words to Friends.

Dear Father and Mother,

My dear and tender love, as a dutiful and obedient child, I do most dearly and tenderly remember to you; and if I should not write one word more to you, as to that, I do not question but that you believe and are sensible that my love is large and dear to you both, for your good in all respects; and this I can say of a truth, that all I desire of you is, that you would be patient and truly content; that you may come to say in truth, the will of the Lord be done, both concerning you and me. So, dear hearts, keep the faith, and hold fast the word of his patience; and in that suffer, as one with me, though you be at liberty and give up freely unto the Lord, for what we have is his; and if he bless, who can curse? Blessed, praised, and magnified be his holy name forevermore.

Your dutiful son,

John Banks

Dear Friends, in the precious Truth, to whom my love in the same is beyond expressions; we are with our Friends at present who are in prison for tithes; and are like to be retained after the sessions for fees, if we get our liberty then, all our fines being levied. But be it as the Lord

sees good, we can truly say he is near to support us; for his presence is even in the midst of us, and we are at true peace with him in our suffering, and are bound together with, and in the bond of love, peace, and unity. This, indeed, my heart rejoices to tell you, and I do believe you will be glad and rejoice with me, who am, and do remain your brother, and fellow-sufferer, who never knew the worth of a prison so much before, to my sweet peace and inward consolation, though I have yet tasted but a little thereof.

J. B.

From the prison-house in Carlisle, the 18th of the Fifth month, 1663.

Some time after, I had drawings in my spirit to visit the neighboring counties, as Westmoreland, Lancashire, and some part of Yorkshire, several times before the Lord sent me forth into other countries; so when I was clear of those counties, I returned home to my parents, and lived with them about a year more. Upon the 26th day of the sixth month, 1664, I took a Friend, by name Ann Littledale, to wife, in a public meeting of God's people, in scorn called Quakers, in a Friend's house in Pardshaw town, before many witnesses, as having freedom and liberty in the Lord so to do; which as a blessing and mercy I received from his hand, wherefore I am bound in duty to give him the praise, and to return him the honor and glory, who lives forever.

About four years after I was married, the Lord called me forth to travel in the work of the ministry, and I was made willing to leave all, in answer to his requirings, to go into the south and west of England. Yes, I was made willing to leave my dear wife and sweet child, though near and dear unto me, and went forth in the power and Spirit of the Lord Jesus. Our friend John Wilkinson and I travelled together in the Lord's work and service (this was Cumberland John Wilkinson). We took our journey in the second month, 1668, and travelled into Yorkshire, and visited many meetings in several places, where we had good service for the Lord and his truth.

A letter to my wife, written upon my journey towards the west and south of England.

Dear Wife,

You are dear unto me, together with our little one, in the nearness of that pure spirit by which the Lord has joined us together, as one heart and mind; from a sense of whose pure love felt to abound in my heart, I dearly salute you, and do hereby let you know I am very well at present, both in body and spirit, for which I can do no less than bless and praise the holy name and great power of the Lord forever, who has thus far preserved me in my journey, in true peace and comfort; whereby it is confirmed unto me that I am in my place, and that the work and service I have to perform is for the Lord, and the furtherance of his blessed truth. Blessed be that day in which I was made sensible of the same, that the Lord should count me worthy to do any service for him.

Wherefore, my dear, be you encouraged to trust in the Lord more and more, and put your

confidence in him in all things, who is able to do whatsoever he pleases and seems good in his sight; for he can make all things work together for good, to them who truly love and fear him, and are concerned for the prosperity of his blessed truth; though we must expect to meet with various exercises in the way to come to be made partakers thereof.

Remember my love and due respect to my parents, and let them know that I am well every way; and to Friends without respect of persons, as they inquire of me. The desire of many people hereaway, is after the Lord; and they flock to our meetings, like doves to the windows, when they hear of any that have the way of truth to declare. We have had a meeting every day this week, and shall have one to-morrow, if the Lord will.

Your dear and loving husband, according to my measure of the truth received.

John Banks

Written near Bradford, in Yorkshire, the 14th of the Third month, 1668.

From Yorkshire we travelled into Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire, and Warwickshire, where we had many blessed meetings, and where I wrote the following letter to my wife.

Dear Wife,

Unto whom I am truly united; in the pure love and unity of the Spirit of Truth, wherein the Lord has made us truly one, do I dearly salute you, and let you know that I am well in all respects; blessed and praised be the Lord our God forevermore.

In my heart I reach forth a hand unto you; give me yours, and let us go along together, in the work and service of the Lord; that so we may be a strength and encouragement to each other, to go on in faithfulness, and finish a faithful testimony for the Lord, in what he requires of us, in doing or suffering, and giving up whatever we have or enjoy in this world.

My dear heart, give all up freely, as to the Lord our God, to be ordered and disposed of by him, who is wise and wonderful in counsel, and to be admired of all them who truly love and fear him, and wait for his glorious appearance of light and life. Take no thought nor care for me, but in the Lord, who has a care and tender regard unto us, and all his people, as our hearts are kept near to him. We came this day to see our dear friend William Dewsbury, and intend to travel through the county, in visiting of the seed of God, towards Bristol, and then as the Lord may order us.

So with the remembrance of my duty to my parents, and my love to Friends, as though named, I remain your dear and loving husband,

J. B.

Warwick, the 4th of the Fourth month, 1668

From Warwickshire we travelled into Gloucestershire, and so to Bristol, where the Lord made our service acceptable to Friends and other people; and we travelled through Somersetshire, from which I wrote the following letter to my wife.

Dear Wife,

In that love which still endures, and increases in my heart to you, do I feel you; and the further I am separated from you, the nearer you are unto me, even in that which length of time or distance of place shall never be able to wear out, or bring to decay. Feel the reach of my love in your heart, and be you broken and tendered in the sense thereof, even of the heart-breaking love of God: in which my heart abounds in love to you; with breathings to God, that we may be kept living to him, through all our various exercises, that so we may daily learn with the blessed and wise apostle, in all conditions to be content; and that patience may have its perfect work in us; for patience gains experience, and experience hope, that never makes ashamed, but anchors the soul both sure and stedfast unto God.

My dear, give me freely up to the will and disposing of Him, into whose hand I am freely given up, both soul and body. Keep near the Lord at all times, and pray for me in spirit, that I may be preserved faithful to the Lord, to finish a good testimony for him; and that I may not return to you until his time, that so we may enjoy each other in the Lord, and be made partakers of his blessings upon us and ours, and all we take in hand, without which, it will not prosper; for it is in vain to strive against the Lord, before whom all nations are but as the drop of a bucket: if he bless, none can curse: blessed and praised be his holy name forevermore. Amen.

By this, you and the rest of my family and friends, may understand, that I am pretty well in health at present, through the goodness of the Lord, though I have been under weakness of body, at times, since I wrote my last from Warwick; but the Lord by his power strengthens me many times, far beyond what can be expected, considering my own weakness. I have faith to believe, and that upon good ground, that whatsoever the Lord is pleased to exercise me in, or call me to, he will give me strength to perform and go through, and nothing shall be able to hinder it. I am truly content, whatsoever the Lord may allow to come upon me, because hitherto he has kept and preserved me, to his praise and glory, and to my sweet peace and comfort; endless praises to Him who lives forever!

Remember my dear and tender love, as also my duty and tender regard, to my parents, for they are very near and dear to me; with my love also to Friends, neighbors, and relations, as if named. My companion and fellow-laborer in the Gospel desires to have his love remembered to you.

And so I bid you farewell. The Lord keep and preserve you, with all his people, faithful in this trying day, which possibly may have the effect to try the faith of many.

J. B.

Puddimoore-Milton, in Somersetshire, the 28th of the Fourth month, 1668

POSTSCRIPT

The truth of our God prospers and gains a good report in these parts, and many other places where we have travelled; and many are coming in to partake thereof. For people in many places are weary of the hireling priests, and dead formal worship of the world, and their assemblies grow thin. The Lord, by the all-sufficiency of his power, has made our service effectual unto many, both Friends and other people, and very full and peaceable meetings we have had in several counties and shires; wherefore we cannot but return the praise, honor, and glory unto Him, whose the work and power are; and count nothing too hard for us, so that we may bear a faithful testimony for Him, to the good of souls; that he over all may be glorified; and that we may feel true peace with Him in the end for our reward.

J. B.

My wife's letter to me:

Dear Husband,

After long expectation to hear from you, I have, before the writing hereof, received two letters, whereby I was much satisfied and refreshed; but in your last from Somersetshire, I observe, that you have been under weakness of body for some time. At the first hearing of which I was sad in my spirit; but considering the greatness and sufficiency of the Lord's love and power, in whom is our strength, I rest satisfied, hoping that all things will work for good in the end. Dear husband, I have been and am brought very low in body, by a strong fever, but am well in mind, blessed be the Lord therefor. It was one month last fifth-day, since the sickness took me, and in about two weeks time I received some strength, but became worse again, and am very weak. I greatly desire this may come safe to your hand, that you may understand how it is with me; and that, in the wisdom of God, you may consider what may tend most for the glory of God in this matter, I can truly say, in a sense of the Lord's love and truth, according to my measure, whether ever I see your face again or no, I desire nothing more than that the will of the Lord may be done in all things, whether in life or death; to whose care and fatherly protection I commit and commend you, and dearly salute you, with love to your companion, J. W., and bid you farewell; and am your dear and loving wife,

Ann Banks

Whinfell-Hall, in Cumberland, the 19th of the Fifth month, 1668

From hence we travelled westward, through part of Devonshire, and into Dorsetshire, Hampshire, Wiltshire, and so up to London. The Lord was with us; and Friends were greatly refreshed and comforted with us, and we with them.

Great openness and tenderness there was in those days among Friends, and many other people where we came, and the witness of God was soon reached. We had very large and full meetings in most places where we travelled, and many were convinced and are yet alive, standing witnesses for God. At London, I wrote to my wife as follows:

Dear Wife,

Yours I have received, whereby I understand the great weakness you have been in, which has been a near trial and great exercise to me. But when I consider the large love of God to you, in preserving you in faith to believe in him, and patience and true contentedness to give up unto him, under your great weakness, it has eased my burden and lessened my exercise.

Wait daily to feel the Lord to be your strength, in the time of your greatest weakness; rely wholly upon him, trust in him, believe in him, and he will never fail you. He can be more to you than a husband, and to your child than her father. May you know your portion increased in Him, and your inheritance to be enlarged, that you may dwell in the borders of his sanctuary, in the sight of his glorious Son forevermore; and may feel your faith to increase, and your patience and contentedness to remain in him, by the sufficiency of whose power, safety and preservation is known. As we abide in Him, whether we live or die we are the Lord's, and it shall be well with us forevermore, world without end: and no matter what we suffer or undergo in this life, if that be attained unto.

Remember my dear and tender love, and also my duty, to my parents, for still I find myself bound to be tender over them, and to do what in me lies for them, under the consideration of what they have done for me. With the salutation of my true love to yourself, in the remembrance of our little one, and my love to Friends, and relations and neighbors, I remain your loving husband,

J. B.

And now Peter Fearon, my apprentice: Mark, and take good notice what I say to you; lay it to heart, and consider well now in my absence. My true and unfeigned love is to you, and I desire your prosperity and welfare, in all which is good, both inwardly and outwardly; but first of all, and chiefly, in that which appertains to the salvation of your soul; the way whereof, the Lord, in his love, has in some measure made manifest unto you. Therefore be watchful to walk in it; that is to say, take heed to the light of Christ Jesus in you, the measure of the Spirit of Truth, which will lead you into all truth, and out of all deceit, as you do obey and follow the same. Whatever this pure light in you makes manifest to be evil, and reproves you for, depart you from it; if it be that which no eye can see, nor no one knows of, yet you must forsake it; wait and watch daily against it, in the light that makes it manifest, and you will receive power to cast it off and depart from it. The light, which is Christ Jesus, the way, the truth, and the life, teaches to be sober and lowly-minded; our words to be few and savory; gentle and easy to be

entreated; not to be high-minded, but fear the living God continually. This keeps the heart clean; and as it is abode in, low and humble in self-denial, and willing to take up and bear the daily cross; and as this takes place in the heart, such thereby come to depart from iniquity. All things that are reprov'd are made manifest by the light, and whatsoever makes manifest, is light; and that which the light makes manifest to be sin and evil, in word or action, you must forsake and deny yourself in; for this is the will and mind of the Lord, by his blessed Spirit; and he that knows his master's will, and does it not, according to the Scriptures of truth, must be beaten with many stripes.

As to things appertaining to your work and service, be patient and content, and go quietly about your business in the fear of God; and say not in yourself, I will think you have not done enough, for it is far from me so to think; only my desire is, if you do ever so little, be careful to do it well. But, above all things, be truly willing and obedient unto your mistress, for whatsoever you do to her, I take it as done to myself: and mind to carry yourself in love, and be a good example in my family, that so you may all live in love and unity together; in which the Lord preserve you all.

Your loving master,

J. B.

From White-chapel in London, the 3rd day of the Sixth month, 1668

We travelled in the work and service of the Lord from London, through those counties before named, again to Bristol, where we were greatly comforted in the Lord, in truth's prosperity, with other of the brethren we met with there; where I wrote the following letter to my wife.

Dear Wife,

I received yours at Bristol, which was cause of great refreshment and satisfaction unto me, because of your recovery from your sickness, which I should be glad to know does continue. I cannot give you a certain account of my return home at present. The day this letter was written in Bristol, we set our faces towards our own country, having been to the end of our journey at this time, for anything we know; but how long we may be in coming home I know not, for great is the work which the Lord has to do, and is doing, and the laborers are not many, considering the greatness thereof. Blessed are they that are faithful therein, though ever so little; for if they continue unto the end, they shall not lose their reward. Greatly does the truth of our God prosper and increase, to the encouragement of the faithful, and many are they who have a good desire to know the way thereof, in most places wherever we have come. Meetings are very large, peaceable, and quiet, almost everywhere, and a great calm there now is; what will be the end thereof, the Lord knows. We have had a sweet and precious time all along in our journey, blessed be the Lord for the same, who has been pleased to bless our weak endeavors for the good of his people, and our great comfort and satisfaction in him.

I am your dear and loving husband,

John Banks

Bristol, the Seventh month, 1668

We travelled through the nation homeward, and at the end of six months from the time of our going forth, we got well there with sheaves in our bosoms, for our faithfulness in our Lord and Master's work, which we had freely and faithfully performed through the ability of his power; and we were very careful to give way one to the other in our testimony, that so we might be preserved in unity and fellowship together, as we were to the end of our journey: everlasting praises, honor, and glory be given unto the Lord alone, for he is eternally worthy! The length of this journey was twelve hundred and sixty-eight miles.

I do not intend nor desire to make a great volume, or to give a full account of my journeys in England, Scotland, and Ireland; but in as much brevity as I can, notice what may be most material. I have travelled and gone over sea between England, Scotland, and Ireland, twelve times, and often not without great difficulty and danger of life by many tempestuous storms. Yet I was never at any time above two nights together at sea, insomuch, that when I have taken shipping at Whitehaven, the seamen would be very desirous who should have me in their vessel; saying, I was the happiest man that ever they carried over sea, for they always got well along when they had me, though sometimes through great tempests. That God over all may have the praise of his own works, and the faithful be encouraged to rely upon the sufficiency of his power forever, is the intent of my writing.

With reverence, humility, and godly fear, I may say that my labors and travels in these nations, in preaching the everlasting Gospel in the demonstration of the Spirit, with which the Lord was pleased to attend me; though through many exercises, both without and within; perils at sea, robbers by land, bad spirits and false brethren; yet notwithstanding all these, I hope, I may say without boasting, I have been made instrumental to turn many unto righteousness; a considerable number of whom are yet alive to witness to the truth of what I say. In my native county in Cumberland, and also in many places elsewhere, it is well known to Friends, with what diligence I labored among them, in the work of the Gospel, early and late, far and near, through much hardship to my body, in heat and cold; and yet, through the strength and ability given me of God, I was preserved in and through all, having faith therein. And with all diligence, when I was at home, I labored with my hands, with honest endeavors and lawful employments, for the maintenance of my family.

About the beginning of the year 1670, was the first time I went for Ireland, and our ancient friend John Tiffin, having drawings there also, we took shipping at Whitehaven, and landed at Carrickfergus, in the North of that nation, for the North was most before us. And after we had visited meetings thoroughly, and were well satisfied in our service, we visited Friends along to Dublin, and thereabout; and having had good and refreshing times with Friends in that city and elsewhere, and being clear, we returned to our own country. It was not long until the Lord required of me to go to Ireland again; and in the third

month, 1671, I was made willing to go, in obedience to the requirings of the Lord, and his presence was with me. My desire was to be at the Half-year's meeting at Dublin, which began the fifth-day of the week. I went to Whitehaven the third-day before, with intent to take shipping there; and my dear wife, and several friends, went along with me; but the wind that day was quite contrary, so that my wife and friends would have persuaded me to go home again, being ten miles, because the wind was not likely to serve. But I told them I could not then; I must rely upon him who had power to command the wind and seas, even the Lord alone. They went home, and I went that evening to a vessel which was ready to go, and told the owner I was willing to go with him to Dublin; and I desired some of his men, if the wind was fair before the morning, to call me at such a house. They answered, "Yes, with all their heart;" but asked if I thought the wind would serve so soon, that was now so contrary? I said, it was possible with the Lord that it might: for I had faith in the thing, according to what was revealed to me.

About the dawning of the day, being fourth-day morning, one came calling aloud to me, to make haste and come soon, the wind was fair, and the ship nearly ready to sail. We had a ready passage; so that according to my desire, I got to the meeting aforesaid on fifth-day, within half an hour after it was set; and a glorious heavenly meeting it was, where many faithful brethren from all parts of the nation came; and the Lord's power was over all, and several living testimonies given, to show forth the greatness and sufficiency thereof; wherefore we had cause of rejoicing in the prosperity of the Lord's work, and our unity and brotherly fellowship one with another.

Next day, in the evening, as I was waiting upon the Lord, a great weight came upon my spirit, under which exercise I patiently abode, until it opened in me, that I was to go southward, to a place called Wicklow, though I knew it not then, being twenty-four miles south from Dublin, where no meeting of Friends before that time had been, that I could hear of, and only one or two friendly people in it. But before I went, I wrote the following letter to my wife:

Dear Wife,

That nearness of love I still feel in my heart towards you, is beyond what I can express; yet I find an engagement upon me to show forth the same in some expressions at this time. It is in my heart to say unto you, my dear, be steadfast in your mind, and in the lowliness thereof watch and wait, to be preserved near to the Lord; so will you feel your peace and unity to increase with him and his people, and assuredly with me, your husband: in whose work and service, which is weighty, I am concerned; and the prosperity thereof is become my chiefest joy and delight; and for which I am willing and in measure able, through the goodness of the Lord unto me, to spend and be spent—may he have the praise, honor, and glory returned to him, who is worthy forever; whose the work is, and who is mighty by his own power, for carrying on the same.

My dear one, my daily cry and secret breathings are to the Lord for you, that you may be preserved in faithfulness to him, even to what you know of him, made manifest by his pure

light in you, by which the enemy, with all his cunning and subtlety, and reasoning which darkens, is discovered, and the outgoings of the mind judged; and the power received by waiting in the light, brings all things into good order, both within and without.

Be of good cheer, for my soul dearly loves you, and in my heart you are written not to be forgotten; together with our dear babes, whom it greatly tenders my heart to think of. The Lord preserve you all in the bosom of his love; who can be more to you and yours than I ever can be: into his fatherly protection I commit you, with myself and all that we enjoy, to be ordered and preserved. It is but reasonable he should have all offered up unto him: for what we are, and what we have, we are by him, and have received from him, that he may have the praise of all, who is eternally worthy, God blessed forever. Amen.

By this you, with Friends, may know that I am well every way, and have had comfortable and good service among Friends and friendly people in this city, where there is great need of faithful laborers; yes, even all over this nation; because many are inquiring the way to Zion: wherefore God's faithful servants are concerned to visit city and country, that the gathered may be established, and they that are not yet gathered, may be brought in. I came to this city on the fifth-day, where we had a heavenly meeting, and on sixth-day evening, as I was waiting upon the Lord, an exercise came upon my spirit and it opened in me that I was to go to a place southward to have a meeting next first-day, I knew of no place where any meeting had been kept; but the exercise remained weighty upon me; so I inquired of Friends if they knew of any meeting kept that way next first-day; but none could tell me of any. At last I told William Edmondson of my exercise, and he named Wicklow to me, and an answer was in me, that that was the place I was to go to; being twenty-four miles off, where a meeting had never been before; of which hereafter.

So I rest your loving husband,

John Banks

Dublin in Ireland, the 22nd of the Third month, 1671

Accordingly I went on seventh-day, and two Friends with me, and gave word that I intended to have a meeting in that town next day, being the first-day of the week. The report going forth, that an English Quaker was come to preach, there was a mighty noise of it in the place, the people being stirred up by the priest. The governor, one Hammond, lived at the castle, a garrison of soldiers being kept there; and the priest labored much with the governor aforehand, as I was told, to put me in prison.

One of the friendly men I have mentioned, being a carpenter, was willing to let us have the benefit of his workhouse to meet in; there being several Friends and friendly people come out of the country: and as I was ready to go from the inn where we lodged, the landlady said to me, "For God's sake, go not along the street, for there is a guard of musketeers waiting at the cross to take you—I will show you a back way." I said, "I accept of your love, but I must not go any private way, but along the town street;

for I have a testimony to bear for the Lord in this town, in love to the souls of people.” So by the time we were well seated in the place as aforesaid, before my mouth was opened, came a sergeant with a halbert, and a guard of musketeers with him; and the sergeant said, I must go along with him before the governor. I answered, “What authority have you to take me? If you have a warrant so to do, I shall go.” He held out his halbert, and said, “This is my warrant.” I said, “You need not have come to us with your swords and guns, as those who came against Christ with swords and staves; we are known to be a peaceable people: howbeit I shall go with you.” They took me to a house where the priest, his wife, the governor, and his man, and some more were collected. The priest being in a rage when I came in, said to the governor, “Sir, this is the deceiver; this is the deluder who is come from England, to delude people here; I hope you will do justice, and execute the law.” The governor being pretty moderate, said nothing for some time; but walked to and fro, being in a large room; and the people in an uproar, pressed in at the door. I was willing to let the priest rage on a little, till he had vented himself, that he might be the more manifest to the people. At last, I said to him, “You say I am a deceiver, and a deluder.”

He answered in fury, “So you are; so you are.” But I said, “Have patience, and let your moderation appear unto all men and hear what I have to say, to clear myself from your false accusation; for I shall not take your assertion for proof: I have had patience to hear you; are you a minister of Christ?” “Yes;” said he, “I am.” I replied, “But if I prove you a liar, as by the witness of this people you are, in charging me with that of which you can bring no proof; you are out of the doctrine of Christ, and so no minister of Christ, but of antichrist, and of your father the devil; and therefore you are the deceiver, and the deluder of the people.”

Upon this the priest's mouth was stopped, and he made to get out at the door; but the people were so thronged, he could not; then I turned to the people, “You hear,” said I, “that your minister has charged me without proof, that I am a deceiver and a deluder; did you ever see my face before? or did you ever hear me speak before now? Which of you, or who have I deceived or deluded?” But they were all silent: some more words I spoke, to manifest to the people, that their minister was no minister of Christ, according to the holy Scriptures; at which the priest cried out to the governor, “I pray you, sir, take him away; I hope you sent not for him to let him preach here.”

All this time the governor was silent, and I declaring God's everlasting truth to the people. At last the priest's wife said to the governor, “I pray you, sir, let him not preach here; commit him to jail;” it being near by, and the jailer present. Then the governor spoke to me, in answer to the priest's wife's request, and said, “I am here in place to do justice, in executing the law, which you have broken, in coming to this town to keep an unlawful meeting and conventicle in the time of Divine service.” I said, I knew no such service performed in the town, neither did I understand that I had broken any law. “How can it be, that I and my friends have broken the law, who were not found preaching, reading, praying, or performing any exercise that is looked upon to be worship to God; only we were met in a peaceable manner in silence, wailing upon, worshipping, and serving the Lord our God in spirit and in truth.” “It is no matter,” said the governor, “what you pretend; you were met, as before I have said, and I must

commit you to jail. Jailor, take him away.” A Friend, newly convinced, spoke some few words to the priest, about his accusing me falsely; and the priest's wife said, “Sir, commit that man too;” which he did. Another friendly man also speaking to the priest, his wife said again to the governor, “I pray you, sir, commit that man too;” and so he did. We three were committed to prison (the priest standing all the while silent, and trembling still); and when we came forth of the house, there was a great multitude of people, and the jailer said to us, “Come after me:” (he lived above stairs, and the prisoners were underneath). He took us into a room beyond his own dwelling, which was pretty large, and the people came in and filled up our room, the jailer's, and a part in the third, and the jailer hindered none. In a little time my mouth was opened in the demonstration of the power and Spirit of God, and I preached the way of life and salvation to the people, in and through Jesus Christ his Son, by believing in his pure light, and walking answerably to the teachings of his grace, and the reproofs of his holy Spirit, by which they might receive power to become the sons of God, and to strengthen the faith of those who believed therein.

It was a blessed day for the Lord and his truth, for his heavenly power broke in upon many, and several were convinced, and received the truth in the love of it; and many made confession thereunto, and told the priest they were satisfied, by what they had heard me speak, that I was no such man as he said I was, and that we were not the people he had persuaded them to believe. The truth was cleared from his aspersions, by which the witness of God was reached in peoples' consciences, and they would not let the priest alone, till they got him to promise that he would dispute with me; he having boasted, that if he might but have the opportunity to manifest that deceiver, he would. The hour was set next morning by eight o'clock; and they agreed that I was to go to the priest's house, and the jailer with me, who said, before we did go, “I thank you, Mr. Banks, for the good sermon you have preached to us; for our minister never preached us such a one in his time; and I believe you are no such man as he said you were.”

Before the hour came the priest broke his word; for instead of staying to dispute with me, he made it his business timely in the morning to go to the sheriff, about two miles off, to tell him what a numerous meeting the jailer had permitted to be in the county jail, above stairs, such a one as never was in the county itself; and, said the priest, “I entreat you, sir, either take some course in time, or else I fear all the town of Wicklow will be Quakers, and then there will be no abiding for me.” A sober man being present, made it his business to come and tell me and the jailer; and that the sheriff said, if he had known it, the utmost door of the house should have been shut against us all, and we kept there till we had been delivered by due course of law; and also said to the priest, “If the jailer, or any other, allow the like again, come and inform me and I shall take a course with them.” When the news came to the jailer, who was a man of a pretty noble spirit, “What,” said he, “have I been a jailer eight years, and know not what belongs to my place? So that I have my prisoners when there is occasion for them, I'll set my doors open, and they shall go and come who will.” And accordingly he did so, while I was there, which was but three days, he keeping a public house. During the time I was there, as I remember, except when I was in bed, I was scarcely one hour without some people coming to see me, and

discourse with me about the principles of religion; so that I was sorry for nothing, but that I had no longer time there, the truth having prevailed so much upon the people, and begotten true love in them to it in so little time. Everlasting praises unto the Lord alone, whose the work is, and by his own power he is the carrier on and manager of it.

In a little time, the jailer, with some others of the town, who persuaded him to it, when the priest had failed and broken his word, so that his own people even hissed at him, agreed to speak to the governor, to have me brought before him, and told him they did believe I was an honest man, and they would have him let me go out of prison. He bid the jailer bring me up next morning to his chamber, being the third-day, at eight of the clock, and he would examine me, seeing the priest had failed. Accordingly, with the two Friends committed with me, I was brought before him; and in great moderation the governor reasoned with me for about an hour, about our manner of meeting, and the worship of God, and what we believed concerning Christ, and of honor to men in authority; all which was cleared to his satisfaction. He confessed to the truth of what I spoke, and said he was satisfied with the answers I had given him, and asked what I would have him to do for me, being I was the first of our people he ever had to do with, he would willingly let me go, if he could be clear and answer the law. I told him it was my liberty I desired and prized; and I believed it was in his power to set me and my friends at liberty. He said, he believed well concerning me, and thought I was an honest man: so if I would promise him to appear at the court sessions, when there was occasion, or get any to do it for me, that he knew, I should have my liberty. I told him, I neither could do it myself, nor desire another to do it for me. "Well," said he, "if you will promise me you will never come to keep any more meetings at Wicklow, I will let you go." I answered, "I cannot do that; but if I do, if you have power so to do, you may put me in prison again, and I believe I shall be as willing to suffer then, as now." So he set us all at liberty, and said to me, "God keep you in the mind you are now in, for I think you are in a good mind." So I took leave of him, and said, "Governor, fare you well; and in so saying, I truly desire your welfare, both of your body and soul." We came down with the jailer to his house, and I said to him, "Now we have our liberty, we may take our leave of you." "Yes," said he, "and pay me my fees." "Fees," said I, "what is that?" "Oh," said he, "it seems you never have been prisoner before." "Yes," said I, "I have." "And," said he, "did you never pay fees?" I answered, "No." He replied, "Well, being you are the first that ever I had in my custody of your people, I will not keep you; because the governor is pleased to set you at liberty; but if any more of you come here, I will put you in the dungeon, if you will not pay fees." "Well," said I, "we must leave that to what time will bring forth." So he gave us our liberty, and we called for drink to give him, he keeping ale to sell; we also had some food from his wife, and laid in his beds for I saw our time was like to be so short, that we made no provision for ourselves; so, in consideration of these things, when we came away, each of us gave the jailer twelve pence, with which he seemed to be well pleased. I went to Dublin again, where Friends were glad to see me, and we were refreshed together in the enjoyment of the Lord's presence: and from there we travelled into the north, visiting Friends, where the Lord has a good people: from which I sent the following letter to my wife.

Dear Wife,

The truth of our God is exceedingly precious, and very desirable—blessed be his name forevermore, who has made us sensible of the same, to the gladdening of our hearts. I feel true unity with you therein, and it is cause of comfort to me in all my travels and exercises for the Lord and his truth's sake, that you draw with me in true subjection, and with a willing mind under his yoke; to the end that his will may be done by us. Oh! that we may carefully keep here; for then surely great will be our reward, if we continue unto the end: for great is and shall be the reward of the faithful.

Having been this day at a very large precious meeting, where many people besides Friends were present, I have not time to write what I would, and partly because of the haste of the bearer; but in a word, I am well, and the Lord is with me; and I am freely given up, and made willing to follow him. Since I came from Dublin, I have visited Friends' meetings, and been into the Scot's country, as it is called, where I had the company of three Friends, but George Grigson has been more with me than any other Friend in the ministry. After the next first-day's meeting, which is the Province Meeting kept every six weeks near Lurgan, I intend, if the Lord will, to go towards Dublin again, and it may be three weeks before I get there. When I am clear of that city, as the Lord makes way, I intend for Wicklow, Wexford, Clonmell, Tallow, Youghall, and so on to Cork and the West, where the Lord is bringing forth a people, notwithstanding all Zion's enemies and opposers. Truly may I say, as being an eye-witness, the harvest is very great in this nation. Oh! that the Lord would be pleased to fit and prepare and send forth more laborers into it.

Farewell, my dear wife, with my sweet babes.

John Banks.

Near Lurgan, in the North of Ireland, the 21st of the Fourth month, 1671

In my return, after ten weeks, it came upon me that I must go to Wicklow again; and when I came to Dublin, there was a letter from Wicklow, informing that the people desired another meeting, and that the sergeant who took me before the governor, was willing we should meet in his house. The priest hearing thereof, threatened him and he was afraid, so that when I and Friends came there the man dared not let us meet in his house. We got another house, but it would not contain all that came; yet there we met, and it was a blessed heavenly peaceable meeting, without any disturbance at all—praises unto the most high God, who has all power in his own hand, and thereby can do whatsoever seems good in his eyes, notwithstanding the determination of wicked and ungodly men. Not long after, so soon as the priest had an opportunity, he began to prosecute and imprison Friends for tithes and such like things, and got several put in prison, who came to visit that place; but the truth prospered so much the more, and a meeting of God's people was set up in that town, and continues.

From Dublin, before I went to Wicklow the second time, I wrote the following letter to my wife.

In the nearness of that love which remains in my heart without change, I write unto you; and

my prayers are to the Lord for you, and all with you; that you may all live in love, and in the fear of God; so will all go well, and be kept in good order, both within and without.

My dear heart, as the Lord has been pleased to work a willingness in you to give up and part with me freely, for his name and Gospel's sake, have your eye to the recompense of reward, even peace with him; and treasure it up in your bosom, that it may be your everlasting portion, when time here shall be no more.

The breathing of my soul is for you, as for myself, for he has made us one: the Lord preserve you unto the end, in faithfulness to do his will, that you may be kept in true unity and fellowship with his people, in keeping to meetings on first-day and the weekday.

Neglect no opportunity that may make for the good of your soul, and then nothing for the body will be lacking. Exercise yourself in his law written in your heart, that so you may feel the streams of his love in your inward part; let truth be the girdle of your loins, and faithful waiting in his light, your dwelling; that although we be far separated as to the outward, we may be made witnesses more and more of the joy of his salvation therein; partakers of that peace which the world can neither take nor give.

You and my dear children are so near and dear unto me, that many times the remembrance of you draws tears from me; for the further I am separated from you, the nearer you are unto me in spirit; and at this time my heart is broken into tenderness, being sensible, according to the exercise which attends me, that the Lord will yet draw me farther from you, who knows my heart, that if I might to-morrow with clearness, return to you, oh, how gladly would I embrace it! But truly, my dear, the Lord requires of me, and I cannot forbear to give some hint thereof, that after I am clear of this nation, I must go for the West of England. From Cork, I intend to take shipping for Minehead in Somersetshire, and so farther, as the Lord is pleased to order me when I come into that nation. Truly the harvest is great in most places; and as the Lord has been pleased to count me worthy to be called, and sent forth into his work and service, amongst his ministers and messengers, though but one of the least of many, I am freely given up to his blessed requirings, to labor and travail what in me lies, that in the end I may receive a penny.

Therefore, my dear, as the Lord has counted me worthy to bear a public testimony for him, in preaching the everlasting Gospel, pray with me, that in faith and patience, and with a heart undaunted, I may bear it faithfully unto the end, to the praise and glory of him whose the work is, who is worthy for evermore. That when in this my intended voyage and journey I have performed what the Lord requires, I may return to you with true peace, in the joy of his salvation; and that we may have and enjoy one another while we live, as those who enjoy one another in the Lord, where is the peaceable and quiet habitation; until which time, the Lord God of life and glory keep and preserve you, with our little ones, myself, and all his faithful people—who is a faithful keeper and preserver, and withholds no good thing from his dear

children, who can be more to wife, than husband, and to children, than father and mother; who is alone worthy of praise, honor, and glory, both now, and forevermore. Amen.

I am your dear husband, with love to you still renewed,

John Banks.

Dublin, the 14th of the Fifth month, 1671

In about two years after, the Lord required of me to go and visit Ireland again; and coming to Wicklow, I went to the jailer's, to see Friends in prison, and to have a meeting in the town. When the jailer saw me, he said, "Oh, Mr. Banks (as he called me,) are you come again? I think you need not have come any more; you did your business the last time you were here, for I think all the town of Wicklow will be Quakers." "But notwithstanding what is done," I said, "it is my business to come to see how the Lord's work prospers; for the work is his, we are no more than instruments in his hand, which he is pleased to make use of; and more than that, you have got many of my friends in prison, and I must needs visit them."

The next time I came to visit this nation, I came to this place again, which was in about two years more, and the priest of Wicklow was dead, the governor gone for England, and no soldiers there, truth still prospering, and Friends' meeting settled and established by the power of God in peace and quiet, and Friends well preserved in and through their sufferings. This makes me say there is none like unto the true and living God, who has wrought, and is working wonders in the earth, and bringing strange and mighty acts to pass. And when I had travelled through most of the nation, visiting Friends and other people, being in the north, in that part called Scot's country, I came up to Antrim, with eight Friends more, intending to have a meeting at our friend James Greenwood's house.

When we came, there was a constable with his staff, and a company of people with him; and he stood at the Friend's door, and said he had an order from the lord Mazarine, that we should not meet there. I bid him produce his order, and we would give him an answer. He holding out his staff, said that was his order, and we should not meet there, meet where we would. I answered, "Keep to your word; we shall be content to meet in the King street," being a market town, and Friends and many people being come together, my mouth being opened in a testimony for the Lord, and in love to the souls of the people, in turning their minds to the teachings of God's Spirit in themselves.

The constable, who was a Presbyterian, came with his staff, in a rage, to pull me out of the meeting; and I said to him, "Are you not ashamed to manifest yourself a liar before so many people? Did you not say we should meet where we would, except in our friend's house?" So he was smitten, and could do no more himself, but went among the people and got a butcher, a man picked out for his purpose, to pull me away. And he came in a most rigid manner, and took me by one arm, and haled me down the street a little way; and there came a Friend out of the meeting, and said to him, "Cease from persecuting the innocent, lest the judgment of God fall upon you." Which did immediately seize upon him, and his hands were loosed from me, that he had no power to pull me any further, but stood trembling by me (I

being declaring the truth still,) and he went home and took his bed, and never got from under the judgment till he died. In a little time I saw it my place to be silent, and our friend George Grigson said, “Oh, you people of the town of Antrim! is this the entertainment which you give to strangers? Some in the days of old, by entertaining strangers in true love, entertained angels unawares.” A glorious heavenly day it was for the Lord and his blessed truth, in strengthening the faith of his people, for his power and heavenly presence was livingly manifested in the meeting, and many were convinced, and several came to own and receive the truth in the love of it.

In the time of our meeting, there was a sudden storm of wind and rain, the like of which, for the time it continued, I have very seldom or never seen, for the water with the dirt ran in a stream amongst us, so that all or most of us were wet to the skin. The storm of wind and rain, was a figure of their raging persecuting spirit; and when it was over, the sun broke forth, and shined very clear; a true figure of the victory the Truth obtained, through the power thereof.

This year, going to London, to the Yearly meeting, I wrote the following letters to my wife:

My dear and loving Wife,

Have faith in and through all your exercises, and know your faith to stand in the power of God, which gives victory over all that is contrary to it. It is good and safe to trust the Lord in every condition, who undoubtedly will provide things needful every way, both for us and ours, as he sees we stand in need, if we are freely given up to do his will, and are content therewith. He has given us an understanding, blessed be his name forever, and in temporal things, as well as spiritual, diligence must be used, with a godly care and honest endeavors, with what labor and pains the body is able to answer; which always was my concern, when at home, but still in and through all, to have a true regard to God in our hearts; this is the way to bring a blessing and increase upon all our endeavors.

By this, you, with all yours, and Friends, may know that I am well every way; I am bowed in humility before the Lord for the same. In company with my acceptable companion, Thomas Langhorn, I came here the last seventh-day night. John Burnyeat is now with me; things here are all quiet and well at present, and meetings full and large.

Farewell in the Lord.

John Banks

London, the 11th of the Third month, 1675

Dear Wife,

In the feeling of the love of God, my heart is truly open towards you and yours, with a true

desire that you and they may live in the holy, pure fear of the Lord God, with a true willingness in your heart, freely to give up whatsoever the Lord does require, be it in doing or suffering; that so he may be revered, worshipped and served in all things, with delight. And that upon no account, wherein his truth and glory is concerned, we may say, Why is it thus? For with him all fulness dwells, and if he bless, none can curse; blessed and praised be his holy name forevermore! The way to bring a blessing upon us and ours, is in all his blessed requirings freely to give up to do his will, though it be ever so much in the cross to ours; for this brings the blessing, peace, and lasting gain in all respects.

For your comfort I may tell you, that since the time I parted from you, I have been made so much a witness of the enjoyment of the power and presence of God, among my brethren, that I would not have missed it, for all that can be mentioned to me in the world.

Oh, the in-breakings of the love and melting power of God, and the shining of his glorious light amongst us, in this our Yearly Meeting, where Friends in the ministry were, from most parts through this nation! How were our hearts broken, and our souls comforted and consoled! The Lord did certainly evidence unto us, that our meetings, and what we there offered to him, were acceptable and well pleasing before him. Oh, the sweet harmony of life that was amongst us! the streams whereof flowed, and many living testimonies were borne, to the greatness and sufficiency of the power of God that overshadowed us! And oh, the subjection, brotherly tenderness, and godly care that were amongst us one over another, that we might speak one by one, as the Lord, by his Spirit, moved and gave utterance! How near were we to the Lord, and how dear one unto another, in the unity and fellowship of his blessed holy Spirit! What a blessed communion was there held, and how richly was the table of the Lord spread amongst us! What thanksgiving, praises, honor and glory, were many made to ascribe unto him therefor! And there was a godly care also for the prosperity of the truth, and spreading abroad thereof, together with the establishing of Gospel order and discipline in the churches of Christ.

May I never forget this glorious, heavenly appearance of our God amongst us, by his power and life-giving presence; but that it may be of lasting remembrance to me while I have a being: for it has not only been to me, but to many brethren, a day of great joy and spiritual comfort, to the building of us up together in the most holy faith. My dear, my heart is overcome in the love of God, with a desire that you may feel the same to your comfort, with all yours. The Lord keep and preserve you all, and all my dear friends thereaways, to whom is my sincere love remembered. And let all be encouraged to go on in the way of truth and righteousness, though we may meet with various trials and exercises; for of a certain truth the Lord is with us, and by his power goes before us, as our king and captain, who pleads our cause, and fights our battles for us, with all Zion's enemies and opposers.

Blessed and happy are all they who bear a faithful testimony for him, while they have a day and time so to do.

Your faithful husband,

John Banks

London, 29th of Third month, 1675

Dear Wife,

By this you may understand that I am well in all respects, blessed be the Lord my God forever, who by his power has preserved me. I am now clear of this city and country, having faithfully discharged my duty in what the Lord my God has required of me, and to-morrow intend to set my face towards home. I have passed through a troublesome country, by wicked informers and other officers; but the Lord has so ordered it in his wisdom, that no Friend has suffered twopence upon my account, at any meeting in all my journey; though the Lord knows I never held my peace for fear of suffering, but did as he ordered me, whether to speak more or less, or to be silent. Bless you the Lord, O! my soul, in so ordering and preserving me in this and many other great exercises and tribulations, both in body and spirit, among these wicked informers, where Friends have suffered much, by what they call the Conventicle Act. I had seventeen meetings among them. So having not much more in my mind to write, I bid you farewell in the Lord Jesus Christ, "And remain your husband in that which changes not,

J. B.

Bristol, 30th of the Sixth month, 1676

In the year 1676, I went into Ireland again; from which I wrote the following letters to my wife, giving some account of my travels.

My dear,

My love in the strength of God's power reaches unto you, and in that I dearly salute you and all yours; and my prayers are put up unto him for you, with all yours. The Lord encourage you by the continuance of his love in faithfulness to follow and obey him; that so the sense of his love in your heart, may constrain you to meet often among his people; and with all diligence to wait upon the Lord in true silence, to feel refreshment from his presence; that so in the life which is pure and precious, you may more and more increase, that as the blessing of the Lord is unto the seed of the righteous, so you may feel it to be upon you and yours.

In this living exercise the Lord preserve you, low in his fear, that in all godliness of life and conduct you may be a good example to your family, and with godly care may train up your children, now when they are young, as becomes the truth. When they do amiss, correct them according to the fault, in the fear of the Lord, laying aside and keeping down all passion and heat of spirit; that they may be a comfort to us in our time, and that we may be found clear in

discharging our duty concerning them, before the Lord and all people; that if they live to the age of men and women, and have children, they may have cause to remember our godly care concerning them, and tell of it in like counsel unto their children, and so from one generation to another.

Let not a foolish pity or foolish fondness tie our hands from correction, when there is need of it, as too many do, for this has more regard to the body than the soul; though surely that which hurts the soul, must needs injure the body also. Let us not be too careful for their bodies, or for portions or worldly preferment, but using honest endeavors, leave the issue to the Lord, who I fully believe will provide what shall be sufficient for them; as we are chiefly concerned for the good of their souls, and there leave it. Let every one of them as they grow up, and have ability of body and a capacity accordingly, be employed with all diligence in some work or business, that so they may be helpful unto you, and become serviceable in the creation. This I could not pass with clearness, being often under a weighty exercise to have our children trained up in the fear of the Lord; that they may be preserved in the way thereof, that none of them might wander or go astray into the broad way of the world, either for husbands or wives, though ever so rich; nor anything else this world can afford, as I see too many do, to the grief of my soul.

By this you with yours and Friends may know that I am well, together with my companion John Watson, whose company and service is very acceptable to me and God's people; and our travels and exercises are made very comfortable unto us, because of the presence of the Lord that does go along with us; and many precious and heavenly meetings we have had in many places of this nation, both among Friends and other people, who are very open to receive the truth, as also in this city, where many are inquiring the way to Zion, with their faces thitherward. Because of this the devil is stirred up in great wrath, and the heathen rage, and the wicked imagine vain things against the Lord and his anointed, and come rushing into the meetings in great disorder, like so many wild beasts out of the forest, especially the collegians; but the Lord, by his power, is pleased so to tame them, that they are put to silence, and made to be quiet. Oh! how powerfully and effectually has the Lord our God appeared among us, in this our Half-year's Meeting, which began last fourth-day, and kept twice every day to the week's end; also two yesterday, and the women's meeting this day. The men's meeting will be held to-morrow, and their week-meeting on fifth-day.

After the next first-day we intend for Mount-Melick, and so towards the north, being clear of this nation, through diligence and hard travel. The Lord, by his power, has mightily appeared amongst us in our meetings, uniting our hearts together and prospering his work; the praise of it forever belongs unto him. For what he has already done, my soul praise you the Lord.

Oh! that Friends might live in love and unity together, that as the Lord has been good in preserving a remnant alive to himself unto this day, they may continue so unto the end; and whatsoever would arise among them that in anywise tends to break their heavenly unity and

brotherly fellowship, and sows dissension in the churches of Christ, may be nipped in the bud; for if it grow, the effects of it will be bad, and do great hurt among the plantation of God. The Lord keep and preserve all watchful, that the envier of our happiness and truth's prosperity may be kept out and prevented.

It still remains with me to go out of the north of this nation into Scotland, because of which, I have travelled very hard. When we came here first, we staid but one week, and took our journey through the counties of Wicklow, Wexford, Clonmell, Tallow, Youghall, and so to Cork, and into the west, and back by Cork again, and so by Charleville and Mallow, down to Limerick, from which Friends came with us to this Half-year's Meeting.

We travelled very hard three hundred and sixty miles to get to it, in which time we had good service for the Lord in many blessed heavenly meetings. With the remembrance of my love to you, and my dear children, and Friends, not forgetting my duty to my father, I conclude, and remain "Your ever loving husband,

J. B.

Dublin in Ireland, 13th of the Ninth month, 1676

Dear Wife,

In that love which many waters cannot quench, neither floods drown, I write to you, and have you daily in my remembrance, together with our dear and tender children, who are always near and dear to my heart, and I hope ever will be unto the end of time, however the Lord may be pleased to dispose of me. We intend to go from this sea-port town, in order for Portpatrick in Scotland. We are both well every way; praised and magnified be the worthy name of the Lord our God forevermore.

To the Lord and the word of his patience I commit and commend you, that in him you may be preserved, with all yours, unto the end, in all faithfulness, to receive the crown of life, and of immortal glory.

Farewell, my dear heart.

J. B.

Donaghadeo in Ireland, the 22nd day of the Tenth month, 1676

When my friend John Watson and I had travelled through the nation of Ireland, visiting Friends therein, and been much comforted and refreshed together with them, a concern came upon us to visit Friends in Scotland; and we sailed in a half-decked boat from Donaghadee in Ireland, and landed at Portpatrick in Scotland. From Portpatrick we travelled seventy miles in cold, frost, and snow, in the tenth month, before we came among Friends, which was at Douglas. The evening before we came there, night came

on while we were upon a mountain, where no way was to be seen, for there was so much snow and ice that we could not ride; and being much wearied with going on foot and leading our horses, we lost our way. But at last Providence so ordered it, that we found a house, and two men came forth and willingly set us into our way; so that we got to a Friend's house, late at night, at Douglas, whose name was William Michael, and had a meeting there next day. Though there were but few Friends belonging to that place, we were sweetly refreshed and comforted together, in the enjoyment of the Lord's presence, whereby it is evident that with him there is no respect of persons, time, place, or number.

From Douglas we travelled to Hamilton, and so to Drumbo, Badcow, Lithgow, and Edinburgh, where we visited Friends and other people, and had good service for the Lord; then to Prestonpans, Leith, and Edinburgh again, where we had two heavenly meetings, though there were some wild scoffing people among them, yet the Lord's power chained them down. From there to Kelso, Onter, Whittingem, Thrambleton, and so to Morpeth, and Newcastle-upon-Tyne; and there homeward into Cumberland. The Lord was effectually with us in our travels and exercises, and we were sweetly preserved together in true love and unity, in our service for the Lord.

About this time a pain struck into my shoulder and gradually fell down into my arm and hand, so that I was wholly deprived of the use of it; the pain increased both day and night. For three months I could neither put my clothes on nor off, and my arm and hand began to wither, so that I applied to some physicians, but could get no cure by any of them. At last, as I was asleep upon my bed, in the night time, I saw in a vision, that I was with dear George Fox, and I thought I said to him, George, my faith is such, that if you see your way to lay your hand upon my shoulder, my arm and hand shall be whole throughout. This remained with me two days and nights, that the thing was a true vision, and that I must go to George Fox, until at last, through much exercise of mind, as a great trial of my faith, I was made willing to go to him, he being then at Swarthmore in Lancashire, when there was a meeting of Friends on the first day of the week. Some time after the meeting, I called him aside into the hall, and gave him a relation of my dream, showing him my arm and hand; and in a little time, we walking together silently, he turned about and looked upon me, and lifting up his hand, laid it upon my shoulder, saying, "The Lord strengthen you both within and without." I went to Thomas Lower's, of Marsh Grange, that night; and when I was set down to supper, immediately before I was aware, my hand was lifted up to do its office, which it could not do for long before. This struck me with great admiration, and my heart was broken into tenderness before the Lord; and the next day I went home, with my hand and arm restored to its former use and strength, without any pain. The next time that George Fox and I met, he said, "John, you mended;" I answered, "Yes, very well in a little time." "Well," said he, "give God the glory;" to whom I was and still am bound in duty so to do, for that and all other his mercies and favors. He has all power in his own hand, and can thereby bring to pass whatsoever seems good in his eyes; who, by the same, prepares instruments and makes use of them as pleases him, who is alone worthy of all praise, honor, and glory, both now, and forevermore. Amen!

In the year 1678, as I was traveling in the West of England, in Somersetshire, one evening I had a meeting at our friend William Thomas's house at Dullverton, into which meeting came an informer, and

some others with him, and took several Friends' names. He was also wicked and abusive, both to me and Friends; and being engaged in testimony for the Lord, I stopped, and said, "Friends and people, mark and take notice of the end of that wicked man;" for it was clearly manifested to me that he would make a bad end. Some time after a Friend wrote to me, that he killed his wife, and was hanged for it at Ilchester. The Friend W. T., was fined by the information of this wicked informer; but he swore against one who was not at the meeting, and so his wicked intention came to nought.

Some time after my return home, the Lord laid a necessity upon me to go forth with a testimony against that spirit of separation which had sown discord, and made division in the churches of Christ, casting stumbling-blocks in the way of the weak, making the cross of Christ of none effect through a false liberty, and setting up separate meetings. But before I went, I was moved of the Lord to give forth a paper to go before me; and I caused copies to be taken, and sent to those places where this spirit had got the most entrance. It was read in several men's meetings, and those who were of that spirit which the paper testified against were enraged and cried out at some places, "He means us!" A copy of which paper follows:

A true and faithful Testimony for the living God, and the all-sufficiency and unchangeableness of his power and Spirit; against the devil and his dark power and spirit, by which he rules in the hearts of the children of disobedience, with all his cunning and subtlety in his instruments. Also a few words of counsel and advice to Friends everywhere, to keep to their first love, and to meet often together in the name of the Lord.

The Lord our God, even the true and living God, has promised that he will never break his covenant with his people, nor alter the word that is gone out of his mouth. This covenant which he has made with, and renewed unto his people, is an everlasting covenant of life and peace, even the sure mercies of David, of which he daily makes those witnesses, who break not covenant with him, but retain their first love and zeal for his name and truth. His name is above every name, his truth is as precious as in the beginning, and his glory shines over all in this day: endless praises unto him! He has gathered many into this unchangeable covenant, and made them nigh unto himself, who are his true-born sons and daughters; children of the promise, quickened and raised up from a state of death, to serve him in newness of life. The work is his own, and the praise and glory belongs unto him forever.

Herein are the sure mercies known, the durable riches, and the living substance fed upon. He nourished us by the virtue of his word of life, when we were young and tender, which made us grow up before him in stature and in strength, with our hearts filled with love to him, our Father, and in love and unity one with another. All our life long, to this day, has he been ready to hand forth a suitable supply to our conditions, as we in faithfulness waited upon him. His word is made good and his promise fulfilled, 'I will never leave you, nor forsake you,' worm Jacob, who are little and low in your own eyes, that dwell in the low valley, abiding in your tent, and do not hunt abroad upon the mountains of imagination. The promise is yes, and

amen, forever, to the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The blessing that makes rich is obtained and partaken of, in the seed and covenant of life, Christ Jesus. I will give you for a covenant unto the people, and for a light unto the Gentiles, that you may be my salvation unto the ends of the earth. This is he whom God has given unto us, and we have believed on, and received him, so that he is become our light, life, and everlasting salvation; the high priest of our profession; our redeemer and restorer; our captain, king, and law-giver; our everlasting shepherd; who by his mighty power has brought us unto his fold of rest, where true peace is; magnified be his name forever.

Dear Friends everywhere, whom God has quickened, and raised from death to life, by the effectual working of his power, be you all stirred up in a holy zeal and true tenderness, to consider what manner of persons you ought to be; being mindful what the Lord has done for you, ever since you were a people; whom he has made to be his people, who were not his people—I say, let your consideration be serious in this matter, that so every one of you, in this day of his power, may bear a faithful testimony for the living God, and the sufficiency of his power and holy Spirit, against the old enemy and adversary the devil, and his dark power and spirit. For truly, good is the Lord, and faithful in all his promises to them who wait upon him, as you yourselves are witnesses. Although our travels in times past, were under great exercise and deep affliction, with weeping and mourning, with our hands upon our loins; and although many have been our trials both within and without, the Lord, by the all-sufficiency of his power, has wrought our deliverance, as we relied upon the same, so that sorrow and sighing are fled away, and everlasting joy is sprung up; yes, endless joy is known here, endless comfort and satisfaction; where we can praise the Lord together in the beauty of holiness, being arrayed with the clothing of his spirit, which makes us all comely before God, even the Spirit of Truth, the Comforter.

Our unity and fellowship stands in the spirit and in the truth, that comes from the God of truth, who is light, and in him is no darkness at all; in which, as we live and dwell, we have unity one with another, and all the powers of hell and death are not able to break us asunder, nor an unclean spirit to hurt us; for we have salvation for walls and bulwarks, and there is no destroying in all God's holy mountain. For the destroying, wasting, and dividing spirit, and cunning deceit, is upon Esau's mountain and in Cain's field, out from the life and power, the true light and fear of the living God; who is a God of order, and preserves all his children and people, in a comely order, living a godly life and holy conduct in all their undertakings; to the end that they may honor and glorify him in their day, by bringing forth much fruit, faithfully waiting upon, and worshipping and serving him.

Oh! the love of our God unto us; the great care and tenderness he has had over us, ever since we were a people, that we might be faithful laborers in his vineyard. Did he call us to be idle? Surely no. Did he give a gift unto male and female, that we should hide it in the earth, and not improve it to his glory? Oh! no. Has he done so much for us, that we should always be as chil-

dren, and neither speak nor act as men? Surely no; but that we should grow up in stature and strength before him, as perfect men and women in Christ Jesus our holy head, that we might all work together, as a body fitly framed in holy order, in his heavenly power and spirit, which leads into purity and holiness, love and true unity, which stand in the spirit, where no rent is, and where no strife nor separation can enter.

Through the blessed working of his all-sufficient power, the Lord in his love brought us together and made us a people, and has preserved us so, to his praise and our eternal comfort. And it is the work of the devil, by his evil power and dark spirit, and wicked instruments actuated thereby, to divide and scatter us asunder. But my testimony for God, to you my friends, which still lives in my heart, is to the all-sufficiency of his power. Keep close to that which first gathered you near to the Lord and one unto another, who has placed his name amongst you; and then not all the powers of hell and death, or any unclean spirit, shall be able to separate, or hurt, or break you asunder, for the power of God is your foundation. Settle upon this, for it stands sure, and is of God's own laying; be you as weighty stones of his building, and then you cannot be moved by all the strength of man's reasoning, nor by all the cunning of the fallen wisdom of satan; but as your dwelling is in the pure light, and as you retain the feeling sense of the Divine life, and keep close to the power, you will be enabled to say, The Lord our God is the true and living God, and besides him there is not another; and therefore we will trust in him and rely upon his power and holy Spirit, which is all-sufficient forever.

And now, dear Friends, although the devil, the old liar, be at work in this day, in a great mystery, even the mystery of iniquity, by his evil power and rending spirit, heed him not, nor his instruments, for the power of God is over him and them all, yes, over all that is contrary unto it. For he that was the first, will be the last, who said, I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end; and he will tread down satan shortly, and all his agents of mischief. He has promised to bruise the serpent's head, which daily is fulfilling by the dominion of his power and holy Spirit, over hell, death, and the grave, and every foul, unclean, quibbling spirit; for these are appointed for the fire of wrath and judgment, whose end is to kill and destroy, and make rents and breaches among God's people, where it gets an entrance, of which I warn Friends to beware. It is one of the devil's last shifts, to appear in the name of light, and ancient power and truth as it was in the beginning; a transformation to cover his dark power and spirit, which creeps cunningly in the dark, to deceive the simple.

But he will not now be called the devil, he will be called God; he will not be called an adversary, but he will be called a friend, by those who are his subjects, though under another pretense: for if any call him otherwise, then he rages in his instruments; but we must tell him plainly, he is the old liar, the same that deceived Adam and Eve, and the greatest enemy and adversary the Lord, his truth, and people have at this day; and they who take part with this evil spirit, and allow it to rule in their hearts, so that by its strength they become open opposers, these are also great enemies to the Lord, his truth, and people, but no weapon formed against

them shall prosper.

But endless glory to the true and living God! this subtle serpent with all his wiles, cunning and subtlety, in the pure light is seen and discovered in all his wicked works and workers, and cunning contrivances: and that power is risen in the hearts of all who keep faithful and close to it, which will tread him down, and preserve in the pure unity and Gospel-fellowship which stand in the Spirit and in the Truth. But this wicked spirit has no share in it, that would make breaches and rents, and let in the wild beasts of the field to devour God's heritage, and so scatter abroad the sheep of his pasture, and drive them back again into spiritual Sodom and Egypt, where the Lord of life and glory is crucified and slain, and made merry over. This spirit is not of the Father but of the world, and will lead into looseness, lightness, and false liberty, where it gets an entrance. This subtle spirit has induced too many, through its cunning craftiness, to slight men and women's meetings, and the power of God by which they were set up, and are more and more established, which would bind this separating, dividing spirit, so that it cannot abide it, namely, the power and authority of the men's and women's meetings, and the holy order therein practiced, and the good effects thereby brought forth; which tend to set up truth and righteousness, and sweep out all deceit, hypocrisy, uncleanness, and false liberty, that the house may be made clean throughout, and a godly care held that it be kept so. This disquiets that wicked spirit, and it rages in some of its instruments, though it appears in others more subtly, being not content with the liberty the truth allows, and with the order it has set up, there being not room enough for their wills and sensual wisdom.

The Lord in his love, and by his light, has clearly given me to see its way, that it leads to the chambers of death and of hell, and he has delivered my soul from its snare, who once was in danger to be taken by it, when men's and women's meetings were first set up, by entering into reasoning with it; and this is the way it gathers strength, and draws a veil over the mind of the simple. "Wherefore rejoice you, O my soul, and praise the Lord with all his ransomed ones, because he, by his glorious power, is treading down satan, and the redeemed of the Most High shall rejoice, and sing praises unto him who sits upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forevermore.

And let none say, Who is able to make war with the beast, and the number of his name, but live by faith; and let your faith stand in the sufficiency of God's power, as those who in the victory and dominion of it can say, Who is able to make war with the Lamb and his followers, for the Lamb must have the victory, and the crown shall be set upon the heads of all those who continue unto the end; the weapons of whose warfare are not carnal but spiritual, and mighty through God, to whom be the glory and honor forever.

Dear Friends everywhere, to whose hands this may come, give ear to the advice of your brother; as the Lord has done for my soul, every one beware and take heed of touching, tasting, or handling this spirit, or entering into reasoning with it, lest thereby you be overcome.

I say as one who have a necessity upon me to warn you in the name of the Lord; take heed and beware of the spirit, that brings forth these evil fruits, and works such bad effects, though under a fair pretense, lest you be betrayed and beguiled thereby, as the serpent beguiled Eve; but keep your zeal, retain your integrity and first love for the Lord, his truth and people. Beware and take heed of giving way to that mind which would cause you to forsake the assembling of yourselves together amongst God's people, or to slight or make a light matter of men's and women's meetings; but be faithful, careful, and diligent in keeping all your meetings in the name and power of God, first-day and weekday, and men's and women's meetings; and cry not, My business, my business, my work and my trade, when you should go and wait upon and worship, or do any service for the Lord; but mind the Lord's work and business, and live by faith, and you will have time enough to do your own; lest your love be so much to perishing things, that you be not found worthy of Christ Jesus; to whom let every soul be subject in all things, who is worthy of glory and honor forever. Amen.

John Banks

Moovgaie, in Cumberland, the 16th day of the Seventh month, 1678

And according to what the Lord required of me herein, I was wrought into a willingness to go forth into several counties in this nation, to bear my testimony against this spirit, and such as were actuated by it. I went with fear and trembling, yet the Lord furnished me with power sufficient, to perform what he required of me, though my exercises were great, both in body and spirit. Whilst at the Yearly Meeting at London I wrote the following letter to my wife:

Dear Wife,

You are truly so unto me, as near as bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh; this is the Lord's own doing; we are forever engaged to return the praise and glory unto him, who has blessed us and our offspring, who grow up as tender plants before him, which makes my heart and soul tender, to consider the great love and favor of God to us herein. My love is with you and yours, and my life in the truth reaches unto you, though I be thus separated from you; and the supplication of my soul is to the Lord for you, that your faith and patience may increase more and more, that in hope you may be confirmed against all the reasonings of the enemy, and may forever trust in the Lord and the sufficiency of his power, which you know, my dear, has never failed us, nor ever will, as we continue unto the end, in the faith of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

And as the Lord has been pleased to work you into a true willingness to give me up into his service, expect me not again before I have performed it; for the will of the Lord cannot be done, but in the cross to ours. I have great cause to magnify the name of the Lord forever, who has not only called me into his work and service, but is pleased to furnish me with wisdom and ability every way to perform what he requires, according to my measure. Let us then praise the Lord, because his work prospers both in city and country. The Lord be with you and

yours, and comfort and refresh your soul in the assemblies of his people; with whom meet as often as you can, first-day and week-day, with the rest of the family, for you know it was always my care when present; wherefore I did rise early, and sit up late, and worked and labored with all diligence, that the same might be effected according to the desire of my heart; and that through diligence in lawful business, with the blessing of the Lord, I might also provide for and maintain you with the children, in decent and comely order, according to truth and my ability.

And as this was my care and concern when present, I can do no less than put you in mind of those things though absent; not being unmindful of your affairs and concerns as to the outward, in which I still sympathize with you. This I hope the Lord as he has done, through faith and patience, and using diligence, will make easy unto you; for we have no cause to look back and say, "The Lord has been lacking." But on the other hand, he has withheld nothing from us, that he has seen we stood in need of, as therewith we have been content; endless glory unto him who lives forever! "As to our Yearly Meeting; Oh! how did the Lord's power overshadow us, and his pure love and life run as a stream amongst us, with the pouring forth of his Spirit upon us in a plentiful manner; in subjection to whose holy Spirit, we were made willing to speak and declare, one by one, of the great work of God; confirming and establishing one another therein, in all faithfulness. And this was in such subjection, and holy order, very many brethren being present, that my heart breaks into tenderness when I think of it; yes, such was the glorious appearance of God amongst us in our meetings, both of men and women, that the contrary spirit was never once able to lift up its head, for the power of God was over all; so that we were made to joy and rejoice before him, in returning praise, honor and glory unto him, who is worthy forever; who is carrying on his own work in order to perfect it, and none can let nor hinder, though they may oppose.

Notwithstanding the great noise of wars, all the meetings I have been in here were full, peaceable, and quiet; even so full that not many houses could contain them, though it is supposed some will hold between two and three thousand. Here is encouragement for all the Lord's people to go on their way rejoicing, for the Lord our God is with us; and in faith and patience to say, Come what may come, your will O God, be done! for all things work together for good to them that love You unto the end; unto which the Lord preserve us all: Amen!

I intend, if the Lord will, to go from hence to-morrow, and travel towards Bristol, and it may be one month before I come there. I travelled hard to come here one week before the Yearly Meeting, which tended to clear me the sooner of this city.

And now, my dear Children,

Mind the fear of the Lord, every one of you, who can see a difference between good and evil; and be careful to do that which is good; so shall you be preserved out of that which is evil. Be sober and quiet, and take heed to every word your mother says, as though I were there and

spoke it, for she tells you for your good, what she would have you to do. Be mindful to read as often in your books as you have opportunities, together with the Holy Scriptures, which is the book of books.

And you my servants, James and Mary, my love is to you, with a great desire and care in my heart, that you may dwell together in love and unity in the fear of God; and walk as becomes the truth, which the Lord in his love has given you a knowledge of, in which I truly desire your growth and increase, as if you were my children; then all things will be well.

Farewell my dear wife, children, and servants.

John Banks

London, the 16th of the Fourth month, 1679

From there I proceeded in my journey westward; but my greatest exercise was in Westmoreland, and at Hartford, as I came up to London, and afterward at Reading, Wycombe, Charlote, Bristol, and through Wiltshire, where I had fifteen meetings in three weeks, at all which meetings there were many of these unruly separate-spirited people, though none of them had power to oppose me; yet after most meetings would be greatly enraged against me behind my back, and threaten what they would do at the next meeting, but never had power to open a mouth in meeting to oppose; for it pleased the Lord to be with me in a wonderful manner; to his praise and glory I speak it with reverence and humility before him; for my testimony was as a flame of fire among briars and thorns, as many of God's people could witness.

My companion, Christopher Story, was a help and comfort to me, though little concerned in that exercise; yet he greatly sympathized with me in spirit, and had a good service to Friends, and continues a solid weighty man in the work of the ministry, both at home and abroad. Oh! great was the exercise I travailed under many times, both in body and spirit; for the weight and wickedness of the separate spirit bore hard upon me, but the Lord's power chained and limited it. I had little benefit either of meat or sleep, especially in Wiltshire; for they who were of it followed me from meeting to meeting.

The following letter I wrote to my daughter, after she was placed at service in London, in the year 1682.

Sarah Banks, my eldest daughter,

You have been near and dear to me ever since the day you were born, with a godly care as a tender father, that you might be nourished up in your young and tender years for your preservation; with many desires in my heart to Almighty God, that as you grew in years, he would be pleased to make you sensible and give you an understanding of those things which make for your everlasting peace, and the salvation of your soul in the kingdom of glory, when time here shall be no more.

And now, dear child, the Lord having thus far answered my desires, and enabled me to perform my care towards you; I have a further concern upon my mind for the good of your soul; which as you are truly mindful of will tend to your good, and will never hinder you of anything that is really needful for you.

First of all I would put you in mind, that God, according to his Divine Wisdom and Providence, gave you life and breath, which you ought to prize and value as mercies, amongst many more you have received from him; and you are also come to an understanding in some degree, how to behave yourself as a child of God, by the light and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, which he has placed in the secret of your heart, for a teacher to you in all things. My concern now is to stir you up unto this by way of remembrance; to be faithful and obedient to its requirings, whether more or less.

This light and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, teaches you your duty towards God, to your parents, and to all men and women. It first teaches you, to fear and love God, and to wait upon, worship, and serve him with all your mind and strength, that he alone by his Spirit, manifested in and through Jesus Christ, may be your chiefest love and delight. It will teach you as you are watchful, to deny all ungodliness and worldly lusts, to take pleasure and delight in meeting with God's people, to worship him in spirit and truth; so that you may come more and more to have unity and fellowship with his faithful children, according to your measure.

This pure light of the Son of God, teaches you to be lowly minded, sober and watchful over your words, carriage, and behavior, in your life and conduct, and to choose such for your companions; and not those, who though they profess the truth, are light, wanton, and high-minded, and follow the fashions of the world; and tattling, and tale-bearing, and meddling with other men's and women's matters which do not concern them. Be sure you be found only in what concerns you, and well becomes your place, being a servant.

This is the way to grow in grace and saving knowledge, and to have the comely adorning, which is the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which in the sight of God is of great price; and is better than costly attire. This is the way to be beloved of God, and his people, to grow up a good woman, and to make a blessed and happy end. This blessed way and course of life, my soul desires for you, my dear child, that you may carefully live and keep in it, to the end of your days. Amen.

The light of Jesus Christ, which thus teaches you your duty towards God, will also teach you your duty towards all men, women, servants, and children; especially now in your place where you are a servant. It will teach you to be faithful, willing, and obedient to your master and mistress, in all things which are fitting and convenient; to be careful that nothing waste under your hand, which is committed to your trust, nor otherwise; and to watch with an eye for good over all in the family. If anything else appear, tell it not abroad to any whereby it may cause dissension; but first tell the party in love, for so would you be dealt with. This is according to

the righteous law of God, which is light, that teaches to do unto all as we would be done unto; and when anything happens amiss with yourself, and you are spoken to and reprov'd for it, as Paul's counsel to Timothy concerning servants was, I exhort you in tenderness, murmur not, nor answer again, except it be to say it shall be amended.

My dear child, the desire of my heart is unto Almighty God, that this my counsel and advice may be made effectual unto you; and that in the serious consideration thereof, with honest desires raised in you to perform and answer the same, your heart may be truly broken and tendered before the Lord, and so kept in all lowliness and humility before him, unto the end of your days. Amen.

So prays your tender and affectionate father,

John Banks

This year I went to Ireland again, from which I wrote the following letter to my wife:

Dear Wife,

In that which opens my heart to the Lord, and makes me truly tender before him, am I at this time enlarged in tenderness towards you, with our dear children and servants, desiring to the Lord, that by the same power your heart may be kept open in tenderness before him, that you may increase more and more; that so we may have a sense one of the other, of our growing up together by the living virtue that springs out of the root which bears us; for as our habitation and dwelling is here, though our work and service be not one, because of the diversity of the gifts given us, yet we grow up together as do all the faithful in Christ Jesus.

The Lord preserve you in his fear, and guide you in his wisdom, that you may be a good example before your children and servants, being careful to train them up in the same fear, to walk as becomes truth in all things; always having a tender regard over them, chiefly for the good of their souls, as well as their bodies; for many opportunities in mercy you have, wherein you may do good unto them, which I have not.

So, my dear, be concerned for their good as they grow up in understanding, for they are quick and apprehensive enough (as many children in this age are), who can quickly see if they be indulged in anything which they ought not to have; and if we thus indulge them, we lose our dominion and authority over them. Let our care be to reach to and have the answer of the witness of God in them, even the witness of his gracious Spirit, which most of them have a sense of, by which they know what they should do, and what they should not and as this comes up in them and is minded, it will make good children of them: and much lies in what examples we are before them.

Wherefore I am still more and more concerned in my mind how to behave myself towards

them, to the end I may be found clear of my charge and duty concerning them, especially for the good of their souls. The Lord has richly blessed us with them as manifold mercies; but still there remains a great care and concern on our parts to be performed; for lack of which, I clearly see that many children who might bring honor to God, his truth, and their parents are, on the contrary, a dishonor to all, though they may have great possessions in the earth, and fulness, ease and great preferment as it is called: but being lost from the Truth, what serves it all for, though many look too much at that, and neglect the weightier matters, which ought to be the greatest part of their concern.

And now, dear children, you may understand our care and concern for you; therefore you that are come to this understanding, I admonish you as a tender father, in the love of God, that you would put on this good resolution, and say, How ought I to behave myself in all things, both in word and deed, carriage and behavior, as an obedient child, both to my dear father and mother, who have such a care for my good and preservation every way; and now especially to my mother, my father being absent? And in order that you may all be such, now to her, and to me when I am present, be you all subject and condescending one unto another; live in love, quietness, and good-will one towards another; and be sober-minded in the fear of God, and keep out of all company but such as is sober.

And by no means be idle at any time, but give yourselves to some good employment, such as your body and understanding is able to perform, with a willing and ready mind to be assistant to your mother in her concerns, and be careful to mind your books when you have time for it. Read the holy Scriptures, and Friends' books, and be diligent in your course and order to keep to meetings, weekday as well as first-day, that so the work of your hands may be made more easy, sweet and comfortable unto you; that God over all, for all his blessings and mercies, may have the praise, honor and glory; who is eternally worthy.

Peter Fearon, who was my servant seven years, is now my acceptable companion in the work of the Gospel.

J. B.

Mount Melick in Ireland, the 23rd of the Fourth month, 1682

A relation of my imprisonment in the city of Carlisle in Cumberland, for six years and nine months, because for conscience sake I could not pay tithes demanded by George Fletcher, of Hutton hall, in the aforesaid county; a justice of peace, so called, but a great persecutor of God's people, by imprisonment and spoiling of their goods; and at the time of my commitment, all that he pretended was his due was but eight shillings and six-pence, which shows his hard-heartedness and oppression.

In the beginning of the second month of the year 1684, I was committed to prison at the suit of the said George Fletcher, impropiator, because for conscience sake I could not but bear my testimony against that great oppression of tithes; being first subpoenaed, and afterwards arrested, because in obedience to

Christ's command I could not put in my answer upon oath to his bill. On the same day that I was taken to prison, there came twelve men with a warrant from George Fletcher, and distrained and took away seven pounds ten shillings worth of my goods, for part of a fine of twenty pounds for a Friend in the ministry, who spoke in our meetinghouse at Pardsay-Crag, it being in the time of the penal act against conventicles. The goods were sold by him, or his order; and so much more taken from other Friends for the said fine, as amounted to thirty-five pounds.

My imprisonment continued seven years, lacking three months, when I was freed by King William's Act of Grace.

Here follows a true relation of the abuses and hard usage that I with some of my fellow-prisoners, have suffered from the jailer, George Lancake, and the turnkey, Alexander Richardson, for no other cause than worshipping God in our prison-house; and in obedience unto the Lord, speaking in his name, in exhortation and prayer; and sometimes by way of warning, that I was constrained to give to people as they passed by our prison-window from their worship and at other times, to turn to the Lord by a speedy repentance, and amendment of their ways.

On the 20th day of the fifth month, 1684, a little before the time of our meeting, there being five more Friends prisoners with me, the jailer said to me, that except I would promise him not to preach that day, he would take me away. I answered, that I could not make him any such promise, neither did I know before the time came that I should preach. "Then," said he, "I have prepared another place for you." He took me by my arm, and led me along, and put me in a noisome, smokey room, under which they brewed, and locked me in; where I remained three days and two nights, without any bed. So the first-day in the evening after I was put there, the turnkey came and opened the door, and said, his master sent him to bid me come forth and go to my friends; but I answered, "Go tell your master I shall not come forth of this place to another, until he fetch me himself who put me here." He went and told him; and the jailer bid his man tell me again, that I should stay there until I rotted before he would fetch me; but I took no notice of that, knowing well what I did.

There were several prisoners in his house for debt, who had wastefully spent most of their estates, who said, "the Quaker says he will not come forth till you fetch him," meaning the jailer, "and you say he shall stay there till he rot before you will do it; we will see who will get the victory."

That night and the next day and night passed over, and the next day towards the evening came the turnkey again, and told me his master had sent him to pull me out by force, if I would not come willingly, that being the fourth time he sent him. The turnkey was a lusty, strong, rugged-spirited fellow. I being sitting, stood up before him, and said, "If you can take me by force, do, here I am," stretching forth my arms; so that he took me by one, and pulled with all his strength, but he could not move me at all; and he wickedly said, "God bless me, I think the devil is in the man, I cannot move him." "No," said I, "the devil is in you, and I am stronger through the power of God than both you and the devil, go, tell your master that." All this while I felt his master was in torment; so he went and told him what he

had done, and what I said; and said, he thought I was as strong as twenty men, for he could move me no more than if I had been a tree. But in a little time after came the jailer himself to me, and said, "What now, John, what is the matter you will not come forth, I having sent my man so oft to let you go to your friends?" I answered, "because it was your will and pleasure to lead me here, you shall also lead me back again, or here I intend to stay; I shall be a true prisoner to you, I shall not make an escape." After some more words had passed between us, he took me by the arm, saying, "Well, come then, if nothing else will do, I will lead you back again;" which he did, down the stairs through the court, to the door from which he brought me, and thrust me in, and said, "Go your ways, pray God I had never seen your face." And the prisoners for debt standing at his door, looking on while he led me, laughed and said, "The Quaker has got the victory."

After this, for seven meetings together, the turnkey haled me out into the jailer's house, being urged on by him, with many threatening speeches, charging his man not to let one of us go out at the gate of his court.

About this time I wrote to my wife as follows:

Dear Wife,

My love in our Lord Jesus Christ salutes you, and all yours, and Friends as though named; the breathing of my soul is still continued unto the Lord for your preservation; for we have cause to say, the Lord has never been lacking to us in the time of our greatest need, to bear up our spirits with courage and boldness for his own name's sake; and as we retain our integrity unto the end, he will be the same, though greater may be our trials and exercises than heretofore.

Wherefore, let us go on our way rejoicing together; because the Lord is our strength, through the greatness of his power, who has not only counted us worthy to believe in his name, but also to suffer for it; and though many hands and tongues be lifted up and bended against the Lord, and his chosen and redeemed ones, in vain do they strive; for the Lord has determined to carry on his own work, in his own way, and to finish it in his time, in despite of all Zion's enemies and opposers; and to crown his faithful ones with dominion and victory. So the Lord preserve you, my dear, near to himself, in openness and tenderness of heart; that you may feel and receive of his divine comfort and spiritual sweetness, in waiting upon him in the assemblies of his people; and through the fresh virtue thereof, be kept living and tender before him; that so, by his power you may be preserved in and through all your various exercises, knowing that many are the trials of the righteous, but the Lord delivers out of all; and this is the comfort and encouragement of the righteous, which makes them bold and valiant for the truth upon earth. I am well, with all my suffering brethren, notwithstanding the rage of the wicked still continues against us; and no greater joy and comfort I have in this world, than to know that you and all yours are well, both in body and mind. In the Lord's time all things will be well. Though I could be glad to see you here, do not straiten yourself in any wise, for I am truly

content to bear it, if it were much more, considering your concerns in this season of the year, being harvest time, and the journey so long.

So farewell in the Lord.

John Banks

From the prison in Carlisle, the 12th of the Sixth month, 1684

Upon the 17th day of the sixth month, being the first-day of the week, we were met together to wait upon the Lord our God with all our hearts, whose power and presence, to his praise and glory be it spoken, was daily manifested amongst us; the turnkey, who now always watched when I spoke, came, according to his customary manner, and took me away to his master's house.

The jailer's rage and cruelty began to rise to a greater height than before; and the bad tree to bring forth corrupt and bad fruit more abundantly, as his corrupt words, wicked speeches and actions hereafter testify. After I had been in his house some time, he began to break forth in a rage, and say, that we were all rogues, and rascals, and cheating knaves, and the common jail was too good for us; no, if he could get us into the house of office, he would put us all there, being then in number sixteen. However, he said he would put six of us who were in one room into the smokey loft, and the rest into his barn, and we should lie there like sheep in their pens. He charged the turnkey not to let one of us go out at his gate, no not to buy our own food or what we had need of, which his man pretty strictly observed; so that we were put to it to get one to bring such things to us as we had occasion for.

About this time William Johnson, a Friend, a prisoner, said to the jailer, "Seeing you so restrict us of our liberty, that we may not go forth to buy our own food, you should get us somebody to do it for us:" he said he would get us none, and if one of us dared go out at the gate, he would drive us in again, as the thieves were driven to the gallows.

Upon the next sixth-day, being the 22nd day of the month, we were met together in the fear of the Lord in the prison-house, and our friend John Carlisle amongst us, he being an inhabitant of the city. In our waiting upon the Lord he did powerfully appear amongst us as at other times, and our friend John Carlisle had his mouth opened, with some words of comfort to Friends in suffering. But on a sudden the turnkey came and haled him away, and turned him out at the gate; but he came in again, and spoke some words to the jailer, to warn him to beware what he did; but the jailer pushed him on the breast with his fist, insomuch that the jailer's wife asked him if he was mad.

In a little time after the turnkey had haled our Friend John Carlisle away, the spirit of supplication came upon me, and in obedience thereto, I besought the Lord for my own preservation, with the rest of his suffering people. Then came the turnkey and pulled me off of my knees, being set on by the jailer, who bid him pull me out by the ears; and stood at the stairs' head with a staff in his hand, we being in an upper room, and when the turnkey brought me to the stairs' head, the jailer said, throw him down head foremost and he will be sooner at the ground, and thrust me with his staff, setting it on my ribs, while

the other haled me. They put me in the old smokey room, and there kept me until some time after the meeting was over, as their manner was; and in the meeting some time after they haled me out, our friend William Johnson spoke a few words of exhortation to Friends, and the turnkey came and haled him away into another room in the jailer's house.

Two meetings after, the turnkey haled me out and abused me much, sometimes putting my hat over my face when I was declaring the truth, and setting up a hooting noise to drown my voice, that people in the street might not understand; at other times coming behind me, and clapping his hands upon my mouth to stop me from speaking, but could not.

Upon the 26th day of the same month, we being met together to perform our duty unto the Lord, a necessity came upon me to pray to him; and so with his people then present, we fell down upon our knees together. In a little time after came both the jailer and the turnkey, and the jailer said, "Pull him down;" so he pulled me down from off my knees, along the floor by one of my arms, but said he could not get me along, and the jailer said, "Trail him," but he could not get me trailed to the other's mind; and so the jailer took hold of me in great fury, by the same arm the other had hold of, and both dragged me along the floor, out of the door, down the stairs, into the old smoky room again; and when I was at the stairs' foot, these words rose in my heart, which I spoke to the jailer: "It had been better for you had you never taken this weapon into your hand, to fight against God, his truth and people; for the time will come upon you which you can not resist, that it will turn with trouble and pain into your own bowels." To the truth of which, several times he has since confessed.

About this time, upon the first-day of the week, the then mayor, John How, and aldermen, with the chief priests, there being a great many of them belonging to the city, with several of a persecuting spirit, being greatly enraged against me, because I was often constrained to sound truth's testimony in their ears as they came from their worship, I being in their view, the casement of our window opening to the street, came into our meeting in our prison-house, when I was engaged in testimony for the truth; and the mayor in great rage bid me be silent, often shaking his staff at me, threatening what he would do to me for preaching there, and disturbing all the city, in contempt of authority. I seemed to take no notice of him for some time, that so he might manifest himself the more. He being a very passionate man, said, if I would not be silent, he would stop my mouth; then I answered and said, "The Lord has opened my mouth, and he, and all the assistance he could get in the city, could not stop it." He said he would put a gag in it, and put me in the common jail, and I should preach there to the walls. I said, "I fear neither you, your gag, nor the common jail; for though you are the mayor, you have nothing to do to meddle with us, we are the king's prisoners and in safe custody, and here is our keeper, pointing at the jailer, he being present, so you may go about your own business;" with which he was silent.

Then one of the aldermen said to me, he could prove I had nothing to do to preach. I asked him, "how he could prove it?" He said, "by the Bible;" I bid one reach him a Bible quickly. Another alderman said to him, "Let him alone, sir, you will do no good with him, you may as well speak to the wall." So he failed of his proof, and with some threatening words they all went away and troubled us no more.

At times the jailer would seem to flatter me, to see what he could do that way, and would say, “You see the mayor and aldermen of the city, with the priests and many others are set against me, because I allow you to preach, and say they will fine me, and that your meeting is a conventicle;—if you will preach, can you not preach in another house off from the street, or go to the other end of this house, it being a long one; will no place serve you but just before the casement?” I said several times to him upon this account, “I take no notice of your flattery, no more than of your threatenings, neither can I go to another place at your request, nor theirs; put me where you will, as a prisoner I shall be true and subject to you, but in what is required of me in obedience to the Lord, in that I am resolved in his name and fear to stand faithful in my testimony for him, in doing or suffering; not regarding or fearing what either you or any of these persecutors shall say or do to hinder me, notwithstanding your and their cruelty and threatenings; for the Lord my God, in whom I trust, and for whose cause I suffer, is my preserver. I can well remember, and have good cause so to do, that above twenty years ago, I was put prisoner into the common jail in this city, for praying to Almighty God, and being met with his people, and also fined and goods distrained for it; and the Lord endued me with strength to suffer all with joy and gladness. And think you I will play the coward now, after so many years? No, no, blessed be the name of the Lord forevermore! I am grown so many degrees stronger in faith and patience, through the might of his power, that I hope and believe upon good ground, I shall be enabled to endure whatsoever you, and all who are like minded with you, shall be allowed to impose upon me; so never let it enter you, to think you shall prevail over me, either with flattery, threatening, cruelty, or the common jail.” After which he said to some of the aldermen, in discourse with them about me, “I have used all the endeavors I could hitherto, to put yonder man to silence, but I cannot. I know no way that it can be done, but one, and I dare not do it. Except his mouth be sewed up, I dare say he will never give over preaching.”

And for four meetings after this, came either the jailer or turnkey and haled and abused me, and put me in some other place, until after the meeting was over; and through the jailer's cruelty and abuse, my body was bruised and my health impaired. On the 13th day of the seventh month, our friend Peter Fearon being come to visit the prisoners, we sat down together to wait upon the Lord, and after some time Peter Fearon went to prayer. But in a little time came the turnkey in a great rage, and asked our friend, “Where earnest you from? Come away!” And so fell to pulling him in a most cruel manner; taking him by the cravat, and threw him back into a bed, and said, he would either hang him, or pull out his throat; still shaking and pulling him by his cravat, or neckcloth, dragging him out of the door into the jailer's house, with curses and oaths what he would do to him. For which I reprov'd both the jailer and turnkey sharply; so that in a little time they let him go. This day I wrote to my wife and children, the following letter.

Dear Wife,

You are truly so to me, even so near that we are truly one, to help to bear each other's burdens, sympathize and be truly concerned one for the other's preservation, both at home and abroad, in prison or at liberty, in sickness or health; not only for the body, but for the eternal happiness

and wellbeing of the soul. This is the right concern of husband and wife who are truly joined together, and who are come to know the true marriage, which is God's joining. Oh, how this helps and strengthens, encourages and bears up, in the time of the greatest exercise.

The Lord, who knows my heart, knows how often in my confinement I have been under a serious consideration of your condition with your weak family, as to outward things, with a cry unto the Lord, in the supplication of my soul on your and their behalf; that you might be preserved with them in health and strength, for the managing of your affairs. And surely your soul may say with mine. The Lord has heard and answered—He has been good and gracious unto us herein; that we can say, things on that hand are well. And so with humbled hearts for the same, let us bless and praise his holy and worthy name, and have his mercies, blessings, and favors, in continual remembrance; for surely the Lord has a secret ordering hand in those things; and if, in his fear and true faith, it be minded, he gives us to see, and makes us witnesses also, that he can and does bring things to pass, far beyond what can aforehand be seen, or expected.

And now, my dear, as to my present state under suffering, it is well, though I am not altogether so in body, yet in the Lord's time I hope I shall be so. I say it is well, though my condition be what it is; for I am well assured that it is according to his will, in performing which I have great peace and satisfaction, although the wrath and cruelty of ungodly men are still much bended against me; but I believe it will not be long, until the Lord by his power will bring them down; for I see, in the light of the Lord, their strength grows weak and their expectation concerning me begins to fail. Howbeit, whatsoever the Lord may yet allow them to inflict upon my body, I count all that may be endured or passed through here, but light affliction, because of the evidence and assurance of that far more exceeding weight of eternal glory, which I have in view, through faith in Jesus Christ, and am traveling in the way that will bring to the everlasting possession thereof.

And so, my dear, let us freely and faithfully follow those things which will make for our everlasting peace and joy with the Lord; whereby we may have the full assurance of the salvation of our souls, in the kingdom of happiness and glory, when time here shall be no more, whatever we enjoy besides in this world; for be it more or less, as we are truly content therewith, it will be sufficient. The Lord gives and takes away, or allows it so to be, according to his good will and pleasure, blessed be his holy name, and revered be his glorious power, now, henceforth, and forevermore. Amen!

And now, my dear children, concerning whom my heart is often tendered, my bowels yearn for your preservation from evil, and that you may grow and increase in all that is good; give ear every one of you and take good notice what I have to say unto you. John, my son, and dear child, God in his love, according to his Divine wisdom, has given you a measure or manifestation of his good spirit, grace, or light, which he has placed in your heart and conscience, as a

witness against every appearance of evil: this in some degree you are come to the knowledge of; whereby you know you should do that which is good, and eschew the evil. This light of the Lord Jesus Christ, teaches you not to be wild or wanton, or given to any idle talking, or unsavoury words; and if you shouldest do or act contrary, this pure light will reprove and judge you for it. This is that, my child, which you must own and love; and then it will not only discover all sin, and every evil to you, but as you take heed to its checks, reproofs, and manifestations, you will receive power over those things, one after another, which the light makes manifest unto you, to avoid all light and airy company, and to have your mind kept in the fear of God, to serve him. Above all love the truth, and those who are in it; and love to go to Friends' meetings, and delight in their company; so will you come to be weaned from every appearance of evil, and to be sober and solid, as becomes the truth.

This is your duty towards God, be careful to be found in it; and as you are found in the performance of this, the pure light and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, which teaches you your duty towards God, and how to obey him, will also teach you your duty to your parents, and in particular to your dear mother, and also to your sisters and brother. You being the eldest at home, I expect your care and diligence herein, in love and tenderness to your dear mother, that so you may be a strength and help to her, now in my absence. I charge you look to it, as you expect a blessing from the Lord, and my favor and countenance. Also be careful that there be no strife between you and your sisters and brother upon any occasion, neither in words nor actions; but be tender and loving one to another, and be sure you all keep to truth's language—Thee and Thou, to every single person.

And now to you Ann and Mary, my daughters and dear children, whom I dearly love, with all the rest; be sure you speak no ill one of the other, nor do ill to any body, carry no tales from one house to another; and when you are sent on an errand, go and come quickly; and be loving, kind, and respectful one to the other, and to your brethren, sister and servants; and help one another willingly in all things, but especially your dear mother; be dutiful and obedient unto her in all things what she bids you do, I charge you, do it readily and willingly, without murmuring.

My dear children, keep these my words in mind daily, that you may all serve one another in love.

And to you, little William and Emme, the youngest. My dear children, be sure you love one another; do not fall out by the way when you go to school, or in coming home; do no hurt to any, and mind your books well that you may be good scholars. Be sure you remember what I say to you, and above all things be careful to do what your mother bids you, and to love your brother and sisters.

Dear children, all of you mind your books; read the holy Scriptures; and the Lord bless and preserve you all, in love, unity, peace, and quietness; fearing, serving, and loving God with all

your hearts; and then all will be well.

I find a great alteration in my body, because of the cruelty and hard usage of the jailer, and his turnkey; together with the lack of the fresh air; for I have had no liberty to walk abroad these several months, and the jailer does not allow me to speak or pray in any meeting, after he hears me; for which, the Lord will assuredly meet with him by his judgments.

I am your loving husband, dear wife, and your tender father, dear children,

John Banks

From my prison-house, in Carlisle, the 13th of the Seventh month, 1684

On the 15th of the same month, in the evening, came the jailer, and ordered Thomas Hall and myself to the common jail, because we could not answer his unreasonable demands; howbeit there was not room in the common jail, for it was wholly taken up with poor debtors and thieves. I having been sick for some time, and not well recovered, a Friend said to the jailer, "If this our friend die through your cruelty and hard usage, his blood will be required at your hands." He answered, he did not care if I never stood upon my feet again, he would put me in the common jail. I asked him, if the place was fit for us to be put in; especially I, not being well. He said, it was such as he had for us, and we might either sit or lie as we could; and if there was not room for us to lie one by the other, we might lie one above the other; and if there was not room elsewhere, we might go into the sink, a nasty, stinking hole, filled up with filth and straw; which fulfills that saying, The mercy of the wicked is cruelty.

Accordingly, he put us two among the debtors, in the common jail, where there was no convenient room either to sit or lie; and we were forced to sit in our clothes all night by the sink; but next day the jailer caused a poor debtor to be removed to his house, where he lodged him. Then we got some straw and bedding to lay on the ground, which was very raw and wet, in the debtor's place, and got stones for our bedstock, head and feet; where we were for the most part locked in day and night, for thirteen days and nights together.

And notwithstanding the weakness that attended me when I was put there, and the nastiness of the place, the Lord was pleased to make it as a place of healing and restoration of health and strength to me; so that when the jailer took me from that place again, as I was going down the street to the place from which he took me, many people coming forth to look upon me, several said, "He looks better than he did when they put him into the common jail," which was cause of rejoicing to me; praises, honor, and glory, be given to the most high God, who by his own healing, restoring, preserving power, can bring to pass whatsoever seems good in his eyes! One passage more is fit to be taken notice of, to set forth the cruelty and hard-heartedness of the jailer. My dear wife, with other Friends, coming to visit me in the common jail, which was above twenty miles from my own house, she desired the jailer that he would do so much as allow me to come out of the jail, to some other place; but there being no compassion in him, he would not allow me to come forth to her; but sent word by his turnkey, that if she would be with me, she might in the common jail but no other place; where she did contentedly

abide with me until the next day, rather than leave me and go to a better place.

One time when I was doing some work in the common jail, the jailer came to me and said mockingly, "John, you have scarce light to your work, (there being very little light in the prison,) but what matter," said he, "you have light enough within." I answered, "Yes, blessed be the Lord my God forever, so I have, but you have little of it; for if you had more, you would see your way better what to do, than you now do." So he turned from me and said no more, but took my fellow prisoner, Thomas Hall, away from me at the end of thirteen days, and kept me there three days and nights more, and then removed me as aforesaid.

When the jailer saw that all his contrivances would not effect his purpose, to make me bow, and to get chamber rent of us; and being troubled in his conscience both day and night, as afterwards he confessed, slavish fear mixed with cruelty still attended him. So he betook himself to a new-invented shift, to hinder the sound of truth's testimony borne by me, from reaching the people's ears. About this time I wrote the following paper:

To the inhabitants of the city of Carlisle; but more especially to such as cannot endure to hear the sound of a man's voice, though in prayer to the God of heaven, or in exhortation to his fellow-prisoners or others to love and fear God, and walk before him as becomes Christians; and yet can endure to hear men and women curse and swear, without reproof or punishment; and allow drunkards to stagger and reel in the streets, with curses and oaths; which I have often seen and heard to the grief of my soul, since I came a prisoner into your city.

Under the consideration whereof, a necessity attends me to put you in mind what you have been and are doing, if happily you may come to see the evil you have done, and repent and amend; because we must all give an account unto the Lord, of the deeds done in the body, whether good or evil.

What evil have I done, or what law have I transgressed, either against God or man? Show me, if you can, and let it be known to people abroad, what great crime I have committed; or why I have been and am so abused; even such abuses as never were done, I presume, to any prisoner in this city before, either by jailer or others.

I say, what is the cause, why I have been and am now, so threatened and abused, being kept close prisoner in the common jail? Is it for praying to God, or exhorting one another, or warning people to repent, that the jailer has been so threatened, and charged to take a course with me? who accordingly often has abused me, also his turnkey, sometimes one, and sometimes both; pulling and haling me off my knees when in prayer to God, both of them at one time taking me by the arm, throwing me down, and dragging me along the floor; threatening sometimes to throw me down the stairs. And yet thieves and robbers, and other evil-doers, have had liberty to worship in their way, without disturbance.

Why are your ears so shut, and you so troubled at the sound of truth, while your ears are so open to the contrary? Read the Scriptures, and judge yourselves, wherein you are short of a true Christian's practice under the Gospel dispensation; which never was to persecute and imprison for worshipping God. Read Psalm Iviii. 1 to 5; and whether you are not such, who are said to be 'like the deaf adder, that stops her ear and will not hearken to the voice of the charmer, charming never so wisely.' 'Do your ears hear reproof, or do you hate reproof, and refuse instruction? Consider your states and conditions what they are?' 'Be not deceived, God is not mocked, such as every one of you sow, such shall you reap. They that sow to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but they that sow to the spirit, shall of the spirit reap life everlasting.' What must you reap, think you? When will it enter into your hearts to consider, you who daily sow lying, swearing and drunkenness, whoredom and pride, which are grown to that height in your city, as though they should win it the crown. 'But woe to the crown of pride, for it must be plagued.' 'And though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished.' 'Though your brows be like brass, and your necks as iron sinews, and though you walk with stout and lofty looks, and tinkle with your feet as you go, the Lord can break and bow you, and turn all your songs into mourning, and your pride and vain glory, sport, pleasure and pastime, into howling and bitter lamentation, which he assuredly will do, except you repent, and amend your doings with speed, before it be too late.'

Oh! why should people's ears be so shut against that which is good, and so set and bent to hear and do that which is evil; to believe lies rather than truth. Search the Scriptures, and read in fear and with understanding: Prov. xvii. 45. 'A wicked doer gives heed to false lips, and a liar gives heed to a naughty tongue.' Jer. v. 21, 22. 'Hear this, O foolish people, and without understanding, which have eyes, and see not, ears, and hear not.' See Matt, xxviii. 11 to 14; who was it there, whose ears were more desirous to have lies told them than the truth, though by those who were ear and eye-witnesses? Was it not the chief-priests and elders, who did what in them lay, by holding a counsel together, to keep the truth of Christ's resurrection from the governor's ears; or if it did come to his ear, to endeavor to persuade him with lies? Let search be made amongst you, and examine yourselves, and see whether there be not such chief-priests and elders, who do what in them lies to hinder the truth from coming to people's ears, or to persuade them not to believe it. And see Acts vii. 51, 52, who were the stiff-necked, Stephen testified against; whom he calls uncircumcised in heart and ears? For it is said, they stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord, because he spoke the truth to them; and for the true testimony he bore, they stoned him to death. Read to the end of the chapter, and there you may find your examples, you stoners, who have thrown stones at us, and at our prison windows, for no other cause, than speaking the word of truth unto you, in love to your souls. And in Acts xvii. 18 to 20, see who it was in the city of Athens, that called Paul a babbler, or base fellow, a setter forth of strange gods; for no other reason, but because he preached Jesus and the resurrection, calling it a new doctrine, and said, he brought strange things to their ears (and yet true,) but they liked not to hear it; and so some of them mocked, and others said, 'We

will hear you again of this matter.'

Now all people search the Scriptures and see with the light of Jesus Christ, 'The true light, which enlightens every man that comes into the world;' of what kind your deeds are: for Christ says, 'This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil; for every one that does evil hates the light, neither comes to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd; but he that does truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.'

I say unto all you in whom there are any living desires and breathings to come out of the broad way that leads to destruction, where many go and walk, come into the narrow way, which few find. Consider in the fear of the Lord, what manner of lives you live, and what fruits you bring forth, and see if the light of Christ, the spirit of Truth, the faithful and true witness of God, his grace or word nigh unto you, placed in your hearts and consciences, does not condemn you; and if your hearts condemn you, God is greater; but if your hearts condemn you not, then have you confidence towards God.

If any say, If I should believe in this light, grace, word nigh, witness of God, or spirit of Truth, which are all one, what will it do for me; for some say it is but a natural light? I answer; It is a teacher in the heart and conscience, 'teaching to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world.' Mark, not ungodly or rudely, as many do. This the light of Christ, the grace of God, the spirit of Truth, will do for you, if you love it, and believe in it: when you are tempted to sin, power from God will be given unto you, through it, which you have not of yourself, to overcome the wicked one in his temptations; for it is no sin to be tempted, but the sin is, to enter into the temptation. Thus power is given over the temptation, and so over sin; one temptation and sin after another is gradually overcome; for as many as believe in him, who said 'I am the light,' to them he gives power to become the sons of God. He redeems them out of the state of the sons and daughters of the first Adam, who is of the earth earthly, into the condition of the sons and daughters of the second Adam, the Lord from heaven, the quickening Spirit who never fell, (1 Cor. xv. 45, 46, 47.) who says, 'Behold, I stand at the door, and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open unto me, I will come in and sup with him, and he with me.' Rev. iii. 20. Is not He at the door of your hearts, to call you to repentance, by his light, grace, and holy Spirit? And if there be not a believing in him by obeying the same, what avails his death and suffering to you, and the shedding of his precious blood for you, if sin be not finished here, and transgression put to an end? Ephes. v. 5, and read to the 21st verse. 'No unclean thing can enter into the kingdom of Christ and of God.' Did not he suffer for the sins of all, that all through him might believe? 'and they that believe not, are condemned already.' Was not sin the cause wherefore he suffered; and if the cause, through faith in him, be not taken away, how shall the effect cease? but if the cause through faith in him be taken away, then the effect ceases, and everlasting felicity, world without end, ensues.

So all people, in tender love to your souls, I exhort you, while you have time, to prize it and make good use of it; seriously consider what effects your faith and belief in Christ have wrought, in order for your salvation and freedom from sin, that always separates from God; for as says John, 'This is that which gives victory over the world, even your faith;' and if your faith be not such, you cannot come to know the victory over the world, and the evil that is in it. Let none think that the name of a Christian will save him; for to have a Christian's name, and yet to be found in the practice of the heathen, does not make a Christian. It is the life and practice of Christianity, lived in, through faith in Christ, that makes Christians, and not barely saying you believe; which life and practice is a 'life of holiness, without which none shall see the Lord.'

Now to the faithful and true witness of God in your hearts and consciences, that will either accuse or excuse, I commend these things, to be weighed and truly considered by you in moderation and the fear of the Lord, as becomes Christians, and what manner of life, conduct, and practice, is found amongst you. 'Know you not,' says the apostle, 'that to whom you yield yourselves to obey, his servants you are, whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness.' For when the book of your conscience comes to be opened, with that other book which is the book of life; according as your deeds and actions shall be found therein, so shall your reward be: in which day of general resurrection, we must all appear before the tribunal of God's glory and judgment seat, to receive the sentence, either 'Come, you blessed;' or 'Go, you cursed.'

From one who truly wishes and desires the welfare and preservation both of the bodies and souls of all people; and hates nothing but the evil in any; and yet am a sufferer in outward bonds for the testimony of Jesus and of a good conscience,

John Banks.

Given forth in the common jail in the city of Carlisle, Cumberland, the 30th day of the Seventh month, 1684

The sixth day of the week, and also the first-day following, being the 3rd and 5th days of the eighth month, so soon as the jailer perceived we were met together, being thirty-eight prisoners, he sent his turnkey to take us all away, one by one, and put us in a back room to have our meeting, and then let us go to our places. But growing weary of this work, the sound of my voice still reaching to the street, he sought out a place in the city to his mind; and removed both himself and us, and placed us in rooms back from the street, in a court enclosed with gates, which he ordered to be shut when our meeting began, especially on the first-days. Since we were so removed and placed, we have enjoyed our meetings pretty peaceably, both as to the jailer and the rest of the city; and gained our freedom and liberty, not only in prison and in and about the city, but at times to go home, far beyond what could have been expected; praises, honor, and glory forevermore be unto the Lord our God, who never leaves nor forsakes his people, that stand faithful in their testimony for him. He by his great power is with them, to

uphold and preserve them; and also in his own time to work their deliverance, and to give them dominion and victory over all their enemies; endless praises over all unto him who rules and reigns forever and evermore. Amen!

After I was liberated by the act of grace, I travelled in the work of the ministry into the West of England, where I wrote the following letters to my wife and children.

Dear wife, together with my dear children,

My heart being open in the love of God, in a living remembrance of you all, as at many other times, when my supplications are put up unto the Lord for his people; I could do no less than write a few lines to express how I am concerned for your growth and prosperity in the truth, every one in your several measures. The Lord beget and increase love in your hearts to him, and one towards another; that therein you may feel life and true tenderness to spring afresh in your souls, as a testimony that you are kept near unto the Lord, in an inward waiting and dependance in fear before him. It is these who are kept near unto the Lord in their hearts, who are living, fresh, and tender; for he causes his heavenly rain and gracious showers to be poured forth upon them, and the springs of life to bubble up in them, that they are made to say, What manner of love is this, wherewithal the Lord our God has loved us! and what manner of persons ought we to be, in all holy life and conduct? to the end that we may live and die the death of the righteous; that so it may be well with us, when time here shall be no more.

Dear children, carefully mind the performance of your duty towards God daily, fearing and obeying him, in what you know of him by his light and grace in your hearts, be it never so little; for as you are faithful in the little, the Lord will make you rulers over more. And as you thus come to know a growth and increase, you will also come to understand what it is to have heavenly treasure in earthen vessels; which is far better than earthly riches and worldly glory, with strife and contention.

Truth prospers very much hereaway; great desires are begotten in many people after the way thereof; meetings are full and large almost everywhere in the counties, where I have of late been, and in Somersetshire, Dorsetshire, Devonshire. It was thought there were near a thousand people at the meeting at Spiceland, where I was yesterday; yes, the work is great here, but the laborers are very few among themselves. Oh that the Lord would be pleased to fit, prepare, and send forth more! I hope I may say, and exclude all boasting, The Lord has been pleased to make my service not only acceptable to many, but effectual to answer the end wherefore he has sent me; so that my travel and exercises are made very sweet and comfortable unto me, and Friends' love, tenderness and respect are towards me, being glad to see me after my long imprisonment; and I have had blessed heavenly times among them. All which considered greatly bows my spirit, and lays me low before the Lord. I have had five or six meetings in a week. My companion left me about three weeks ago, having something upon his mind for London, and I being not yet clear of this county, and feeling a concern upon me for

some counties more, I do not see that I am likely to reach the Yearly Meeting at London this year, though I must go there before I return home; but when, I cannot give any further account at present.

Farewell, my dear.

John Banks,

From Spiceland, in Devonshire, the 25th of the Third month, 1691

My dear heart, it is with me to say unto you and yours, that the sacrifice of a broken heart and a contrite spirit the Lord accepts, and never did nor will despise, though offered with sighs and groans that cannot be uttered. In this the Lord keep and preserve you all; which is the way to grow in grace and saving knowledge, and to receive a blessing from his hand, which enriches the soul, and is better than all earthly enjoyments, which are but for a moment. Surely methinks I am always with you, in travail and concern of mind for your preservation every way, as I hope you are with me, in my travels and various exercises both of body and spirit, which the Lord has been pleased to make sweet and comfortable unto me; and I believe has also blessed my endeavors and labor of love for the good of many where I have travelled. It is the great rejoicing of my soul to see the work of the Lord prosper, which he is hastening in the earth, for his own seed's sake: blessed are all who answer him by obedience when he calls, and in faithfulness continue unto the end; unto which, with my own soul, the Lord preserve you all.

Amen!

Dear Wife,

By these, you with all yours, and Friends, may know that I am well every way; high praises unto the worthy name of the Lord forever! I came to this city the last sixth-day, and have had five meetings since; in all which, the Lord was pleased to appear effectually by his power and life-giving presence. Meetings here are very full and peaceable, and many people have great desires after the truth. Oh! that those who have long made profession thereof, may be found good examples in their places, so as to answer the testimony of truth, and the witness of God in people's consciences, which would greatly tend to further his work, and cause truth to prevail more upon people; which the contrary hinders; wherefore blessed are the faithful.

John Banks

London, the 9th of the Fifth month, 1691

The above is the last letter I wrote to my dear wife, Anne Banks. She died the 2nd day of the tenth month, after the date of the aforesaid letter, early in the morning; and was buried the fourth-day after, in

the burying place of Friends at Eglesfield, in Cumberland. We lived comfortably together many years, and she was a careful industrious woman, bringing up her children in good order as became the truth, in speech, behavior, and habit; a help-mate and a good support to me in my travels, always ready and willing in truth's service; and was never known to murmur, though I often had to leave her with a weak family, notwithstanding the exercises in many affairs she had to pass through. She was well beloved amongst Friends and her neighbors, several hundreds of whom were at her burial.

In the time of her sickness she was very patient and content unto the last, being sensible of her inward condition and end; telling me she must leave me, that it was well with her, and that it would be well with her forever.

She also said she hoped I would be, as I had been, a careful and tender father to her children, who were dear and near to her. And in some time after, ended her days in peace with the Lord; and I am well satisfied of her eternal well-being.

Though our separation by death was the greatest trial I ever met with, yet the Lord in whom I trust, was and is my preserver, in that and many other deep trials and exercises; to whom I am deeply engaged in all humility, to give the praise, and return him honor and glory, who is God over all; blessed forever. Amen! I have used much brevity in respect to many of my journeys and exercises, not being willing to make a great volume; it remains to be noticed, that often I have visited Friends' meetings from Cumberland to London, and in London, and into the West of England, in my way there and home, both before and after the Yearly Meetings; and in many other journeys beside, from the year 1688, to the year 1702.

This year, going to London to the Yearly Meeting, I sent the following letter to my children.

My dear love in the truth, is hereby remembered unto you and Friends; by these you and they may know that I am well, with your brethren and sisters. I am in haste, being the tenth hour at night; and I with seven Friends from Ireland here, take our journey towards Chester early tomorrow, if the Lord will, for that nation; and therefore have not time to write to you what I desire. "We have had a long and tedious time with that contentious man, George Keith, for several days together; he is of a very turbulent and troublesome spirit, vexatious to the church of Christ; but the power of God, for all his quarreling, is over him, and the life of our meeting run in one channel, to set the judgment of truth upon his head; for it was clearly made manifest unto us, in the light of the Lord Jesus Christ, that he was not only gone into and entertained the spirit of division and separation, but of envy and deep deceit; by which he warred strongly, to prove Friends in the ministry to preach false doctrine, and himself the true, chiefly about the body of Christ, and the light within. But by the unruliness of his spirit, and the darkness that he is gone into, he has so manifested himself, that all his enticing words could take no place with us. The Lord preserve Friends in the innocency and simplicity of the truth, where is true unity, peace and safety from the destroyer; for wit and wisdom, in the strength of man's reason, darken and stop the springs of life.

Your loving father,

John Banks

London, the 8th of the Fourth month, 1694

I travelled through the nation of Ireland five times; and once from Carrickfergus to Dublin, being the first time, though I omit, for brevity sake, to mention how I travelled from place to place, and the length of time and number of miles. I also travelled in Scotland and there visited the people of God, and in the Isle of Mann.

While I was in Ireland, I wrote the following letters to my children.

The love of God unto you has been such, as to give you a knowledge of himself, in and through Jesus Christ, the true and saving light; and that which is required of you is obedience, and a diligent walking therein, in all fear, humility and lowliness of mind; for that greatly tends to make sure the steps, in the way of truth and righteousness; and it is such the Lord teaches, namely, the humble, by his pure light and grace. Oh! that a daily care may attend you to follow him in all faithfulness, in answer to his blessed requirings, whether in words or actions, at home or abroad; for this is well-pleasing unto him, and a rejoicing unto my soul; who am still under a weighty concern and tender care for your preservation every way, in that which is good; and more especially seeing the Lord has been pleased to take your dear mother from us. I have no greater joy than to know that you grow in the truth; and that you are loving and tenderly affectionate one to the other, in patience and quietness of mind bearing one with another, in all affairs wherein you are concerned; so will your undertakings be more easy and comfortable unto you. Do what in you lies to keep to meetings, and be condescending one to the other therein; and when you are met together with the Lord's people, let the fear and dread of the Lord be upon you, that you may be kept in all diligence in waiting upon him, daily to feel the work of his spirit in your hearts, to work you into true tenderness and brokenness; that you may grow up, and bring forth fruit, to the praise and glory of the Lord, and your enduring comfort; which is my hearty prayer unto the Lord on your behalf.

We had a very heavenly meeting here in their new meeting-house, where never meeting was before; and are to have a meeting to-morrow at Youghall, next day at Cork, where the province Six-week's meeting begins; two meetings there the first-day, and men's and women's meeting the second-day; and are to go ten miles to a meeting on third-day, at Bandon; fourteen miles to a meeting further west on fourth-day; forty-eight miles back again by Cork, to a meeting at Charleville, on sixth-day.

My acceptable companion, James Lancaster, desires his love remembered to you, and Friends.

Farewell, dear children. Your loving father,

John Banks

Waterford in Ireland, the 4th of the Fifth month, 1694

Dear children, John and Mary,

That true love and fatherly care which chiefly attends me concerning you is, that you may grow in grace and saving knowledge, which edify the soul; and in a sense and feeling of that, witness the divine touches of the love of God, to tender your hearts before him, among his people, and at other times. Carefully follow those things, in the course of your life, that make for peace with him, according to the teachings of his holy Spirit; by which the Lord has measurably given you a knowledge of himself and his will what he would have you to do, and how to walk before him, and all people. Oh! therefore, that you may fear, love, and obey him with all your hearts; so will you be kept humble and low, which is safe and good for all, but more especially for youth, because their natural inclinations are too often aspiring; that is, climbing up and getting high. But the truth, which is his love to the sons and daughters of men, manifested in and through Jesus Christ, being kept to and lived in, humbles the heart and brings and keeps down the wild nature; where safety from many hurtful things is experienced.

By these, you and my friends may know, that I, with my companion J. L., are well, praises be given to him who lives forever! We have travelled through the south and west of this nation to this place, a second time; and intend, if the Lord will, to go towards the north the next second-day. And, if I find myself clear, when I have gone through the north, I may turn homeward; which if so, will be some time in the eighth month; but this is more than I yet clearly see, and so must leave it at present.

The work is great in this nation, and the laborers are but few; yet the Lord has here a blessed zealous people for his name and truth, filled with love to his servants. This is largely manifested in accompanying us from one meeting and place to another, from ten to twenty and more in company at one time, the length of twenty-five miles, though in the time of harvest (mind that;) and three travelled from this city above one hundred miles with us, namely: Amos Strettell, Samuel Baker, and Joseph Hanks, considerable dealers in outward affairs; and two also intend to travel with us from this city into the north, namely: Abel Strettell and Peter Fletcher. This I write as an example for others to take notice of, which in love I leave to their consideration, who may see these lines.

Your loving father,

John Banks.

Dublin, the 18th of the Sixth month, 1694

After I saw it my place and service to settle in Somersetshire, which was in the year 1696, I often travelled in the counties and shires adjacent, and also to the Land's End, in Cornwall, laboring together

with Friends, to keep up meetings for the worship of God, first-day and week-day; and not only so, but to keep up and maintain the good order of truth, and to have the same put in practice. And the Lord has been pleased to make use of me as an instrument, of his own fitting and preparing, to convince several, some of whom became faithful and able ministers in their day; and some of them have finished their Lord and Master's work, and are at rest with him in glory. The Lord keep and preserve them, with my soul and all his everywhere, diligent and faithful unto the end.

Amen! John Banks.

A SUPPLEMENT TO HIS JOURNAL WITH AN ACCOUNT OF HIS LATTER END AND DYING WORDS

After settling in Somersetshire as aforesaid, by marriage with his second wife, Hannah Champion, an honest woman of Mear in the said county, in the eighth month, 1696; he travelled in the work of the ministry in the western and adjacent counties, while he was of ability; particularly into Devonshire and Cornwall, with Paul Moon of Bristol, in 1697. The same year he went to visit Friends in his native county of Cumberland, and usually went to the Yearly Meeting at London, as long as he was able, and several times into the north. In the year 1704, he was at the Yearly Meeting in London, and had good service there, which was the last time he attended it. He dwelt fourteen years in the county of Somerset, from the time of his settling there, till his death; and was very serviceable in that county, not only as to his ministry, but in helping Friends in establishing the good order of truth in Monthly and Quarterly Meetings. Though I must needs say for the honor of that county, they had been long, even from the year 1660, in the practice of the wholesome order of truth in their meetings, which were set up by the power of God for the well-regulating of our religious Society, and which Friends generally through the nation are in the practice of; yet he, with several other worthy elders, were instrumental in improving and confirming Friends in it, for the honor of truth and our holy profession, not only by word and doctrine, but by life and practice.

About the sixth month, 1705, he was taken very ill and weak, being much afflicted with the gout, so that he was confined to his bed, in which condition I found him when I went to see him at Mear, in the beginning of the third month, 1707; yet very fresh and living, and clear in his understanding. He disclosed his mind to me in some particulars to my satisfaction, and I was comforted to find the Lord so with him. He continued weak about two years, so that he could not travel as in times past; but afterwards he somewhat recovered again, and went abroad; and in the year 1708, removed from Mear to Street, near Glastonbury, for his health's sake, and to be near his friends and meetings, where he enjoyed his health better for some time; but was still often very much afflicted with his old distemper and other infirmities, as age came on. Some time after his removal to Street, he wrote me a loving letter, of which I shall transcribe some part.

Dear Friend,

That which makes us near and dear one to another is, because we have received a certain knowledge that we are children of one Father who is holy and heavenly, begotten again to a lively hope, in and through Jesus Christ, by the quickening of his eternal Spirit, to serve him the true and living God in newness of life. He has instructed us by the teachings of his all-sufficient grace and holy Spirit, how we may wait upon, worship, and serve him, and in what; even in the spirit and seed of life, by which, we can cry, 'Abba Father.' In a day never to be forgotten by us, he did not only bring to the birth, but gave power to bring forth; and as a tender Father, from the time of our infancy, by his helping hand, has always waited to be good and gracious unto us, giving us rain and heavenly dew, which he has caused many times to descend upon us, that we might grow from one stature and degree of holiness and strength to another; that so, in our day and time, we might come to answer the good end for which he has made us a people. This was not only that we should meet together to wait upon, worship, and serve him in Spirit and Truth, though chiefly therein, but that we might grow up together, according to our several gifts of his holy, pure Spirit, to the degree of elders and fathers, to do work and service in the church of Christ; and in a more public manner amongst God's people, where there is much to be done. Happy are they who can say in truth, what they do in that service, they do it unto the Lord, and for his worthy name and glory; great shall be their peace and comfort here, with a heavenly blessing in Christ Jesus, and more abundantly and eternal in the heaven of heavens.

But why should I write of these things to you; only that we delight to be telling one another what the Lord our God has done for our souls; who, by his mighty power, has been our preserver and upholder, ever since he was pleased to give us the knowledge of himself; in and through various trials, deep exercises, temptations, and afflictions, both without and within; and all for the end that we may be helpful one to another, in building up, and strengthening one another in the most holy faith, which works in the heart; as living members which make up that body which is complete in him our holy head, the Lord Jesus Christ; as those who have a fellow-feeling, and sympathize one with another, under all our exercises; for how can it otherwise be, but that members of one body, which are living and sensible ones, should have a true feeling of one another, and a godly care and true tenderness that no one be hurt.

My heart is open to you, in that same love in which our brotherly unity and fellowship did first begin; in which you are truly near unto me, even in the love of God and unity of his blessed Spirit, in which the Lord preserve us little and low in our own eyes, near to him and one unto another, faithful unto the end and in the end. Amen!

Great has been my affliction, even more than I am able to express; and even so has the tender care of my heavenly Father been over me, beyond my utterance, in preserving me in and through it all to himself, sensible of my inward condition, with my understanding open and

clear; praises, living praises, unto him the living and eternal God, who has all power in his own hand, and is able to bring to pass whatsoever seems good in his eyes! For when I was in the midst of my affliction, and my neighbors were called in to see me pass out of this troublesome world, as it was thought by all outward appearance; I having a little recovered, it livingly rose in me, "You must not go hence yet, you have not wholly finished the work of your day." It was the word to me, and I believed it; and thus far the Lord my God has made it good and fulfilled it to me, who never breaks covenant with his people, nor alters the word that is gone out of his mouth.

Yes, thus far the Lord has been pleased to raise me up again, though but weak still, so that I can sit-in a meeting, and bear testimony to his name, and return the praise, honor and glory of all unto him who lives forever. Friends, in condescension to my weakness, keep the meeting in its course at my house, both for worship, and the men's Monthly Meeting also, which is cause of great refreshment and comfort to me. The gout, which bears hard upon me often, has left such a cold numbness in my feet, that I can go but little and lamely; and there is such a weakness and pain in my joints, that when I stand I shake like a leaf; all my fingers are so crippled, I can write but little, and sometimes none; howbeit I was willing once at least to give you some hints, how it has been and is with me. Yet, notwithstanding all my infirmities, I can tell you in so many words, though I undergo pain and weakness without, I have peace, comfort, and strength within, and that makes amends for all my needs. So I shall conclude in love; and do remain

Your friend and brother, in the truth that is living and precious.

John Banks

Street, in Somersetshire, the 29th of the Seventh month, 1708

But though he was somewhat recovered, yet not to go far abroad; and not long after, his distemper and weakness returning, he was again reduced to his bed. I visited him in the fifth month, 1709, being the last time I saw him; and found him as I did two years before, in a living freshness and sense of the Lord's love and mercy to him, and he discoursed very cheerfully of many things. He got up while I was there, but could hardly go without help, and continued weak for the most part of his time after.

The 5th of the third month, 1710, after giving account of his weakness, he wrote, "Howbeit all is well, I live to God through it all, and that as a full cup supplies all my needs, and sweetens and makes my afflictions easier to be borne; glory, honor, and everlasting praises unto him who lives forever!" About two months before he died, he was raised beyond expectation in a more than ordinary manner, so as to travel to some neighboring meetings; which was to admiration, considering his weakness. At a Monthly Meeting at Somerton, the 6th of the sixth month, which was very large, he stood about an hour and a half, when it could hardly have been expected he could have sat so long in a meeting; and bore a sound and faithful testimony to truth, with such presence of mind, and distinction of doctrine, that it was admirable to those who knew his weak condition, which is not mentioned to exalt man but the power of

God; and gave demonstration that his memory was strong, his understanding quick, and judgment sound in things spiritual, which was comfortable and refreshing to the meeting. He earnestly pressed Friends to a holy zeal for God, that they might be faithful in the small appearances of truth; encouraging such as were weak, and putting Friends in mind to prize the present liberty, for it had been a summer season, and that a winter might follow. After the meeting he was so very weak, that it was a task for two men to get him to his lodging. He was very cheerful, signifying his great satisfaction in being so capable of enjoying his friends' company, by being so free from pain; and had an evening meeting the same day, with Friends and many others in the town. Next day he went to Long Sutton, to visit Friends, and the following day to Knole; then to Puddimore, and the day after to their Monthly Meeting, and had a very large testimony to Friends.

Next day he went to Samuel Bownas's at Lymington; there to Sock, and to a meeting at Yeovil, which was very large, many Friends being there. He was very weak, but his senses were lively and quick, and he had a good discerning of the state of the meeting, and several particulars in it; and was well accepted by Friends. This was the extent of his journey, after which he returned home the 15th of the same month, having been out about ten days. Many Friends thought he would not have been able to undertake such a journey, but he could not be satisfied in his mind without it, although it was thought it much weakened him.

About two weeks after, on the 2nd of the seventh month, as he was walking in his orchard, he was struck with a pain in his back, so that he was scarcely able to go in; which proved very trying to him for several days before his death. Yet he often said, that notwithstanding all his pain, his soul did praise and magnify the Lord for his goodness towards him, though his pain was so great sometimes, that he thought it sharper than death. He expressed his belief that the Lord had provided a place for him in heaven; and how well it would be if the Lord would be pleased to remove him. Many Friends and others came to visit him while he lay sick; and oftentimes he had a large testimony to them, by way of exhortation, counsel, and advice. On the 22nd of the seventh month, several Friends being present; after a time of waiting in silence upon the Lord, he said to this effect:

“Dear Friends, I counsel you in the love and fear of God to keep to your meetings, for the worship and service of God, both first-days and week-days; and also Monthly and Quarterly Meetings, which were set up by the power of God, to keep things in good order amongst us.—Friends of Glastonbury and Street, my love to you has been so great, that I have ventured my life in riding through deep waters to come to visit you, when I have had a concern from God upon my mind; so that you can say, I have been a good example to you in keeping meetings, as well as in other things. Although I am weak in body, and do not know whether I may live much longer or no, I am however strong in the Lord and in the power of his might, and have nothing to do but to die; for I am rich in faith towards God, and my cup is full of the love of God. Whether I live or die, it will be well with my soul; for blessed be the Lord! I can say with the wise and holy apostle Paul, that I have fought a good fight and kept the faith, and henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of eternal life: and did the apostle say for himself only; no, he was wiser than so, but for all them that love the blessed appearance of the Lord Jesus Christ.”

Some Friends of Somerton taking their leave of him, he said, "Give my dear love to Friends, and tell them that my soul is alive unto God." Amongst them there was a young man lately convinced of the blessed truth, to whom he said, "The Lord be with you; and I desire you in his love to give up in obedience to the workings of the Spirit of God in your heart, and then he will do great and glorious things for you; and do not stumble at the cross, for the more you look at it and put it off, the harder it will be for you to take up." A Friend taking him by the hand, he said, "My dear love is to you, and all that are faithful to God." Another took him by the hand and bid him farewell; he answered, "I do fare well in the Lord; my love is to you and all the faithful in Christ;" adding, "Joseph is yet alive, and that is enough."

He earnestly desired Friends to keep in the unity of the Spirit, which is the bond of perfect peace; with a great deal more good advice and counsel to Friends, it being attended with Divine power; which tendered the hearts of many of those present, and caused tears to run down their eyes. The 24th, Thomas Freeman went to see him, and asked how it was with him? he answered, "Very sick, and full of pain, but the Lord helps me, else I should cry out aloud; truth helps me, and ever has since I believed in it." A few days before his death, he said to some who were with him, that he could say as the woman of Samaria did, that he had met with one who told him all that ever he did; and that He was one who would not sew pillows to all arm-holes, nor daub with untempered mortar, nor cry as priests and some other professors do, peace, peace, when there is sudden destruction. Some few hours before he died, he said to those who were with him, "Well is it to have nothing to do but die." Another time he said, "It is well with me, and I am assured it will be well, and I have nothing to do but to die, and shall end in the truth as I began."

He was very sensible to the last, and after all his violent pains, had a very easy passage; and died in peace, the 6th of the eighth month, 1710, aged seventy-three years and two months, and was buried the 12th of the same in Friends' burying ground at Street, where he died. His body was accompanied to the grave by many Friends from several parts, and several living testimonies were borne to the truth and power of God, that raised him up and preserved him to the end, to the honor of God and the praise of his great name; and in commemoration of the deceased, who is undoubtedly entered into that rest which is prepared for the people of God. The Lord fit us and prepare us all more and more for the entering thereinto; through the alone merits and mediation of his dear Son, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen! The blessed end of the righteous who die in the Lord, and such as are faithful to the truth in their day, so different from that of loose and careless professors, should be an encouragement to all who have any desires after the Lord, to embrace the truth and be faithful to it, that their latter end may be like his; for whose sakes and the truth's, I have faithfully collected the foregoing account, from such as were eye and ear witnesses of it.

J. W.

EPISTLES AND PAPERS

Unto You with Whom I Once Walked

The truth in soundness held forth and declared unto those with whom I formerly had my interaction, who are yet remaining in the cloudy dark day, tossed from mountain to hill, and cannot find a place of rest for your souls; but are crying “there are so many ways, worships and opinions held forth in the world, that we do not know which is the true way; for if we did but know the way of God, we would walk in it.” For your sakes who are thus crying, I write, in whom there are true breathings after the way of God: as I have learned of Christ, who is the true light of the world, and has enlightened every man that comes into the world; so shall I declare unto you, who once had my conduct with you, according to the vain customs of the world. While I remained with you in vain sports and pleasures, and in wantonness, and could have gone to the same excess of riot which many of you are yet in, you could have spoken well of me, though in an evil action, because it was a pleasure to the vain mind, which the light of Christ in my own conscience reproveth me for.

I knew not then what it was which reproveth me, and let me see that I should not do so; and therefore was apt to believe those that called it a natural light, or the check of a natural conscience, a thing not sufficient to bring salvation, as the world calls it; for, say they, we know we have all such a thing as you tell us of, but it is only a natural light, or the check of a natural conscience. Is that natural which reproveth in spiritual things? Let the wise in heart judge by plain Scripture. Is satan divided against himself, how then shall his kingdom stand? This is the windy doctrine of the priests, for which they have no Scripture, and so add their meanings thereunto, or diminish therefrom, deceiving the simple. But the Scriptures witness against them who tell you that the light of Christ is natural: it is the Spirit of Truth, which he has sent, which does reprove the world of sin, of righteousness and judgment, which whosoever believes in, shall not abide in darkness, but shall have the light of Life. They are deceivers, whom the prophet declares against, every one seeking after his own way, for his gain from his quarter; for put into their mouths, and they will cry peace, peace; but hold from them, and they will even prepare war against you; and so they are the false prophets, which the true prophets declared against, and by which the people of God in all ages suffered the spoiling of their goods; for they that will live godly in Christ Jesus, must suffer persecution.

When was the covenant changed, or when do you look for those days declared of in the Scriptures? “Behold, the days come, says the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, (which my covenant they broke, although I was a husband unto them, says the Lord). But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel: After those days, says the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from

the least of them, unto the greatest of them, says the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.”

Cease then from man, whose breath is in his nostrils, and come to the teachings of the Lord in spirit, where the New Covenant is known, for God is a Spirit, and they that truly worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth; and such he is seeking to worship him in this his everlasting day; and the children of the Lord, are taught of the Lord and in righteousness are they established, and great is the peace of his children.

So all people, turn your minds to that which reproveth you in secret, of that which no man can accuse you for, that by it you may be led and guided into all truth. It is the light of Christ, the Spirit of Truth, which he has sent to reprove the world of sin, of righteousness and of judgment. And take heed of the hasty will, that would say, away with this light; if this be your way, we do not desire the knowledge of it. Do not call it so, but try and prove its strength, and depart from the evil which it makes manifest, and do not call it natural, or a thing not sufficient, because it appears but little in you, for this is because you are disobedient to it. Whatever the light makes manifest to be evil, depart from; lying, swearing, drunkenness, and all manner of profaneness; yes, if it be a secret thought, or any intent harbored in your bosom against your neighbor or any man or woman whatsoever, never so secretly, yet being made manifest by the light in your own conscience, you must depart from it, or else the indignation of the Almighty you must one day know to be heavy upon you, for disobedience; when the Lord Jesus Christ shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. For all things that are reproveth, are made manifest by the light, and they that believe in the light, shall not abide in darkness, but shall have the light of Life; (mark the words) shall not abide in darkness, but shall have the light of Life. And though these things may seem but little in your eyes, yet be faithful in a little, and you shall be made rulers over more; you shall know power over all the works of darkness, and over the power of the devil.

The people of God witness a cleansing and sanctifying throughout, in body, soul, and spirit; and the blood of Christ cleanses them from all sin, for the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save to the utmost, neither is his ear heavy that it cannot hear. His power is the same, and as all-sufficient as ever it was; but you will not come unto me that you might have life, says Christ, and so you remain in sin and in death; and he that sins is of the devil, and has not seen God, neither knows him; and as death leaves such, so will judgment find them. Therefore cease from all those who make a prey of you for dishonest gain, who lead captive silly women laden with sin, led away with various lusts; ever learning, but never able to come to the knowledge of the truth, as it is in Jesus Christ, who is the true light, the way, the truth, and the life; and no man can come unto the Father but by him. I say, cease from all these scribes, pharisees, hypocrites, and deceivers, who walk in long robes, and are called of men master, who love the chiefest places in the synagogues, uppermost rooms at feasts, and greetings in the market-places, whom the woe is to, who shut up the kingdom of God against men, and will neither enter themselves, nor allow those to enter, that would.

Oh! all people cease from them, and come to the teachings of the Lord in spirit, for the nations of them that are saved, must walk in the light of the Lamb. But this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil: But he that does truth, Comes to the light, that his deeds may be manifest that they are wrought in God.

Repent, repent, and turn unto the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the stone refused and rejected by all the builders of the world; the same stone is become the head of the corner; praises everlastingly unto his holy name, who has called us out of darkness, into his marvelous light, where we walk and are not faint, run, and are not weary. He has not only called us, but also chosen us out of the world, and therefore the world hates us, for the world loves its own; and though we be hated, persecuted, scoffed, and scorned, and judged as a people not worthy to live, by this wicked and adulterous generation, who speak evil of the thing they know not; and though the beast push with his horns, and the false prophet cast his envy and wrath against the Lamb and his followers, yet they shall both be taken alive, and cast into the lake of fire, and the saints shall rejoice forevermore. I say again, repent, and turn from the evil of your ways, from your idle talking, foolish jesting, and laughter, which is madness and folly; yes, all your vain conduct whatsoever, lest sudden destruction come upon you; which shall come upon all the wicked, who love and make a lie; without speedy repentance, and amendment of your ways, not only in confessing your sins, but in forsaking them.

There is no other way to obtain mercy at the Lord's hand; for be not deceived, God will not be mocked, such as every one sows, such shall he reap; they that live after the flesh shall die; but they who have a part in the first resurrection, over such the second death shall have no power.

If ever you come to know the way of God, and to walk in it, you must come to the spiritual worship, for God is a spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in Spirit and in Truth; and such he is seeking to worship him in this his everlasting day. So you, in whom tender desires are, come you out from among them, and be you separated, and touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you, says the Lord. Be careful now, while you have time, to cast off the deeds of darkness, and be separated from all your idol worships, for the Lord is wearied with them. Prize the everlasting love of God to you, who has spared you so long; some twenty, some thirty, some forty years, and upwards; and yet you are crying, if we knew the way of God, we would walk in it; and then to satisfy yourselves, say, we hope we are in the way; whereby it is evident you have no certainty of it. By this you may plainly see, if you are not willfully blind, that your teachers have not been sent of God, for they have not profited you; and you are always learning, led away with various lusts, but never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Some led into lying, swearing, and drunkenness, fighting, and quarreling, gaming, and sporting, and such like fruits as these.

And though both priests and people cry and say we are the false prophets, and deceivers come in the latter days; I answer as the Scripture says, "by their, fruits the false prophets are known; do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles;" no, they are not so blind. So whether the priests and teachers of the world, who have the words, but are strangers to the life, or we, bear the fruits of the false prophets, let

that of God in all consciences, and plain Scripture judge. Christ said, “false prophets should come,” and John said in his days, “that many false prophets and antichrists were already entered into the world; whereby,” said he, “we know it is the last times.” I believe many of you will confess, that there were no Quakers, (as in derision we are now called) in John's time, yet he said, “they knew it was the last time then, because many false prophets and antichrists were already entered into the world.” You say the last time is but now come in our days; and so whether John, or the professors and priests, and teachers of the world, have holden forth the truth in this thing, let the wise in heart, and plain Scripture judge. Christ, who is the light and life of men, is the door by which you must enter into the kingdom, if ever you enter; “for he that climbs up any other way, the same is a thief and a robber.”

And if ever you come to own God, and the way that leads to his kingdom, you must own the light of the Lord Jesus Christ, in his inward appearance, to be your teacher, leader, and guide. It is even he the true light, who is the way, the truth, and the life; and if you speedily repent, and turn unto God by him, from whom you are fallen, and put away the evil of your doings before repentance be too late, it shall be well with you. But if otherwise you go on in rebellion against the light and strivings of his good spirit and grace, which God has placed in your hearts to witness against all sin and iniquity; and harden your hearts, stop your ears, and close your eyes, you shall seek repentance with tears, and shall not find it. And this you shall know in the day of the Lord; “when you must give an account unto him of every idle word,” and of all the hard speeches which you have spoken against his servants, his pure way of truth, and his people; that you were warned to repentance in your life-time, by a lover of all your souls, though but as a child, and one of the least among many of the Lord's children and people; yet he has obtained favor with the Lord and mercy at his hand, through true judgment for sin, and transgression.

And therefore has rather chosen to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasure of sin for a season.

John Banks

Given forth in the year, 1661

Unto You Who Once Knew the Truth, the Light, To Your Justification, But Being Turned From It Into the Unclean World, It Is Now Your Condemnation;

That all in whom there yet remains any tenderness, or breathings towards the Lord and his truth, and whom the enemy of their souls' peace may be tempting to forsake the truth, for the enjoyment of that which will perish in a moment, may take warning lest they also be given up to hardness of heart.

Did you once know the truth, to convince you of the evil customs, fashions, and vain traditions, together with all the dead worships and forms which are in the world, and are you now like the dog turned to the vomit, and the sow that was washed, to the wallowing in the mire.

Oh! how does my soul mourn and lament for you in secret, at the consideration of your state; who were once convinced by the light of the Lord Jesus, of the evil that is in those things, and knew his power to redeem you therefrom, in some measure. And as you yielded obedience to that which manifested the evil and departed from it, how did your peace increase? so that you were brought near unto the Lord in spirit, and worshipped him in truth and righteousness, by which you felt acceptance with him, and he was well pleased. And are you now departed from this, and gone back again into Egypt's darkness, amongst the flesh-pots, which causes you to have an ill savor? Consider your ways, and look back from where you are fallen; and return unto that which justified you, but now condemns you, or else you must perish eternally. Wherein stands your joy, peace, and comfort? or in what can you content yourselves? Does it stand in the enjoyment of the deceitfulness of riches, or in that which will perish in a moment? "You fool, this night your soul shall be required of you," and then whose shall all these things be, for which you have forsaken my precious truth, says the Lord; which of my everlasting love I made manifest unto you, for the salvation of your soul. "For as I live," says the Lord, "I will not the death of a sinner—Oh foolish and unwise people, who has bewitched you, that you should forsake the truth," which forever will be your condemnation, except you repent. Repent then, consider your ways, and be wise, who are not wholly given up to hardness of heart, and past feeling that which is good: Repent, and return unto the Lord God with all your heart, and be you separated from all idol worships, and come you out from amongst all those people who resort thereto, whose course is evil, and whose way is not right. For if you do not, but go on in rebellion and hard-heartedness, (mark what I say) seven other spirits more wicked than that which bare rule in you before, will enter you; so that you will become two-fold more the children of hell, than you were before.

Oh! your state is sad, and your condition lamentable, who turned from the light, Christ Jesus, the way, the truth, and the life, into darkness, to be tempted and led away of the devil. Your state is miserable, who turn from worshipping the true and living God, in Spirit and Truth, which worship he accepts and none else, to the worship set up by man's invention and tradition; and forsake the truth, the light, under what pretense, color or covering soever. If upon pretense of staying at home; and say, Why may you not serve God as well there, as in coming to our meetings; and that you will stay a while at home, and not join yourselves to any people as yet. Oh! Believe not, neither hearken you unto the enemy of your soul's peace, in this kind of reasoning by his lying spirit, by which he would counsel you; or under what other pretense soever, for this is the craft and subtlety of the old serpent. He will proffer you all the glory and preferment of the world if you will worship him, or that likeness which is now set up, under what name, or in what manner soever; whether by staying at home, or with whatever other trap he may take you; for he cares not where the body goes or is, so that he in his subtlety can but get the rule of the heart, and the affections set on earthly things. If you lend an ear unto him, you will grow worse and worse, as the wicked do; and then though you may enjoy all the pleasures the world can afford, you shall always beg, and still lack; he that has an ear to hear, let him hear what the spirit says. This covering, or any other besides the Spirit of Truth, cannot hide you from the wrath of the Lord. For where is your example? They that feared the Lord, and worshipped him in Spirit and Truth, met often together, though sometimes upon mountains and high-ways; and did salute the church at one another's

houses. And they that forsake the assembling themselves with the people of God, under what color or covering soever, I must declare it for the clearing of my conscience, whatever they pretend, they neither worship nor serve God, nor has he pleasure in them, because they draw back; “for if any man draw back, my soul has no pleasure in him,” says the Lord. All these coverings are but like those of fig-leaves; for “woe unto them that are covered with a covering, but not of my spirit,” says the Lord; all other coverings shall be ripped off in the day of the Lord, and they that are under such coverings, shall be made naked and bare, and by his jealousy consumed. Oh! how is the truth dishonored by you who turn from it. Oh! how do vain people boast themselves against it, and plead to do wickedly. “Because of you offenses come, but woe unto them by whom they come; it were better that a mill-stone were hanged about their necks, and they cast into the depth of the sea.”

Therefore I say unto all you in whom there are any true breathings towards the Lord and his truth yet remaining, and do yet feel the spirit of the Lord striving with you; in whom the enemy of your soul's peace may be twisting and twining, to drive you therefrom, and to persuade you to forsake the truth, (but under another pretense,) for that which will perish in a moment, and will bring everlasting torment; I say unto you in true and tender love, take warning betimes, upon the consideration of what I have before said, concerning the state of them who are turned from the truth; lest you also be given up to hardness of heart.

Friends, do you know the truth in any measure to abound in your hearts, yes, though never so little? and do you feel the spirit of the Lord yet to strive with you, which will not always strive? and are you sensible for what it strives? and do you know the truth, and that there is not another way, nor truth, that can bring people unto God? and do you know that you are in that, and if you turn from that, it must be to your own condemnation? And does the truth let you see that all worship and forms, and many ways and opinions in the world, are dead, dry and empty; and that all the vain customs and changeable fashions in the world, are corrupting, and will defile. And are you not sensible that the Lord out of his everlasting love, did reveal and make manifest these things unto you, that you should come out of them, and be separated from them, and wait upon him, and worship him in Spirit and in Truth, according to his own ordination. And if you turn back again from this his precious truth, which has separated you from all these things, or at least made them manifest to be evil, into the world where all these things are, you shall be polluted by them.

I say, Friends, do you know, and has the truth made you sensible of these things? Oh! then forever stand fast, faithful and obedient, and continue to the end, and you shall be saved. Let none faint in their minds, nor sit down by the way, but in the measure of light, which has life in it, breathe unto the Lord, and continue unto the end, that in the end you may receive the crown of life, even the salvation of your souls. But they who are not willing to bear the cross, cannot obtain the crown; and they that will live godly in Christ Jesus, must suffer persecution. They that are not willing to suffer with him, must not reign with him; (mark that) and “he that loves father or mother, wife or children, house or lands more than me,” says Christ, “is not worthy of me.” Dear Friends, as you value the salvation of your souls, which is of great weight, “choose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the

pleasure of sin for a season;” and do not hearken unto that spirit in you, which would say you may go to the world's worship, and yet live honestly, and serve God well enough. Oh! dear Friends, let none hearken to that, for that is the seed of the evil one, the devil, who was a liar from the beginning. “You cannot serve God and mammon;” you cannot forsake the truth, and serve God; though the enemy of your soul's peace may tell you that departing from or not coming to meetings, in the way and manner that the people of God meet to worship him in Spirit and Truth, and going into the world, or to their worship, is not departing from the truth, and that you may serve God in another way, and live honestly in this world. Dear Friends, be not deceived through the subtlety of the enemy, for God will not be mocked: such as every one of you sows, such shall he reap; “they that sow to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but they that sow to the spirit, shall of the spirit reap life eternal.”

But rejoice you, my suffering Friends, who sow unto the spirit, of which you shall reap life everlasting; rejoice, I say, and be exceeding glad, even in the God of your salvation. Let your rejoicing be in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which you are crucified unto the world, and the world unto you; you lambs of my Father's fold, with whom I lie down and am safe, even in the endless rest.

Oh rejoice, you who are freely given up to follow the Lamb whithersoever he goes, in this the day of trial; “wherein he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather the wheat into his garner, and burn the chaff with unquenchable fire.” In which day the wolf is seeking to worry you, and the ravenous beasts to make a prey of you; and wherein the spoiler may be allowed to take away that which you enjoy as to the outward; yet again I say unto you, rejoice; as one whom the Lord has made sensible of your state, as being a member of the same body, for the stirring up of the pure mind in you, that you may be more sensible of his love in your trial, and that you may answer the same by pure obedience: Praise and magnify the God of your salvation, by walking in obedience to what he requires of you, or allows to come upon you, for the trial of your faith, who are as those having nothing yet enjoying all things to the praise of the Lord. Yes, truly, my Friends, this can I say to your comfort, that in whatever you suffer freely and willingly, for holding the testimony of Jesus in righteousness, you shall receive a hundred fold in this world, though it cannot be beheld with an outward eye, and in that which is to come, everlasting life.

Blessed are your eyes that see, and your ears that hear, and your hearts that understand the things of God aright, for you shall hear and receive the things that belong to your peace. Yes, as you diligently hearken to that still small voice in you, which is the voice of the true Shepherd, who calls the sheep of his pasture into his fold, who know his voice, and the voice of a stranger they will not follow. As you keep close unto this, which leads into the low valleys, where fat pasture is, you shall receive strength, whereby you will be enabled to stand in and go through the greatest trials, and leap over the highest mountain that shall arise in your way. So shall you finish your testimony for the Lord, and his pure way of truth and righteousness, in the faith of Jesus Christ, in which you did begin; which is to make a blessed and happy end and finishing; for such as continue and persevere unto the end, in all faithfulness, shall be saved.

Unto which the Lord preserve you all, bold and valiant, and faithful for the truth, while yet upon the earth, is the breathing and travail of my soul, in tender love to the Seed of God in all.

John Banks

*For Friends of Paedsay-Meeting, or Elsewhere in Cumberland;
To be Read Among Them, in the Fear of the Lord.*

Dear Friends, The foundation of God stands sure, and they whose building is thereupon, dwell in safety, where the enemy cannot come. Dear Friends, keep the watch, that nothing may have any entrance into your hearts, but the beloved of your souls, whose love has been so prevalent with you, that by it a willingness has been wrought in you to part with all for his sake. Oh! therefore, press on towards the recompense of reward, always following him, so that you may feel sweet peace with him in your bosoms; for behold he comes quickly and his reward is with him; who can deliver, both out of the fire, and out of the water.

Let none think it strange concerning the fiery trial, in which the Lord has seen it good to try you, among the rest of his people, as though some strange thing had happened; but all be faithful to the Lord unto death, and you shall receive a crown of life. It is not they that have begun well, and sit down by the way, who receive this recompense of reward; but they who in faithfulness continue unto the end, who know the saving health of Israel, and are cured of all their infirmities. Let none allow that to have place in your hearts, which would say, "Why is it thus? or why has the Lord allowed it thus to come to pass?" But all keep the faith and hold fast your integrity, and be steadfast in your minds, for before the day be over, the trial must be greater, before the dross be separated from the pure gold; for the Lord our God is about to work a thorough work in the earth, to make you clean vessels for his use, by which he will get himself honor and make you shine who are faithful.

Blessed and happy are all you, my dear Friends, who honor God in your generation; and woe to them who dishonor him in their lives and conduct, who would seem to honor God with their mouths and lips, and yet their hearts are far from him, in the earth. And all that are given to tattling, and talebearing, and of a whispering spirit, and busy mind, are for judgment; and in what bottle soever these things are retained, it will burst, and must be broken to pieces.

Therefore, watch against every appearance of evil, both within and without, with an eye for good, over one another; that where there is an evil eye, it may be plucked out; and so the eye being single, the whole body will be filled with light, by which the darkness comes to be expelled. And they whose abiding and dwelling place is here, know that it is a pleasant thing to dwell together in unity. "It is like the ointment that was poured upon Aaron's head, which ran down his beard, to the skirts of his garment; yes, as the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion; for

there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life forevermore.”

Dear brethren, dwell together in unity, that this blessing may be witnessed among you, even life forevermore. And that this everlasting dew may be felt to be distilled among you, that so you may all be members of that body that is fitly framed together by joints and bands, which the Lord God has prepared to do his will.

And all my dear Friends, in the Lord Jesus Christ, who have kept your garments unspotted of the world, and who have borne a faithful testimony for him in this trying day and perilous time, peace be unto you: the love of God fill your hearts, and his living unity tie you together forevermore; with whom I am truly bound up, in that bundle of love and life that can never be broken. Surely my soul loves you, and I am truly one with you, in that love and unity, of which length of time, distance of place, and wide seas can make no breach or separation. Oh! be you all encouraged to follow the Captain of your salvation, who hitherto has gone before you and pleaded your cause with your enemies, both within and without. Surely you have good experience how he has spread his banner over you, which is love; which unto you has been as a covering from the heat, and a hiding place from the tempest and the storm. Yes, it is even so, for there never has been any weapon yet formed against you which has prospered, as you have stood in his pure counsel.

Therefore, whatsoever the Lord may yet allow to come to pass for the further trial of your faith, fear not, you little flock, for it is his good pleasure to give you the kingdom. And though the waves toss themselves, yet need you not be troubled, for he that delivered Daniel out of the lion's den, and Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, out of the fiery furnace, is the same as ever he was. “I am the Lord, I change not, therefore you sons of Jacob are not consumed,” but preserved, and that to his praise and glory, even all who are of that seed and offspring. And blessed are all you that suffer for truth and righteousness sake, who count nothing too hard, too near, or too dear to be parted with, for this righteous cause of your God; great is your reward in heaven, even life everlasting, world without end. And as the Lord your God, has not only counted you worthy to believe in his name and truth, but to suffer for him; Oh suffer joyfully the spoiling of your goods: wife, or husband, whoever it be, part with and freely give up each other, whether to a prison, or the spoiling of goods, or to be spoken all manner of evil against. The servant is not greater than his Lord; as they have done unto me, says Christ, so will they do unto you; who suffered even unto the death upon the cross, through the counsel of the chief priests, scribes, pharisees, and hard-hearted Jews.

Dear Friends, consider the everlasting love of God unto you, who spared not his only Son for your sake, that by him, that is, by his death and suffering, you might be redeemed out of your miserable state, and lost and undone condition. By this love, the Lord your God has wrought a willingness in your hearts; and oh! that he may work more and more; that so in a true sense of the same, you may be preserved, to the tendering of your spirits in true unity and fellowship with him and one with another. In a blessed inward feeling of that love, life, and heavenly unity which are at this time in my heart, I take my leave of you; and breathe unto the Lord, that we may all be preserved unto the end.

Your brother in the living truth, that changes not,

John Banks

From Malloe in the county of Cork, in Ireland, the 19th day of the Sixth month, 1671.

The Testimony of Truth, Against All the Customs, Fashions, Ways, Words, Worships, Carriages and Behaviors that are in the World, Which are Out of the Truth;

With an exhortation and warning to all that profess the truth, and come amongst God's people, and yet are found in the said customs, fashions, ways, words, etc., and plead for them.

The people of God, in scorn called Quakers do deny and have no fellowship with such unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them, because the testimony of truth is against them. Fashion not yourselves like unto the world, for the world passes away, and the glory of it as the flower of the field; and the world by wisdom knows not God, nor the things of his kingdom, for its wisdom is from below, which leads and draws down into the beggarly elements and rudiments. The carnal-minded man knows not the things of God nor his kingdom, even those things that belong to the soul's peace; for they are foolishness to him, because they are spiritually discerned. The carnal mind and wisdom lead out into carnal, visible things, to feed on the husks among the swine; for without are dogs, sorcerers, etc; and that spirit which rules in the hearts of the children of disobedience, leads into various lusts, pleasures, customs, fashions, idle talking, foolish jesting, lying, swearing, pride, and drunkenness. Such discern not the Lord's body, but crucify him, and say, as some did of old, they will not have this man, even Christ, to rule over them; because by his light, he reproveth them for their evil deeds. So they crucify the Son of God afresh and put him to open shame, by sinning against him.

And in such, who bring forth these fruits, the just suffers by the unjust.

For these are the fruits of the flesh, and of those who preach and teach for doctrines the precepts of men, and are found in the many inventions; in outward washings, eating and drinking, under a pretense that God requires these things at their hands; when as he says, "Who has required these things at your hands?" These things do not so much as make clean the outside; and so are far from making or keeping the heart or conscience clean, or void of offense towards God. All such ways, worships, customs and fashions, truth's testimony is against; for these things are practiced amongst them who say they are erred and strayed from the way of God, like lost sheep; and so upon good ground God's people dissent from them.

The practice of the world, is to change from fashion to fashion, in pride of apparel, meats and drinks, to see who can exceed each other in pride and high-mindedness; to the end, their eyes and minds may look out, one after another.

The practice of those who truly fear the Lord, is to be plain and decent in their apparel, not given to change, as they of the world are, nor to wear anything but what becomes the truth, and may tend to adorn the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Where God has endowed with much, they are not to be extreme because of that; nor they who are endowed but with little, to strive to set out the fleshly part beyond their ability; for both in rich and poor, this is to cause the eye to look out, and the mind to wander. But the people of God strive who can exceed each other in good example; both in meat, drink, and apparel, only using what is decent and comely; to the end every eye may be turned inward, and all learn to be lowly minded.

The ways of the world are many, crooked and unclean; and they run to and fro in lying, swearing, and drunkenness; idle, vain, needless, unsavory words; vain customs, and proud antic fashions; which is the cause why their ways are crooked and unclean. The way of the people of God, whom he has redeemed out of the world, is but one straight and pure way, in which they follow the Lamb in the regeneration, who leads them out of all uncleanness, into purity and holiness. The words of the people of the world, are many, needless, and unsavory. But the words of God's people are few and savory.

The worship of the people of the world, who deny the true light, is in darkness, and their prayer therein is not heard, nor answered; for in praying, they cry, Lord forgive us our sins; and yet they do not believe they can be freed from them; and the people they preach to, live in their sins and so are never the better.

The worship of the people of God is in Spirit and truth; they pray with the Spirit and with the understanding, and their prayers he hears, and answers; they preach, being sent of God, and so profit the people; and such receive the end of their hope, the salvation of their souls, by Jesus Christ the righteous. And now unto you who profess the truth, and assemble amongst God's people, and yet are not in reality what you should be, either in your words or practice, in many things; but are loose and unfaithful; in love to your souls, this is written as a faithful warning, being the testimony of truth.

Take heed both old and young, who are fashioning yourselves according to the world in extremes, beyond the bounds of truth, either in your apparel, words, carriage, or behavior. What! cannot you set the people of the world an example according to truth, and if they will not come to that, never go you to join with, embrace or follow their vain and antic fashions.

And you that are old men and women, both as to convincement and years, set a watch in the fear of God against hastiness, rashness, peevishness, and crossness of spirit, for this is an ill example to your children, and to such who are young and weak in the truth. But be you grave and temperate, as nursing fathers and mothers; and set a watch before your lips, that you may not offend with your tongue. And both old and young, who make a profession of the truth, take heed that you do not utter unsavory words in your communications, and using the name of Lord and God in your common talk, as is the manner and custom of the people of the world. This is taking the name of God in vain, and such he will not hold guiltless. It is evil communication that corrupts good manners. "You are the salt of the earth," said

Christ Jesus to his disciples, “but if the salt has lost its savor, it is good for nothing, but to be cast out and trodden under foot of men.” Wherefore have salt in yourselves. Friends, you know that from the time you were first convinced, the truth would not allow nor admit of any of those things above; and it is the same now as ever; therefore consider from what root it is these things arise, for they are all out of the truth and disowned by the children of light; and the testimony of truth is against them.

You who are parents of children, train them up in the fear of the Lord, as becomes the truth, and give no liberty to them, nor indulge them in word or action, that is contrary to the truth of God. Teach them the plain language of thee and thou, to every single person; and to name the days of the week, and months in the year, according to the testimony of the holy Scripture; for this is according to truth; and not, as the people of the world do, after the names of the heathen's gods. And beware, both old and young, of taking liberty, and presuming to do such things as you call little faults, until greater evils break out; for then will shame come openly to such, and God's truth and people suffer.

And let none join with the people of the world, in their customs of marriages, feasting, or set drinkings, sports, pleasures, or vain shows whatsoever; but take heed unto the light of the Lord Jesus Christ, which makes manifest all things that are reprobable and for condemnation.

Beware all you who profess the blessed truth, of being overcome with strong drink, or other liquors, for by such the truth will suffer great reproach. Take heed of idle talking, foolish jesting, or fair speeches, for pleasing your relations in the flesh, for an earthly end, more than the truth will allow of, that is a deceitful thing; neither be you found back-biters, tattlers, nor tale-bearers, to stir up strife, or busy bodies in other men and women's matters.

Be watchful in the fear of God, and carefully mind and obey his teaching grace, and holy Spirit; the Spirit of Truth that leads into all truth. And as this is kept to, we cannot in conscience join with the people and spirit of the world, for that spirit leads out of the truth, into the broad way which leads to destruction. So all who in any measure have known your garments washed and made clean, from the pollutions of the world, have a care that they be not spotted and defiled again, by being familiar with the people of the world, in their vain, loose discourse, in their communications. This is the inlet of many evils; for we cannot join with the spirit of the world, that leads into vanity and excess, without there is first a going from the Spirit of Truth in ourselves, for light has no fellowship with darkness. Hence when the mind is gone from the pure light and all-sufficient grace, the eye is abroad after many things, which should be inward to the Lord; and so that eye and mind being too much one with the world, such begin to spy out which is the newest and finest cut and fashion, and the minds of such are restless until they have it; being gone from the truth in themselves, in which is the true rest and peace.

And yet you would be owned and called Friends: “You are my friends,” said Christ, “if you do whatsoever I command you.” And he says, “Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart.” His grace teaches not to be proud, or high-minded, for that is the enemy's work, and the spirit of the world joins with it, but not the Spirit of Truth. But some are friends to the world, and enemies to God; so consider whether

you are friends of Christ, or of the world; for according to the blessed apostle Paul, “Be not deceived, God is not mocked, such as you sow, such must you reap; they that sow to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption, but they that sow to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.”

Now it is plain and clear to every one who knows what it is to have their eye in their Head, (which is Christ) that they who follow and join with the world, in their needless and extravagant fashions, sow to the flesh, and the wrong spirit; for some of which the prophet Isaiah, in chap. 3rd, from ver. 16th to the end of it, reproveth the haughty carriage and behavior of the daughters of Zion. Wherefore I say unto you, away with your round tire, like the moon, (as said the prophet) and setting your dresses high above your brows with your powdered hair; but adorn yourselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety, not with braided hair, or with gold or pearls, or costly array, but, which becomes women professing godliness, with good works, as said the apostle Paul, 1 Tim. ii. ver. 9, 10. And for further proofs, read Jer. x. 2, 3. 1 Cor. vii. 31. 1 Pet. i. 14. and Ch. iii. ver. 3, 4, 5. and there you may see how many fashions the apostles name.

The fashions too many of you are found in the practice of, had you not your example from the people of the world, and were taught by the spirit of it to uphold and plead for them, and not from those who truly fear and serve God; nor yet from his pure holy Spirit, for the testimony thereof is against your fashions, that the truth never led into; and they who live the life thereof, must stand in their testimony against them. These things cannot be hid from the world, being daily and publicly practiced and seen with their eyes. That as Thomas Ellwood said, in his Epistle to Friends: “It has come to pass, that there is scarce a new fashion comes up, or a fantastic cut invented, but some one or other who professes truth, is ready with the foremost to run into it. Ah! Friends, the world sees this, and smiles, and points the finger at it and this is both a hurt to the particular, and a reproach to the Society in general.”

If you would not have these things spoken nor written against, take away the cause, and the effect will cease. See to it, that the inside be clean, and then the outside will be clean also. Cast off the deeds of darkness, and put on the armor of light, and willingly take up the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ, and contentedly bear it, and it will crucify you to the world and the world to you, with all the vain fashions, words, and actions of the world, with all the sinful lusts of the flesh. And as our dear and elder brother, George Fox, who was a good example to us in his time, said; “All Friends everywhere, admonish one another, young and old, that you do not run after every fashion which is invented and set up by the light and vain mind; for if you do, how can you judge the world for such things?—And set not up, nor put on that which you once did with the light condemn; but in all things be plain, that you may adorn the truth of the Gospel of Christ, and judge the world, and keep in that which is comely and decent.”

So hear and fear, betimes, and lay to heart and consider these things, for the spirit of the Lord is grieved because of them, and the hearts of the righteous are made sad; therefore see that these things be amended; for all these are for judgment.

And you who profess the truth, and meet amongst God's people, and yet go out into the world to seek

wives, or to join yourselves with the world for wives or husbands; the testimony of truth, and of the holy Scriptures, and all God's people is against you, because you have fellowship, and join with them who are in darkness. In so doing, you go from the truth in yourselves, and so lose unity with the children of light, and wax cold in your love and affection towards God, his truth and people; and grow hard, proud, and high-minded, and count this but a light matter, but it will prove heavy unto such in the end, except they unfeignedly repent. Oh! be not deceived, you cannot serve God and mammon; you cannot live in the truth, though you make profession of it, and join with the world. Why are you so vain in your imaginations, and why are your foolish hearts so darkened? Surely it is because you have not been watchful in the fear of God, against the out-goings of your minds; and not keeping to that which is good, the evil has overcome you. For if you had dwelt in the pure light, it would have expelled your dark thoughts, and then the world's spirit would have had no place in you. It never was the practice of God's people, in any age of the world, to be joined together in marriage, by a hireling priest. But marriage being an ordinance of God, and the true joining together being in and by his Spirit, God's people who kept the law of marriages, took one another in the assemblies of the righteous, or before witnesses, and they were and are witnesses thereunto.

And so, dear Friends, whom God has redeemed out of the world and the evil that is therein, keep out of the same, keep your garments unspotted of it; take heed of that which would spot and mar your garments, and heavenly image. Evil words in your communication spot and mar; corrupt ways, peevish, hasty, and passionate humors, lead and drive the heart far from God, and out of the way of truth. Evil customs and changeable fashions, spot and defile your garments. Condescending to the worldly spirit, for pleasing relations, or others, for an earthly end, loses your dominion in the truth. Mixed marriages by a priest, and yet the truth professed, tend to bring into worldly-mindedness; and where the earth and love to the world, come over the pure mind, the just is oppressed by it.

Live and dwell in the redeeming power of God, that sets free, and preserves so, all those who abide in it. It preserves out of the world's ways, customs, and fashions; out of unsavory words, out of hastiness, bitterness, and crossness of spirit; out of pride, and high-mindedness, bad marriages, and the like, and preserves the mind unto God; to seek first his kingdom and the righteousness thereof, and then all other things, in the Lord's time, will be added. Thus you may be true witnesses that greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. Christ Jesus, God's everlasting power, you are all to follow, hear, and obey; he leads into purity, and holiness; he leads into the green pastures, which make fat; but the spirit and power of the prince of the air and darkness, that rules in the world, if you give way to it, leads into blindness, and darkness, and hardness of heart, and leanness of soul. And when the soul is in death, what better will any be to have a name to live, and be dead? What comfort can a wife, a husband, houses, lands, gold or silver, then minister unto any, especially when their dying hour comes, and they not fitted for it; for tribulation, anguish and woe will then be to every soul that does evil. So know Christ Jesus the power of God, to be your head, and husband, and never forsake or deny him, for any pleasure or delight in the world, for the world passes away, and the glory of it; but he, the way, the truth, and the life, will last and endure forever; whose name is called the Word of God. He has said, I

am Alpha, and Omega, the beginning, and the end, the first and last; he was before, and will out-last all the world's ways, worships, customs, fashions, tithes, types, figures, shadows and inventions of men. He the substance is come, and fed upon; blessed be his name forevermore.

And, dear Friends, keep all your meetings in his name and power. Come orderly together at the time and hour appointed, not scatteringly, a long time one after another, for this is no good example to the world, nor so profitable for your growth in the truth, in your own particulars. Keep your meetings in constancy and faithfulness, as well on the weekday, as on the first-day; as our manner was in the beginning. Prize truth and God's glory, for truth is the same that ever it was; and the Lord is not lacking to his people now, any more than formerly, to them who in faithfulness wait upon worship and serve him.

And, when you are met together, be faithful and dilligent in keeping your watch, and take heed that you be not overcome with the spirit of slumber, especially you that are ancient, and public in the affairs and concerns of truth; nor any professing to wait upon, worship and serve God, neither old, nor young; it is of bad report, and ill savor, and very uncomely to behold; a stumbling block in the way of the weak, a hurt of their own souls, and a grief unto the heart of the upright. Dear brethren and sisters, be faithful and diligent in your meetings, and waitings, lives and conduct, that you may adorn the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; that the life you live, may be the life of the just, which is by faith in the Son of God; for this only gives the victory over the world, and all the evil that is in it. Hold fast the same unto the end, that you may receive the crown of life, and of immortal glory. That to God alone, who has called you by a holy calling, and gathered you together by his own hand and arm of power, to wait upon, worship and serve him, who never said to the house of Jacob, seek you my face in vain, you may give the praise, and evermore have cause to return him the honor and glory; who is worthy thereof, forevermore, Amen.

John Banks

Mooregate, in Cumberland, the 22nd of the Twelfth month.

Dear Friends and Brethren, Unto Whom the Salutation of My Love Reaches.

In all your meetings together to do service for the Lord, his truth, and people, and to see that good order be kept in the churches of Christ, wait diligently to be endowed with power and wisdom from above, which is pure, and peaceable; that by the same you may be guided to judge of and determine all that you have committed to your trust and charge, whether in things spiritual or temporal. Thus good order, the blessed unity and fellowship that stands in the one spirit, may be preserved amongst you, and every one may have right done them, and true judgment in the power and wisdom of God may be set upon the head of that which is unruly, stubborn and rebellious. For take notice, that every one who professes to be a member of the body, or of the meeting, where things are to be done in unity, according to order,

and settled and agreed to by the ancient and elder brethren of the church of Christ; every such a one ought to be subject and condescending one unto another, in things which are already settled and established as to church-order; and not any one to say in this or the other, I would be left to my freedom and liberty. Let all seriously consider, that if every one of you when met together, should be of this mind, would not this tend to lay aside and break all order, rule and fellowship, as it is already settled according to truth, in our men and women's meetings, as seen fit in the wisdom of God? Yes, surely it would. Wherefore I cannot but say unto you, for the clearing of my spirit, that care be taken to keep up the good order settled in the church; notwithstanding some in their particular judgment be against it. I speak in tenderness, for the good and preservation of all who love good order and unity with the people of God, beware every one of reasoning above the simplicity of the truth; for the apostle warned to take heed that you be not betrayed from the simplicity that is in Christ, as the serpent beguiled Eve.

Dear brethren and sisters, be you all careful to keep low and near the Lord, and then you will be kept near and dear one unto another; and the Fountain of life, and Divine wisdom will be opened unto you, and the streams thereof will run plentifully among you; which will make all your meetings and undertakings sweet and comfortable, in the wisdom and power of God; and in the heavenly fellowship of his spirit, all the disorderly, unsubjected, and unruly will be judged and cast out from among you.

Wherefore, dear Friends, keep close together, as a body fitly framed together in unity, so shall nothing be lacking; for we need not to lack anything amongst ourselves, that may tend to strengthen us against the enemy within, or his instruments without; for he is strong and subtle, and they are many, all seeking to devour and break us asunder, which all the powers of hell and death shall never be able to do, as our care is to keep close together. Let your continued care and mine be, that nothing upon any account may be given way to, that may tend to do any hurt, or make any breach amongst ourselves; but as the Lord has honored us with his truth, above many, to his praise and glory, and our comfort be it spoken, he has preserved us in unity, and sweet communion together for many years. Oh! that we may still be concerned as one man, of one heart and mind, to continue and persevere unto the end, in that in which we have begun and thus far are preserved, living to God, zealous for his name, truth, and glory; that through our careful settling, and steadfast abiding upon the rock and living root that bears us, we may bring forth fruit more abundantly, through the fresh springs of life, which will spring afresh into us, in and through Him, who is the fountain of all our mercies, blessings, favors, and preservations; that living praises in our hearts and mouths in our assemblies, may arise to the Lord, in a sense of life, being broken and tendered before him, to bless, praise, and magnify his holy and honorable name, for our preservation in his truth, near to himself, and in love and unity one with another; which is the travail and living concern and prayer of your brother, that you may be so kept and preserved forever, unto the end. Amen.

Known to you by the name of

John Banks

From my prison-house, in Carlisle, in Cumberland, the 29th of the Third month, 1684

*The Blessed Effects of True and Saving Faith:
With Encouragement to all Friends Everywhere, that Suffer for Truth and Righteousness Sake*

Dear Friends, The great work of God in the sons and daughters of men, is to purify the heart and make clean the inward parts, which is through faith in his Son. Faith is the gift of God, and the work of it is to purify the heart, and cleanse from dead works, to serve the true and living God in newness of life, to work out the old leaven, and mould into a new lump, to make the heart a-new, the mind heavenly, and the soul living.

Oh the blessed effects of true and saving faith, even that faith which stands in the power of God! which as man comes to the knowledge of, such come truly to believe in God, and confession with the mouth is made to salvation, and so gradually a casting off and forsaking everything that is evil, whereby a learning to do well, by the teachings of the grace through faith, comes more and more to be known. These are the blessed effects of true and saving faith; which works tenderness in the heart, instead of hardness, and brings to true openness those that have been shut up, and into a nearness with the Lord, and one with another, even such who have been far separated from him, by wicked works. This is true faith, that works in the heart, to the overcoming of it, saves them that were lost, quickens them that were dead, and brings them through the strength and power thereof, to serve the true and living God, in the newness of life.

The blessed effects of this true and saving faith, are to make clean, pure, and holy, and to sanctify throughout, in body, soul, and spirit; to make a new creature, and bring to a true knowledge. What it is to be in Christ Jesus; and so the heart, with the whole affections, come to be set on things which are heavenly, everlasting, and eternal. Oh! the pure change and blessed alteration that comes to be known hereby. Man that has been unclean, is made clean, and man and woman that have been unholy and impure, are made holy and pure; and so in the holy life, holy men and holy women, come to worship and serve the pure holy God, in the newness, livingness, and tenderness thereof. According to their measure, they come with the blessed apostle, to say, by living experience; “The life that I now live is by faith in the Son of God. Old things are past away, and behold all things are become new.” The old words past away, the bad actions and vain conduct put off, which are for judgment and condemnation; and the armor of light put on through the blessed effects thereof.

Through this true and saving faith, which stands in the power of God, His people come to have on their armor, by which, they are made more than conquerors; made able to withstand all the fiery darts of the devil, and all his instruments both within and without, and with the prophet to leap over a wall, run through a troop, and to break that which is as a bow of steel spiritually, that otherwise cannot be got over, run through, nor broken. Oh! what is too hard, for those who are in this true and saving faith? The author to the Hebrews, in the eleventh chapter, verse thirty-second, having spoken largely of the fruits and effects of faith, says, “What shall I say more? for the time would fail me to tell of Gideon, and of

Barak, and of Sampson, and of Jephtha, of David, and also of Samuel, and of the prophets; who through faith subdued kingdoms; wrought righteousness; obtained promises; stopped the mouths of lions; quenched the violence of fire; escaped the edge of the sword; out of weakness, were made strong; women received their dead raised to life again; and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection; and others had trials of cruel mockings, and scourgings; yes, moreover, of bonds and imprisonment; they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword, they wandered about in sheep-skins, and goat-skins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented, of whom the world was not worthy; they wandered in deserts and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth, and these all have obtained a good report through faith.”

So dear Friends, wherever this may come, unto whom the salutation of my life reaches, try yourselves, prove yourselves, that you may know whether you be in this faith or not, whereby all these blessed effects are wrought and brought to pass, and many more, to the making perfect throughout. Let none content or satisfy yourselves with the word faith, or with the bare profession of faith; but carefully mind what Christ Jesus our Lord says, “If you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, you shall say unto this mountain, be you removed, and it shall be so.” If faith in this small measure or degree, through the blessed effects of it, be thus powerful, or those whose faith is no more, thus gain the victory, how much more victory shall those obtain that keep it unto the end; for it is those who finish in that same faith in which they begun, who shall be saved, and for whom the crown of life and immortal glory is laid up. But some who are young in the truth, and whom the enemy may bear hard upon by temptations, may say, I thought I had faith in some measure, and yet those things stand in my way like mountains, that I cannot get over as yet, and great oppositions and temptations I meet with, both within and without, that prevail with me.

Dear Friend,

In much tenderness my soul breathes unto the Lord for your deliverance; and in order that you may be delivered from that which so oppresses you in spirit, or stands in your way, mark well what I say unto you—you will too much, and through your willing you would run too fast, and make too much haste, striving to get over things, which is the great cause why you come short of obtaining victory through faith; and that you do not come to know the blessed effects or work of it in your heart. Remember the counsel given to Israel of old, “Your strength, O Israel, is to stand still.” True strength, and victory through faith, over and against the enemies both within and without, is in standing still, and being quiet and cool in your mind; for as the Scriptures of Truth testify, it is certainly true, It is not in him that wills nor runs; the battle is not unto the strong, nor the race to the swift. And Christ says, Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit to your stature? Stand still and patiently wait to receive the power which the Lord will give to all in his own time, not in theirs, who patiently wait for it, that so patience in you may have its perfect work, and you may have the victory given to you, over all the temptations of the enemy, through faith in the power of God, and so will all those things come to be removed out of

your way, that you stand questioning and reasoning about. True faith gives victory, and is known by the blessed effects of it; and as the apostle said, This is the victory that overcomes the world, even our faith; and this is the way to know an anchoring and establishing upon the sure rock, through faith and hope, which never make ashamed.

And now, dear Friends, unto all you whom God in and through Christ Jesus his Son, has not only called to believe in his name, but also to suffer for truth and righteousness sake; blessed and happy of the Lord shall you be, if you continue unto the end. You have a true knowledge and right understanding, that your suffering is for truth and righteousness sake, for Christ's sake, as those that are his, whom he has redeemed, and saved, and sanctified by his blood, death and suffering. You are not your own, nor anything you have or enjoy, that your suffering may be for Christ your Redeemer, your Saviour, your Shepherd, Counsellor, King, Priest, and Law-giver, and so for righteousness sake, as those, who because of the tenderness of their consciences cannot do, nor consent to have done, that which is unrighteous, unjust, or unlawful, according to the righteous law of God.

Blessed and happy are all you whose suffering is on this wise; for it is not only what any suffers, whether in body or goods, that will tend to bring the recompense of reward home to the comfort and joy of the soul, as a confirming encouragement in suffering; but also that you all know for what you suffer, namely, the name, the power, the truth, in the Seed Christ. Here is true ease, true peace, and quietness in spirit under suffering; this makes the yoke easy, and the burden light, and the blessed recompense of reward from the hand of God comes unto all such a hundred fold in this life, and such also shall inherit life everlasting, as Christ Jesus our Lord said unto Peter, Where there is a willingness to forsake father, or mother, wife or children, houses or lands for his name sake, this shall be their reward. So dear Friends, my counsel and advice unto you all is that you all be truly careful what you suffer for, that none may have only a name to live, and be dead; but as those who have faith in Christ, and are in a spiritual travail; for if any one suffer in body or goods, and not in the truth, that will be a sad comfortless suffering.

While as a great mercy from God, you have yet health and liberty to meet together to worship and serve him, be faithful in meeting often together, first-day and week-day, in men and women's meetings; and when met, be diligent in waiting upon him, to receive of his living power from time to time. This is that which truly fits, furnishes and prepares in every good word, work and service. Make good use of time, in being truly careful how you spend it, for it is the ill use made of time, or the careless squandering away of it, that makes many unfit for a time of trial, when called thereunto. Remember, the ten virgins all had lamps, but five lacked oil, and it is said their lamps were gone out. It seems they once did shine; and they were all called to prepare, but the five foolish lacked oil, and so were left behind, and the door was shut against their entering into rest, and partaking of joy, because of their unwatchfulness, in the time they had given them; and although they came calling and crying afterward, it was to no purpose, the door was shut. It is plain there was a time when the door was open, when the wise, who had both the lamps and oil, entered in; therefore all be upon your watch continually, with a care to have oil in your lamps, that you may enter unto the place of rest, where you shall partake of joy unspeakable and

full of glory, as in a habitation of safety, where none can make afraid. If the storm or tempestuous trial last long, you shall never lack bread, but it will be sure, and your water will never fail; for He, for whose name sake you suffer, will spread your table, fill your cup, and maintain your cause. There your communion will be sweet with the Lord, and your unity and fellowship will be very comfortable, that you will have with all his faithful suffering people.

This is the counsel and advice of your brother, in tender love, that all who suffer by oppression for truth and righteousness sake, it may be in this manner, that so you all may have cause of great encouragement under suffering, whether in body or goods, which I can give in truth by good experience, who have had my own goods spoiled, and my body imprisoned time after time, and now am a prisoner, because for conscience sake I cannot uphold that great oppression of tithes. In the same day and hour I was to go to prison, were the spoilers carrying away my goods, for no greater crime than worshipping and serving the Lord my God; and oh! the joy, gladness, and rejoicing that was in my heart, because I was truly sensible of the cause wherefore I suffered. My joy was unutterable under this consideration, that the Lord my God should not only count me worthy to believe in his name, but also to suffer for the same. Christ Jesus the Son of the Father's love suffered to save and redeem my soul; and therefore should not I willingly offer up all I had and did enjoy, in answer to what God, through Christ his Son, had done for me? Yes surely, I said in my heart, I will offer up all freely. I speak to his praise and glory, and the encouragement of all faithful willing sufferers, whose suffering will never be wearisome nor tedious unto you; no murmuring nor complaining will have room in any such heart, as to say or think, How shall I live? Or how shall my wife and children be maintained? Or my business be carried on? For though we are not to be void of an honest care in those things, yet not to murmur because of the suffering.

What! is not God Almighty all-sufficient for the soul? And must not he be relied upon, through Christ his Son, our Lord, for the salvation thereof? And is not he that is all-sufficient for the soul, sufficient for the body also? Yes, assuredly, by living experience can my soul say, And is not the earth the Lord's, and the fulness thereof? And cannot he take and give according to his good will and pleasure? Let all remember the patience of Job in retaining his integrity, in his deep affliction and suffering, both in goods and body, whose wife gave him bad counsel, saying, Will you always retain your integrity? Curse God, and die: But he refused it, and reprov'd her; and suffered the loss of his thousands of sheep and camels, and hundreds of oxen; and all his children and servants; yet the Lord restored him double, so that it is said, The latter end of Job, was far more happy and blessed than the beginning.

Oh! that all who are called to suffer may be careful to refuse evil counsel, given either by wife or husband, kinsfolk or relations, who would persuade them to requite the Lord evil for good, and desert their testimony in suffering; such who would give counsel on this wise, This is but a small matter, and the other is but a little thing; you may do it well enough, or allow another to do it for you: No, says the honest-hearted and true to God, I must first be faithful in the little and then my Lord and Master will make me ruler over more; and that which I cannot for conscience sake do myself, I cannot allow any connivingly to do for me, for this is hypocrisy and dissimulation.

Oh! what encouragement have all the faithful in suffering, to trust the Lord with all they have and enjoy, and to consider the patience of Job; the faithfulness of Daniel; and the faith, courage, and nobility of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. Daniel could not but open his window, and pray to his God, though a decree was made to cast him into the den of lions, but the angel of the Lord's presence shut their mouths, and preserved Daniel, the servant of the living God; as the king called him, when he saw his faithfulness. The kings and rulers of the earth, with many people, are made to confess, We are the people of God indeed; when they see us stand faithful in our testimony, as Nebuchadnezzar was made to call the three servants of the Lord, Come forth you servants of the Most High God; although he threatened then, as some in our times, that, If they would not fall down, and worship the image he had set up, they should be cast into the fiery furnace, seven times hotter than ever; and who is that God that shall be able to deliver out of my hand? Yet as the Lord had then, so he has a way now, to deliver all whose trust and confidence is in him, beyond the expectation of wicked and cruel men, notwithstanding their fury. Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego said, "Be it known unto you, O king, we will not serve your gods, for our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace; and if not, we are not careful to answer you in this matter." And because they could not bow to the king's image, at the sounding of several sorts of instruments of music, they were bound and cast into the burning fire, with their coats, hosen, and hats; and the flame of the furnace was so great, that those men that cast them in, were slain thereby; but not so much as one hair of the three faithful servants of the Lord was singed, nor the smell of fire found on their clothes. What great encouragement is here, for all who in any measure know God, to believe and trust in him in suffering, whether in body or goods, though ever so deep; for hereby it is evident that the Lord always had, and has a true regard to his people, and the more need they stand in of him, so accordingly he appears, and works their deliverance, according to that saying, "The rod of the wicked shall not always rest upon the lot of the righteous." Not only so, but he brings plagues and judgments upon the heads of the persecutors and afflictors of his faithful ones; "One hair of whose head," says Christ, "shall not fall to the ground without your Father's notice."

When Herod the king, the troubler of the church, killed James, and because it pleased the Jews, took Peter also, and put him in prison, intending to bring him forth to the people; that same night, although Peter lay bound in prison with two chains between two soldiers, an angel from God came upon him, and loosed his chains, and caused the iron gate to open of its own accord. And Paul and Silas, who were put in the inward prison, after they had been beaten and sorely abused, and their feet fastened in the stocks, prayed and sang praises unto God at midnight; and such was the wonderful appearance of the great power of the mighty God, which caused the prison doors to open, that it is said, The foundations of the prison were shaken; and when the jailer waked, he thought to have killed himself, seeing the doors open, supposing the prisoners had been fled; but Paul said, "Do yourself no harm, we are all here;" and he came trembling, when he perceived what was done, and said, "What shall I do to be saved?" and Paul and Silas spoke unto him the word of the Lord, and bid him believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and he should be saved; and he and all his house believed.

There is great encouragement for all faithful honest hearted Friends, under suffering, to go on in all

faithfulness, freely giving up life and liberty, and all into the Lord's hand, willing to cast their care, and put their confidence in Him, who has all power in his own hand, to bring to pass whatsoever seems good in his eyes. The wicked many times in the height of their wickedness are frustrated, and God's people, beyond all expectation, preserved and delivered; of which you yourselves have many times been made living witnesses; hold it fast, dear Friends, in your remembrance.

And you may also see when there is a giving up freely to what the Lord requires, through the might of his power people's hearts and consciences are reached, causing them to tremble, whereby good desires are begotten and the query raised, What shall we do to be saved; though before they have been persecutors and afflictors of God's people. They whose care it is thus to walk and show forth a godly life and example in doing or suffering, so as to reach to the witness of God in people's consciences, though in the inner prison, as Paul and Silas were, have not only cause to bless and praise the holy name of God, for accompanying them by the angel of his presence, but also to sing and make melody unto him in their hearts.

Dear Friends and suffering brethren, though the Lord our God see it good to try your faith and patience, to see how you will trust in him, in the hour of temptation and time of trial, and men are permitted to take your goods, and also separate you from your nearest relations, your dear wives and tender children, and put you in prison, yet this is your joy and comfort, being sensible of the cause wherefore you suffer, and that man with all his power and rage, cannot separate you from the pure enjoyment of the presence of the Lord; but it reaches unto his dear suffering lambs, though in a dungeon. If it were not so, we were most miserable; but now above all people we are blessed and happy; blessed and praised, and magnified forevermore be the holy name, and great power of our God, by which he does carry through all his faithful children and people; for he is forever worthy of all praise, honor and glory: unto him alone be it given, both now and forevermore.

Amen.

Dear Friends, put on courage and boldness, in the name, fear and power of the Most High, as an armor, faithfully to follow your Captain, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will never leave you nor forsake you, except you first leave him, who will lead through good and bad report, fire and water, and in every trouble and exercise, will be your preserver, who upholds all by his word and power. In faithfulness follow your Leader whithersoever he goes; for as you with diligence follow him, he will bring you forth in his own time; and happy are they that patiently wait till then though in as great trial as ever any of his people suffered. Yet, if you be steadfast in the faith, he will bring you forth, and make you more bright and pure, holy and clean; for the fiery trial makes so; concerning which, as the apostle Peter said, "Think it not strange, concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as you are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, you may be glad also with exceeding joy:" So a true and faithful testimony, whether in doing or suffering, in body or goods, may be borne unto the truth, and for God, and his pure holy worship, and against all oppression and unrighteousness, that the same may be left upon record to

after ages as a confirmation to their faith, and may tend to their encouragement; as the example of those faithful witnesses who have already finished their course in the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, and are gone to their rest, does greatly tend to strengthen the faith, and encourage those who are now traveling in the same way.

In that same love, pure life, and true tenderness, into which at first you were begotten, and raised to bear a faithful testimony for the Lord, his truth and glory, though but in little things, when nothing was too near or dear for you to part with, may you all persevere; that He who was known to be the first, may carefully be kept unto, and be known to be the last; the Alpha, and the Omega; the beginning and the ending; the same to-day, yesterday, and forever; who is from everlasting, to everlasting; that so the crown of life and immortal glory may be set upon your heads, which is laid up in store for all who in faithfulness continue unto the end: Unto which, the Lord God of life, by and through the greatness of his own power, preserve you all faithful in life, and unto death. Amen.

John Banks

From my prison-house, in Carlisle, in Cumberland, the 17th of the Fifth month, 1684

An Exhortation to Friends

Dear Friends, Many have been the mercies, privileges and deliverances, of which the Lord your God has made you rich partakers, as you have stood faithful, ever since he gathered you out of the world, by an arm of mighty power stretched forth.

And first of all, let me put you in mind of his love and good-will towards you, in so calling and gathering you; and it has been through his fatherly care over you, that you have been preserved until now. Forever prize the same, in all humility before Him, for he is worthy.

And now, dear Friends, you know the good end of the Lord in calling and gathering you to be a people to himself, was not only, that you should believe in his name, but that you should also suffer for truth and righteousness. And a great work the Lord has wrought in you, and also for you, by his power and holy Spirit of Life, in order to prepare and furnish you, and give you strength, that you might run the race set before you, without wearisomeness or fainting; where you meet with many conflicts by the enemy within, and deep exercises, and hard trials without, so that the saying is fulfilled in you; Through many tribulations you must enter the kingdom: And yet, notwithstanding the danger on every hand, that caused fear and trembling sometimes; and notwithstanding the rod of the wicked was laid heavy, and with sharp strokes upon you; yet through all, the Lord your God, by the same power with which he gathered you, and brought you through all these things, has wrought your deliverance, and brought you to your desired haven.

And these the mercies, favors, and deliverances which you received from His hand, are never to be

forgotten. Many times they were little expected, either inwardly, or outwardly; and in both respects, when your travel and exercise was great; when a little peace was given, and ease from burdens felt, how sweet and precious was this unto you; and how did it tend to humble you before the Lord, and lay you low before him, to the renewing of your fellowship and communion with him, and one with another.

Dear Friends, always keep these things in your remembrance, that like so many good householders, you may be found bringing forth out of the good treasure of your heart, things both new and old, and yet all sweet and savory. O the inexpressible love and kindness of the Most High! in calling and gathering you, in quickening and giving life unto you, by his eternal spirit and power, and in causing his heavenly light to shine out of the darkness, to give you to see your way out of the same; in which waiting, you might witness life more and more. And great was his love and Fatherly care, in feeding, refreshing, and nourishing you; causing his gracious showers to fall upon you, his plantation, that the seed of life and righteousness might grow in you, in freshness and tenderness.

Oh, the love, mercy, and good-will of your God unto you, who have stood faithful in your testimony-bearing, for him and his pure truth: In the day of your trial, he has borne up your heads, over all his and your enemies, that you might not sink in the midst of troubles; and has filled your cups, and maintained your cause, and returned a hundred fold of joy and peace into your bosoms, even when the body was in prison, and the goods spoiled, and husband separated from wife, and wife from husband, sometimes unto death: has not the Lord, in all these things, been as a husband unto the widow; and more to the wife, than she could either ask or think; and as a father unto the fatherless children; and in the time, when as to outward appearance, you might have wept and mourned, because of your deep exercises, have not you even then been made to rejoice and give praises unto God, who did not only count you worthy to believe in his name, but to suffer for truth and righteousness, and say with patient Job also, The Lord gives, and takes away, etc., or allows it to come so to pass: blessed and praised be his holy name, and great power forevermore.

Oh Friends! let these things be had in remembrance by you, while you have a being. For how has the Lord gone before you as a King and Captain, to lead you on, who have counted nothing too near nor dear to part with, that in faithfulness you might freely and fully follow him, as Caleb and Joshua did, notwithstanding the winds and tempests. And how has he also followed you with his mercies, blessings and favors, when great spoil and havoc has been made of your goods, and of what the earth brought forth and afforded you; yes, how has the Lord caused these things to grow and increase again abundantly, so that you have had good cause to say, You have been blessed in basket and in store; and though some have had but little, yet having meat, drink, and clothing, let such therewith be content, for so we learn by the teachings of the grace of God, which is sufficient in all states and conditions.

Dear Friends, let these things come often under your consideration, when you lie down and rise up, go forth and come in; so shall you feel your spirits wrought more and more into true tenderness and brokenness, to lay to heart what the Lord has done since his heavenly day dawned. May not I say to

such as can read and understand. One has chased a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight: the work is the Lord's, the praise and glory thereof belongs unto him, to whom it is due, both now and forevermore. Amen.

And now, dear Friends, the Lord in his kindness and good-will to you, after a long time of cruel sufferings, tribulations and deep exercises, has allowed a day of ease and liberty to come unto you, according to the desire of your hearts; which was not to be expected as to outward appearance, which has freed you from your suffering condition, both in body and goods, in many places. And although it does not reach to free me from my bonds, yet the Lord knows, I am truly content with my condition, and no more weary than I was the first day I entered the same: and my heart is glad, and my soul rejoices, upon the account of what is extended unto many Friends. One hour of such a day and time, once, by many, would have been greatly valued, when prisons were full, houses and shops broken up, goods spoiled, and meetings greatly disquieted by wicked informers, and others; surely such a day as now is, or one hour of it, would have been greatly prized as a mercy from the Lord, and no doubt was much desired by many, and labored for with much care and diligence by others.

And is the day and time now come and yet continued, how long, I shall leave to the Lord, of so large liberty and freedom as I need not to mention; and is it not prized by all as a great mercy, favor, and deliverance, seeing that many prison doors are set open, and the wife enjoys her husband again, and children their parents, and our meetings are continued unto us in a most peaceable manner: praises to God on high forever. I say, is not this prized by all? I hope it is by many; and my desire is, it might be by all; for what a pity were it, that such a rich mercy should be undervalued by any, or not considered and prized according to the worth of it, or what it may produce, if made right use of. But I fear, and have a godly jealousy, that there are some who are so inconsiderate and unmindful of the mercies of the Lord, that they rather requite him evil than good herein. Oh! let all take heed and beware, that because of the present time of liberty and ease, none may take more ease and liberty unto yourselves, in meeting, or out of meeting, than becomes those professing truth: No—no more ought you to take, than if it were a day of trial and deep exercise; for still you have an unwearied enemy to war with, that neglects no opportunity which may make for his purpose, by many temptations within and evil counselors without.

And though it be not now a time for him and his, to rage and roar as though they would devour all at once, yet he will be creeping now in his cunning and subtlety more mysteriously and hiddenly to darken within, to hurt and hinder your growth in the truth, by presenting some delightful object without; and there is no way to have him discovered, nor to receive power against him, but by waiting and watching with diligence, and true fear, in the pure light of the Son of God. Therein power is received, whereby the power of darkness is trod down, and kept under; so that he will be known to rule and reign, whose right it is, who is God over all heaven and the whole earth, blessed forevermore.

It is the work of the prince and power of the air, that evil spirit, where it gets place and rules, to do what hurt it can amongst the tender plants of God, to hinder the work of God; as that rending spirit of separa-

tion in those that entertained it, has used all its cunning craftiness, by creeping in the dark, to hurt and spoil within, and so make breaches and separations without. For it is plain and evident, which may greatly tend to confirm all Friends against it, and to convince those that are of it, that this spirit and power, which pretends to be the Spirit of Truth and power of God, is not the Spirit of Truth nor the power of God; for though such be preachers, they never have been instrumental since they were joined with it, I am fully persuaded, to convince any of sin, or gather any out of the world. Their work has been, and still is, to deceive the simple, and the wise and rich, who love ease and pleasure more than God, his truth and people, and are got into a false liberty and looseness, because they love not to bear the cross, and live in self-denial; and because they who are of that spirit, like ease and liberty to the flesh and carnal mind. This present juncture of time might have served them to work in, but that they have already so far manifested what spirit they are of, to all whose eyes are open, by flying and hiding themselves in the time of persecution, and keeping Friends out of their meeting-houses.

So that now they can do little more harm, though they creep here and there; for that serpentine-spirit has shot its sting, and spent the greatest of its strength, so that any child of God now may tread upon it, without hurt or danger.

Dear Friends, how can it otherwise be, but all those things, rightly considered, shall greatly tend to confirm your faith against it, never any more to touch with it, nor them that are of it, and also open the eyes of others, taken as in a snare, to break the snare and come forth from them who are of that spirit, that such may be restored and healed: As many as have escaped, let them prize God's love therein forever.

I say, they have never, since they received that spirit I have described, been instrumental to convince any of sin, or gather any out of the world to God; so it is plain such are none of his sending, nor preparing: no ministers of Christ, but of him that is opposite to Christ, speaking from a dark power and spirit which gathers into the darkness, out from the true light, where people cannot see the true way. For the work of the true ministers of the everlasting Gospel is still to gather from darkness, into the true light and life, and so into the heavenly Man, who was before the power of darkness was, Christ Jesus the power of God, there to live, move, and have a being; where this earthly, separating, rending spirit cannot come, for it has its power from below, out of the pit of darkness, where its habitation and dwelling-place is; out of which the Lord God of life, keep and preserve you all, my dear Friends, in your habitations of light, there forevermore to live and dwell.

Let all take heed and beware of the deceitfulness of the enemy's workings in the dark, who from the beginning still wrought man's misery by getting an entrance by his lies, contrary to the knowledge God gives by his light and grace. He undoubtedly will now persuade to fleshly ease, careless security, worldly-mindedness, to seek self and its interest, if the watch be not carefully kept. For lack of this, darkness enters, deadness comes over them, and a spirit of slumber takes place, which is both a thief and a robber; and the Spirit of Truth not being minded, to lead and guide, the spirit of the world gets in, and draws, and leads into the earth and earthly things; and instead of laboring to be rich in faith and

good works towards God, such labor chiefly how to grow rich in the world, that they may have great substance to leave, they know not to whom.

And all this darkness and insensibleness comes for lack of waiting and watching with diligence in the light of Jesus Christ, the ancient and standing principle of truth, and because the daily cross to the will and mind that leads out, is not borne and lived in.

And some, for lack of a rightly prizing and valuing the present mercy, so largely enjoyed, allow a high mind to rule them, which leads above the fear of God, and out of a sense and feeling of the pure truth in themselves, and so walk not orderly. Dear Friends everywhere, as wise men and women, have a care in the fear of God, and in love to his truth, as those who are ordered and guided in his wisdom, that all people may see you are no more heightened, because of peace and liberty, than cast down in a day of trial: but that all may behold your good conduct, coupled with fear, that you are as those bowed before the Lord, under a deep sense of his present mercy, not forgetting those heretofore received. For although the Lord may be pleased to make man instrumental in this or any other thing, it is unto him alone, who is the Author and Original of all good, that you are to return the praise, honor, and glory forever; though we would not withhold that from man which is his due who is found doing well, which is acceptable with God, and worthy of commendation and praise by all his people, who desire their continuance therein. And dear Friends, as you are preserved before the Lord and all people, you will be of the blessed apostle's persuasion; who says, I am persuaded that neither life nor death, principalities nor powers; things present, nor yet that which is to come, shall be able to separate me from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus. So let all take heed, and keep low in the even way, the middle path, where no extreme is, where you will be kept humble and meek. It is such the Lord teaches to prize and value every mercy and favor they receive from him.

It is very rarely those prize liberty and ease to the worth thereof, who never knew bonds, trouble, and suffering: Yes, it is as rare in such, as for a man and woman to prize health and strength, who scarcely ever knew sickness or weakness; or for those to prize the worth of bread, who never knew the lack of it.

It is those chiefly, who have borne the heavy burden of imprisonment and spoiling of goods, and have been straitly confined to the impairing of their health, who are ready to cry out and say, How deeply are we engaged unto the Lord for the enjoyment of this mercy of so large liberty and freedom. Oh that you may never forget of the same, though I know the honest-hearted who have their eye to God, and love him, his truth and people above all, though never called to suffer, are ready often to say in their hearts; Though I have never been exercised as other of my friends, yet I cannot but be mindful of their suffering condition; and when they suffer, I suffer with them, and when they are freed, eased, or at liberty, I am made truly glad; so that I am engaged with them, to praise the Lord for such a favor.

And the blessed effects produced by duly prizing the mercies and favors received from the Lord are, walking worthy of his love manifested to us, and valuing the same, which engages the Lord to give us more abundantly thereof, and constrains us to love him again, and to double our diligence. These are so

far from taking more liberty to themselves, because of the liberty that is given, that they find themselves the more engaged to meet often amongst God's people in all their meetings, not only for worship, but men and women's meetings to do service there for him, his truth and people. But ease and liberty, not made right use of, bring forth little but idleness and unprofitableness, which render men unfit to do service for God.

Dear Friends, in the name of the Lord go on, and let none sit down by the way, but in faithfulness follow your Captain, the Lord Jesus Christ, who never leaves nor forsakes those who follow him, that you may have good cause to say, as those who have made right use of the day of God's love and mercy, in giving ease and liberty, as well as when exercised in and under suffering, "come what will come, the will of the Lord be done."

And all who make not use of this day's mercy for that end and purpose wherefore the Lord has allowed it to come to pass, which is to engage and establish his faithful people, it will rise up in judgment against them. Brethren and sisters everywhere, all be awakened unto righteousness to serve the living God, as you ought to worship and serve him, which is with all your hearts, your might and your strength, and with all you have and do enjoy, which is the Lord's. The Lord God of Israel keep and preserve you faithful in serving Him and one another in love, for the increase of life and unity amongst you; is the supplication and travail of my soul unto the Lord on your behalf, into whose blessed and Fatherly protection I commit you all; to be kept where safety and preservation is forevermore.

Who am your friend and brother, in the living and precious truth, though a sufferer in outward bonds, for the testimony of Jesus, and of a good conscience.

John Banks

From my prison-house, in Carlisle, in Cumberland, the 8th day of the Seventh month, 1687

A General Epistle to the Flock of God, But More Particularly, in Cumberland.

Dear Friends and Brethren, Look to the rock from which you were hewn, and to the hole of the pit from which you were dug; that is to say, never forget from where you came, no more than to what degree you are attained; what you were when the Lord first visited you; and what you still are of yourselves, without the assistance of his power; hold this fast in your remembrance, and it will greatly tend to humble you, and keep you little and low in your own eyes, in true self-denial: so shall the Lord alone be exalted, and his glorious power extolled over all.

It was the Lord who visited us with the dayspring of his love from on high, by the shining forth of his glorious light, in a land of darkness, a country where there was a famine, not of bread nor water, but of the preaching of the Gospel; and brought us to a country, where light and life are, and that flows with milk and honey. Forget not the way of your soul's travel; and you that have not known it yet, must tread

the same path, before you can come to be sharers with those who have so done; who have known what it was when they entered on their journey, or the beginning of the work, to drink a bitter cup, even the cup of judgment, to bring down and burn up all that was contrary; and a sword to slay the enmity, and of twain to make one new man.

Then was the day of weeping, and mourning, and trembling; then did the earth tremble at the presence of the Lord. The way of Zion's redemption being through judgment, love it still, and dwell in a sense of it to the end, and the enemy shall never prevail against you; dwelling in Him to whom all judgment is committed, both in heaven and in earth, in Christ, the light, the life, and the quickening spirit.

Dear Friends, in a sense of the tendering love of God, let me ask you, who delivered and saved you, who has kept and preserved you until now? Surely you can say with my soul, the Lord alone by his own power and strength; which he has never failed to show for those that trust in Him. Therefore trust therein, and keep thereto, unto the end, and you shall be eternally happy.

And as you have known the travail of your souls, in passing from death to life, and out of darkness into light, which is the path that the younger generation who are coming up must tread in, you can tell them by experience, for their encouragement, that the Lord will never leave them nor forsake them, if they follow him in the way of his judgments, which he mixes with mercy, and which must be owned and loved, to bring down self, and whatever would exalt itself above the pure witness. You can tell them, that when your hands did hang down, and your knees smote one against another; so that sometimes your hearts were fearful whether they should ever be lifted up or strengthened again; yet having faith, and being taught by the grace of God to have patience also to wait the Lord's time, he has appeared to lift up the weak hands, and strengthen the feeble knees, and make the fearful heart strong by the might of his power.

Yes, the Lord has often wrought your deliverance, and done wonderful things for you, beyond what you then could see, so that you have been ready to say, I hope I shall never meet with such exercises, trials and temptations as heretofore. Yet if anything of self was set up, to glory above what was fitting, because of what the Lord had done for you; has not the only wise God seen it good, after all this, to try and prove you again, both without and within, that you might be kept truly humble and low before him, always depending upon his power, and on nothing of your own. Has he not seen fit to try your faith and patience, and for a time has hid his face from you; and given you but little either of spiritual bread or water; insomuch, that because of your weakness and faintness, the enemy has been very busy to tempt you to despair of the sufficiency of the power and mercy of the Lord, or to turn you aside from the way of truth, using all his subtlety to keep you from calling to mind how the Lord heretofore brought you over mountains and high hills, and leveled them all before you. And your hopes sometimes have been so faint, that some of you have been ready to say, with one in the days of old, "Lord, have you forgotten to be gracious!"

And yet has not the Lord, after all this and much more, renewed your hope and strength again, and by

the glorious appearance of his heavenly Sun, has broken forth and shined in your hearts, clearly discovering to you the enemy's wiles and working, with all the mists and darkness he brings in with him, and driving away the same, through the power that is received in the light, even the light of life. Thereby you see what has been the cause of your being so exercised, so long after your convincement; and after you have known many deliverances, and watering-showers, and fruitful seasons; yet now are brought to judgment and the sentence of condemnation; that all which is of self, in which the enemy works to the hurt of the soul, may be slain with the sword of the spirit, which is the Word of God, and consumed with the fire of the Lord.

Thus has the only wise God taught you by his holy Spirit, and thereby you have learned experience and spiritual skill, how to come to his judgment seat, that you might come to his mercy seat also; that so you might know the way of your soul's travel, from death to life, through weeping and mourning, to joy and gladness, through poverty and weakness, to feed at the table of the Lord; and come to have your strength daily renewed, to sit in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, in that rest prepared of God in Him, where his glory shines in your dwellings, which will make you to shine as the stars of heaven, as you keep your station in inward watchfulness and waiting in the light.

When the mind is stayed there, it is immoveable, for its stay and strength is the sure rock and foundation of God, his great and glorious power, out of which, both the water and honey proceed. O the divine sweetness that is in it! Who can set forth the greatness, the goodness, and excellency thereof? You know, dear brethren and sisters, that our souls many times when together, have been made rich partakers of the same, in the enjoyment of the life-giving presence of our God, and made near and dear one to another; when we have been so filled with the wine of his kingdom, that tears of joy have often run, which have far exceeded the tears of our sorrow.

Dear Friends, whom my soul loves in all true tenderness, and unto whom I am inseparably joined; in the unity of the spirit, my heart is full of love and life, which flows from the living Fountain; with desires for your eternal good. That you ancient ones, whose time cannot be long here, may finish in that in which you began, in freshness, and true tenderness, and receive the crown, that so it may be well with you forevermore.

And that you who are younger in the truth, and also in years, may not please yourselves with long life, nor yet with worldly preferment; but wait with all diligence and true fear, to feel the work of the converting, heart-tendering power of the great and mighty God, to work a true change in you, in body, soul, and spirit; that so it may be well with you, when death looks you in the face. And my dear ancient Friends, be careful that you never forget, nor depart from your first love and tenderness; and all you younger who have not so fully known it, wait diligently for it, that you may know the blessed effects of it, as the ancients have done, that through the fear of God placed in the heart, and an awe and dread of offending the Lord, you may come to say with them; Oh! that I may never speak a word, nor do any action that may grieve his good spirit, nor break my peace with him. May I neither eat nor drink to excess, nor wear anything in apparel contrary to the pure truth, neither be found in any carriage or

behavior, in conduct or communication, that may give any occasion, or whereby truth may suffer. This was and is the desire, and cry of all the faithful, and of those that truly fear the Lord, and have known what the first love is, and the blessed effects of it.

This was a time when nothing was valued like the truth; and it is so still, with all who love truth and righteousness. No hardship, no scoffing, no scorn, no reproach for the name of Jesus, no suffering, no spoiling of goods, nor imprisonment of body, neither principalities nor powers, things present, nor things to come, shall be able to separate such from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

All these, and much more than I am able to express, were the effects of your first love and true tenderness that was begotten in you thereby. Keep to it, live in it, and never depart from it, nor forget it; that so you may continue unto the end, in that in which you have begun; as those whom the Lord in his love and by his power, has thus far preserved, so shall you be everlastingly happy, when time here shall be no more.

Dear Friends, were we the wisest, the greatest, the mightiest, or richest among the sons and daughters of men? Most of us were such as were accounted foolish, weak, mean and contemptible, like the Jews in the days of the prophet Nehemiah, who were called feeble by the enemies of God, and of his people, who mocked and laughed them to scorn, and said, What do these feeble Jews? not knowing what work the Lord has determined to do by them in answer to the prayer of the prophet. He has done great and wonderful things in this his days through the might of his own power, by those whom he has called and chosen out of the world, though counted weak and feeble, yet made strong, through his renewing of their strength. Here is encouragement given by our Lord and Master Jesus Christ, for all true believers and faithful followers of him, through many tribulations: "Behold," says Christ, "I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing by any means shall hurt you: notwithstanding, in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you, but rather rejoice that your names are written in heaven. In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank you, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hid these things from the wise and prudent, and have revealed them unto babes, even so Father, for so it seemed good in your sight."

What remains for you then to say; Oh says the truly humbled, what manner of love is this wherewith the Lord my God has loved me, and visited my soul? And most especially, in a day when I was an enemy in my mind to him by wicked works. I am constrained to love him again, and to fear him always, that I may in no way offend Him, so good and gracious a God, so dear and tender a Father, who has dealt so kindly with me, not according to my desert, for I was unworthy that his love should reach unto me. And such were we. Yet, notwithstanding all this, and much more, has the Lord, with whom there is no respect of persons, loved us freely, in a time never to be forgotten. Oh! be humbled, and laid low before him, under the sense of his love, that our hearts may be often broken, and tendered thereby; for if the love of God does not work this effect, nothing can. But all who, in true fear, dwell in a sense of what the Lord has done for them; the secret cry of their soul is. Oh! I can never do enough for the Lord, to answer his love, and the knowledge of his blessed truth he has given me, and the divine sweet-

ness and abounding thereof, that I have many times felt to spring afresh in my soul, in waiting upon him.

Wherefore such a one is made often to say, there is nothing that I have, that is so near and dear to me, but I can freely part with it for the Lord and his worthy name's sake, for all I have and do enjoy is the Lord's; so can his redeemed say with a good understanding, not only their souls and bodies, but all they have and do enjoy, are his. Blessed and happy are all they, whose godly resolution this is, who are thus redeemed by his power; hold fast and continue your godly resolution unto the end, in true faith; and look not out, nor give way to the reasoning part; but keep near the Lord and rely upon the sufficiency of his power; that by waiting and watching therein, you may receive strength. Then you will be strong and courageous, bold and valiant for the truth upon earth; for he, for whose name's sake you suffer, has sufficient in store to reward all your losses, crosses, trials and sufferings, both here, and eternally hereafter; and assuredly will not withhold it from you, as you stand faithful unto him in your testimony unto the end; unto which, the Lord by his own power, preserve you all, Amen.

Dear Friends, I being well stricken in years, cannot promise long time to myself in this world, and I was willing, in answer to the motion of God's blessed spirit, to send this epistle abroad amongst you, as a token of my entire love and tender care over the flock of Christ; wishing that grace, mercy and peace, in and through Him, may be multiplied and increased amongst you, and that brotherly love and unity, in the one spirit of life may continue, and abound more and more, and that in all your meetings and families, you may be blessed with heavenly blessings in Christ Jesus.

From your friend and brother, in the covenant of light and life.

John Banks

Given forth at Meare, in Somersetshire, the 23rd day of the Fifth month, 1698

A True Testimony Concerning My Faith in Christ

I BELIEVE in that same Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, for remission of sins, and the salvation of my soul, who “was conceived of the Holy Ghost, born of the virgin Mary, made a good confession before Pontius Pilate, and was crucified without the gates of Jerusalem; was dead and buried, and rose again the third-day, and ascended into glory, far above all heavens,” that he might fill all things, according to the testimony of the holy Scriptures; for which I have a godly and reverent esteem.

I also believe in Him, as to his appearing the second time, without sin, unto salvation, to all that look for Him, by his living and eternal spirit, the Spirit of Truth, which the world cannot receive, as when he prayed unto the Father, that he would send the Comforter, that leads into all truth, all that believe in him thereby.

When it pleased the Lord to visit me with the day-spring of his love from on high, in the days of my youth, by this Spirit of Life and Truth, sin and satan were manifested; and if at any time I was prevailed upon, by entering into any of his temptations, I was reprov'd and judg'd thereby. But when faith was begotten in my heart, to believe in the Spirit of Truth that reprov'd me, I received power from Him, in whom I did and do believe, to overcome one sin after another, in order to a perfect freedom from it, which must be in this life, or else there is no entering into the kingdom of heaven. For all who live and die in sin are unclean and therefore cannot enter the kingdom.

This is the blessed effect of the faith of every true believer in the Lord Jesus Christ; as to his birth, suffering, resurrection, ascension, and second coming without sin, unto salvation; in whom all must believe for life and salvation to their souls, whoever come to know the full assurance thereof, in the kingdom of happiness, and endless glory. I believe in Him, and own Him in all his offices, and under every name and denomination which is given to Him in the holy Scriptures. I own Him as King, even King of saints, and Lord of life and glory; High Priest of the profession of all that were and are of the true faith; God's covenant of light and life; Emmanuel, God with us, who is come to save his people from their sins, not in their sins, for there is no being saved therein; which is in the fallen and lost condition.

I own and believe in Him, as he is the "true light, that enlightens every man that Comes into the world." I own and believe Him to be "the way, the truth, and the life; and that no man comes to the Father but by Him." I believe in Him, as he is the Minister of the sanctuary, and true tabernacle which God has pitched, and not man; who by his power and spirit, has fitted and made many able and faithful ministers, in this the day of his everlasting Gospel, among whom he has been pleas'd to account me worthy to be one, though one of the least of many. He is the Minister of ministers, and none are or can be true ministers, but who are made so and ordained by Him.—He fits, opens and prepares by his power, and quickening spirit.—So the ministers of Christ preach Him, the way, the truth, and the life; the true light, the door, the true Shepherd, who laid down his life for his sheep, and saves by his grace all true believers, who obey the teachings thereof.

He is also believed in and known by his second coming, to be the ingrafted Word, that is able to save the soul. He took flesh and suffered in it, the one Offering once for all, to put an end to sin, and finish transgression, and bring in everlasting righteousness.—The fulfiller, the finisher and end of the law, with all the types, figures and shadows of it; the end of tithes, swearing, temple-worship, outward circumcision, offerings and oblations. The end, finisher and fulfiller of water-baptism, and outward communion by eating of bread, and drinking of wine; He the great Baptizer, having baptized many by his spirit into one body, of which he is the Head, which is the one saving baptism, with the Holy Ghost and fire;—and John with his water baptism is decreased, and ended.

And He is the one bread of life, come down from God out of heaven, which is eaten of by faith, whose flesh is meat indeed, and his blood is drink indeed. He the living substance is come and fed upon; that was and is the communion of saints.

This being the substance of the testimony, in brevity, of my faith in Christ, I am willing to leave it behind me, when I have finished the work of my day, and am gathered to my everlasting rest, which I have long travailed for, through many deep exercises. And this not only for myself, but I was willing to leave this upon record, on the behalf of my Friends and brethren also, the people of God in scorn called Quakers, who are of the same faith in Christ with me.

That all may know, who have a desire to have a right understanding of our faith and principles; that we are no such people as to our faith in Christ, as some ignorantly, and others hatefully have rendered us; as though we only or wholly depended upon the light within, for salvation to our souls; and did not own or believe in Christ, as to his coming, death, resurrection, ascension, etc.; and the benefit we, and all true believers have thereby. But, blessed, praised and magnified be the worthy name of the Lord our God forever, who has opened our understandings by his power, whereby we know Him, in whom we do believe; which is not to believe in the light within, distinct from Christ;—or as if people could believe in the light, and not in Christ. But we believe in both, as one; knowing and being clear in our understanding, that no separation can be made between Christ, and the light that comes from him, which shines in the hearts of all true believers; and shines in the darkness of unbelievers, and therefore the darkness cannot comprehend it. So we as truly believe in that same Christ, who laid down his body, and took it up again, as in his light within, and we have benefit to salvation, by the one as well as the other, and of both, they being one, and are willing to lay hold of every help and means, God in and through Jesus Christ, has ordained for our salvation.

John Banks

Meare, in Somersetshire, the 5th day of the Seventh month, 1704.

TESTIMONIES CONCERNING JOHN BANKS

John Whiting's Testimony concerning John Banks

Since it pleased the Lord, in his infinite love, to cause his day to dawn and his truth to break forth in this nation of England, even in an acceptable time, when many were seeking the Lord, and wandering like sheep without a shepherd upon the barren mountains of lifeless profession, seeking rest but finding none; many messengers have been raised up, and sent forth to publish the glad tidings of the Gospel, and to turn people from darkness to light, that they might find rest to their souls; many of whom, especially of the first rank, are fallen asleep. Among these our dear friend John Banks, the author of the following papers, was early raised and sent forth with the word of life, and was a faithful laborer in his day, who gave up himself for the spreading of truth, spending and being spent in the service of the Gospel, for gathering people to the knowledge of the truth, in which he was made an effectual instrument to many, in this and other nations, particularly Scotland and Ireland.

Since the Lord was pleased to give me the knowledge of his truth, to which my education by religious parents was a good help, I always loved its messengers for its sake, as I did the author of the ensuing papers for his sound and savory testimony, which ministered grace to the hearers. He divided the word aright, according to their several states and conditions, of which he had a good discerning, and could speak a word in season accordingly; like a good scribe instructed unto the kingdom of heaven, who brings forth of his treasure things new and old. He was also one that ruled well, not only his own family, but in the church of God. I knew him above thirty years, from his coming into the county of Somerset, in the year 1677; and could then, though but a young man, set my seal to the truth of his ministry, and witnessed the efficacy of it. It was with demonstration of the spirit and power; he being endued from on high, to preach the everlasting Gospel of life and salvation. I have often been comforted in meetings with him since, especially about the time of his coming to settle in the county of Somerset. One of the last duties we owe to the memory of such who have labored among us in word and doctrine, and for their works' sake have been worthy of double honor, is to publish their memoirs, as occasion offers, after their decease; in which, I confess, I have often been comforted, as commemorating the worthy and noble acts of the Lord done by them, and his goodness, mercies, and providences in preserving them, and carrying them over all opposition of men of perverse minds, and the persecutions and sufferings which have attended them for their testimony, and which have not been few in these latter days. This has always been the lot of truth and its witnesses, and was the lot of the author of this book.

The following journal and collection of his writings were sent to me by him in his life-time, with a desire that I, and J. Field, should take the care of publishing them after his decease, which we have carefully done. I have been comforted in reading them, by the sound, solid, serious matter contained in them, which I doubt not will have a witness in the consciences of all who read them in the fear of God. In them he being dead yet speaks, whose memorial still lives and will live among the faithful in a lively remembrance of him.

I truly loved him for his sincerity and uprightness, being a faithful man to the testimony of Truth, and concerned for good order in the church of Christ, against disorderly walkers, and to keep things clean in Monthly and Quarterly Meetings, from all that would defile or break the love and unity. When he grew weak in body, that he could not travel as in time past, though he got to several meetings beyond expectation but a little while before his death, yet his care for the church was not lessened, that all things might be kept well; and at last having served his generation according to the will of God, he fell asleep and died in the faith and full assurance of a blessed immortality and eternal life. He laid down his head in peace with the Lord, in a good old age, and full of days, aged about seventy-four, and is entered into the fruition and reward of his labors, and his works follow him.

John Whiting

London, the 12th of the Twelfth month, 1711.

A Testimony from Friends of Pardshaw Monthly Meeting in Cumberland, concerning John Banks

He was one upon whom the Lord poured forth of his holy Spirit, and gave a large gift thereof to serve him. The Lord's love is universal to all; he would have none to perish, but that all should come to the knowledge of the truth, and be saved; and for that end he gives gifts to men, to make them instrumental in his hand, to bring the sons of men to have faith in his only Son the Lord Jesus Christ, "who is the true light which enlightens every man that comes into the world." Our dear friend was early called into the work of the ministry, and was faithful to improve his gift; and the Lord made him useful in his hand, and many are the seals of his ministry who yet remain in this county, who are witnesses of the power that was effectually with him, to the convincing of many. He was a faithful minister of the everlasting Gospel, and given up to preach it freely, and labor faithfully in the work thereof; and went through great hardships, and travelled much both by sea and land, in Ireland, Scotland, and in this nation, and most of all in this county, where he labored night and day for the gathering of people to God, and for the settling of those who were gathered. He was one of good discernment, and was often opened by the Spirit of Truth, to speak to peoples' states, and had an answer from God's witness in their hearts, so that many were convinced by him.

He was instrumental to gather several meetings in this county; being an incessant laborer in the Lord's work, both in body and mind; rising up early, and lying down late, and freely given up to spend and be spent; and we sincerely desire that we who had the benefit of his labor, may be kept in true fear and walk worthy of all the Lord's mercies, to his glory, and our salvation.

His ministry was powerful and piercing, ministering judgment upon the transgressor, yet filled with consolation to the sincere hearted, so that he was both beloved and feared by many. His memory lives amongst the righteous; and we doubt not but he is entered into rest. It was not only given him to believe, but to suffer for the testimony of God; in which he was preserved firm and true, to the stripping of his goods by the Conventicle Act, public sale being made of what he had; yet the Lord bore him up over all, that he was as one of the stakes of Zion, that could not be moved. He was afterwards in prison at Carlisle for his testimony; yet retained his integrity, and stood faithful, and the Lord was with him, and gave him courage still to stand firm in his testimony against tithes and the hireling priests, not only in word, but in deed and in truth. In the time of the Conventicle Act, he kept close to meetings, so that the informers concluded, whoever were not, he would be there; insomuch that they ventured to inform against him, whether they saw him, or not; and thereby laid a snare for themselves; and swore he was preaching on Pardshaw Crag, when he was gone in the service of the Gospel into Ireland, and was taken prisoner in Wicklow; which was proved against them, and they were forced to fly the country, and both came to miserable ends.

He had great service at that time, for many were convinced of the truth at the meeting in which he was taken prisoner. We might say more on this subject; yet the bent of our minds is not to attribute anything to him, or to any man, but to the Lord's power, which raised him up and made him what he was, to his honor and the peace and benefit of the church; desiring that we who yet remain may keep in true fear

and humility, following the Lord Jesus in the way of self-denial, that we may so run as to obtain the crown of immortal glory. “Be you faithful unto death, and I will give you a crown of life.” James Dickinson, Peter Fearon, John Burnyeat, William Harris, John Wilson, Jonathan Bowman, John Ribton, Peter Wilson, Thomas Tiffin, Christopher Fearon, Jonathan Bell, John Nicholson, Matthew Lowman, George Wilson.

From Friends of Pardshaw Monthly Meeting, the 23J of the Eighth month, 1711.

John Bousted's Testimony Concerning His Deceased Friend, John Banks

He was a faithful minister of Christ in this his glorious Gospel day, after that long and dark night of apostasy, which had spread itself over the nations, in which many were made drunk with the cup of fornication. After it had pleased the eternal, wise God to open his understanding, and to let him see his own state and condition, and reveal his Son in him, he was made willing to give up freely to the heavenly and inward appearance of Christ Jesus, the hope of glory. And as he was obedient thereunto, he was intrusted with a large gift of the ministry, in which he grew, and was made powerful in it, to the turning of many unto the right way of the Lord; who were convinced of the evil of their ways, and turned unto Jesus Christ, their free teacher; and were made to bless the Lord on his behalf, that it should please the Lord to send him amongst them who had sat in darkness, and under the region of the shadow of death. He was skillful in dividing of the word aright, having milk for babes, and stronger meat for those of riper age. I knew him well, and truly loved and honored him, for he was worthy of double honor, as one that ruled well in the church of Christ.

As he was bold in asserting the truth, so he was valiant in suffering for it, both by imprisonment, and in spoiling of his goods. When at liberty, he travelled much in various parts of this nation, also in Ireland and Scotland; and in many places where it was my lot to follow him, I found of the fruits of his labors; both by the convincement of some, and the settlement of others; for great was his labor in the love of Christ our Lord. And although he was sharp in his rebukes to the unfaithful and to backsliders, yet in admonition he was gentle and courteous; God having given him the spirit of discerning, and of a sound judgment.

I speak these things to the honor of the hand that raised him up; with fervent and true desires to the Lord, that he may raise up and send forth many more faithful laborers into his harvest; for the harvest is great, and the true laborers are but few.

John Bousted

Aglionbye, the 25th of the 9th month, 1711.

Christopher Story's Testimony Concerning John Banks

As the labors, travels, and exercises of our dear friend John Banks were great, both in doing and in suffering for the name of the Lord, I shall here give a relation of some part of them, where I was present with him. The first time I saw him was at a meeting at John Iveston's, of Jerishtown in Cumberland, in the latter end of the year 1672, or about the beginning of the year 1673, where there were many Friends and other people. It was a good meeting, to the confirming of those who had lately received the truth in the love of it; and convincing others of the right way of the Lord.

The next meeting he had in our parts was at Edward Atkinson's of Masthorne. A great meeting it was, and many received the truth in the love of it, and lived and died in it. Others were so reached, that though they never took the profession of the truth upon them, yet they often manifested their love to truth and Friends, to their dying day. So effectually was the love of God manifested in that meeting, that many tears were shed by some for joy that the Gospel of glad tiding was so preached, and by others, in a sense of godly sorrow for their mis-spent time. He had several meetings afterward, nearer to the borders of Scotland; and one at Parkrigg, in which several were convinced by him, and others being added, it is now become a settled meeting. He was serviceable amongst us in word and doctrine, and very exemplary in life and conduct, so that I greatly loved him. He had also a share in government, and the care of the churches was upon him, that they who professed the truth might walk answerably in their lives and conducts.

In the year 1679, our dear friend going to the Yearly Meeting at London, for the county, and it being my lot to be his companion at that time, we met at Strickland in Westmoreland; and visited some meetings in Yorkshire, Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire, Northamptonshire, and so to London. He had good service in most places, and much comfort and satisfaction I had in his company, he, whom I esteemed above many others, being a loving and a nursing father to me.

After we had staid the time of the Yearly Meeting, and he was clear of the meetings of the city, we went to a meeting at Windsor, and so to High Wycombe, Reading, Newbury, Marlborough, Calne, Chippenham, and most of the meetings in those parts. It was a time of deep exercise to many faithful brethren who kept their habitations in the truth; for in most meetings of this part of the nation, there was a rending, dividing spirit crept into the church, and many were made to say, "Alas, we know not which way to turn, or what will be the end," etc. I am a witness, with many more, some of whom are yet alive, of the deep exercise of spirit he went under, from meeting to meeting, for the Seed's sake, that the innocent might be preserved from hurt, and the spirit of separation which would divide in Jacob and scatter in Israel, might be fully manifested. Though his exercises were such night and day that his meat and sleep were almost taken from him, yet the Lord so strengthened him in his inward man, that he was borne up in his spirit, to confirm and build up the righteous in that most holy faith which works by love, and to proclaim woe and judgment upon the spirit that had led into separation.

And though in several places, they who were most in the separation, followed him from meeting to

meeting, and bent their bows against him, waiting for an advantage, yet the Lord was pleased, for the honor of his own name, to preserve him by his power, that he came away to the churches' comfort and edification, and to his own peace.

After this, we came to Bristol, and found faithful Friends under great exercise of spirit, by reason of a contentious spirit that some there were gone into. We visited meetings thereabouts, and when our friend was clear, and his service over, we came pretty direct for Cumberland.

As the labors and travels of this our dear friend were great for the truth's sake, which he was called to bear witness to, so he was also valiant in suffering for it, as appeared in his imprisonment in Carlisle. It was my lot, with others of our meeting, to be committed to prison at that time, for our peaceable meeting together to wait upon the Lord, and to worship him in spirit and in truth. We found our dear friends, John Banks and Thomas Hall, separated from the rest of Friends, who were prisoners, and put into a dark place, called the citadel, among the felons, something like a dungeon, where they could not see to work in a dark day, without candle-light; and for no other cause, but for preaching and praying in the time of Friends' meeting to wait upon the Lord, in the place where they were confined. His persecutors hoped by their being absent, the meetings of Friends would be silent, and give less occasion of disturbance to priests and others, who took occasion against his preaching. The first meeting we had amongst the Friends in prison, Andrew Graham and I, appearing in public, the jailer was much disturbed, and took us away from the rest of Friends; and being afraid of the priests and others, was at a stand what to do; for there was no room for any more beds among the felons. The bed whereon our dear friend lay, was next to the sink, where the filth was discharged, which made it the more noisome; but the Lord's power carried them over all, and in a few days I obtained liberty of the jailer, to go with the turnkey, and found the Friends, through the Lord's goodness, easy and well.

The turnkey returning, I staid to bear them company till evening. When the turnkey came again, he told John Banks he and his companion might go to the rest of Friends, if they pleased, for it would avail nothing to keep them there, as there were now other preachers. John Banks replied, the jailer brought them there without any just cause, and he should fetch them back again, and cause what they had to be carried along with them; which he did before he slept. Being now together in one place, we kept our meetings, first-day, and week days; and the place of our confinement being near the upper end of Castle street, and not far from the great cathedral, so called, it often happened that at the time when people came from their worship, on the first-days, John was preaching, and his voice would reach to the door of the great house; and people frequently would either go softly, or stand a little; for at that time no meeting of Friends was kept in the city. And at this the priests were much disturbed, and threatened the jailer so much, that he left this place at the year's end, and hired another house.

Our friend John Banks, being a good example in all things, labored diligently with his hands, being a glover and felt-monger by trade; and with much sitting during that cold winter, in which the great frost continued so long, he thereby grew infirm. We were sixteen in one room, and had the privilege of but one little fire; and mostly four or five ancient people had the benefit of it; but at last we all 6 obtained

our liberty; mostly by King James's proclamation, and came forth free and clear men, for which the Lord shall have the praise. I could say more; but knowing there are many faithful brethren and sisters, who had a perfect knowledge of him and of his integrity, from the time of his convincement to the day of his death, and of his many labors and exercises both at home and abroad, I am the more easy to conclude, being an eye and ear witness of what I have here written.

Christopher Story

A Testimony from the Quarterly Meeting in the County of Somerset, concerning John Banks, of Street, in the same County, deceased; who departed this life the 6th day of the Eighth month, 1710.

He was very zealous to the last to spread the Gospel; and in all his exercises and afflictions he had the honor of God and good of his people in his eye. He devoutly labored in his gift, and being an able minister of Christ, was instrumental both to gather and confirm many souls in the truth. We have many witnesses, who, with us, have partaken of the comfort of his labor. He was a good example, and his conduct was pleasant and profitable; sharp against the obstinate opposer, but meek and gentle towards them, who, in a sense of their shortness, were ready and willing to acknowledge the same.

Such was his concern for the Gospel, that he did not spare himself to promote the truth: he was zealous against a luke-warm spirit, warning Friends, both by doctrine and example, to beware thereof; often reminding the young people of that fervent love which was amongst the brethren in the beginning. He was not insensible that a libertine spirit too much prevailed in many places, neither was he lacking to bear a testimony against it. Friendly reader, whoever you are, or whatever your state in the church may be, although the design of this is to demonstrate our love to the deceased, yet we also intend hereby your edification. And in order thereunto, we would briefly say; first, if you are a minister, attend on your ministry, and wait to know God's time, that when you speak it may be in his time; and keep to your opening, that what you speak may be from the Spirit, and with understanding.

Thus will you learn, both when to speak, what to speak, and when to be silent; a principal thing for Gospel ministers to have the true knowledge of. And also you will be preserved from a lifeless unedifying ministry, which is a hurt, but never helps true believers. It is a living ministry which begets a living people; and by a living ministry, at first, we were reached and turned to the truth. It is a living ministry that will still be acceptable to the church, and serviceable to its members. It is an excellent virtue in ministers, a seal and confirmation of their ministry, to be found in the practice of that which they preach to others; such can in boldness say with the apostle, "Be you followers of us, as we follow Christ." Secondly, if you are not gifted in the ministry, but a living witness of the virtue of truth, and partaker with us of the like precious faith, we entreat you mind your place in the church, that you may be found in obedience to the Gospel: thus may you come under a spiritual qualification for the oversight of others; which must be by taking heed to yourself, according to Acts xx. 28: "Take heed there-

fore unto yourselves, and then to the flock," etc., but first take heed to yourself. Why so much to myself? I know the truth, and am sensible of my duty, some may say, But give us leave to add, that many are sensible of the good they ought to do, but neglect it; therefore, look well to yourself, that your obedience keeps pace with your knowledge, that so you may not only be a hearer, but a doer also. This will give you authority, that with clearness and boldness you may advise them that are unfaithful, and neglect what they ought to do; for he that hears and does not, his building is not aright, and cannot stand in the time of trial. Whatsoever you may be, it matters not; for he that advises others, being faulty himself, must expect to meet but with a cold reception. Therefore, look well to yourself, neglect not the gift that is in you, neither measure your duty by another's neglect. It is too much a practice in this age, to be influenced more by the worst than by the best of examples. But, follow you the footsteps of the flock of Christ's companions, who are gone before; so will you come up in the place of some of the many worthy ancients who are gone to rest; amongst the number of whom, this, our friend, may be accounted worthy to be reckoned; as one who both bore the burden and heat of the day. Let it be your concern to follow his example in faithfulness; not for imitation's sake, but for the Lord's honor; so will you be fitted to enter into that blessed inheritance which God has in store for the faithful. That this may be your portion, so wish, and so pray your fervent and Christian friends.

Signed by order, and on the behalf of the Meeting aforesaid, from Glaston, the 22d and 23rd of the First month, 1710-11, by Elias Osborne, William Jenkins, John Hipsley, Abraham Thomas, Joseph Pinker, William Horwood, John Thomas, Samuel Bownas, William Alloway.

A Testimony Concerning our Dear and Worthy Friend John Banks

Whom the Lord was pleased to place in this part of the country, as he himself has signified; and he was very serviceable amongst us in the work of the ministry, and also in settling a godly discipline in many places; encouraging the young men, as well as the old and middle-aged, to come to our meetings for that service, that they might be serviceable in their places. He was very tender and loving to the well inclined, and a reprover of evil doers, gainsayers, and backsliders, placing judgment upon the head of the transgressor.

He was very desirous that things might be kept savory, and in good order amongst us, often giving good advice and counsel to Friends out of meetings, as well as in meetings, for it was his great delight to see them grow in the truth. He gave way to strangers when we were visited, although he was an able minister of the word of life, which dwelt plentifully in him, and his bow abode in strength, and he would often hit the mark. He was a great encourager of Friends to bear a faithful testimony against tithes, and steeple-house rates, etc., and where he saw anything to the contrary, he would show his dislike. He was a faithful laborer in the work of the Lord, visiting Friends' meetings abroad, as long as he had strength of body; but was attended with weakness several years, in which time he wrote several papers to Friends. Some time before he died, he removed his habitation to Street, near the meeting-

house; and our meetings both for worship and business, were many times held at his house, which was a great comfort to him, for he was very glad of the company of honest Friends; and sometimes when they asked him how he did, he would say, "Weak in body, but strong in the Lord—all is well." He was borne up in his spirit beyond what could be expected, to bear a living testimony in our meetings, being attended with that Divine power which made his soul sing praises to the Lord, to the comforting of the faithful in Christ.

He was a great help to us in our Monthly Meetings, in managing the affairs of the church; being favored with the continuance of his understanding and memory. We greatly miss him, and although it is our loss, yet we believe it is his everlasting gain, and that he is gone to rest with the faithful in Christ. And now, since it has pleased the only wise God, in his infinite wisdom, to take unto himself this our dear friend, his faithful servant, and minister of the everlasting Gospel, it is the desire and supplication of our hearts, unto the great Lord of the harvest, that it may please him to raise many more such laborers; "For the harvest indeed is great, but the true and faithful laborers are but few."

Signed on behalf of our meeting, at Glastonbury and Street, the 13th of the Third month, 1711, by James Clothier, Sen. Joseph Moore, Arthur Gundry, John Blackmore, James Clothier, Jan. Tho. Freeman, Tho. Marnard, Wm. Blackmoke. Roger Jewell, This was viewed and approved of by the Monthly Meeting.

Hannah Banks' Account and Testimony Concerning her Dear and Tender Husband, John Banks, deceased.

I was married to him the 28th of the eighth month, 1696, being a widow, and was convinced of God's truth in the time of my widowhood; we were married at Glastonbury, and went to live at Mear, until the year 1708, and then came to Street, where we continued until he died. He was afflicted with much weakness in his latter time; but a little before his death was raised to go to some meetings.

On the 5th of the sixth month he went from home to Somerton, and the next day to their Monthly Meeting of worship, which was very large, and he had a good meeting, to the satisfaction of Friends. Afterward he had an evening meeting in the town, and went next day to Long Sutton, to visit Friends; and to some other places; and was at the Monthly Meeting at Puddimoor, and had a large testimony to Friends; and also at Yeovil, and was well accepted; after which he returned home.

Most Friends thought he would not have been able to undertake such a journey, being between twenty and thirty miles, by reason of his weakness; but he could not be satisfied without it. On the 2nd of the seventh month, as he was walking in the yard, he was taken with a pain in his back, which, by degrees, went downward into his feet, and proved to be the gout. It was very painful for several days before his death; yet he would often say, until the last, that notwithstanding all his pain, his soul did praise and

magnify the Lord, for his goodness towards him, though he thought his pain sometimes sharper than death; and said, how well it would be if the Lord would be pleased to remove him hence. Many Friends and others coming to visit him, he had a large testimony to them, by way of exhortation; and a few hours before his death, said how well it was to have nothing to do but to die. At another time he said, he was assured it would be well with him and that he should end in the truth, as he began. He was very sensible to the last; and, after all his pains, had an easy passage, on the 6th of the eighth month, 1710, and is gone to rest; aged seventy-three years and two months. He was a man that feared God, wrought righteousness, loved truth above all, and his friends with all his heart, and served them faithfully to the end. I am satisfied he has laid down his head in peace, and rested from all his labors. He was a true help-mate to me, and we lived almost fourteen years together; five of which he was under great weakness, which he bore patiently to the end. I cannot but lament my loss of so near a friend, for he was a great strength to me in my weakness, who am poor and feeble of myself, and do desire the prayers of the faithful, for my preservation, that I may hold out to the end; who am his mournful widow,

Hannah Banks.

Street, in Somersetshire, the place of my abode, this 4th of the Third month, 1711.

THE END