

THE JOURNAL
OF
JOSEPH OXLEY

ORIGINALLY ENTITLED:

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JOSEPH OXLEY

HIS LIFE, TRAVELS, AND LABOURS OF LOVE, IN THE FAITH
AND FELLOWSHIP OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.

"I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him." Gen. 53:19..

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UNABRIDGED
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JOSEPH OXLEY'S ADDRESS TO HIS CHILDREN.

My dearly and well beloved children, unto whom I send greeting: grace unto you, and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

You are nearer and dearer to me than all things here beside. Divine Providence was pleased to bestow you on me in the days of my youth, since which you have been my constant care; and, as you have been increasing in years, so in like proportion have my cares been increasing towards you. While very young, you were instructed to fear and worship your great Creator, and oftentimes directed to him, and to the guidance of his blessed, holy, unerring Spirit, which, as due regard is paid thereunto, would lead and guide you into all truth. This becoming the rule of government of our actions, will make us, of the children of men, the children of God. I have not failed to bestow on you a liberal education, to qualify you for business, and brought up and settled you in such business and callings as are in esteem and reputation, in all which I have had an eye to the glory of God.

As occasion required, I have exhorted, advised, reproved, and restrained you. You know well that I was exemplary in attending religious meetings, and you also therein became my companions. My increasing cares, and laudable endeavours, through Divine favour, have in some good degree procured for me that blessing, which above all temporal blessings I have desired,—the blessing of sober and virtuous children. It is the all-wise, great and good Benefactor, the Lord, the everlasting I AM, the Alpha and Omega, before whom my soul seeks to worship at this time, and with earnestness to entreat, that he would still vouchsafe the renewings of celestial rain upon the seed of his poor servant, that thereby they may grow as plants of the Lord's own right hand planting, to his glory and praise forever and ever.

I am now pretty far advanced in years, waiting daily until my change shall come, having no desire to stay longer than is my Master's good will and pleasure. In this state of resignation I desire to live, and to live so as to be fit to die. I trust, in this passage through life, I have not been unmindful of that great work, unto which I have apprehended myself called; and when concerns of a religious nature have appeared to be my duty, have not to charge myself with neglect or backwardness; but stood in passive submission to be made willing in the day of his power. Herein, as I was made to give up, I had great peace, and have no cause to murmur or repine at any of his requirements, though I thought myself not worthy, not pure enough to run on his holy errands. I do not know how better to recommend you, than to follow me, my dear children, in like manner, only in greater degrees of purity. The more pure and holy and perfect we are made, the fitter we are to be sent on his errands, and to bear the Gospel message. In former manuscripts I have recommended brotherly love and unity, without which there can be no real, true happiness. The same I again recommend to you. There is much beauty in beholding brothers and sisters living in love, endeavouring to help one another as occasion may require, in counselling and advising in temporal or spiritual matters. I charge you be not unmindful in so doing, my dear children; peace will flow in upon you abundantly, and your reputation and honour will be increased among men. The Lord will delight himself in you, and you will be a praise to his great name.

My life being attended with variety of dispensations, I have, as opportunity presented, committed to paper some things, among many that have fallen to my lot, in the course of my pilgrimage; not with any intention or desire of its going forth to the public, but intending chiefly to have it kept within the circle of my own family; not thinking it better worth. You will find in the perusal of these few sheets, the tender dealings and merciful visitations of the Almighty to me, after long provoking him to anger; by which means, judgment and condemnation were brought over my soul. May he who reached poor me when I was gone astray, and brought back again that which was lost, in like manner effectually reach the hearts of my dear children, that closely joining in with the visitation of Truth, they may at length become warriors and champions in our Israel, contenders for the God of their father, in their generation; and the Lord so bless the work in their hands, that sinners may be converted from the error of their ways, that souls may be saved from death, and thereby hide a multitude of sins. In that day the wisdom of God will be made manifest, and according to the saying of the prophet Daniel, “those that are wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars, forever and ever!” For this great and good end, many have been called into the Lord's work and service, and their reward shall be according to their measure and faithfulness.

Great is the loss which many sustain who have been long hearing, and not obeying, being diverted and turned aside by strangers, of which there are many to delude and enchant; deceivers, and not true, captivating allurements, called by fine names. Thus it is, that the creature is exalted above measure, and is set up in the mind above the heavenly witness; turning aside the deep counsels communicated from Him who is perfect, who delights not in the death of sinners, but is graciously seeking, immediately and instrumentally, to save sinners from their sins, and to preserve them from sinning. How strange a thing it is that minds should be so infatuated, as to prefer pleasures rather than peace. It is by seeking and pursuing after pleasures, that many hearts are wounded and slain; but they that seek after peace, shall be made peace-makers, and shall be called the children of God. The testimonies and labours of the Lord's servants, tend to bring off from those things that are of a hurtful and destructive nature and evil tendency, wounding the poor soul, bringing it into great distress and confusion; which do not settle it upon a right bottom and sure foundation, wherein dwells true happiness, comfort, and peace. Thus is an understanding given, not a verbal declaration only; for the knowledge and Christian experience of such, as have been seeking after the Truth, and by obedience to its manifestations have found it, and have it in possession, speaks of what they know, and not of what they know not. I therefore direct and recommend you to such teachers, and to the teacher of them, the Lord Jesus Christ in your own hearts, the true and infallible Teacher; that by attending thereto, you may come in this manner to attain to the like experience, and in the end obtain your hope, even the salvation of your souls.

Remember my counsel, herein recommended, and depart not from it. It is what above all things else I covet for you.

JOURNAL OF JOSEPH OXLEY'S LIFE AND TRAVELS, ETC.

CHAPTER I.

I HAVE had it on my mind for a considerable time, to commit to writing some of the many occurrences that have befallen me; and of the precious visitations, and merciful dealings of the Almighty with me from my youth up.

I was born at Brigg, in Lincolnshire, on the 4th day of the ninth month, old style, 1715. My father's name was John, son of John and Mary Oxley of Criggleston, in the parish of Sandel, and county of York. My mother's name was Ann, daughter of Joseph and Catherine Peckover, of Fakenham, in the county of Norfolk.

Respecting my mother, my father left this short testimony:—"Ann Oxley, of Brigg, departed this life the 27th of the sixth month, 1720; and was interred at Castlethorp, in Friends' burial-ground, the 30th day following, aged thirty-three years and three months. She was a virtuous, zealous woman, sometimes publicly engaged in meetings, and loved and entertained Friends heartily who came to visit us. She was naturally a woman of a ready wit, charitable to the poor, a friendly neighbour, and well beloved of all. We had a good meeting at her interment, wherein several testimonies were borne concerning her; also at the burial-ground, all signifying her departure was in peace with the Lord." About three years afterwards, it pleased Divine Providence to visit my dear father with a sore fit of sickness, of which he also died, the 29th of the twelfth month, 1723, aged forty years; leaving three children, Joseph, Ann, and John, thus rendered destitute not only of natural, but religious parents. I was the eldest.

About the eighth year of my age, we all came under the care of my grandfather and grandmother, Joseph and Catherine Peckover; myself more particularly under the guardianship of my dear and honourable uncle Edmund Peckover. My sister became the care of my grandmother, and my uncle Joseph Peckover, of Fakenham, took the care of my brother John, who was the youngest. I was boarded at Brigg, with Ann Bethell, widow, a valuable Friend, until such time as my relations could settle my father's affairs. I went to school in the town, but have no reason to think I was one of the best boys; for though I was very young, I well remember that one night on going to bed, curiosity led me to look into the maid's trunk, which was in the chamber, and unlocked: on opening and searching the trunk, I found a little screw box which I ventured to examine; its contents were chiefly silver. I thought I might hazard to take sixpence, and not be found out; which I did, and no more.

My mistress, with whom I went to school, sold nuts, gingerbread, sweetmeats, etc., some of which I bought, and distributed amongst my school-fellows, and played truant; on which I was suspected, and at night my pockets were examined, and I was found to have spent about two-pence, for which the next day I underwent the discipline of the rod, which I have had reason to think was of service to me, not

remembering I have ever done the like since. Soon after this I was sent to Gilbert Thompson's school, at Sankey, in Lancashire, a very good school; but I was very unapt at learning my books, though few exceeded me at play. One time in particular I have reason to remember. My master being from home, I had agreed with another boy to run a race, and for each of us to carry another boy on our backs; and in running, I fell down with my leg under me, by which means I broke my thigh, which proved a source of long confinement, sorrow, and trouble. The surgeon who set it, not being sufficiently mindful, set it wrong, and in this state it remained several days, when at length it had to be broken again and set afresh, which indeed proved an unspeakable sorrow; but afterwards the parts united and did well.

About this time my dear grandfather Peckover, of Fakenham, departed this life, and bequeathed something for my further education, etc. After being at school more than five years, I was sent to Scarborough, in Yorkshire, to be an apprentice to a clockmaker. But when my master came to see me, he was afraid to take me, because I was so very low of stature, and sent me to school again, to a Friend who lived in the town, where I also underwent some profitable correction, as well as acquired useful learning.

The following summer, my uncle, Edmund Peckover, being on a religious visit in these parts, I was bound an apprentice to Robert Henderson, of Scarborough, clock maker. My uncle recommended to my master, that he should let me attend week-day meetings as often as it was convenient. His great care over me in that respect made lasting impressions on my mind, even to this day; and I have been careful to be exemplary therein, and in bringing up my family in that commendable practice. My master and dame, for so I was ordered to call my mistress, were both sober, valuable Friends, and orderly in their conversation; but such of us as were under their care as apprentices, journeymen, etc., were unruly and disorderly, very unbecoming and reproachful, idle, loose, and profligate, corrupting one another in many evils, frequenting ale-houses, and gaming; practices destructive both to body and soul. Let all beware lest they unhappily fall into these evils, and bring the Lord's displeasure on them as I did. I liked very well the business, but it was too hard and laborious for my strength. I had also a pretty deal of other business, such as cleaning boots and shoes, looking after my master's horses, etc., as occasion required, which kept me very backward in my business. Having served my master seven years, my time with him expired. I am far from being able to give a good account of myself during these seven years. I remained exceedingly raw and ignorant respecting religion, negligent in attending meetings, for which my master and dame would often reprove me, and on a first-day evening they would frequently call us together to read in the Holy Scriptures. My mind seemed at this time to be estranged from anything that was good, and I turned a deaf ear to all advice and counsel that had a tendency to settle the mind in the fear of God.

Being now in the twenty-second year of my age, I left Scarborough, and by order of my uncles, Edmund and Joseph Peckover, went to Brigg, my native place, and by their advice, disposed of an estate of my late father's: from there into Norfolk, to see my relations there, which afforded me very great satisfaction, and not the least to see my dear brother, who was then an apprentice to John Northern, a Friend at Walsingham, in said county: I had not seen him for about thirteen years. We were exceedingly rejoiced to see each other, and though we were so long parted, I believe brotherly affection remained as strong as

if we had lived together all that time. I spent some time in the country with my aged and honourable grandmother, who was a mother in our Israel, and would often be giving me such advice as I stood in need of, but it had little effect at that time. It now became time for me to think how I must live in the world, for at present I was neither in circumstances, nor otherwise qualified, to set up in my business, being altogether ignorant in the watch-making branch, which I thought highly necessary to know; and, in order thereto, I went up to London, where I met with my uncle Edmund, and by the interest he made, I got a place, though not so suitable as could be desired.

My instructor was a good workman, and in many respects kind; but he was very much lacking in religion, seldom or never going to any place of religious worship. He was by profession of the Church of England, so called. I indented with this man for two years to learn to be a watch-maker, which I liked very well. My master was a good-natured man, and willingly agreed with my uncle's proposal, in letting me go to a week-day meeting once a week. Thus was my uncle's kindness and care continued over me so long as I remained under his charge. My master would often take me out with him, and make me as his companion: I used to be frequently with him at his clubs and places of diversion, and at these places I learned to sing what they called a good song, and so became one with them.

But even at that time, I was under such strong inward convictions, that my heart was filled with grief, and however joyous I might appear outwardly, I was inwardly condemned. My mistress was a Dutch woman, but not of that free disposition as was my master. Once on a trifling occasion she was angry with me, and her passion increased to such a degree, that she threatened my life, and caught up a case-knife for that purpose, and in her great fury and rage made an attempt, to give the fatal stroke; but providentially, for I cannot call it anything less, the maid-servant interposed, and took hold of her arm, by which means she was prevented doing the intended evil, and gave me an opportunity of making my escape. My master being from home was sent for, and was under great concern and sorrow; he requested I would pass by the offence, and promised he would do what lay in his power to make me easy, and to prevent in the future any such insults, which he found difficult to do. I believe the greatest dislike she had to me was, because I was one called a Quaker. Though far from what I should be, yet I could not compliment her in the way she required of me. I had now lived with my master about one year and a half, and so far from growing better, I grew worse, and brought great sorrow and trouble on my relations and friends in the country, whom I wanted to see, and an agreeable opportunity offering I ventured to go. But I met with a very cool reception, and while I stayed in the country rather lost than got reputation and favour. I soon returned again to London, and my master received me very cordially.

About this time there came to town a young man, George Whitefield, educated a clergyman, who preached sometimes in steeple-houses and at other times in fields, etc.; and many were excited to go and hear him, amongst whom I was one, and as I thought, he spoke as one that had authority and not as the scribes; so I returned very well satisfied.

Soon after, I heard he was to preach at Kennington Common, a short distance from London, to which place I resorted amongst a great many thousands of people. The day was excessively hot, and I was in

the throng of the people, and being very low of stature, was overcome to such a degree with the crowd pressing me, and continued so long, that I thought verily I should have been smothered to death in a very little time. Oh! the distress of mind I was now in! The horror and confusion of my soul was beyond all description! The terrors of the Lord were upon me; the stings of a wounded conscience I felt to pierce through and through for sin and transgression. I thought I was in a few moments going to launch out of time into eternity, nothing but everlasting woe and misery seemed to be my portion forever and ever! My agony was so great, both in body and mind, as to make it intolerable to bear without loud shrieks and cries, which were heard far and near, by very many. The press was so great, that they who had their arms down could not get them up, till at length a gentlewoman in a coach noticed my condition, extended herself as far out as she well could, and with her fan yielded me some relief, which enabled me to stand it till the preacher had done. Now was my heart made to rejoice, and my tongue broke forth into singing, unto Him to whom I was so largely indebted, and by whose providence I was yet spared; and even at this very time I cannot help saying, "I thank you, O my heavenly Father! in that you did not call me away in that unprepared hour, to give an account of my stewardship; very unfit I most assuredly was to appear before your great tribunal: I beg, I may ever, while I live, reverently and gratefully remember and acknowledge this day, wherein you were pleased so mercifully to spare, to reach, and to visit so effectually my soul. 'Now I know that my Redeemer lives, and because he lives I live also.'" I returned home filled as with the new wine of the kingdom: when I got home, I stripped myself of my wet clothes; for I was comparatively as if I had come out of a pond, and I was stopped by several to know where I had been, I was in such a strange condition. But oh! the draft of divine consolation, the gracious abounding of the love of God to my soul, it was so ravishing to my heart that I never felt the like before: I was almost fit to be swallowed up in an ecstasy of joy.

I now loved to attend meetings for religious worship, on week-days as well as those on the first-day of the week, from which I experienced great benefit and strength. Soon after this, I got acquainted with one James Oldham, of whom I inquired if he could inform me of a suitable place to live at, as my time with my master was near expiring. He replied, he did not know but I might have such accommodations where he himself lived, and that if I liked he would make the necessary inquiry, and let me know; of which I much approved, and indeed it was what I much desired, for I knew the Friend with whom he lived. When the time came, my master and I parted very good friends, continuing a correspondence as occasion required. It was not long after I left my master, before I went to see him again about some business; and falling into conversation, he signified to me, that several young men who had been under his care for improvement in like manner as myself, had agreed to go with him to Islington and take a game at skittles, etc., and desired my company. I would have excused myself by saying I was ignorant of the play, but he said he would not be denied, but go I must. I then agreed to make one of the company, and he thanked me. Immediately, I did not like what I had promised, but I thought within myself, I would keep from committing sin as much as it was possible. There lived at this time a young man with my master, in the capacity of an apprentice, who was nearly out of his time; he was sober and very religious in his way, and showed great friendship for me. He came to my new quarters, to see me and speak to me about the engagement I had come into with my master as above related, which he thought was by no

means consistent with the profession I made, and would eagerly have me not to go. But I replied, that as I had passed my word, I could not depart from it without telling a lie. James Oldham, of whom I shall have occasion to speak more largely by and by, joined the young man, who was what is called a Methodist, in giving me advice in this matter.

James Oldham, in whom was the Spirit of Truth and righteousness, argued so clearly and powerfully, and so convincingly as to overcome me, notwithstanding all my attempts to defeat him; he set forth good and evil in such an excellent manner, attended with that wisdom which is from above. In this dispute, I was again overcome with the flowings forth of heavenly virtue, and my heart was humbled as in the Divine presence, that I was even ready to say, "Lord make me what you would have me to be;" and in yielding myself cheerfully to the will of God, it procured for me that peace which the world cannot give nor take away.

From this time I began to seek the Lord in the way of his requirings, and forsook all my old companions and idle pastimes, and led a life of circumspection and care. This was the time of my espousals, a time wherein nothing appeared to me so lovely as the Truth. I was well pleased that I had got into this family, as having my dear friend James Oldham for a companion. He came from Warrington, in Lancashire, up to London when a young man, and being by occupation a barber and perriwig-maker, worked at his business in the capacity of a journeyman. He told me, that he himself had been a very great libertine, accustomed himself to frequent swearing, insomuch that he did not know when he did it. I think he was brought up in the way of the Church of England, so called, and was convinced of the Truth in London some few years before I had knowledge of him. He was a very comely young man, unmarried, endued with a large share of natural understanding, which was under the government of best wisdom; and lived in abstinence, that he might the better feed the hungry and clothe the naked.

His chief diet was bread and water, sometimes milk; he was cheerful and pleasant in conversation, as also very instructive and edifying: I never heard him speak evil of any, but he made it a rule if he could not speak well of a person, to be silent rather than speak to their prejudice. He was of a meek and humble spirit, a diligent attender of religious meetings for worship, both as to the day and time appointed; the becoming gravity and steadiness with which he sat in meetings, from the beginning to the end, was profitable and instructive to behold; was never heard speaking slightly of any testimony that was dropped in a meeting, or the instrument of it, though never so mean or contemptible. He was full of love and good works, and abounded in charity to people of all professions; it seemed to me to be his meat and drink to do the will of his Maker. He was the greatest pattern of Christian perfection of all I ever knew; his work was cut short in righteousness; he was taken ill of a fever which was very violent, and continued but a few days; he lived and died in the Lord!

But to return,—the news of my being somewhat reformed, soon got into the country, which was very pleasing to my relations; but they also received an account that I had got into a very singular and strange way of dress, as a wig without any curls, undyed stockings, shoe-strings instead of buckles, etc., and some said, that I was the same as before, only that I had made an alteration in dress to deceive: but time

manifested all this to be untrue. My brother, who lived in the country, and was before this under the like precious visitation, and had made some profitable steps in the way of life and salvation was not a little rejoiced at this religious turn in me, and from him I often received letters, which were greatly to my edification and comfort. We always loved one another very affectionately, but now far more than ever, as children not only of the natural, but also of the heavenly Father: after this manner we continued to love and live to the end. I followed my watch-making business in the capacity of a journeyman, and at best could make but poor earnings, and in the time of the hard frost was forced to live very sparingly to make it do; yet I was content and thankful in this respect, and being steady I became more known, and grew in the esteem of Friends.

CHAPTER II.

I NOW began to have an inclination in my mind to change my condition; in the prosecution of which, sundry remarkable occurrences befalling, make it necessary to insert more largely than otherwise I should have done. A sober virtuous young woman of a reputable family struck my attention: I weighed the matter very deliberately, and moved as I thought in the openings of Truth.

I had but bare knowledge of the young woman, but she bore a good character as a religious Friend, which weighed with me more than any other thing. I was altogether a stranger to the family and they to me, which made it a matter of difficulty to get properly introduced, which at length I did by giving some prior intelligence. I addressed myself in the best manner I was capable of to the parents of the young woman, who were both of them then living, and received me becomingly, and heard me pretty fully on the subject. They acknowledged the respect I showed to them and their daughter, in presenting myself in such an honourable and commendable manner, becoming my profession; but withal signified, however they might be in my estimation, that I was not so in theirs, and therefore desired I would desist any further attempt of that sort, for they should not give their consent, and hoped I would not do anything that was dishonourable. I answered them, "No, far be it from me:" and after some little more time and conversation, we parted. They were people of greater property in the world than I expected or thought of, and probably that might be some objection. I returned home somewhat disquieted, lest while I thought I was doing right, I had done wrong. But even to this day I believe I did right according to the best of my judgment, and remained without condemnation: and at night I laid myself down to rest with a sweet composed mind.

Parents and children should be careful not to thirst too much after the love of the world, but above all things seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and those things shall be added unto you. Young people, who are sober and religious and withal industrious, are to be preferred to those that have worldly riches without the other necessary qualifications.

I had strong inclinations once more to go into the country to see my ancient and honourable grand-

mother, Catherine Peckover, with the rest of my relations; and to save expenses I travelled on foot, which fatigued me very much. But when I got there, I found a very kind reception, and very comfortable was this visit to me. After being here a few days, my dear brother proposed my staying and settling in the country, which I liked very well, if my friends would be kind enough to assist me, without which I could not; nor had I courage to ask any such favour, and had but little to expect from such a proposal, considering my past conduct. But my brother was very pressing that it might be so, and was the chief and principal instrument in bringing it about, which was at length effected, but not without some difficulty. I was bowed in awfulness and in thankfulness to the great Master, who was pleased to open the hearts of my Friends for my help. I then hired a little shop at Fakenham, and was to board with my grandmother, who seemed more than commonly pleased with the thoughts of my company, and I not less so with the thoughts of hers. After a short stay in the country, I returned again to London to settle my affairs there, and to furnish myself with what was necessary for my little shop; which I did in the best manner I was capable of, not having a larger capital than thirty pounds, and that not my own. Before I left London, I requested a certificate of removal from Peel Monthly Meeting to that of Fakenham in Norfolk, which was granted me, signifying my life and conduct were sober and orderly, that I was clear in respect of marriage, and recommending me to the care of the said meeting. Having forwarded my things, and taken leave of my friends in town, with many of whom I had sweet and precious unity, I returned into the country, about the middle of the year 1741.

I was greatly pleased with this change of life, as I never before knew what it was to live so comfortably. After a time, I got my little shop furnished and myself agreeably settled. I had now to consult with my grandmother how I should conduct myself during the time of our week-day meeting, my shop standing by itself: without hesitation, she soon advised me what I should do, and that was, when the meeting day came, to shut up my shop, “for,” says she, “your grandfather and I did so, and when we returned from meeting, generally found many customers waiting for us,” and believed they never were sufferers by shutting up their shop for the sake of going to a religious meeting. I immediately joined in with my grandmother's advice, being of the same judgment, and sweet, comfortable, edifying meetings we had, such as I trust will make long and lasting impressions on my mind. I thought nobody could be happier than I was, settled in the midst of my relations, among whom there dwelt so much love and harmony. I had hitherto been brought up and educated at a very great distance from my brother and sister, but now kind Providence so ordered it, that we were all settled within the compass of a very few miles of each other: so pleasant was my situation, that I thought I should not desire to have a better settlement in this world.

But the Lord our Maker, the Creator of the ends of the earth, who has given us these blessings, for a time and season, that we might be one another's in him, knows best when, by his ordering hand, to take away as well as to give; and it behooves us as finite beings, to live in fear and in subordination to his all-wise providence, and to say, “Your will be done.” When I had lived thus happily about three months, my dear grandmother was taken ill, and grew weaker and weaker, and in a little time was confined to her room. As I was one day sitting by her, she spoke very awfully of eternity, and what a solemn thing it was to die, and said unto me, “My dear, I would have you to be faithful to that which it may please the

Lord to require of you. It may be that you may have to bear a testimony in this place; and if it should be so, I would have you to be faithful to it.” She continued but a few days longer, and quietly departed this life, in the seventy-fifth year of her age.

The following is a testimony from the Monthly Meeting of Wells, in Norfolk, concerning her.

“We think it incumbent upon us to say something in commemoration of so good and valuable a woman, counting it no small blessing to the churches in these parts, wherein she continued from about the twentieth year of her age to her departure out of this life, and was all along a very serviceable and honourable member amongst us. Her many excellent qualifications, attended with a meek, humble, reverent deportment in all respects, rendered her very near and dear to us. It pleased God to bestow upon her a gift of the ministry, to which she was faithful and very exemplary in waiting on it, delivering the matter she had to say with much plainness and brevity, being attended with great power, to the no small edification and comfort of the churches. Her life and conduct well corresponded with her doctrine, and she was much respected by people of other societies: she was very charitable and full of good works, her delight was to be found in practices becoming the Gospel, and she was an eminent pillar amongst us, a worthy mother in Israel, and a great ornament to the Society.

She received the Truth while very young, and with her honourable mother, was imprisoned for her testimony thereunto before she was sixteen years of age, and undauntedly confessed the same, and pleaded for it in her examination before the judge in court, being the first called to answer to their indictment, though there were upwards of sixty persons then present upon the same good account, and she the youngest of them all. She conducted herself with such modesty, giving pertinent reasons for her joining with her friends in assembling together to worship God in spirit, etc.; and refusing her liberty on terms inconsistent with her religious profession, as drew from the court no small attention and surprise: and it was so ordered, that she with her fellow-prisoners were all set at liberty.

This she would afterwards often mention, with great sweetness and gratitude of soul to the Divine hand, by which she was supported to hold out to the end of her days, in a constant dependence on that arm of power which gloriously visited and wrought upon her. She retained the sense and savour of Truth in as precious and lively a manner as in the beginning, it being very frequent for her to express the same in her living ministry amongst us.

Much more might be said concerning this our worthy friend, but we study brevity, being nearly affected with her removal from us, which though it be our unspeakable loss, we doubt not is her great gain, and that she is centered in the holy mansions with saints and angels, and the spirits of the just made perfect. She departed this life at her own dwelling-house in Fakenham, in the said county, on the 1st day of the eighth month, and was attended to the grave by great numbers of Friends and others. She was born about 1666 and died in the year 1741, and was a minister

about forty-six years.”

I was very much affected by this great loss, both in respect to my outward settlement, and because my grandmother was a choice companion and counsellor; yet I found my duty was to be still, and not to murmur, but to put my trust and confidence in the Lord, in whom there is everlasting strength.

I continued to live in the same house; and as my uncle, Joseph Peckover, and aunt lived in the same town, they were very kind to me, and I believe had an esteem for me. There was a care on my mind, that as I believed in the Truth, I might also walk in it, that being a good example I might be an encouragement to others; and as I was honest before the Lord, he was pleased to increase these desires in me, and to bless me with the aboundings of his good Spirit, by which I was often comforted in religious meetings more than formerly. I was glad to experience this, and that my removal from London into the country, and from a worse to a better living, as to the outward, was not to my spiritual hurt. It was not long after this, that I found myself uncommonly exercised in meetings, but had not liberty to say to any how or in what manner my exercise was, as I thought it might wear off. I had great and weighty ponderings of soul, fearing lest I should be drawn into delusions through the craftiness of the enemy; but still trusted, that the Lord would not allow me to be deceived by him.

About this time, my dear uncle Edmund Peckover, laid before our Monthly Meeting a concern which had been on his mind for a great many years, to pay a religious visit to the churches in America, and requested our approbation and certificate. It was a singularly moving time, and almost the whole meeting was broken into tears, so deeply exercised was all within him for the cause of righteousness, and for the prosperity of our Zion; he spoke with Divine power and authority, and the Lord's love and gracious regard was largely manifested to us that day. My brother carried on his business till his return, which I believe he did as a faithful and just steward; and the Lord has richly and plenteously rewarded and blessed him for it, for which my mind is made humbly thankful at this time. All things being in readiness, several of us went as far as Swaffham, twelve miles, at which place it was agreed, that Joseph Ransom and I should continue with him up to London. For which purpose, Joseph Ransom and I turned back, after we had rode a few miles, to get some few necessaries for our journey, and returned to our company as expeditiously as we well could. We found they had dined at Swaffham and gone from there: still moving forward, we saw them at some distance, going but a foot's pace and in much stillness. The nearer we approached, the more awful and solemn they appeared: when we got up with them, we found they were all retired into silence, and our spirits were also gathered and united with theirs in the holy solemnity. In this manner we continued some time, and then dear uncle made a full stop, and so did all the rest, and alighted from our horses; uncle being filled with the power and love of God, kneeled down on the wide heath, and supplicated the Almighty with fervency of spirit, and we were all so affected and reached by the power of Truth which was over all, as was to our inexpressible joy, consolation and comfort. This was a renewed confirmation to our dear uncle and us, of his concern being grounded upon a right bottom.

I never at any time felt and enjoyed anything to the like degree as this; it was to us at that time, even as

if the very heavens were opened, the fragrancy thereof remains sweet in my remembrance to this day! In this heavenly frame, we saluted one another, while tears plentifully trickled down our cheeks:—we knew not how to part, and yet it must be; — thus in much brokenness and contrition of soul and spirit, we took an affectionate leave one of another; but indeed, we were so overcome, as to be almost past utterance! After some little time more, we mounted our horses and turned our backs one upon another, the heavenly virtue still remaining with us, Joseph Ransom and I accompanying him towards London, and the other Friends and relations homewards. When at some distance, he turned about, to take another look of his relations and Friends, and they also in like manner, shaking their heads and waving their hands, with hearts full, bidding farewell: and even while he sorrowed, he rejoiced! So we passed on our journey filled with Divine love, that it was some considerable time before we fell into any conversation. He had two public meetings at Hertford, besides a few Friends gathered together in the evening to take their leave, and a memorable opportunity it was, owned by the Master himself, whose living presence was experienced to our comfort and edification. Having conducted him safe up to London, he went on board the vessel soon after, and I returned with the plenteous reward of peace in my own bosom, for having attended this good man so far on his journey.

CHAPTER III.

To return to the close and weighty concern which I found on my mind in religious assemblies. This would sometimes bring before my remembrance, what my grandmother said to me a few days before she died, at which I have already hinted; a great dread would often attend me, lest I should too readily engage in an office for which I was not sufficiently prepared. I besought the Lord day and night with cries and with tears, that he would be pleased to be with me in the way that I should go, whatsoever I might suffer as to the outward; and, blessed be his great and holy name, I witnessed him to be as a shepherd, who “gathers the lambs with his arm, and carries them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young.” And in the work and operation of this great duty, I found the gradual and gentle drawings of the Divine Leader, who requires no more of us than he is pleased to give us power and strength to perform. Great was his love, and manifold his tender mercies towards me, in forming and fashioning me according to his holy pleasure. Notwithstanding all this tender dealing and gentle leading, when the time came that I was fully convinced of what my duty was to do, I was very unwilling and reluctant to comply with the requiring, and entreated with the greatest earnestness that I might be excused; and was afraid, when the meeting day came, lest a concern should come over my mind to say something.

In this state I continued long, until by sorrowful experience I found, that the Lord was angry with me, and withdrew his loving-kindness from me; then was I in great distress of mind, and said in secret, If I might but enjoy his Divine presence as I had formerly done, and the like concern should again befall me, I would certainly be faithful. And the Lord, who retains not anger forever, was pleased again to restore me by his grace, and condescended to my petition. Soon after, I was tried in like manner as here-

tofore; and notwithstanding what I had already undergone in time past, in bringing his displeasure over me for my disobedience, and the clear evidence I had in my own mind of the certainty of the concern, and that it was no delusion nor work of the enemy, all this would not work a compliance in my hard heart even to do what I knew was my duty to do, and so I allowed the meeting to break up again, being in a state of disobedience and unfaithfulness. As it was in the cool of the day, when the Lord called unto Adam and said, "Where are you?" so in like manner, when I was come from meeting, and settling myself amongst my outward concerns of life, the piercing cry of, "Where are you? overtook me,"—with, "Vengeance is mine, and I will repay it, says the Lord." It is not an easy matter to describe the state of my mind, the distress of my soul. Formerly I had been favoured with the love of God, but these times and opportunities seemed now to be at an end, the fruitful field was turned into a wilderness, briars and thorns and nettles were spiritually brought forth in me, as scourges, to chastise and punish for my willful neglect, omission, and transgression. Day was turned into night, and this night was a continued distress of soul. Light was become darkness; I think no pen can write, nor tongue describe what I underwent. He laughed at my calamity, and mocked when my fear came: when I went to meeting, instead of Divine approbation and love which I used to feel, I was condemned and reproved: "I will not hear the melody of your violins." In this dark lost state I remained long; and when the fierceness of his anger was somewhat abated, I was far from enjoying comfortable meetings as before, but sat in much drought and barrenness, and had not power to lift up my spirit to ask forgiveness of him whom I had offended.

At length it pleased the Lord, that we were favoured with a religious visit from our dear friend Elizabeth Dennis, whose company was truly acceptable: it was my lot to be guide to her to the next meeting, and on our way she spoke many comfortable things concerning me, as that I should come up in acceptable service in our religious Society, etc. I did not hide my state from her, but gave her to understand, that I thought not, for I feared the Lord's precious visitation to my soul was over, in that I had withstood the day wherein I was called, and that I never expected the like call anymore. But she said, "Yes;" and that she was well satisfied it would be so.

This was to me a joyful message, and I now began rather to revive, and hope sprang in my mind, that the Lord would once more favour me with the lifting up of the light of his countenance, and I found by degrees his displeasure wear off. I suffered so much in this state, that now I only wished and desired if it might be his will, he would please to accept me, and I would willingly serve him, if I could but have those former and precious visitations of Divine love and life revived. I experienced my religious meetings to be more still and quiet than heretofore; and after considerable time I felt a gradual increase of the Divine love and life, of which my poor soul had long been deprived: I now only waited for a fresh commission, and strength to do what his will commanded. Blessed be his great name, who had made me as passive clay in the hand of the potter! For, of a truth, I had learned to say, "Your kingdom come, your will be done:" and being now fully given up, the Lord was pleased to renew his tender visitations to my soul as formerly. I was constant in attending meetings, in which divine favour was abundantly communicated and experienced. I escaped for some time being tried in this very great duty; for although I was fully given up in my mind, yet I was to be mindful not to be too forward, for that I thought would be as

bad or worse than being too backward.

About this time, we were favoured with the company of Daniel Badger, a Friend in the ministry, whose service was attended with demonstration of the Spirit and with power. In this meeting, I found my mind afresh baptized into the service of the ministry, and though I said nothing at all, yet I was well satisfied I bore my testimony in standing uncovered, trembling before the Lord and his people; and if anything had been given me to say, I should certainly have spoken it, whether little or much; however I had great peace in this first and foolish appearance.

I now thought myself again restored into Divine favour, which was more to me than great temporal riches; and began to think that nothing more of this kind might befall me, and that what I had done was only for a trial of my love and obedience; for it was some time before anything of the like kind was again required. But on a certain time, when Mary Goodwine, a young woman in the ministry, was on a religious visit to us, it was my lot to conduct her to Wells, which was the next meeting, and there again I found the concern came very powerfully on me; and I sat the chief of the meeting under an exercise of supplication, which in faithfulness I gave up to, and most in the meeting were remarkably affected; which I do not mention boastingly, but it was a confirmation that I was right in this weighty undertaking. And though, in this great duty, I acknowledge myself to have been backward even to unfaithfulness and stubbornness, yet if it is rightly considered, it is not to be much wondered at, that the creature should be made to suffer greatly before it is brought to be altogether passive to the heavenly will, and fit for the Master's use. How awful was the work which the Lord wrought by his servant Moses, and great the pleadings he made as to his unworthiness and unfitness in several respects. Notwithstanding the Lord allowed his servant to reason with him, yet he continued it so long, that the Lord was angry with him; though he so remarkably manifested to him his greatness and power and authority, with visible signs and tokens, beyond all imaginations and doublings; by which Moses was to understand, that although he was but as the rod or twig which he had in his hand, yet at the Divine command it could be turned into a serpent, to strike terror into such as lived in defiance of his holy will. So plainly did the great Master condescend to his servant, that at length he was brought into a compliance with the Master's will; for I think the Holy Scripture gives this testimony concerning him, that "Moses did as the Lord commanded him."

I continued faithful in that which appeared my duty; and while very young in my ministry, had drawings in my mind to pay a religious visit to Friends in Lincolnshire and Yorkshire; and a Friend in our county having somewhat of the like concern, I thought it a good opportunity for me to shelter myself under him, if it could be so ordered. Accordingly, I paid a visit to the Friend, signifying to him the engagement of my mind; which proving very agreeable to him, I then took the necessary steps in settling my business, and sought the unity of my friends and relations, with the approbation of my Monthly Meeting, from which I obtained a certificate.

On the 26th of third month, 1743, I set forward on my journey from Fakenham to Lynn, at which place I met my companion, John Norris, of Mattishall; and we had a meeting there that day. A very hard

meeting it was, and the occurrences that befell us in the course of our visit to this meeting were very discouraging, and had not the power of God been near to support against all the contrary, I must have returned wounded in the first engagement: at length we parted friendly. We had a meeting next day at Wisbeach to more satisfaction; and from there to Gedney in Lincolnshire, where we witnessed the Lord's power to our great comfort. The next was Spalding, and so to Boston; had a large, good meeting, chiefly of other societies. We passed to Wainfleet the next morning, and in the evening at Partney, and had meetings there and at Waltorn the day following; at which place the Lord was graciously pleased to shower down his Gospel rain upon us, causing us to bring forth fruits to his praise. On first-day, being the 5th of the fourth month, were at Brigg; and in the afternoon had a good meeting.

The hearts of the people were opened, and I hope drank in that of which their souls and ours stood in great need. I cannot well forbear mentioning, that about twenty years ago this was one of the most flourishing meetings in the county; about fourteen ministering Friends belonged to the said particular meeting. But since that time, it has pleased Infinite Wisdom to call most of them to their long homes, and many through unwatchfulness grew cool, and instead of contending for the saints' victory, settled down in spiritual indolence; and a slothful spirit prevailing, many of their members turned their backs on the Society, many married contrary to the rules of our wholesome discipline, and became ruined as to religion, and otherwise falling into various hurtful lusts, lost their credit and reputation as to the world: so that now the meeting is declined from being one of the largest, to be one of the smallest in the county. I am sorry I have no better account to give of my native place. It is a great pity that any who have attained to a good state in religious experience, should depart from it; for as the wise man says, "A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches."

On the third-day following went to Winterton, and from there to Gainsborough. The state of the Society seems to be at a very low ebb in this place, and the people grown very indifferent about attending religious meetings.

From there to Beltoft, and in the evening had a good satisfactory meeting; then to Thorn, and had our meeting somewhat disturbed by one in profession with us, but not perfectly clear in his understanding, yet the Lord's power was Over and above all. It being first-day, had two good meetings, and in the evening visited the wife of our friend John Fisher, who had been sorely afflicted for a long season.

Hannah Taylor, a Friend who had a gift in the ministry, was with us; we had a comfortable opportunity, and our minds were edified in the Lord. We passed on to Braithwaite, and had a meeting there that evening; and good was the Master whom we served, in shedding abroad his love in our hearts. From this place we went to Rawcliff and Holden, and so to Cave and Beverly, at which last place we had a large meeting, consisting chiefly of people of other societies, who conducted themselves with a great deal of sobriety.

From hence to Hull, which proved to us a time of great exercise, the people very much lacking in the life of true godliness. The following meeting was at Regement, which was very different from the former, being a meeting chiefly of living members; our visit there was well accepted, as many expressed

themselves afterwards. From there to Welwick, where we had a very good meeting, many were brought into tears, and others under weighty exercise in themselves. At Oustwick we were divinely favoured; let praise be given unto Him, to whom it is due, for all these spiritual blessings! From there to Hornsea and Bridlington, which last was trying. Then to Scarborough, where we had large meetings to good satisfaction: then made the best of our way to York Quarterly Meeting, which was well attended by several Friends in the ministry.

Finding in myself a clearness to look homeward, and James Seaton, a Friend at this meeting having a concern to visit our county, we agreed to accompany each other. So, at York, my companion John Norris and myself parted, he not being as yet free to return, and took for a companion John Scott, who was an elder and minister. James Seaton and myself left York the 1st of fifth month for Thornton, and on the first-day following went to Holm Yearly Meeting, where we met with my former companion John Norris, and again at Amberwell, and had a good meeting together at Huby next day; then passing to Thirsk we met with a company of noble plants, though young, and through the mercy of our God experienced a renewal of inward strength. In company with several Friends we passed on to North Allerton, and were again favoured with a heavenly precious visitation, blessed be his great and holy name for it! In the compass of this Monthly Meeting a fine spring of ministry is opened amongst the youth, within a short space of time. In the evening we had a meeting at William Proud's, to good satisfaction; from there back again to North Allerton, and so to Rounton and Richmond, this latter a very hard laborious meeting, the people being too much settled in form, and short in the life and spirit of true religion. Then to Leyburn where things went much better, as also at Masham and at Boroughbridge. From there to Knaresborough, Nethersdale, Asquith, Fairfield and Skipton; at which last place we had a good meeting, being well attended by ministering Friends and others; and so to William Slater's, who with his wife was exceedingly kind to us: went to Lothersdale meeting and returned back to William Slater's.

The next day had a meeting at Ayton, to our comfort and refreshment, thanks be given to the Almighty for it! and then to Settle, where we were kindly received. After meeting, paid a short visit to our ancient friend Julian Franklin, very satisfactorily. In the morning, went to a little meeting at Dibdale, and returned to Starburtop; had a meeting with the neighbours in the town to good satisfaction, and set forward to Stainbrigg. But when we came there we understood the meeting was held at Hawes, three miles distant; there we went, and the next day had a heavenly meeting at Askrig, where the loving-kindness of God was largely extended to the praise of his own everlasting name. Next morning to Masham again, my companion not thinking himself clear, and so to Richmond general meeting. This was also the more immediate concern of my companion, whom I was free to attend, as also he was free to attend me to Thirsk, which place I apprehended it to be my duty to visit a second time, not having an opportunity of clearing myself when I was there before. I would have all who travel together as companions in the service of Truth, to see that they condescend as much as possibly they can one towards the other; by such conduct they show forth that mutual love, which ought to live and dwell in companions, by which they receive strength one of another. This was a day of great love to our souls,—forever blessed be the great Shepherd of Israel, who at times is pleased to look down upon the low estates of his servants, and to give them of the new wine of his kingdom!—I wish those here, who have received a precious visita-

tion, may be preserved from the many evils that are in the world.

We had two or three meetings at Billsdale in private families, much to our satisfaction; lodged at Thomas Kendra's, a poor but good man, his children sober and religious: his eldest daughter Rachel came out in testimony at about the age of fifteen, and promises to make a very useful and serviceable member in the church; her father also has lately appeared in like manner. Thus is the Lord pleased to visit by his mighty power, and call in both young and old.

From Billsdale we came to Hutton-in-the-Hole, at which place lived our worthy and honourable friend and minister of the Gospel, John Richardson: we stayed here two nights, and were greatly benefitted by this good man's company and conversation: he accompanied us to Kirby Moorside, and had a meeting appointed for the towns-people, which proved pretty satisfactory. On the first-day following, being the 1st of the sixth month, our aforesaid worthy friend, John Richardson, with several others accompanied us to Pickering, at which place and on this day a meeting is held once in the year, called a Yearly Meeting, to which there is a general resort of people from many miles round: it was computed there were assembled on this occasion between three and four thousand people. The Lord was pleased to favour us with a good opportunity, and his living presence was over and above all, to the praise of his great and holy name.

After meeting we went in company with George Mason to his house at Fadmore, and next day to Farndale, to the burial of John Peacock, and I trust it was a season of mutual edification. Then we passed to Wellbourn and to Whitby, where Divine favour again owned us in a wonderful manner: the next day to Thornton and so to York. On the first-day in the morning the work was hard and laborious, but in the afternoon Truth sprang up and got the victory, and a blessed meeting it was: let the praise thereof be given to Him who alone is worthy! We should not have returned to this city again; but when there, at the Quarterly Meeting, not being faithful to what I apprehended to be my duty, I was, for the sake of peace to my own mind, necessitated to return, which step I found profitable to me in my future deportment. Finding the work which had been weightily on my mind to wear gradually off, I bent my course homewards, journeying through Lincolnshire. I found my business in my absence had been conducted very agreeably, and my relations and friends generally well.

Some time before I set forward on this journey I had it on my mind to change from a single to a married life: I had acquainted my brother where I had made my choice, or rather where I thought kind Providence had chosen for me; but I must first serve my great Master in this present duty and requirement, and in so doing there might be the better hope of his blessing to attend and prosper me afterwards. I found in the course of my journey, this pre-engagement of mind was a great preservative and stay to my affections, from looking after anything of the like kind. Some under the like travel, it is to be feared, for lack of keeping themselves with watchfulness in this particular, have hurt the work and service to which they have been called; which service is altogether sufficient to attend to, and nothing else ought to take up our minds, lest thereby it should prove ensnaring to us, and a hindrance in the performance of our religious duties to God and his people.

After being at home some time, I acquainted my relations with my intentions, and requested their approbation; which being agreeable to them, I set forward with my uncle Joseph Peckover, whose hearty concurrence I had, to pay my respects to Elizabeth, the daughter of Edward Fenn of Norwich, a man truly valuable and honourable in our Society, and generally beloved of others, a lover and possessor of peace, an Israelite indeed, in whom there was no guile; and his daughter a virtuous, prudent young woman. Having obtained the consent of the good old man, I was by him introduced to his daughter, and after paying sundry visits, there appeared some probability of succeeding. I had again to consult my uncle concerning where I should settle, for my business at Fakenham I thought scarcely sufficient; but I proposed to my uncle who was in a very large business, that if he would please to turn over an article or two of his business to me, it might do, and as but few Friends lived there, I thought it might be agreeable. But this proposition not being approved, I turned my thoughts about settling at Norwich, and requested of my intended father-in-law to ask counsel of Norwich Friends, which he did. It was their united judgment that I should come and settle at Norwich, which I did soon after, and boarded with my intended father-in-law till my marriage. This took place on the 28th day of the then fourth month, called June, 1744, at Norwich, in a very large and solemn assembly of the people called Quakers and others, where the Lord was pleased to favour us with his divine and living presence; blessed and forever praised be his great and holy name, who was pleased to bestow on me one of the best of women and one of the best of wives.

CHAPTER IV.

About this time my uncle Edmund Peckover returned from his religious visit to Friends in America, to the joy and rejoicing of many. After I married, I continued pretty close at home at my business, but not to the hindrance of my service. I visited meetings in and about our own county, and parts adjacent, as concern and freedom led me; till the year 1750, when a concern came over my mind to visit some meetings in and about London, and in some parts of the west of England, of which I acquainted my dear wife, which pretty closely affected her, and proved a greater trial to her than I believe either she or I expected, which I attributed to the great love and affection she had for me. As she seemed unwilling I should leave her, I said to her, "My dear, I perceive your unwillingness to part with me, and I hope I shall be made easy to stay, and the concern wear off:" here I rested the affair for some time, having great peace in my own mind, in that I was so freely given up in my own particular. But it was not very long after, that my poor wife began to grow uneasy in herself with what she had done, and I believe kept it as long from me as she well could, and when she could keep it no longer, she said she hoped I would forgive and excuse her conduct in offering to stay me at home, when she believed it was my place and duty to be elsewhere in religious service; that it was her great love for me, and the trial was so great, that she said she did not know how to give me up. I was not hasty in saying anything to lessen the present exercise of her mind, believing it might be for some good, both at the present, as also in time to come. And so I recommended her to wait in patience and stillness, and feel after the renewings of Divine

favour, that she might be the better enabled to judge whether I was right in my concern.

She cried bitterly, and with great earnestness said, "O, my dear husband, I entreat you to forgive me: I am so distressed in mind, that I know not what to do: I hope I shall never offer to hinder you any more on the like occasion." "Now," said she, "I freely and willingly give you up, and desire by all means that you would go, for I believe the Lord requires it of you." I then did all I could to pacify her, and to mitigate her distress of mind, which I was sensible was very great. So herein the wife had a part, and the husband a part; and I trust it is or ought to be with all husbands and wives who live in love and in the true fear of God, as through divine favour we were concerned to do, and were preserved in that in which the true unity stands. I then made the necessary preparations, in which my dear wife was very assiduous and willingly helped forward; and I laid my concern before our following Monthly Meeting, in order to obtain a certificate, and they having unity with me, granted one.

I was favoured in this journey to be companion to my dear uncle Edmund Peckover, an eminent minister of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. All things being ready, we set forward on the 1st day of the eleventh month, 1750: but when I came to take my farewell of my relations and friends, especially my dear and loving wife and tender children, our minds were so affected as is not easily to be set forth.

We were accompanied to Wymondham by my father-in-law, Edward Fenn, where we lodged that night; early next morning, my brother John Oxley came to attend us to Mildenhall, at which place we had a meeting the following day, and so to Edmundsbury and Saffron Walden, where Truth made way for us, and the enjoyment of it was sweet to our souls.

Next day had a meeting at Royston, where lived a valuable Friend, Francis Gibson, whom we visited. We had a public meeting at Ashwell, to which came many people of other persuasions, and I believe it was a time of heavenly visitation and favour. We had also comfortable meetings at Baldock, Hitchin and Hertford, witnessing the blessed enjoyment of peace for our faithfulness, and reached London the 14th of eleventh month, 1750.

After our stay in London about two weeks, we took a little tour into the country, to Uxbridge, Jordan's, Wycombe, and Chesham, in which meetings my uncle was favoured to the joy of many; from hence to Hempstead and Alban's, being their Monthly Meeting, which was but small, yet mercifully under Divine notice, to our mutual comfort and strength. The next being seventh-day, we set forward again for London, in order to complete what we further apprehended to be our duty; and visited all their meetings on the first-days, and also their week-day meetings. We were favoured to have many good and precious meetings in this city. O that it may please the great Lord of the harvest to bless the many labours of love, which have been bestowed on this large city, and plentifully water the seed which has been sown, that it may take root in many, and bring forth abundantly, so that many souls may be saved, and his great name over all praised, who is worthy forever and ever!

Having it on our minds to pay a religious visit to Friends at Bristol and parts adjacent, we took meetings in Oxfordshire, many Friends accompanying us out of London to Maidenhead, where we had a large

meeting, chiefly consisting of the towns-people; unto whom my companion was led to preach the universality of the love of God, which had a good effect on the minds of many; and though the meeting held long, yet the people were very unwilling to disperse. The next day had a meeting at Reading, which was large, and then to Henley, both low meetings, wherein I allowed my mind to let in discouragement, by which I received hurt. But, at Warborough the next day, the Lord was pleased to dispel those mists and fogs, and to arise with strength, to the refreshing of my poor weary soul, and again at Bichester the day following, where was a great throng of other people, and the Gospel was preached with good authority, to the joy and rejoicing of many. The next morning we set forward for Banbury, where we found our dear friend Benjamin Kidd in a very indifferent state of health, and not likely to continue long. The removal of so great a minister and so useful a member in society, will be a very great loss. We were renewedly favoured and comforted together in the love of our heavenly Father, though we parted very sorrowfully, believing we should not see one another any more; neither did we, for he died soon after. Thus we travelled in the love of God and fellowship of the Gospel from place to place, till we came to Bristol, where we had several meetings to good satisfaction to ourselves, and hope to the profit and edification of our friends. My uncle inclined to go to Bath, and make some stay there on account of his health, not being very well. I attended him there, and after a time he grew better, and the concern still continuing with him, he travelled more largely. But not so with me: the concern abated; and as such, I found it my duty to return home; and after taking an affectionate leave of each other, I set forward for London by Reading, and in a few days reached home, and found my family and friends well, and my business reputedly conducted in my absence, having in some degree the evidence in myself that I had pleased God.

I continued at and about home for a considerable time: my family increasing pretty fast required my diligent attendance, with whom I took great delight. As the Lord had been pleased to bless me in a wonderful manner in a state of marriage for about nine years, so now he saw fit in the course of his providence to deprive me of that happiness, in removing from me my beloved wife and sweet companion, the greatest of all temporal enjoyments. It was a sharp and a close trial: she was taken ill of a fever, in which she continued about three weeks, and departed this life the 15th of seventh month, 1753, aged above thirty-four years. She completely fulfilled the marriage covenant, in that she was a loving and faithful wife, an affectionate and indulgent mother, a wise and prudent mistress, a good friend, and a kind neighbour: as she was generally beloved in her life, so in her death she was lamented and mourned for. She left a sorrowful husband and four small children. I continued in a state of widowhood about four years; and though I disposed of my children in the best manner I was able, yet I lived very far short of that happiness I enjoyed in the time of my dear wife.

I continued in the watch-making business, etc., until my eyes in part failed, and a Friend in reputation and character, and of considerable worth in the world, agreed with me to go into business together in the worsted manufacture of Norwich; and as I became the principal in conducting the business, I was often abroad on that account, sometimes at London and other times in Holland.

In the year 1757, finding myself very lonesome and unpleasantly situated in many respects, I thought a

good wife for myself and a good mother for my children, would in measure make up what I much needed. For this end I sought the Lord again, that he would be pleased to bless me as he had done in time past; and as my eye was to him, I believe that he ordered and directed my steps, how and where I should choose for myself, and also for my children: and so in due process of time, I made my addresses to Mary, the daughter of Thomas Burr. He was a man in good reputation as a minister and elder, at Royston, in Hertfordshire, open hearted, and generous in his house to entertain ministering Friends. His wife also was a woman of a good spirit, had an acceptable gift in the ministry, and travelled pretty much in the unity of Friends. My dear friend Mary Burr was about forty years of age, well educated, sober and religious, had an acceptable gift in the ministry, naturally affectionate, and a great lover of children; and after a suitable time, we were married at Huntingdon on the 5th of first month, 1757. I esteemed it a very great mercy and favour, that I was once more made happy in a state of marriage, with a wife who truly loved me, but one that never offered to hinder me in any religious service, whether at home or abroad, far or near. She was a true helpmeet in religion, and I loved and valued her the more, because of her service in the church; a woman of a good spirit, not forward, but of a good courage, and sometimes travelled abroad in the service of Truth, in which I was not slack to help her.

I continued at home one whole year after I married, when I found drawings in my mind to pay a religious visit to Friends in some parts of Leicestershire, Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire, Yorkshire, and Lincolnshire; and Isaac Grey, a suitable companion, offered in the like concern. So I gave up to what I believed to be my duty, and ordered my affairs for this purpose; and on the 3rd of first month, 1758, set forward on my journey, accompanied by my dear brother John Oxley to Milner. They usually having a meeting that evening I was free to attend it, though much fatigued with my journey, which proved to my comfort and satisfaction. My brother and I parted next morning in great affection; he returned home, and I went forward to Godmanchester, where my companion and I agreed to meet.

We had a good meeting at Huntingdon the next day, though the fore part of it was low; at which time was brought to my remembrance what is written concerning the good old patriarch Jacob, when he passed over the brook though with his staff only in his hand; yet when he returned he was become two bands; at which I received encouragement to hold on my way, and my companion and I were truly united in the service, and loved each other in brotherly affection, as becomes labourers in the Gospel. Our desire was that the Lord would be pleased to be with us, and though we were weak, yet he was and is strong, and able to make himself victorious over his enemies by few as well as by many, and to magnify the honour of his great name by small as well as by great instruments. The next day we had a meeting at Gedington, which I hope had its service; things were pretty closely spoken to, that there might be a due care in each to come up in a faithful discharge of that gift which is given to profit with. We went forward to Leicester, Castle Donington, Nottingham, Mansfield, Chesterfield, and Dronsfield, a small meeting, where a little bread was handed with hard labour. On the following first-day we were at Sheffield, and had two pretty, large and laborious meetings; from which we travelled to Ponlefract, Wakefield, Burton, Highflatts, and many more meetings in those parts, wherein we experienced the love of the great Master to flow to his poor servants, though the state of the church in these parts is very low, more in form than in substance. On the 3rd of second month, went to Skipton, at which place my son

Joseph was at a boarding-school, and we were much pleased to see each other.

On first-day, the 5th, we were at their meeting; my companion was wholly silent, and I was led in a very close manner, signifying how eminently they had been favoured in an instrumental way, and yet were not bringing forth fruits in keeping with repentance. On the 8th went to Lothersdale, lodged at William and M. Slater's. William was above ninety years old, yet retained a lively sense of Truth; we had a meeting at the meeting-house, and another with them at their dwelling in the evening, the latter was exceedingly comfortable, the Truth was extended to all and over all, blessed be the Lord forever! Fifth-day, the 9th, had a meeting at Satterforth, at which place I was much indisposed.

Seventh-day was a little better, had a meeting at Moneybent, and same day went to Settle. I yet remained very unwell: next day, being first-day, the 12th, I was favoured while I was at meeting with a fresh degree of Divine love, and my spirit was brought into a sweet heavenly calm, by which my inner man was so comforted and strengthened, that I became truly resigned to the Lord's will, it appearing to me as if my peace was made with him. May I ever live under a sense of his divine mercy, and regard to my poor soul.

[This coincides with a similar expression in a letter to his wife, dated Settle, 14th of second month, 1758, namely, "Although I am low in body and mind, I am strong and rich in faith; greatly rejoicing in the warfare in which I am now afresh engaged. The answer of peace and well done still accompanies me from day to day."]

On fifth-day I had a meeting at Hawes; the state of which was low: and the day following had one at Garsdale to good satisfaction. Lodged at the widow Harker's, a poor but honourable woman, who nursed me well. We found drawings on our minds to Westmoreland, to take some meetings there; and accordingly set forward next day. After being clear of those parts, returned into Yorkshire again, and got to York on third-day, the 26th. In the evening, began their Quarterly Meeting of ministers and elders: next morning was a meeting for worship, in the afternoon a meeting for discipline, and in the evening public meeting for worship, in which I was concerned in a short testimony, exciting the people to a humble gathering and waiting for Divine and heavenly teaching: the meeting was held pretty much in silence. Next day, being the fifth of the week, was another meeting for discipline, which was to pretty good satisfaction; in the afternoon another meeting of worship, in which several testimonies were borne, but the true seed was under much oppression.

After this meeting, the ministers and elders retired into a room by themselves; when, if anything further was necessary to be communicated, either in word or doctrine, it might be then and there given. Mercy Bell, who was present, concluded this meeting in supplication. My companion, Isaac Grey, thinking himself clear, and desirous of returning homeward, left next day, being the 31st, intending for home without appointing any more meetings. But I could not find myself so at liberty; and endeavoured to make myself as easy as I could without my companion, hoping the good hand of the Lord would still be with me, as he had not hitherto failed, blessed be his name for it! The same day I had a meeting appointed at Thornton in the Clay, and returned in the evening to York.

[After attending a few more meetings in Yorkshire, Joseph Oxley proceeded homewards, through Lincolnshire, taking meetings as he went. At Brigg he remarks,] We were informed of a man being in town under the character of a Friend: I soon made out that he was not in unity; a man of a forward spirit, and very weak capacity. We were much afraid of having our meetings on the first-day disturbed by him. He, in his own forward and weak mind, invited many to the meeting, and many through his invitation came, it was judged with intent rather to mock than to profit thereby; but, blessed be the Lord, who was with his poor depending children, though we had much of the rabble, Truth kept them in good order: the Gospel was preached freely, all was quiet and still, and the Truth was in dominion over all, praised be the Lord forever!

Fourth-day, the 26th of fourth month, I now apprehended I had done all that was required of me, and returning home I felt sweet returns of peace flowing in my bosom beyond measure, my heart was abundantly comforted, in which melody of soul I thanked and praised the Lord for his great goodness. I had the happiness of finding my wife, family and relations well, and we received one another in the same love in which we parted.

I was now favoured to stay at home with my family, taking the necessary care for their support; yet when I felt my mind drawn to pay a religious visit to any meeting or place I was very careful not to let business hinder me. After continuing at home about two years, my mind was under a fresh exercise and concern, to make a like religious visit to Friends in Essex and Hertfordshire; and as in times past, I carefully settled my temporal affairs and sought my Friends' approbation; and having their concurrence and certificate, after taking a solemn and affectionate leave of my dear wife and children, I set forward on the 6th of fourth month, 1760, to Diss. It was their general meeting, which was very large; but not so much to satisfaction as could be desired, on account of many unruly comers, not of our profession, who seemed to come more out of vain curiosity than for edification. Cousin E. Peckover attended me to Woodbridge, it being their Quarterly Meeting for Suffolk, and was in a good degree to satisfaction.

On fourth-day I set forward, accompanied by my uncle Jonathan Peckover and Richard Brewster, to Ipswich; at which meeting was Elizabeth Roberts; and the Lord was pleased graciously to own us with his life-giving power and presence, greatly to our comfort and inward refreshment. I quartered that evening at John Head's, and in the morning was conducted to Manningtree, where live our much esteemed friends Elizabeth Kendall and Mary Bundock, valuable women in ministry and conduct: they received me very cordially, and the next day was their weekday meeting, wherein my spirit was deeply exercised; the Lord's blessed power and spirit was prevalent, and the meeting concluded in prayer and praising his great name.

The same evening I went home with Matthew Swindale, a man truly valuable for his innocence and simplicity, and as such is worthy to be called an elder in our Israel. The next morning he conducted me to Colchester; and on the 13th we with several Friends set forward to Oakley, at which place is a meeting held about twice in the year. This meeting was very much incommoded by reason of rude people and children. I had to warn them from the dreadful consequences that befell the children who

mocked the Lord's servant, the prophet Elisha, and afterward to invite them that they might seek the Lord while he in mercy was to be found, etc. that, being brought into a state of repentance and amendment of life, they might find mercy with Him whom they had much offended. The meeting ended in supplication, and I hope it was profitable to many. After taking some refreshment went to Manningtree, and from there the next day with my friend John Kendall and his mother to Colchester; in my way there a post-chaise boy turning very suddenly upon me, the hind wheel went over my mare's hind foot, by which she was so hurt and affrighted, that I feared she would be spoiled, and being new and handsome it gave me some concern: she soon got the better of it, but I was reminded by this not to like my mare beyond what I ought, because that would create too much care and concern.

Second-day I stayed at Colchester, and visited some families of Friends. Third-day had a meeting at Coptford, which was large, being attended by pretty many Friends from the city: the meeting was hard and laborious; after which I went with Joseph Docwra to his house, and on fourth-day had a meeting at Kelvedon, which was more to satisfaction. This evening I went with Robert Ludgater, an elder whom I think very honourable. Next day had a meeting at Halstead, where I was met and accompanied by my friend John Drewett, and the next day at Coggeshall, where the true seed was in great oppression.

On the first-day following at Colchester, the morning meeting was open and to edification, the afternoon one more close and shut up. Had a more public meeting in the evening, which was to a great degree of satisfaction. I was favoured at this place with the company of my towns-woman and fellow-labourer in the Gospel, Hannah Lucas, also Ann Homing of Ipswich, both valuable instruments in the hand of the Lord, they being then on their return from London on a religious visit. Third-day was at an appointed meeting at William to good satisfaction; the same evening at Maldon, wherein I was silent. Fourth-day had a meeting at Braintree, which was large, but a very long time in gathering, the inconsistency of such a conduct became the subject of my testimony. This evening to Joseph Smith's, who in the morning accompanied me to Chelmsford, as also his wife and Hephziba Smithies, both in the ministry: the labour and exercise of the meeting that day was very trying to those that were rightly concerned for the prosperity of Truth, and unto these the Lord was pleased to open a spring of comfort to the refreshment of their travailing souls: the meeting concluded in supplication. Lodged at Stephen Levitt's, our friend John Griffith being at that time from home on a religious visit to Friends in Ireland. Next day held a meeting at Felsted, which was drowsy and dull; the people were called to and warned, lest they should settle in a state of carnal ease and security, and so be like the church of old, which was neither hot nor cold, but lukewarm, and as such highly offensive in the sight of God.

On first-day, being the 27th of fourth month, was at a general meeting at Stebbing, where were Judith Clay and several other Friends in the ministry: the meeting was large and mercifully favoured. Third-day was at Thaxted Monthly Meeting, which was small, and the state of it very low. There were by appointment several Friends on a visit to such as were unfaithful in their Christian testimony concerning tithes, priests' demands, etc.

Next day to Saffron Walden, where live many well-disposed Friends, notwithstanding which it was far

from being an open meeting. Here my companion John Drewett left me; we were very agreeable to each other, and parted in great love and nearness of affection, he returning homeward for Bury, myself towards Hertfordshire. But before I leave Essex, I would just observe, there are many meetings in this county, and a fine appearance of Friends, and I do not remember ever visiting a county wherein I have had greater openness and freedom in preaching the Gospel. Fifth-day was at Royston meeting, which I hope was profitable to some, though to myself hard and laborious.

Sixth-day at Baldock meeting, to which came many Friends from Royston; it was a time of deep travail and exercise to my mind; a testimony was given me to bear, and I trust I did it faithfully. Seventh-day to Hitchin, which place I went to in such fear and bowedness of spirit, that I was almost ready to sink, by letting in the reasoner so much to my discouragement..

When I came there my relations, of which I had many, and Friends seemed pleased to see me. The next day, being the 1st of the fifth month, was at both their meetings, where through the goodness of Him who called me there, all slavish fears and doubts were removed, and the Lord alone became my strength and support, blessed be his great name, who is strength in weakness, riches in poverty, and all in all to them that put their trust and confidence in him, which now I experienced wonderfully to my help: we were mutually comforted in the overspreading of the love of God in our hearts, to his praise and our rejoicing.

Third-day was accompanied by Joseph Ransom, senior, a worthy and honourable elder, my wife's uncle, to Ashwell, where although there is but one family of Friends, I had a large meeting of the neighbours. In this place lives Barbara Everard, a poor, honest, decrepit creature, apparently convulsed all over, by which her speech is much affected, and understanding also. Yet the Lord has been pleased to make use of this young woman in an extraordinary manner, having bestowed on her a gift in the ministry, in which office she appears above many of far more natural talents; in common conversation she is difficult to be understood, being of a stammering tongue, but very clear in utterance in her ministry, her matter very correct and sound, opens the Scriptures very clearly, and preaches the Gospel with great power and authority, and is of singular service in this place: she had at this meeting good service.

[The following is a letter written not long afterwards by Barbara Everard to Joseph Oxley.]

Ashwell, 9th of Seventh month, 1760.

Loving friend,

This with my love to you and your loving wife, hoping these lines will find you in good health, as we are through the mercy of our God, who is the Father and Fountain of all our mercies, to whom be glory both now and forever! Although we are far separated in body yet we are near in spirit, for I do not forget you nor your labour of love when amongst us, neither do I think your labour was in vain, for it tended to encourage us to press forward towards the mark of the prize of our high calling in Christ Jesus, that so we might come to the knowledge of the things that

belong to our soul's everlasting peace. My desire is, that we may wait humbly for the teaching of that blessed anointing, that so we may witness a profiting; for the Lord is come to teach his people himself, yes, his presence is sometimes sensibly felt among us in our meetings.

The 6th of the sixth month, we were at Baldock Yearly Meeting, which was a large good meeting, the testimonies were to the reprovng of the backsliders from the Truth, and to the encouraging of the sincere and upright-hearted followers of our Lord Jesus Christ to hold on their way. At this meeting Isaac Sharples gave notice, that he intended to be at Ashwell meeting the first-day following, which was very large and a good open meeting, the Lord's presence being sensibly felt amongst us, to the comfortng of the mourners in Zion; and I believe the Lord will have a people to bear testimony to his great name and Truth in the earth, for he is sometimes pleased to make use of mean and contemptible instruments, to bear testimony to his great name, of which number I am one as you know very well. Yet the Lord does not forsake me, for he is near to help all those that put their trust in him.

For some time I had a concern upon my mind to go to a place called Weson, about two miles from Baldock, to have a meeting, where there had not been a meeting held for about twenty years before, which made me reluctant to give up to it. But when the mighty power of God arose in me, I was made willing, and my uncle and one of our young Friends went with me, and the meeting was very large, there being as was supposed two hundred people at it, and I had a good open time among them, and they behaved soberly, so that I came away with a reward of peace in my own bosom: for the Lord is a rich rewarder of all them that faithfully serve him. Having given you an account how things have been lately in these parts, I conclude with praises and hallelujahs to the everlasting God, who is near unto his people in all their exercises, to whom be glory both now and forever, amen!

My uncle joins with me in love to you and your loving wife, our love is also to all sincere and true-hearted Friends.

Barbara Everard.

Fourth-day was at Statfold, a small, hard, laborious meeting, but witnessed the Divine presence to sustain me, and I hope I was in the way of my duty. The above Barbara Everard was likewise at this meeting, and had a short but acceptable opportunity. The same evening I went to Clifton, and had an evening meeting, consisting chiefly of the neighbours, of whom there were many. At this place I was met by my very kind friend and former companion, Isaac Gray of Hitchin, a man of a pleasant disposition and earnest for the prosperity of Truth; the meeting not large, but I hope profitable. After which, I went with John Gunnis, an acceptable ministering Friend, who accompanied me the next day to Cranfield: the people were earnestly laboured with, that they might have in possession what they had in profession. The same evening to Ampthill, and lodged at John Morris's; had a meeting here on the sixth-day to good satisfaction: here are a pretty number of Friends of the right sort.

This evening went to Luton, and lodged at Daniel Brown's; seventh-day had a meeting at this place, John Gunnis and Isaac Gray being with me: it was a good and very comfortable strengthening opportunity to us; I desire to bear it in remembrance with thankfulness. After this meeting went to Hempstead, and lodged at the widow Dearman's; from this place John Gunnis returned home. I was pleased with his company, being a man of an innocent life and sweet conversation, of a humble spirit and meek disposition, savoury in his ministry, and I think him a man much in favour with the Lord. Third-day morning had a meeting at Alban's, in which I had to speak pretty closely to parents on educating and training up their children, and the advantages of demeaning themselves becomingly, which is too much lacking amongst us. From hence to Hertford, and was met here by my kind friend Samuel Scott, junior. Fourth-day had a meeting with them to good satisfaction, concluding in prayer and praising the Lord. Went to Buntingford that night, and had a meeting there next day; both myself and Samuel Scott had an opportunity in testimony: the doctrine declared was very close, and I believe there was occasion enough for it. I was informed afterwards, that they had not had a stranger to visit them on the like occasion for three years past. Went forward to Bishop Stortford, and the same day had a meeting at Stansted, where I was quite silent.

First-day, the 15th, was at their morning meeting at Hertford, and in the afternoon at Ware: returned to Hertford, it being their select meeting for ministers and elders, in all which the good hand of the Lord was near to uphold and support. I now apprehended myself at liberty from the service, in which I had been so closely engaged, and to the best of my understanding had faithfully discharged myself.

I went up to the London Yearly Meeting, wherein I experienced my mind to be much comforted and renewedly strengthened. The affairs of the church were carried on in much brotherly love and condescension, and meetings for religious worship attended by many able, living ministers, both of our own and other nations: yet, several of our meetings for worship were disturbed by some of a contrary spirit, who, in their own forward wills, would say a great deal to the burdening of the right-minded. In my return from London I came by Saffron Walden, thinking it my duty to pay them a second visit: had two very good, comfortable, satisfactory meetings there, the 1st of sixth month, after which I set forward for Norwich, which I reached the next day, and found my wife and family in the enjoyment of health. We were truly glad and thankful to our great and good Master, who had thus favoured us with an opportunity of meeting together again, this 2nd day of sixth month, 1760.

Let it be weightily considered by all such as apprehend themselves called to travel in the work of the ministry, that he who has called us is holy, and has said, "Be you holy," and in another place, "Walk before me, and be perfect." As we preach Christ, the way to perfection, in all manner of conduct and conversation, it behoves us to walk in great circumspection and care, lest, unwarily, our example should be such as to occasion the Truth to be evilly spoken of. Some, in the course of their travels, for lack of watchfulness, have been drawn out into conversation respecting individuals, and of ministers, to speak slantingly of them, and disrespectfully of their service; by such conduct, these ministers and their ministry become lessened in the esteem of some Friends; and though there may appear some face of approbation, yet at the bottom the slanderer is had in greater contempt. It is therefore rather to our repu-

tation, that we should be silent on such occasions, than to speak to the hurt of any, and to the hindrance of their service. I would rather recommend, as a general rule, to speak evil of nobody. Show also your moderation at table, in eating and drinking, and let it not be known that you are dainty: there are many beholders, some probably for good, but not all. Some young and well-minded are seeking our company, for conversation, that they may be profited and improve from our experience; unto these be not heard to murmur and repine, because of spiritual adversity, and lowness in mind, and distress of soul, and the like; lest by so doing, others may follow your example, and let in discouragement to the hindrance of their growth and spiritual improvement. But, rather speak pleasantly of the dispensations of Divine Providence, believing that all things work together for good to them that love and fear God. And let us seek to be endued with that wisdom which is from above, that all our actions and ways may demonstrate that we are governed by it. This will preserve us in a steady, persevering conduct from place to place, and such will be favoured to see the work and service that is to do; of which be mindful, and in so doing you will be esteemed no loiterer, nor hurrier, but moving with stability; and walking consistently, according to the leadings of Truth, will add strength unto the minister, and honour and praise unto Him that has thus called us.

CHAPTER V.

I HAD now been at Norwich about sixteen years, during which time our meetings had been evidently increasing, and still continue so, not only as to numbers amongst ourselves, but also from amongst those of other societies, who have been convinced of the blessed Truth, and joined us in religious fellowship; some of whom have become as princes among the people. The Almighty has been abundantly gracious in affording a time of precious visitation, wherein many sons have been called as from far, and daughters as from the ends of the earth; a growth in the Truth has been experienced, and many have become publishers of the same glorious truths of the Gospel.

At my first coming here, there were but three Friends in the ministry, namely, George Dupledge, Joseph Gurney, and Robert Letchworth; the former was removed by death a few weeks after my coming, Robert Letchworth removed himself and family towards London, Joseph Gurney lived about six years after my coming, and then died: so that in that capacity I was left almost alone. But a hope sprang up in my mind at that time, that it would not always be so; and it is now a matter of no small comfort, that the Lord in his goodness has been pleased to increase the number, that I think there are of men and women not less than sixteen, who appear in public testimony in an acceptable manner. I wish we may all be preserved through the various trials and vicissitudes of life unreproachable, and stand faithful to the end in the testimony of Jesus.

In the year 1761, my honest and faithful wife being also engaged in the work of the ministry, as before related, had it on her mind to pay a religious visit to Friends in Huntingdonshire, the Isle of Ely, and parts adjacent. She took her departure from home the 5th of ninth month, 1761, and returned, after a tour

of about two months, in much peace. By sundry accounts she had very acceptable service, being a woman of a holy life and godly conversation, and a zealous contender for the cause of righteousness.

After being at home about two years, I found an increasing exercise and growing concern to pay a religious visit to Friends in the nation of Ireland. The prospect of this visit had attended me more or less, for fifteen years, and now I could no longer, with any degree of peace, withstand the divine requiring; I therefore made suitable preparations for leaving my business and family, and laid my concern before our Monthly Meeting, and a certificate was granted me for that purpose. I set forward on the 31st of fifth month, 1762, on my way to Liverpool, and took with me my youngest son Edward, whom I left by the way at Highflatts in Yorkshire, at a boarding-school. We got to Highflatts on sixth-day, and the following third-day I went to Manchester, and attended next day their week-day meeting, which was pretty well as to numbers, but seemed to be lacking in that spiritual exercise which tends to profit. After meeting went to Liverpool, where I heard there was a vessel then ready to sail for Dublin.

The seventh-day following we set sail in the afternoon; the weather fine, and clear sky, with little or no wind stirring; so that we did not reach Holyhead until third-day morning, being almost becalmed, and what wind there was was not in our favour. The next morning the packet-boat sailed from this place for Dublin, and as some of our passengers grew weary, they left us and went on board the packet. Fourth-day evening we weighed anchor, the wind being a little more in our favour, but fell off again: we at length got to Dublin the 18th of sixth month, after a passage of about six days. The master of the vessel was very kind, but one of the passengers, an officer in the army, was not so, but made ridicule of the Quaker, as he styled me, and the movings of the Spirit. He had me in great derision, and at length, growing very insolent and affronting, I found it my duty in the Truth to reprove and admonish him: which I did, and the Lord was with me and gave me courage and strength, and power over him. He was afterwards still and quiet, and continued so all the time we were together. Some few years afterwards, being in London, I went into one of the prisons to see one that owed me some money, where I saw this man, who viewed me with great shame; he was there for some misdemeanour.

But to return. When I landed, I went to my friend Samuel Judd's, at whose house I lodged; he was an aged man, and very infirm, but very loving and open-hearted to travelling Friends. I attended their week-day meeting the day I landed, which was small, and I thought not the most profitable.

[In a letter to his wife, after speaking of Samuel Judd's kind attentions to him, he says, "I am in a very low, needy state, yet well satisfied I am in the way of my duty to Him whose judgments and mercies cause us both to fear and love him. I desire of you, my dearest friend and companion, with whom I have sweet unity and fellowship in that life that is everlasting, to seek the Lord for me, that I may be preserved and upheld to the praise of his great name. Oh! that I may not sink in this great undertaking, but be enabled to stand boldly for my Lord's cause, and that no blemish may be permitted to come upon me in any future time, so as to cause our holy profession to be evilly spoken of."]

After meeting, several Friends retired into an adjacent room, according to their accustomed manner, and

being asked for my certificate, it was produced and read, which was to pretty general satisfaction, and some Friends were appointed to assist in purchasing a horse for my journey. First-day I went to meeting, which was pretty large, and I was favoured to preach the Gospel with a degree of openness and freedom beyond some other times. Between the two meetings, there landed a woman Friend from Coalbrookdale, in Shropshire; her name Ann Summerland, who had at dinner a sweet heavenly opportunity in supplication: we were glad, though strangers, of one another's company, and went together to the meeting in the afternoon, which was much smaller than that in the morning, but hope it was to pretty good satisfaction. I stayed their meeting on third-day, and on fourth-day set forward to Ballicane, where a meeting being appointed, was I hope to some profitable instruction.

Fifth-day to Erratt's, which was very small; and a few came in not of our Society: the Lord's power was over us, and the Truth declared in the demonstration of the Spirit, and it ended much to our comfort and edification. About this time that worthy and highly valued Friend, James Pim, of Mountrath, departed this life; he was an elder, and worthy of double honour.

Sixth-day was at Wright's meeting, the room well filled, both with Friends and with the goodness of the holy, quickening, enlivening virtue and presence of Divine love, which is the crown of our assemblies. Went to Enniscorthy Monthly Meeting, also had meetings at Cooladine and Randal's Mills, where lived a worthy Friend named Joseph Williams; the meeting was held in his house. I was led in the course of my testimony to speak on the parable of the lost sheep, and of leaving the ninety and nine to seek that which was gone astray. It was a time of merciful visitation to some present; Truth was exalted, and the holy name praised, who is worthy forever!

Next day had a meeting at Wexford; fifth-day, 1st of seventh month, at Forest; and sixth-day at Ross, wherein appeared a state of great hardness of heart, and an unwillingness to bow and submit to the tendering visitation of Divine Grace. First-day attended the meetings at Waterford, wherein I found the love of God abundantly shed abroad in the hearts of many to our souls' comfort. I also stayed the week-day meeting, which afforded consolation, and in the afternoon went forward to Clonmel. The meeting here was pretty large, and many amongst them are concerned to seek the way to the kingdom of peace more earnestly, growing in the root as well as branch. The day following was conducted by Robert Dudley to Cashel; the meeting very small, and the true seed imprisoned.

Next morning set forward for Youghal, it being their Province Meeting, which was very large, many other people coming in, whose behaviour was very becoming in all respects; the meetings were well conducted, and the Lord's powerful Truth owned us in a wonderful manner. James Toomey, John Morris, Samuel Neale, Joseph Grubb, James Keys and Thomas Whiley, were appointed to visit several families in the said town. I accompanied these Friends in their visit, which was attended with a good degree of satisfaction, both to the visitors and visited. After which, set forward for Cork meeting on sixth-day.

The following week, accompanied by my kind friends Samuel Neale and James Toomey, attended meetings at Bandon, Limerick, Mallow, Birr and Roscrea, where the Lord was pleased to favour, so that his doctrine did drop as the rain, and his speech was experienced to distill as the dew, praised be his name!

Next day at Knockballymagher, where the meeting was held at the house of our worthy friend, James Hutchinson; and he accompanied me to Ballinakill, where, in a particular manner, parents were recommended to be more circumspect in bringing up their children and families in the fear of God.

The next day, being the first of the week and the 1st of the eighth month, had two meetings at Carlow, wherein the Lord was pleased to favour beyond our expectation, comforting the weary travailing soul, and giving fresh courage and strength for future service: may we live in thankful remembrance of the continuance of his merciful and precious visitations from time to time extended, which we have not merited. The same evening I went home with Robert Leckey and wife, and third-day had a meeting at Kilconner: here also the Lord blessed with great openness to preach the Gospel, and the meeting concluded with prayer and thanksgiving. Fourth, fifth, and sixth-days, had meetings at Newtown, Ballitore and Athy, at all which places Divine Goodness owned us by the breaking of bread, to our inward comfort and spiritual consolation.

[From Ballitore he writes:—"Oh! how does my poor weary soul travel from place to place, and from one meeting to another, seeking the living amongst the dead. There is in most places great plainness and great dryness, emptiness and show: I hope the Lord's servants by their many faithful labours will be clear, and the blood of the unfaithful will be on their own heads. I have travelled in company with a very honest Friend for two or three weeks past, whose name is James Toomey, of Limerick; he is seventy-two years of age, and in good esteem in his service, short and savoury: we parted this day. Through mercy, I continue in a good state of health, much better than I expected: but my spiritual exercise is greater than ever yet I have met with; yet, blessed be the name of the Lord, when I am near sinking and almost ready to faint, he is pleased to appear, to uphold and strengthen, to refresh and comfort his poor tried servant!"]

First-day, the 8th, my companion James Toomey, being now returned, I was joined by that eminent worthy elder, Abraham Shackleton, whose company was very agreeable to me. We were this day at Mount-melick, and had two meetings to very good satisfaction.

After meetings at Tullamore, Moate and Ballymurry, on sixth-day rode to the widow of James Pim, of whom I have before made mention. She was afresh affected with grief on seeing my companion, because of the intimacy and unity of these two brethren; who might with propriety be compared to Aaron and Hur, that were companions and helpers together with Moses against theirs and the Lord's enemies. Seventh-day made a visit to our ancient friend and elder, John Pim of Lackey, who having a son in a lingering disorder, wholly confined to his bed, we had a little meeting in his chamber to a good degree of satisfaction. Although my dear companion, Abraham Shackleton, was not engaged publicly, he was a man truly worthy of double honour, and in family visits and select opportunities he was of singular service, advising and admonishing as he was opened in the Truth, and the people loved him with great affection: he ministered a word of counsel to this young man to good satisfaction. In the evening returned to my quarters, where I met with many letters from my dear relations and friends in England, all signifying their approbation and unity with me in my religious visit to this nation.

First-day 16th, was at two meetings at Mountrath, which were large and divinely favoured, to our mutual comfort and strength. Third-day was again at Carlow, being their Monthly Meeting, which was large, and that for discipline conducted with a good degree of unanimity and concord. The same evening returned home with my companion to Ballitore. Fourth-day, his son Richard, who promises to come up in the paths of his worthy father, accompanied me to Baltiboys. The meeting was small, and the love of God grown cool in the minds of many, yet he is pleased to continue striving with them that they may be saved. After meeting at Rathangan, returned to Christian's town, and lodged at Samuel Neale's, a choice Friend with a very large family. After taking meetings at Timahoe, Edenderry, Oldcastle, Coothill, Castleshane, Ballyhagen, Charlemont, Toberhead, Colerane, and Ballinacree, came to Ballamana, and on fifth-day had a meeting there; and though many things would have crowded in on the mind to hinder the performance of true spiritual worship, yet it pleased the Lord to arise, and his enemies and the enemies of his people were scattered. We were favoured beyond our expectation with the power of Truth, and comforted in his holy presence; and though our number was very small, our strength was increased in God, the fountain of all good.

On sixth-day had a meeting at Grange, small of Friends; a few others came in who behaved well. I was led to speak of the free ministry, and to invite unto God the inexhaustible fountain that cannot be drawn dry, and setting forth the insufficiency of man's teaching without Divine assistance, and witnessing Christ in God to be all in all. I was informed after meeting, that there was a Presbyterian priest there, of which I knew nothing. Same evening went to Antrim: amongst the few Friends here, the enemy had got in, and made great havock. On seventh-day I had a meeting with them, and endeavoured to shut out all prejudice of every kind, so I witnessed the renewings of Divine favour to be shed abroad in my heart, inviting all to return, repent and live. Went home with the widow Boyd, about three miles; had a meeting at her house to which came many of their neighbours, and the Lord was pleased to favour us in a memorable manner, and his name was exalted and praised over all, who is worthy forever and ever!

After meetings at Lisburn, Newtown and Hillsborough, went to Ballinderry on sixth-day, it being their Quarterly Meeting for the province of Ulster. The meeting of ministers and elders sat down about the first hour in the afternoon; toward the close of said meeting there appeared a little matter on my mind which I gave up to, and had good satisfaction therein. Seventh-day morning was a large meeting for public worship; and in the afternoon one for the transaction of the affairs of the church, which were carried on in much unanimity, and brotherly love and condescension.

First-day, the 16th, the meeting was very large, and favoured by the Master of our assemblies, who gave many of us signal tokens of his heavenly regard, which my soul gratefully acknowledges at this time. Second-day was at Lurgan, at the burial of Thomas Trueman, a ministering Friend in good esteem.

Third-day went to Rathfriland: a very poor appearance of Friends. I was led in a very close manner, though in much love, yet afraid of their steadfastness. Fourth-day went to Moyallen, and had a meeting there; and although silent, I believe I was favoured to see that the Lord had a righteous number in that place, which was much to my soul's peace and comfort. Went to Castleshane, Oldcastle and Edenderry,

where I paid a visit to Joshua Wilson, grandson to that ancient and worthy minister and elder Thomas Wilson; and hope there is of the same righteous seed and principle growing up in him. Third-day had a meeting at Rathangan; the testimony of Truth was against the spirit of the world; which delights itself therein to the hurt of the growth of the most pure part. Fourth-day went to Dublin; and on seventh-day our dear friend, Ann Summerland, returned from her visit to this nation, of whom mention has before been made: having paid a pretty thorough visit both to her own and Friends' satisfaction, she felt at liberty to return home.

First-day we stayed their morning meeting at Dublin, which was large, in which I think Ann had very good service. A ship being ready to sail for Liverpool, we agreed to accompany each other to England; and going on board in the afternoon were favoured to land safely at Liverpool the next evening, for which our hearts were made truly thankful. We had a meeting there next day, in which the goodness of the Lord was abundantly felt, and acknowledged in reverence and fear.

Fourth-day went to Warrington, where we parted; I returned by the way of Highflatts, and took my son Joseph who had been there some time for education. We got safe home on the 6th of tenth month, 1762, after a journey of about seventeen weeks, in which I travelled about 1482 miles. Before I close this account I would just remark, that I was detained in this country two or three days longer than I expected, occasioned by some apprehension of duty to visit two or three meetings a second time, to which I was faithful; yet could not see any extraordinary service attending, which occasioned deep travail in my mind; as in all probability I should have gone in a vessel which sailed two or three days before we did, for the same port. But a great mercy it was for me that it was otherwise ordered, for we were given to understand, when we got on the coast of Liverpool, that the said vessel was lost, and all the people perished. So I had to behold the preserving hand of the Lord in guiding me by his providence, and making way for deliverance and escape from the most imminent dangers, which I hope to bear often in remembrance with reverence and fear. I have only now to add, that I found my wife and family well, and my business was well conducted in my absence. I gratefully acknowledge and own the goodness of that Divine hand, that was with me in all this journey, and preserved me without fainting. May the continuance of heavenly wisdom guide me in all things, that I may walk in those paths, and practice those rules, which I have so earnestly recommended to others!

The work of true Gospel ministry is a very great mystery, which they that are exercised therein can testify by experience. Its source and spring is everlasting goodness, diffusing itself into the soul, by which it is enlivened, quickened and strengthened, to call and invite mankind to come to a state of repentance and amendment of life, that thereby they may live in the love and favour of God, and at length die in acceptance with him. Many of these godly messengers, for so I will venture to call them, who are thus taught, instructed, and qualified, oftentimes meet with great exercises and trials, such as leaving wife or husband, children, business, and everything else, to go whithersoever they apprehend to be their duty, far or near, without fee or reward from men. And this continues to be a great mystery, to many amongst the many professors of Christianity unto this day. I write not these things, because I am dissatisfied with any lot or portion I have in the work, though I have met with many close trials and

proving seasons, and have found myself hitherto upheld and supported to yield in submission and in obedience to God in every requirement of this kind; and if more should be required, I hope my will may be brought into subjection to the Divine will, and at length say, as I am taught by the great Master, I am an unprofitable servant. He said unto his servants formerly, "Go into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right you shall receive;" and he who thus promised is faithful to perform; and on all occasions, I have witnessed him to be a rich rewarder, a God nigh at hand, and a present help in the needful time. Praised forever be his great and worthy name, who has not only blessed me with the knowledge of his precious Truth, and by it has to this time in a good degree preserved me; but has been graciously pleased to bestow a measure of the same good Spirit on my dear children, by which they not only believe in the Truth, but also are concerned to walk in it; and this I esteem far greater riches than the increase of worldly inheritance.

CHAPTER VI.

Being free from any religious constraint of travelling abroad in the service and work of the Gospel, I remained at home, continuing in my business, and living peacefully and comfortably with my family and amongst my friends, with great nearness and unity, harmony and love; that I have not anything worthy of remark till entering into the year 1766. In the first month of which year, my wife, with the approbation of her Monthly Meeting, visited Friends in and about London, to good satisfaction, and to the comfort and peace of her own mind, and returned home the 22nd of second month, to the rejoicing of her family.

Having been exercised for some time past in a godly concern to visit Friends, in a religious capacity, in the north of Yorkshire, Durham, Northumberland, and Scotland, I got in readiness, and acquainted my friends with my concern, requesting their approbation and certificate, which was granted me. John Roper, a Friend of our city, who had been some years before convinced, and come forth in public ministry, also found it on his mind to accompany me in the said service, which I well approved. My eldest son Joseph, by this time, was grown up; and being steady and sober, I committed the management of my business to his care, under the assistance of my brother John Oxley; and the time being come, I took a solemn farewell of my family and friends, and set forward on the 2nd of the eighth month, 1766.

[After passing through Lincolnshire, where at Wainfleet they lodged at William Reckitt's, who had not long been returned from a religious visit to America, they went on to Hull, where they] had a meeting to which came abundance of other societies, and we were made partakers of that Divine power and presence, by which our hearts were renewedly comforted, and enabled to praise the Lord, in deep reverence of soul, for his goodness to us, which was beyond what our tongues could utter.

[They visited the north of Yorkshire and Durham, which it is not necessary to particularize, except that he mentions meeting with Philip Hasleton, at Moorsum, in Yorkshire, a very ancient Friend and

minister, who had formerly travelled in the service of Truth with Luke Cock; also at Raby, in DurJiarn, with Joshua Dickson,] who has been a valiant in the cause of righteousness in our Israel, having travelled through most parts of England, Ireland and America, and his labours of love were very acceptable. But, at this time, we found him very low in his mind, and sorely tossed and distressed, and almost ready to distrust in the goodness and mercy of God.

The meetings at Sunderland were large, and enlivened through the goodness of our great and good Master. The 8th, we were at Newcastle, being their Monthly Meeting, which was large; there were several ministering Friends, besides ourselves, who were strangers, and much was said in the springings of Truth, to edification. We passed on through the county of Northumberland: there are but few Friends in these parts, and meeting-houses very few, and much coolness and indifferency towards religion. We went to Cornwood, and lodged at Cuthbert Wigham's, a worthy elder and minister, who has four daughters in that religious capacity. We were at this meeting on first-day the 14th, which was large; abundance of the people called Methodists came in, so that the house was pretty well filled, and though Truth did not seem to rise high, yet it was a good, quiet meeting. Had a meeting at our quarters in the evening, wherein was experienced a flow of that Divine life and power, by which we were made alive, and the Lord alone praised, who is worthy forever and ever! On the 16th we went to Jedburgh, in Scotland, and next day lodged at Kelso, at Charles Armstrong's, an ancient Friend and minister; he was much weakened in his faculties through age, etc.; his children married out of the Society, but, through the precious visitation of the Almighty, his daughter so offending has taken a sober religious turn, and sometimes appears in a few words in meetings.

We had a meeting with them, to which came many of the town's people, and heard with attention the preaching we had to declare, and through Divine favour it was an opportunity to mutual comfort. Here is a hopeful family in this town, James Anderson, his wife, son, and daughter, with whom we were renewedly strengthened, and they with us: we rested a day here, and then directed our course to Edinburgh, accompanied by James Anderson the younger.

We were at both their meetings on the first-day, which were made large by the coming in of other societies; I hope they were in a good degree to satisfaction, both to the visitors and visited. We had also a meeting in the evening, among Friends only, which was a time of favour, labour was extended for an increase of love, and they were exhorted to cherish a disposition to receive it. We were informed a matter of difference had got in amongst Friends in this place, and we found our minds concerned to labour with them, in hopes we might be helpful to reconcile them one unto another. I think my companion was far the most useful in this undertaking, which he handled with great wisdom and prudence; by which the transgressors were brought to see they had greatly missed it, and erred from that love and meekness which is in the Truth, of which they made ample acknowledgment, and even did all we requested of them towards bringing about a reconciliation. My companion was rather desirous of having a meeting at Kirkaldy, to which we went, and had a large gathering in a convenient house. I had an opportunity pretty early in the meeting, and the people were orderly and still, after which my companion stood up and preached well; but standing a long time, the place being crowded and thronged,

and the weather bad, the people grew uneasy and tired, and wanted to be going, and they began to create noise and disturbance, so that the meeting did not conclude with so much satisfaction as I could have wished. Yet many seemed to approve of the doctrine they heard, and I doubt not it will have its service: they said, there had not been a Friend's meeting there before in any of their memories.

Fifth-day, the 25th, we set forward for Dundee, where was no meeting nor members of our Society. Sixth-day went to Montrose, at which place is one family of Friends, but they had not convenience to lodge us. About a mile out of the town, there lived an old bachelor, Henry Napier, who had formerly entertained Friends, and had been a considerable professor in the same way, and had appeared in a ministerial capacity, but through unwatchfulness was dwindled away. We went to see him, but he received us very coolly, said he had not accommodations for our lodging; but after being there some time, and having much conversation with him, he said he would receive us on our return, and with much ado promised he would grant us a meeting at his house, but that he could not take in our horses; so we went back to our inn at Montrose, and lodged there.

The next day we went to Ury, and dined with Robert Barclay. R. B. sent a boy with us to Aberdeen, which was on the seventh-day, and first-day we were at both their meetings, which were very large, though but few in profession with us; they were quiet and still, their behaviour very becoming, and the Lord's power was great and mighty, and Truth exalted, and his holy name praised, who is God over all blessed forever! Second-day we rode to Old Meldrum, and the next day had a meeting there: here is the largest body of Friends in Scotland. I was silent at this meeting, but not my companion, who I trust had good service.

Fourth-day had a meeting at Kinmuck; the same evening went to Kingswells, lodged at Gilbert Jaffray's, who had married a Presbyterian: had a very good meeting. A few honest good Friends live here and hereaway, though they are poor as to this world, yet rich in faith and good works.

[Under the date of the 30th of ninth month, at Old Meldrum, he thus addresses his wife:]

“Your very precious epistle, I received at Edinburgh, much to my comfort and edification. You are very acceptable to me in that which is most durable and lasting, wherein, I trust, though far absent in body, we are made partakers. This is what unites us, and herein stands our fellowship. However lovely one to the other, we are to consider ourselves servants to Him who has called us; unto whose service, I desire we may be freely given up. He is a rich and plenteous rewarder of all those that cheerfully serve and faithfully obey him. My cries are often to the Fountain of Goodness, that I may be endued with patience to the end of the present engagement.”

Being now on our return, on seventh-day came to Ury, and had a meeting on first-day there, where the pure life was oppressed, and in great bondage; same evening went down to Stonehaven, where with a few Friends and many others we had a far more comfortable meeting. Second-day went to Tyacke, where lives Henry Napier, who promised to take us in at our return, and grant us a meeting at his house, with that family at Montrose, and another of his own name at a small distance from him, but not allow it

to be more public: all which was complied with, and we had a very choice good meeting in his house, very suitable advice and counsel was given under the direction of the Great Master, which, if properly attended to, would be greatly to their benefit and increasing good. We parted with them in much love, and went on to Glasgow, visiting two or three scattered families professing with us in our way. At Glasgow we lodged at Provost Ayton's, no Friend of account living here; and on first-day we went to meeting, and after some time sitting, there came in pretty many, with some of Provost Ayton's family, who conducted themselves soberly and well, and we had a good meeting.

In the afternoon the meeting was far more considerable, and the people as quiet and still as we could expect. I trust the good hand of the Lord was with us, and supported us in that cause of which we were not ashamed. We could not well help remarking, as we passed along to meeting, both morning and afternoon, the order and becoming behaviour of the people in attending their places of religious worship; the vast number of inhabitants who filled the streets from one end to the other, and all so seemingly well disposed, that I could not but behold it with admiration. I wish our people in England would follow their example, which would be more to their reputation than spending that day in so profane a manner as many of them do. We returned by way of Edinburgh; some of their members who were absent when we were there before, and were principal in the matter before hinted, being now returned, and dissatisfied with the terms of accommodation, we had another public meeting for worship, in which the power of Truth became prevalent, which so cemented us together, that we were as one heart and one mind. In the evening, we had all the contending parties together, and the good hand of the Lord was with us, to the healing of breaches, and restoring into love and unity one with another; and after all these disputes were ended and matters settled, we were drawn into retirement: a favoured opportunity it proved, wherein suitable instruction and counsel was given, which, if diligently attended to, would keep them in the unity of the Spirit, which is the bond of peace. We lodged at William Miller's, who has been remarkably kind to such poor travellers, not only in entertaining them at his house, but also in furnishing them with guides for many days together, chiefly at his own cost, which we thought was too oppressive. At the following Yearly Meeting it was agreed, that in future such expense should be defrayed out of the general stock; for, before, it was also very expensive to the travelling Friends themselves, who in various places have neither guides, except what they themselves provide, nor Friends' houses to accommodate them, but must be all at their own cost, which for some was very hard to bear, but now is made easy, and to general satisfaction. After a stay of two days we set forward to Kelso, and on seventh-day reached Carlisle.

Before I leave Scotland, I would just observe, that I have had great satisfaction in paying this poor nation a Christian visit, yet am sorry to see the Society at so low an ebb in this part of the world. The great loss here, as in many other places, has been a departure from the principles of our worthy predecessors, and falling into the love of the world, with its various enticements, delusive pleasures and delights. Those who follow these gradually fall from the honest, simple, plain way of dress, and from plainness of speech, and also decline in their zeal to attend religious meetings, which are set apart for the worship of Almighty God, and at length become so darkened in their imaginations as to mix in marriage with those of other societies, and become disunited from the body. These I apprehend to be the

reasons why, in this and several parts of my native country, we are so much decreased and degenerated. Greatly therefore does it behoove us, who are parents of children, to bring them up in the fear of the Lord, and have a constant watch over them for their good, endeavouring to draw the mind into an inward search after those things which are heavenly, durable, and fade not away!

At Carlisle we received several letters from our dear friends and relations, and though they gave us the comfortable account of their welfare, yet the sorrowful news of the mobs rising in our city, breaking windows, unroofing houses, and setting them on fire, destroying and throwing into the river flour and meal in very large quantities, and a great deal more damage, affected us. The accounts informed us of many of the inhabitants assembling together, who, by force, got the mob under; that several of them were taken into custody, who afterwards were tried, and many were condemned, and some hanged.

From Carlisle we went to Moorhouse, Scotby, and Sikeside, where we were kindly received and entertained by our friend William Graham and wife. We had a large meeting with them the next day: I was opened on the recommendation of the apostle to the Philippians, "Whereunto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing:" Truth favoured, and we had a glorious meeting, praised be His name who gives the increase. Sixth-day, went to Carlisle Monthly Meeting, which was very large, and I hope that such as feared and worshipped the Great Name were profited thereby.

Seventh-day, a small meeting at Kirkbride, in which the ownings of Divine power were experienced to our consolation; the same evening went forward to Wigton; and the next day, being first-day, had two meetings with them: the state of their meeting seemed low, nevertheless, I was favoured to have open service amongst them. Second-day, at Bolton, where we laboured honestly according to our measures for their good, and the same evening had a meeting at Holme, which was large and well, the truths of the Gospel being preached in the power of God. Third-day, at Allonby, and the next day a meeting at Broughton, which was large, but not so much to satisfaction as I could have desired. Lodged at Isaac Hall's, whose wife had an acceptable gift in the ministry, and was concerned to visit the churches in America, which, when she had nearly finished, was taken very unwell, and though no outward helps were lacking to restore her, yet in vain; she quietly and willingly resigned her life to Him who gave it, and doubtless received the reward of her labours. I saw several good accounts of her, all concurring in her acceptable service.

Fifth-day, had a meeting at Cockermouth. Jonathan Wilkinson's wife being very ill and confined to her chamber, we had a sitting by her bedside, and though my mind was much cast down, yet was comforted with this opportunity: Hannah Harris was also with us. These two good women found themselves concerned to pay a religious visit to Friends in America, in which undertaking they were most affectionately united, and preserved in the sweet, heavenly, precious fellowship, in which they became true yoke-fellows and companions; I heard much in commendation of them, and of their labours and services in those parts.

First-day was at Pardshaw, which I believe is by far the largest meeting in Cumberland. It was a good

meeting, though many things were spoken to in a very close manner. Some matters of difference had got in, as we afterwards understood, by which some have received hurt: may Truth so operate in their hearts, as to bring about a reconciliation, and restore the desirable blessings of love and peace, is what I wish for them in great sincerity.

Next day we called on a poor widow and her daughter who live together; we asked, while on horseback, if she could with conveniency take us in, for we had been told her circumstances were narrow, and could not tell what kind of a reception we might meet with. But I do not remember where, in the course of all my travels, I have been more kindly received than by this good woman, widow Wilson, and her dutiful daughter, who cheerfully set before us the best she had in her house. While we sat at meat, my heart was so filled with the sweetness and love of God as to break forth into supplication, beseeching that the Divine blessing might attend the present occasion, and that the handful of meal which was in the barrel should not waste, nor the cruise of oil fail; so was my soul poured forth to the Lord, that his blessing might be upon these, who out of their little gave freely to the Lord's servants, who in love were sent to visit them.

Fifth-day, had a meeting at Penrith, which was the last in Cumberland. There are in this county, which we visited pretty thoroughly and to our satisfaction, many meeting-houses and a great many Friends, who I hope rather increase than otherwise, and who love and live in the principles of which they are making profession. From there we proceeded to Strickland and Kendal, in Westmoreland, and on third-day had a meeting at Settle, wherein Truth arose into great power, and a heavenly time it was, the remembrance of which is sweet to my mind at this season! Here were two Friends engaged in visiting families by order of their Monthly Meeting, who requested our company, which we granted to their and our satisfaction. Next day we went to Skipton, then by Bradford to Leeds, and attended their meetings on first-day, which the Lord in infinite goodness was graciously pleased to own, and filled our cups, so that they ran over, and his heritage was watered, to his praise and the consolation of his people, who, says my soul, is worthy and blessed forever!

The weight of the concern which had long exercised my mind on account of the visit I have already performed, now wearing off, I found it my place to come pretty directly home, taking meetings as they fell in my way, and was met by my dear wife and son-in-law Cook, at Wymondham, where we had a large meeting, to edification. The same evening returned home to my habitation at Norwich, the 27th of eleventh month, 1766, witnessing in my measure the verity of the saying of the royal Psalmist, "He that goes forth weeping, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him!"

1767. In this year, my dear uncle Edmund Peckover resigned his life to Him that gave it; by whose removal the church has sustained no small loss, though to him undoubtedly it is great gain. The Monthly Meeting to which he belonged thought his memory worthy of some testimonial, and as my esteem was very great for him, not only as a near relation, but a father in Christian experience, I have thought fit to subjoin it.

*A Testimony from Wells Monthly Meeting in Norfolk, concerning our ancient and eminent friend,
Edmund Peckover; deceased.*

He was born at Fakenham in this county in the year 1695, and was the son of Joseph and Catherine Peckover, both persons of eminent worth and estimation in the Society. It appears by a short manuscript under his own hand, that he once had thoughts of leaving some account of his Christian experiences behind him, and made a beginning towards it; but whether he pursued his intention, or was prevented, we cannot ascertain, nothing further having been found amongst his papers in pursuance thereof. The fragment he has left is after this manner.

“The tender dealings of the Almighty with me in my youth being often fresh in my remembrance, brings a most grateful sense thereof over my mind, under which I cannot but commemorate the same with reverence. It was no small advantage to me that I was favoured with religious and godly parents, whose concern and care, to bring me up and the rest of their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, was great. And what I look upon as very remarkable is, that before I arrived at an age capable to retain those good and wholesome admonitions, which in the wisdom of God they often communicated to me, I felt the good hand of the Lord at work in me, in a manner suitable to my tender capacity, impressing upon my heart a living sense of his greatness and goodness, which often brought me under much awfulness and fear, dreading to do anything that I knew was not well pleasing in his sight: herein I could distinguish that I had peace and satisfaction, and met with encouragement in myself beyond what I am able to express. And when I have been drawn into anything which tended to hinder my growth in that which I found to my soul's advantage, sorrow and trouble took hold of me; under a sense whereof I often made vows and promises that I would never join with the like again, which being my first fruits before the Lord, I believe he had a tender regard to, and often assisted me to perform those covenants, which through some good measure of Divine influence I then entered into. In the time of this exercise, great and many were the conflicts I had to encounter; but, to the praise of his great name I speak it, his compassionate, fatherly care was over me, and always attended me with such a portion of his Divine and saving grace, that I knew preservation thereby through things of the most trying and pinching nature: in the experience whereof thankfulness would arise.”

As he was thus early visited, so, through faithfulness to the Divine manifestations, he was early anointed and sent forth to preach the Gospel, even in his minority, either while under education at the school of that ancient and honourable Friend, Gilbert Thompson, or very soon after he left it; as near as we can gather, his mouth was opened in public testimony about the year 1711, and in the fifteenth of his age. Through Divine favour, as he abode in faithfulness, he grew in the Truth and increased in his gift, which was very acceptable.

He entered upon his first journey in the service of Truth with Edward Upsher, in the year 1714, being the eighteenth of his age, and visited Friends in several adjacent counties. In 1716, he

accompanied George Gibson through Ireland: he visited Friends in that kingdom again in 1726; travelled most parts of this nation many times over, and twice into Scotland; and in the year 1742, a concern having long and weightily been upon him to pay a religious visit to Friends in America, he went over in company with our friends John Haslam and Michael Lightfoot, who was then upon his return to Philadelphia.

Having discharged that duty to the edification and great satisfaction of the churches there, as appears by their certificates, the Lord was pleased in 1744 to restore him again in safety to his native land, with the rich reward of peace in his bosom. In 1753, he made his third visit to Friends in Ireland, and continued afterwards, as he found it his concern, to travel in various parts of this nation, was a constant attender of the Yearly Meeting in London, and at many other opportunities paid very acceptable visits to that city.

In the exercise of his gift, he was frequently opened and enlarged in Divine counsel, in delivery was manly and distinct, his doctrine sound and flowing, and his spirit lively and powerful. He appeared at times as a cloud filled with celestial rain, to the reviving and refreshment of the living heritage of God, zealous for the prosperity of the church, and for the gathering of all. He spared not to spend himself in the strength of his days, and Almighty goodness was pleased to preserve him a strong man and an able minister for a long course of years. He usually delivered himself with great fervency; and often in the flowing forth of Divine love upon his spirit, he was raised to sing the song of Zion in a melodious manner. While favoured with ability, he was constant and particularly careful in giving due attendance to meetings, and very serviceable on occasions of marriages and burials.

He was exemplary in life, unstained in character, assiduous to preserve discipline and order in the church, and that love and unity might be maintained and increased; painful in travail, laborious in word and doctrine, an elder worthy of double honour, to whom we cordially gave it.

The deep impressions that remain on many of our spirits in the grateful remembrance of his labours of love, which through Divine assistance he was enabled to bestow upon us, we hope will be lasting engagements to us to preserve a just and affectionate regard to his memory. His doctrine was often wonderfully suited to the states of those to whom he ministered, and the holy unction which accompanied it effectual, melting the hearts both of Friends and others.

We have cause to believe that in many distant and different parts, as well as in his own neighbourhood, a number are still in being who are as seals to the truth and power of his ministry, to whose convincement he was made instrumental, or to whose growth he was helpful.

It pleased the Lord, that about three years before his decease he received a shock of a paralytic kind, which, both in his own apprehensions and in that of his friends, seemed to threaten him with a hasty dissolution. Under this affecting visitation, by the account of a relation who visited

him the same evening, he was graciously preserved in a broken, tender, living frame, and expressed himself after this manner:—That he had now the satisfaction of a good conscience, and of having discharged himself in the duty required of him, according to the ability afforded him, declaring at the same time the great consolation he inwardly enjoyed. The next morning, after a short sleep, and taking some little refreshment, he was somewhat revived, and signified, that he was well pleased his outward affairs were settled, and was fully satisfied with the manner in which they were ordered, and entirely resigned to the disposal of an all-wise Providence, whether it might be to lengthen his days or to take him hence: that he felt a blessed assurance, and found the Lord, who had been his support in many trials from his youth to his advanced years, still to be near him, and could experimentally say his Redeemer lived, who had ever been the strength of his faithful people, and had brought to pass many things in his pilgrimage, which to outward appearance seemed very unlikely. After this, he lay in a sweet quiet frame of mind, and his pain lessening he appeared pretty cheerful, and in time he became so far restored as to be able to appear abroad in a carriage, but with considerable difficulty to himself.

And though in common conversation his apprehension and memory seemed much impaired, yet his public appearances in meeting continued sound, consistent and savoury. A few months before his death he was rendered totally unable to attend meetings, and continued gradually to decline; and the gracious Lord, who had been his strength and stay in the prime of his life, supported him in his last moments. He appeared to be favoured with a comfortable foretaste of that glorious immortality which is prepared for the righteous. For though he was deprived of bodily strength to speak so distinctly as usual, yet he was sufficiently understood to intimate the inexpressible joy and felicity he felt, and seemed to pass away as with a heavenly song of Divine praise in his mouth. He departed this life at Wells, the 19th of seventh month, 1767, and his remains were buried at Fakenham the 22nd, after a large and solemn meeting of relations, friends and neighbours. He died in the seventy-second year of his age, and the fifty-seventh of his ministry.

Signed in and on behalf of our Monthly Meeting held at Wells, the 4th of fifth month, 1768, by many Friends.

CHAPTER VII.

In the seventh month, 1769, my wife and I took a journey to London, principally to attend the marriage of my brother John Oxley, to Elizabeth Chorley. The marriage was solemnized at Devonshire-house, in a very large assembly of Friends and others, who conducted themselves well on the occasion. Thomas Whitehead concluded the meeting in supplication, which was to good satisfaction.

I continued my usual employment in business, keeping much at home, except visiting neighbouring

meetings as I found a concern so to do, and going occasionally to London, but not with certificate.

Many years before my going into Scotland, I was apprehensive that at some time it would be required of me to take a much longer journey. But nothing of that kind appeared to be very nigh at hand, and I desired to wait in a state of resignedness, and not to be afraid, and so terrify myself with apprehensions of what might be, neither on the other hand to be forward in giving credit to every appearance as a real concern. To live in reverence and fear before the Lord, and walk circumspectly before men, seemed the present requirement and way of duty. Having a very pleasant habitation in a good city, an affectionate wife and comfortable children, made my home very desirable, also other near connections and beloved friends, with whom I lived in great love and unity, as behooves children of our heavenly Father, a blessing I desire to be preserved in, and that the same may preside throughout the whole flock and family everywhere. But in the year 1769, I found my mind so closely beset with the concern I was under, as not to be able to keep altogether silent, and having some intelligence given me, that it was thought Samuel Neale of Ireland, one whom I knew and had good unity with, had somewhat on his mind of the like kind, and finding my concern to increase and grow stronger, it was upon me to write him, which I did as follows:

Norwich, 6th of Seventh month, 1769.

Dear friend, Samuel Neale,

I HOPE you will excuse the freedom I am taking, in communicating to you the religious concern and exercise of mind I have been under, and which has long attended me, and yet is very weighty upon me; in which I trust I am in part become will-less and passive in the Great Master's hand, to be formed and fashioned as it seems best to his good pleasure;—a concern, my dear Friend, to go over the great and mighty waters. I have had some intimation as if you had something of a similar concern. If it should be so, and my lot be cast with you, if only over the great deep, I hope my mind would be reverently bowed in thankfulness to the Father of mercies, in whose hands are our lives and preservation, for affording so favourable an opportunity. I would not be thought to force myself on you, or to oppress you in any respect, by no means; only to express how much I love you, and the unity I have with you in the Lord's service.

Now, my dear friend, although I have been so communicative, I desire and expect you will keep it to yourself, especially if it is not likely we should be companions. I hope hitherto it has been my care not to move too hastily in these important matters, wherein is much safety, and here I desire to abide according to the present feeling of my mind. If I live and am well, I should like to see another year or Yearly Meeting, and shall hope and expect to receive a few lines from you in the same freedom as I have written these, or else shall conclude you have not unity with me in my concern; and if it should be so, I should not much wonder at it, for verily, to write the truth, I am far from liking it myself, and if I dared, I would say I think my Master has made choice of a very poor, mean, contemptible creature;—but I dare not say further, for he knows what is best,

to whom I recommend each of us for protection, and remain in unspeakable love, your friend and brother in the unchangeable Truth,

Joseph Oxley.

After having so done, my mind was made quite easy. My wife having a journey before her in the west, during her absence, I was as if no concern had ever been, and it fared with me as though it would quite wear off. Somewhat more than a month afterwards I received a letter in answer to mine, as follows:

Glanmire, 2nd of Eighth month, 1769.

My dearly beloved and esteemed friend, Joseph Oxley,

I received your letter in course on the 6th of last month, which was very unexpected both as to the subject and the letter; and however some have circulated an intimation of my having any drawings to visit the churches on the continent of America, it has never of late years transpired from me, except when I have been asked the question; silence or perhaps an evasive answer may have formed suggestions in their minds, which they have without my approbation privately circulated. And this has been the cause of this report. I consider myself, dear friend, as one of the weakest of the family. I must acknowledge the sound of America has often pierced my ear for twelve or thirteen years past. It has often opened and shut, sometimes quite disappeared, and that for many months, then again moved and stirred more feelingly in my mind, and I cannot say but of late more than usual. How it may be, I cannot say: I am ready to be commanded, I think, though in my own apprehension one of the weakest and poorest of the household to be appointed to an embassy so important, so distant, and so weighty. As to the requiring, time will ripen, and may the fruit be never parted from the tree until ripe, that it may have its proper flavour amongst those who have distinguishing palates. As to you, dear friend, and your concern, I have no right to doubt. I have always had unity with you in your religious labours, and should think it a favour to have such company over the great waters, if Heaven should order it so. But the concern is of such a nature, so weighty, so important, so interesting to ourselves and the church, that trying the fleece wet and dry I trust will not be displeasing, and anon we may hear from each other. Thus much I may say. My wife knows not, nor any other member of the church as much as I have written to you, therefore I enjoin to secrecy; as I would not betray my concern, or waste my strength by any unripe declarations, which perhaps may wither, or be only a trial of faith and fidelity.

Farewell, dear friend! may the Rock be our safe hiding-place and munition in all our stoppings, that at home and abroad, our places may be filled up with propriety, our unity increase with our years, and we remain immovably bent to seek the city that has foundations, which is the humble desire of your nearly united friend,

Samuel Neale.

After passing these two letters, we left the result for our further weighty consideration, believing, if it were right, it would ripen in due order of time; but if not, that it would die and dwindle away.

In this year my dear wife was under much exercise and religious necessity to visit Friends in the west of England, and as I believed it was of the Truth, and proceeded from a right cause, I freely gave her up to the Master's use; and she having the approbation of Friends, and the Monthly Meeting's certificate, signifying their concurrence and unity with her ministry and deportment, set forward in the ninth month. She was accompanied by Mary Mayo, a young woman of an innocent life and who sometimes spoke in meetings, which being to edification was satisfactory to Friends. They returned by way of London on the like good errand, and came home the 13th of twelfth month, the same year, with the recompense of peace, which is the reward of the righteous for their obedience and faithful labours.

[The following encouraging extract from a letter to his wife while at Bristol, evinces their union of labour and earnest desire for the promotion of the cause of Truth.]

I cannot help adding before I conclude, that my dear wife may well weigh her concern now she is out, and not to return while there is any oil in the pot, but wait to know the proper time. It is possible there may be yet many more empty vessels, yet when the oil stayed, there was a sufficiency to pay what was demanded. The Lord in infinite wisdom guide you, instruct and counsel you by his unerring Spirit, bless and protect you in all the various encounters both within and without, make his work prosperous through you, and number you with the wise who shall shine as the brightness of his firmament, and them that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever! Consider, my dear, you are advancing in years, and probably may not have another opportunity of the like kind, so I hope you will be careful to discharge yourself honestly in the sight of God, and faithfully before his people, that your latter end may be crowned with eternal peace. From your loving husband and fellow-labourer in the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ,

Joseph Oxley,

Early in the following year I received a second letter from my friend Samuel Neale, which I think worthy of inserting, and is as follows:

Glanmire, 13th of First month, 1770.

Dearly beloved friend,

Since I wrote to you, many months have elapsed. My answer to your letter was very much in the simplicity, and as I felt at that time; since which, in the services I have passed through and been employed in, I have felt no abatement in my concern. But with an increase in the springing of light into my mind it has been always most conspicuous, which makes me hope it is of the Lord; for the greater degree of light we have, the clearer every thing appears; and you know sometimes there are withdrawals to prove our faith and fidelity, when all prospects are shaded, and

we feel an entire blank. I thought I would therefore ask you how you fare, my brother, and how you get forward with your feelings. In my searchings, I have thought, if this matter of great importance must be submitted to by me, which has been so many years upon my mind, I should think myself much favoured, if the Lord of mercy would unite us together in this labour, and allow me to get under your skirt, because I think with your spirit, and temper and concern, I have great unity; the more so, the more I look at it. But even this favour I would endeavour to relinquish, if not perfectly conformable to the Divine will, that I know sustains all those employed in the Lord's service, as submission, dedication, and awful fear are abode in.

I have been of late two months from home; in Dublin about one, and visited many families in company with Friends deputed on that service; afterwards joined Friends in that province, and visited the meetings for discipline. By hearing the queries read and answered while men and women were together, a full opportunity was given in the openings of Truth to make some useful remarks, and much favour was mercifully experienced in the performance of this service: and besides this, we have visited Limerick, Clonmel and Youghal particular meetings in their families. Thomas Whiley, William Fennell, Joseph Grubb, and sometimes Robert Dudley and George Peet assisted, besides your poor friend.

It has been a renewed visitation, and I think some fruit already appears. May the great Lord of the harvest raise up and send those who may be living members of the body, who by keeping on the spiritual harness may make war in righteousness, and remain in that greenness that is always acceptable to the Lord and his church, though in their own view their services may appear very small and of little or no consequence. I had a letter from dear John Elliott, giving an account that dear Rachel Wilson was arrived safe in their port, and that her labours of love were universally acceptable in America. My wife joins me in the tender of true affection to you and yours; she seems passive to the Divine will, if her husband should be called from her in this service.

I remain your nearly united friend,

Samuel Neale.

It was no small comfort to my mind to find a Friend so concerned, and one with whom I had such close unity and sweet fellowship. And though the trial was great and hard to submit to, yet made somewhat easier in having the prospect of such a choice Friend for a companion. So we kept waiting in stillness and in patience for further discoveries of Divine counsel, and communicated to each other according to our feelings and growth in Christian experience. After receiving two letters from my dear friend in Ireland, it was incumbent on me to send him somewhat, as under.

Norwich, 1st of Second month, 1770.

Esteemed friend and brother,

I have before me both your kind favours of the 2nd of eighth month, last year, and the 13th of last month. By the former was enabled to fathom the state of your mind respecting that great and important business I wrote to you concerning, and as you desired I would make it a matter of secrecy, I conformed thereto. But before long it will be prudent to make some discovery to my dear wife and brother, as it will be to them matter of joy and comfort, knowing them to have sweet and precious unity with you, and I hope that good Hand which has hitherto preserved, will preserve you all your life long, to his praise and the good of his church. I much approve of your steady cautious movings in the present dispensation, and wish for myself that I may follow your example, which I will endeavour to do.

Since I last wrote what was on my mind, I have been almost ready to repent, as for a considerable length of time every appearance of concern in that way seemed to be withdrawn, and I was ready to apprehend I had been altogether mistaken; and so I remained the greater part of the time my wife was absent at Bath, Bristol, etc. But soon after her return, things appeared with a very different face, and now the concern is more weighty and pressing than ever, though I have long reasoned, and contended, and strove against the discoveries and holy manifestations of the Divine Spirit, in this great and awfully solemn act of duty. I have found myself overcome by a far superior power, that is stronger than the strong man armed with every artifice of united endeavour to baffle and obstruct the carrying on of the work of God in the soul. All these batteries are in a good degree put to silence, and thus it is, that in the day of the Lord's power his people are made a willing people. Yet notwithstanding I am brought into a good degree of resignation to his mind and will, I am very far from thinking myself in any degree proportionally qualified for such service: so trust, he is graciously pleased in condescension to my weakness, inabilities and frailties, to send another with me, more valiant and honourable.

I lack words to express my thankfulness for the present apparent prospect; I wish I may not be too elevated therewith, lest something or other should be allowed to disappoint me of so desirable a friend and brother. I shall be waiting in expectation of being informed, as early as you can, whether you think you shall hold yourself in readiness against next London Yearly Meeting, which may be some rule for my government in settling my domestic affairs, etc. That meeting I expect is to judge of the propriety or impropriety of my concern; and if it should be given in the negative, I should not much wonder, considering what a poor creature I am.

If so, I hope I should in a proper, becoming manner, acquiesce in their wise determination, and not, think amiss of my friends, but love them the better. If this should be my lot, I trust my dear Samuel will not let in discouragement thereat, whose services have many times been tried, proved, and approved. I should like to go over in a particular vessel which I have in view, the master of which I have some acquaintance with. But that I must leave, and all things else. I hope the Lord will be with us from the violence of all storms and tempests both without and within, and enable us to speak to the praise of his great and holy name, who is worthy forever and ever! I much approve of the visits you have paid with your friends to Dublin, your province, Limerick,

Clonmel and Youghal, all which places I trust will reap the good of your labours, and your end be crowned with peace.

I perceive you have been very poorly so as to keep your chamber and even your bed; I do not much wonder at it. I have been as bad, or worse, scarcely able to keep my understanding perfect. You may now judge of my feelings, and of my unity with you. My wife joins me in very dear love to you and your dear wife, and expecting soon to hear from you again, I remain your brother in the unchangeable Truth,

Joseph Oxley.

Some few weeks afterwards I received another letter from him, of his intentions of being at the ensuing Yearly Meeting at London, and expressing his approbation of my proceeding according to the good order established amongst us; which I did in great fear and weakness at our following Monthly Meeting; and Friends having unity with me in my concern, made suitable record of my declared intention, and deputed some Friends to draw up a certificate and bring to the next Monthly Meeting for approbation, which was done and recommended to the Quarterly Meeting for their approbation also.

[Samuel Neale's letter is as follows.]

Glanmire, 21st Second month, 1770.

Endeared friend, Joseph Oxley,

A few days ago I received your acceptable letter of the 1st inst., in which I had the intelligence that your way cleared in your own view, and the reasoning of the creature was silenced by the resurrection of fresh sight and strength; so that doubting was abated, which is certainly the experience of the faithful in proportion as the veil is rent, and all offered up at the altar. Dedication and devotedness are born and brought forth through a state of suffering, nursed as at the breasts of resignation and perseverance in what is made known as a duty. Many things interfere in order to retard and obstruct, but if ever we arrive at a peaceful rest we must give up all when demanded, in order to stand approved, and then we are promised multiplied favours in this life, and in that which is to come life everlasting.

As for my own part, I acknowledge myself abundantly obligated for the favours dispensed; I often look upon myself as a worm, and one of the lowest order, but why should I dispute or say, "Send by those more strong, more experienced, more furnished or more fervent in the war?" Let this language forever be silenced, and in proportion to what is made manifest may I stand faithful, whether to do or suffer, for it is not of him that wills or of him that runs, but God that shows mercy. Thus, my beloved friend, I am brought into a willingness to be a spectacle to the world, to angels, and to men, to be employed or not to be employed, believing in that Arm that is omnipotent, that still works in the little, low, and despised ones whom He has called from the

corruptions of this delusive world, to follow Him in the straight and narrow way; though opposite to the visible ease or interests of this life, carnally speaking, yet infinitely interesting and glorious in the end! which that we may keep constantly in view, through every trial and dispensation, is the fervent desire of my soul!

I thought it needful to write you without delay, in order that you might be preparing, as the time will quickly come about when it will be needful to consider our friends. I have ventured to speak to a few, and am setting my affairs in order, to be capable to leave home with as much ease to myself and reputation, as the importance and nature of the journey, if prosecuted, demands: which I look upon, as if going to be separated from all things here below. It is usual for us in this land to lay our concern before our Province and National Meetings: the meeting I expect to consult will be in about nine weeks, our National Meeting falls soon after, and whether I shall be able to get to the Yearly Meeting at London, I cannot yet say, but shall endeavour to be ready about that time or soon after, if I am sustained with faith and strength. The fellowship of your spirit and the prospect of your company I look upon as a great favour, as I shall look upon you as a father, a friend, and counsellor. As to your submitting to the judgment of your friends, though opposite to your own feelings, I know you so well I have no doubt of that; but I believe you will not escape so, it would be an easy method of laying down our burdens; and really if my friends should be of a contrary judgment to my feelings, I think I would acquiesce without a censure or the least murmur in my heart. The unity of my brethren is the cordial of my life, next to Divine favour, and I hope I shall never outlive the unity of the faithful, as I should be a burden to myself and mankind.

Present my dear love to your dear partner, and brother John, whose sympathy with you will be a strength I doubt not. I remain your nearly united friend and brother,

Samuel Neale.

In the third and fourth months of this year were removed from us by death, John and Samuel Gurney, of this city, sons of our worthy and honourable deceased friends, Joseph and Hannah Gurney. These two sons were valuable members of our Society, great and good men, adorned with many excellent qualifications, both natural and acquired. They were considerable merchants, and obtained much wealth in an honourable traffic, and their just and upright dealings gained them great reputation, love and esteem, where they were connected. As they were blessed with affluence, so they took pleasure in communicating to those that stood in need. Their hearts were opened to do good, as also were their houses for the accommodation of their friends, etc. Free and generous in their sentiments, being filled with love and charity to all religious professions, they were particularly serviceable in arbitrations and settling of differences, on which account they had many solicitations, not only by those of our own, but other societies. They were well acquainted with the order and discipline of the church, and on them fell a considerable share in the active part, especially the former; the latter for many years being rendered incapable of attending, through long weakness and many infirmities, which he bore with great patience

and Christian fortitude. John was chosen sundry times clerk to the Yearly Meeting of London, of which he was a diligent attender, and discharged himself in that office to general satisfaction. They were lovers of peace, and peace-makers, and such, said our blessed Lord, shall be called the children of God. They left behind them their loving affectionate widows, with beloved children, who deservedly mourn their unspeakable loss.

I received another letter from my dear friend, Samuel Neale, dated 14th of fifth month, the substance of which is as follows:

“I for some time thought I should have met you at London, and there have consulted with you how and when to proceed. I was fully and freely given up to the Lord's disposing hand which way to turn, but as the time drew near, I felt a stop and gloom between me and that movement, and rather a draft of mind to go from my own country; some yet unsealed reasons may be the cause of this change, but from my own small experience, it is the sure way of moving, in the freedom and liberty which Truth gives.”

I now found myself under great difficulty how to proceed, and sought with great earnestness, that all-wise Providence would direct me the right way, and that I might not show myself unstable and unsettled, and that my trust might be in the Lord, and not in another. The Yearly Meeting drawing on, I found it my duty to proceed in regular order, as I had hitherto done, and not to look back at anything that might seem to tend to discouragement. The time being now come, in awful reverence and holy fear, I laid my concern before the Yearly Meeting of ministers and elders in London. After a weighty pause and deliberate consideration, and reading over my certificates from Norwich, a minute was made, and some Friends chosen to draw up a certificate for the meeting's approbation, which was done and is as follows:

From our Yearly Meeting of ministers and elders, held in London, by adjournments from the 2nd of sixth month, to the 11th of the same inclusive, 1770. To Friends and brethren in America.

Dear friends.

Our esteemed friend, Joseph Oxley, having in a weighty manner signified unto us the concern which has rested on his mind for several years to pay you a religious visit, and produced certificates on that account from the Monthly Meeting of Norwich, the place of his residence, and from the Quarterly Meeting of Norfolk, which were read in this meeting to our satisfaction. We think it needful to certify our concurrence therein, having good unity with our said friend as a minister, and also with his present engagement; fervently desiring his preservation by sea and land, to the accomplishment of his service amongst you, to your help, comfort, and edification, and that he may be favoured to return in due time to his family and friends here with the reward of solid peace, we remain, with the salutation of brotherly love, your affectionate friends.

Signed in and on behalf of our said meeting, by many Friends.

These testimonials from Monthly, Quarterly, and Yearly Meetings, greatly increased my care and concern, lest I should not be able to answer what they set forth. It therefore behooved me to be particularly watchful over my conduct everywhere, lest unguardedly I should fall into some hidden snare or other, that might be laid to draw my feet from the paths of stability and prudence, and so fall short of what was required of me. I greatly admired, esteemed and loved the precious unity of my friends and brethren, which I had mercifully witnessed in times past, to my comfort and strength in my steppings along, in the various dispensations of Divine Providence, in whose power, above all, I had confidence, and in whom I put my trust. May my trust and confidence be in Him, more and more, in this warfare in which I am now about to engage, that I may have to say, with the Psalmist, “The Lord lives and blessed be my Rock, and let the God of my salvation be exalted!”

The next thing that came under consideration was the way of my going, whether to Cork and so fall in with my dear friend Samuel Neale, that we might accompany each other over the great waters, or go from the port of London. This matter took up much of my attention, and I was afraid lest I should be misled. There was at this time a good vessel lying in the river Thames, the owner a Friend, and the captain educated in our profession, and a friendly, kind man; the second mate was also a Friend. She was bound for New York. I was invited to go on board her with my brother John Oxley, and other Friends, where we were kindly entertained.

The ship's name was the Duchess of Gordon, Isaac Lasels Winn, commander, and an expert sailor; there seemed very good accommodation for passengers. While I was on board, I felt myself every way easy and comfortable, and so did my brother and others for me. In this state of mind I continued peaceful and easy, and greater freedom to go this way, than by the way of Cork, and ordered myself accordingly; and when I returned from London, I wrote to my friend, Samuel Neale, as follows:

Norwich. 14th of Sixth month, 1770.

Esteemed friend, Samuel Neale,

I have before me your kind favour of the 14th of last month, which I have read over and over again, and shall reply according to the feeling and freedom of my mind. I perceive you have got the free liberty and consent, both of your own Monthly and National Meeting, which as you were pleased to say of me, I had not the least doubt you would obtain, and fresh strength be renewedly experienced. I understood by Friends of your country, it was a time of Divine favour remarkably extended, to your mutual comfort and edification. I placed great consolation in expectation of your coming to London, and great has been my disappointment in not seeing you there. But as we are freely and willingly given up to do as the Great Master would have us, so he will order and direct us in best wisdom, whose ways are far beyond our conception and past finding out. I should esteemed it a favour to attend you, unto whom I own I have greatly leaned, and whom I love with great affection, perhaps too much so. Probably R. D., or some other good Friend from Ireland, will inform you, with what feebleness and diffidence I laid my concern

before the meeting of ministers and elders in London, yet without any altercation they appointed a certificate to be drawn up, which is far beyond what I expected. I have so far attended to the way that has been opened, and found peace therein; and since, you have informed me of your resolution not to come to London, but to go from Cork, I am concerned in like manner to seek for instruction and counsel, which I have endeavoured to do according to the best of my understanding; and as here is a fine large good ship, said to be the best in the river Thames, expected to sail in a month from this time at the latest, I feel my mind most easy to accept this opportunity, which my wife, brother, and children, etc. well approve, and trust in the Lord for preservation and strength. “In all your ways,” says the Psalmist, “acknowledge him, and he will direct your paths.”

As I have no view to serve myself, nor interests of any kind whatsoever, but purely to be found in the discharge of my duty to my Maker, so I rely on the multitude of his mercies, that he will preserve me; and though it may please him to take away my natural life by sea or otherwise, yet, as it is in his cause, I trust I shall be saved with an everlasting salvation. And in this faith I embark in this great work and weighty service. I gratefully acknowledge your love and tender offers of kindness and respect, if I had come to Cork, in furnishing me with the necessary accommodations for the voyage, which I sensibly feel arises from a spring of natural and spiritual affection, in true Gospel fellowship. May Divine Wisdom direct us, and we submit ourselves to be directed by Him, that the hearts of the people may be opened, and the doctrines of the Gospel received to immutable joy, and the praise of all given to Him who is worthy thereof forever and ever!

Finally, brother, farewell!—farewell in the precious unity of the saints' travail, and in that love which many waters cannot quench, nor distance erase. Should we be favoured again to see one another, I trust this love will be with us, and if not, that it may be said of us as was said of Saul and Jonathan, that they were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their death were not divided. My dear wife and brother join me in dear love to you and your dear wife, and such as may inquire after your affectionate friend,

Joseph Oxley.

CHAPTER VIII.

After making visits to my relations and friends in country and town, and receiving many who through kindness came to see me, with whom I had good unity, we parted in much love and contrition of soul; and taking leave of my dear wife and affectionate children, which at parting was very trying, on the 13th of seventh month, 1770, I set forward to London. On first-day morning, was at Gracechurch-street meeting, and in the afternoon at Devonshire-house; at the latter I was silent, but they were both good

meetings to me.

I continued visiting meetings in and about London till the 28th, when I was ordered down to Gravesend, and was accompanied by many Friends whom I loved in that which changes not. The next day the captain giving us to understand that the pilot did not weigh anchor till two or three o'clock in the afternoon, we held a meeting together before we parted, to our mutual comfort and edification, and after dinner was over, a signal was given for the passengers to go on board; so we embraced one another in much brokenness of spirit, and in love unfeigned took our leave and parted, but not without scattering tears plentifully on both sides. On Fourth-day we anchored off Spithead, and going on shore at Portsmouth, I made inquiry concerning Friends, but could find only one small family that resided at Gosport, who entertained me very kindly till seventh-day. On first-day, I retired pretty much to my own apartment, meditating on the mercy and goodness of the Lord; for though he had separated me from my nearest and dearest connections, yet I experienced his living presence to be with me on the wide ocean.

[The following is an extract from a letter he wrote to his wife while on the voyage.]

“I received your letter of the 27th of seventh month, at Portsmouth, but being called to go on board immediately, had not time to answer it, nor scarcely to read it; since which, I have perused it with a good deal of attention, as also your former one of the 18th, which I have before acknowledged the receipt of, and which continues to be sweet in my remembrance, being living testimonies of a tender and affectionate wife, mother and friend, and seals of approbation, union and concord in the present dispensation and separation, for which the love of God only could sufficiently compensate.

Oh! how is the mind at such times weaned and redeemed from all other delights, though never so nearly connected: strange to the nominal professor, and understood only by those whose dwellings are in the light! My son Joseph's letter of the 26th of seventh month, and daughter Kitty's, were as marrow to my bones, and bring them sweetly to my remembrance at this time, causing thankfulness in my mind for the present visitation wherewith they are visited, and am bound in prayer for them to the Fountain of inexhaustible goodness, that they may so run as to endure to the end, and at length be saved with an everlasting salvation.”

Our cabin passengers were many, chiefly military officers, who carried themselves very respectfully towards me, which I esteemed no small favour. Third-day we made very little way, had a calm sea, and a calm mind, except some concern I was under about having meetings on first and fifth-days, and consulted with the captain, J. A., and T. B., who were professors and approved the same. It fell to the captain to propose it to the company, by way of requesting a favour for me and my friends to hold meetings, and to have the privilege of the cabin at such times unmolested; this was pretty cordially complied with on first-days, which I thought a favour, and gaining a great point, as many of them were topping men and topping spirits, and giving up the cabin for such services was depriving those of the use of it who did not choose to meet with us. We were in number, cabin and steerage passengers, twenty-six; and

we found it necessary to form ourselves into an assembly, and meet from time to time, as occasion required. We accordingly made rules, and established orders amongst ourselves for future regulation; and one of the first concerns which came before us, was the due observance of the first-day of the week, concerning which the assembly came to this result, namely. That the first-day of every week shall be set apart, as far as is consistent with the exigencies of our present situation, for the performance of religious worship; and whereas men differ in their opinions as to the modes of religious worship, that every one may enjoy liberty of conscience, and have an opportunity of performing his religious service according to the mode and opinion of the particular church or people of which he or she is a member, the state cabin shall be cleared of all encumbrances whatsoever by ten o'clock in the forenoon of every first-day of the week, commonly called Sunday, for the conveniency of the people called Quakers, and such others as shall choose to assemble with them for about the space of two hours; and further, that on every fifth-day, from the hours of eleven to one, be set apart for religious worship. We continued our meetings on first and fifth-days without any material inconvenience, except sometimes the weather being very boisterous so as to prevent. There were six who made profession with us, but several others of the passengers attended our meetings, and behaved orderly and well. I endeavoured to walk before them prudently and conduct myself wisely, avoiding as much as possible giving any just occasion of offence, and in so doing I gained their esteem and respect, and the advice I had to give, whether public or private, was generally well received.

There was also a German Lutheran preacher on board, a steady well-behaved man, and others professing the Lutheran religion, they also had their meetings, and oftentimes would attend ours. There were, at the fore part of our passage, many disorders amongst us; but by good management they were brought under proper decorum, and considering we were so large a company, differing so widely in our several professions and callings, the time passed away more agreeably than I first expected.

Eighth month 21st, about half-seas over, met with a sail, which we spoke; she was a French ship from Martinico, for Bordeaux, laden with sugars, etc. Some of our passengers went on board her, and presented them with a pig, of which we had many, a Cheshire cheese, two or three dozen of ale and porter, and in return they sent us French claret and rum; after these exchanges and passing marks of respect, we parted.

Some days before this, we saw two or three whales, which afresh struck me with awful wonder of that great Power by which they were created. I now looked on myself as having turned my back on Europe, and weaned from that part of the world, and found an increasing attraction to dear America, for whose inhabitants my soul breathes peace; and the Lord has commanded it to be preached to all nations, in which service I am given up according to my small measure, living in faith that he who was formerly all in all to those who went on the like good cause, will in mercy vouchsafe to preserve my mind, and give proportionable strength to every service he may be pleased to call unto.

Johann Christopher Kunze, the German preacher, had repeatedly requested that I would write something in his book, and after deliberately considering thereon, I had freedom to write as follows:

Esteemed friend.

As you desired I would write a few lines in your book, I have freedom to insert the judgment of the apostle respecting religion, who says, "In Christ Jesus circumcision avails nothing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature; and as many as walk after this rule, peace be on them and mercy, and upon the Israel of God." Let us preach this Gospel with power, to the end that our hearers may believe, and walk by the same rule, and mind the same thing. I am much pleased with your and our friends' company, Frederick Augustus and Henry Muhlenberg, brothers and professors with you in religion; and am thankful in my measure that the Lord has been pleased to be with us in our little gatherings on the wide ocean. May his everlasting arm of Divine strength surround you, and protect and bless you in every good word and work, is the fervent prayer of your affectionate friend,

Joseph Oxley.

On the 20th of ninth month we made soundings, supposed to be abreast Block Island, the next day we saw Long Island, and the day following we came up to New York, in good health, just eight weeks from London. Besides having one of the best vessels to come over in, we had also one of the kindest captains, whose endeavours were to oblige to the utmost of his abilities. When I landed at New York, there were many Friends waiting to receive me: my mind was made humbly thankful to the Lord, for his mercy in preserving me every way in the course of this passage; may I never be forgetful of him.

On first-day I was at both their meetings, which were pretty large, and mercifully favoured with the ownings of divine love. New York River is as broad as the river Thames, very pleasant, on one side is Long Island, and on the other side rising hills, forming a beautiful landscape. The city itself is large and has many stately buildings, decollations, etc., a considerable place of merchandise, and very improving. Second-day set forward for Philadelphia, accompanied by my kind friend Samuel Bowne. We crossed Hudson's River, about a mile and a half over, to Powles Hook, so to Newark, Elizabethtown, and Rahway, at which place we lodged at Joseph Shotwell's, who with his wife were gone to the Yearly Meeting at Philadelphia. Third-day to Philadelphia, which is ninety miles from New York. I was received in much kindness and affection by my much esteemed friend John Pemberton, at whose house I quartered, being one whom I had seen in Old England with our dear friend John Churchman, who made us a very acceptable visit in a religious capacity.

It was now the time of the sitting of their Yearly Meeting for Pennsylvania and the Jerseys, which was a very large and solemn gathering, such as I had not seen before, so consistent in appearance of dress, and uniformity throughout, agreeably to our holy profession, as greatly affected my mind; and my tongue was loosened to speak of the love I was made comfortably to partake of in this the latter part of their feast, which they acknowledged had been throughout to mutual comfort and edification. The meeting continued two days after my coming, and concluded in solemn prayer and thanksgiving and praise to Him who opens wide his hand and had filled with his blessing, who is ever worthy!

I stayed some few days in the city, visiting Friends in their families, by whom I was kindly received, and amongst whom I had some comfortable sittings. My companion, Samuel Neale, not being yet arrived, I went a little out into the country, and on third-day, the 2nd of tenth month, had a meeting at Frankford. The morning was very rainy, and my kind friend Israel Pemberton, sent up his coach to carry me to the said meeting, but I had not freedom to accept of it, for example sake. Samuel Emlen and John Pemberton attended me: the meeting was small but comfortable; after meeting dined at Abel James's, whose wife is the daughter of that eminent worthy Thomas Chalkley; she is a reputable Friend, and has a family of promising children: returned the same evening to the city.

Joseph Oxley to John Oxley.

Philadelphia, 8th of Tenth month, 1770.

Dear and well-beloved brother, I wrote my dear wife at my landing at New York, on the 30th of last month, or thereabout, and from there passing to Philadelphia, partook of the closing sittings of their Yearly Meeting, which was much to my satisfaction, edification and comfort. The meetings were very large, more so than any I have seen in England, both for worship and discipline; the affairs of the church carried on in much brotherly love and condescension, a very great deal of becoming plainness and honest simplicity being coupled together in the fear of God, united me much nearer to them than I expected: their meetings for discipline not less lively than those for worship. I had the pleasure of seeing many worthies whom I had formerly seen in Old England, which was not a little pleasing in many respects: Esther White, John Churchman, William Brown, Mordecai Yarnall, Elizabeth Hudson, (now Morris,) Joseph White, William Home, George Mason, Thomas Goodwin, and others. I have been to all their meetings in the city, and a few in the country, am setting forward tomorrow to take about two weeks meetings in this province of Pennsylvania, and then go off southerly to Carolina, which it is supposed will take up six months. Samuel Neale is not yet arrived; I am attended by my worthy landlord John Pemberton, whose kindness is manifest in many respects, and to such a degree as I know not how to express: Samuel Emlen is also in our company.

Last fourth-day I was at a meeting at Frankford, after which went to the house formerly dear Thomas Chalkley's, whose daughter, the wife of Abel James now in London, is of good report, and entertained us in a kind and affectionate manner. The next day had a meeting at German-town, and dined at John Hunt's; his wife as well as himself kind and loving. My last gave information of a religious visit by our friends Sarah Morris and Elizabeth Smith. I suppose they will scarcely embark till spring. Robert Willis also goes over on the same account, in this vessel, Captain Falkner. She is a new vessel, on her first voyage, and I think not inferior to Captain Winn's. I have not heard him in testimony, so cannot speak to that.

William Hunt, another Friend in the ministry, intends to pay you a visit, I think, from Carolina; I have not seen him, but understand he will embark shortly. I am, through the favour of kind

Providence, in good health and spirits, my hope and confidence in the Lord, who sustains all those that put their trust in him. Friends here are diligent to advise against and admonish all such as appear inclinable to enter into associations or combinations, not agreeable to our peaceable principles. I hope this climate will agree with my constitution. It is a fine open, clear air, and rivers and springs, hills and dales, woods and groves, wherein are all manner of fine forest-trees, from the lowest shrub to the tallest cedar, and fruit trees of almost every kind; on the highways and hedges grow apricots and peaches, vines, walnuts, locust-trees, with much more abundance than in England. If my dear wife is yet in the land of the living, let her know, after first giving my dear love to her in the most affectionate manner, that her Joseph is yet alive, in health of body and peace of mind, preaching and recommending repentance and amendment of life, with a profitable reward, even an everlasting inheritance unto all such as are concerned thus to love and fear God. My duty to my endeared and honourable father.

My dear brother, father, and friend, to whom I have committed all I have, may the Almighty be pleased to bless yours and mine in all spiritual and temporal blessings, and enable us so to walk in all humble thankfulness, in reverence and in fear, that our children may be his children, and our God their God. Remember me in your nearest approaches, that my faith fail not; when you write, advise and exhort me as best wisdom directs.

In that love which changes not, I affectionately salute you, and remain your loving brother,

Joseph Oxley.

[After another little tour of one hundred and sixty-two miles into Chester county, he remarks.] The country in general is woody, except plantations which were in part cleared. Fifth-day was at the week-day meeting at Market street, which was silent. Sixth-day had intelligence of a vessel being arrived in the river from Cork, on board of which was Samuel Neale, whom I much longed to see; and set forward in company with John Pemberton and Samuel Emlen, in order to meet him on the road, which we did about seventeen miles from the city. When we met, we got out of our carriages, and saluted each other in much affection; we then got into one carriage and came to town together, being much comforted, for the love of God was with us. I tarried in town the following first-day, was favoured to have two good open meetings, where Truth was witnessed in a good degree to be in dominion: the evening meeting, which is constantly held every first-day, was exceedingly large, and to a good degree of satisfaction.

Joseph Oxley to His Daughter, and to His Wife,

Reading, in Berks County, Pennsylvania, 19th of Tenth month, 1770.

My dear Kate,

It has rather been for lack of a suitable opportunity than desire, that I have not answered your very acceptable letter of the 26th of seventh month; the remembrance of which at this time and

at this great distance is very comfortable to my mind. I am, through Almighty goodness, a partaker of good health, but how long so great a blessing may be continued is uncertain. I therefore embrace this opportunity once more to recommend you to that God who I trust is your father's God, and in whom as we abide we shall do well, and the more we put our trust in him the greater strength will be administered to resist our enemies who assault us variously, even if possible to slay the pure witness of God which is revealed and made manifest in the heart. My dear child, above all things love the Lord and his Truth, fear to offend him, serve and obey him in every of his requirings, so will you wax valiant in fight, and the name of the Lord will be precious in you. I have at times to rehearse and set forth both in meeting and out of meeting, of the blessings wherewith I am blessed:—the beloved wife and mother, faithful in the cause of righteousness, whose pious regard is to instruct and lead by the hand your dear father's children, and I know you are near to her, and her life almost wrapped up in your life; and I know your love to her is not a little. May your love more and more increase in all spiritual blessings, and make you together fruitful in righteousness, becoming the servants of God, having your fruit unto holiness and your end everlasting life,—so says my soul!

I seem to have a great field of concern before me, and I am willing to discharge myself honestly and faithfully, as I may answer it before the Lord; in like manner do also, whether in little or greater matters, and remember, that the Lord will recompense you for every good word and work. You are brought into sweet remembrance, sleeping and waking, in meeting and out of meeting, and at times of the most awful approaches, for the blessing of preservation and perseverance in the way of the Lord, and above all things that his will may be done in you, whose name is glorious, and whose goodness and mercy endure forever and ever. Make my dear love acceptable to all near and dear relations, friends and acquaintance, as if named, to your sister when you write, also to the poor doctor, to whom fail not writing, and let them know I am well and have my trust in Him that fails not.

Philadelphia, 20th of tenth month. Yesterday morning intelligence was brought me of a vessel being arrived, from Cork, at Newcastle, about forty miles from hence, on board of which was my dear friend, Samuel Neale. Samuel Emlen and myself in a chaise, John Pemberton and Thomas Fisher on horseback, went out to meet him, and met with him about seventeen miles from this place, which was very pleasing to us both: I hope our travelling together or separate, will be under the government of best wisdom. I hope you will write to me as opportunity offers, and write freely the feelings of your mind in religious experience, which may qualify me in making some return to further advantage. So with my very dear love to all, I remain most affectionately your loving father,

Joseph Oxley.

My dearest companion and loving wife.

Though I have written several times of late to yourself, my brother, and others, yet having a spare side, I thought I could not do less than ask my dear wife how she does spiritually, and if she is careful to preserve the outward weak and tender fabric, of which I hope I shall hear in due course. You see I have written largely to my dear Kitty of my outward and spiritual travels. I continue in heart and mind given up to the Divine will, in life or death, as it shall best please him; outward travels hitherto have been in woods, wilderness, and forest, where the meetings for the most part have been large, comfortable, and to edification, many mothers with their infants attending:—the zeal of the mothers I thought sufficiently compensated for the cries of the babes. Yesterday being the first of the week, I stayed in town with my companion, he appeared in all the meetings, morning, afternoon and evening, very acceptably though short; he is very desirous of my accompanying him, and I have nothing to object to it at present, so I think we shall jog off together; he landed in very good health after a passage of eight weeks.

My dear and sweet companion and partner of my life, and fellow-labourer in the holy exercise of Gospel travail, I feel myself so given up in the service, that the world and business scarce enters into thought. Remember me most endearedly to all my nearest kindred, from the dear wife to the least child, and from the affectionate brother to the distant cousin, and from the bishop to the least in that order. I probably may not write again for some time: give me up freely, my dear, in every work, and wherever the Lord requires, that there may not be a returning without a proper discharge from Him who has set his servant to work, that if ever we meet again it may be in joy and not in sorrow. My companion, and John Pemberton and wife, who are very kind to me, desire their love to you. From your loving husband,

Joseph Oxley.

The evening before, we had the company of several Indians, about twenty, who, with many others, were come to the city to hold a treaty with the governor on some particular occasion, and at the same time were disposed to pay their respects to Friends, which is not uncommon for them to do; and many Friends met them at the house of our friend John Pemberton, whose brother James had collected some presents of sundry kinds for them, which he delivered, after making, or reading the following declaration:

“Brethren, we heard with love what you said to us the other day, and it has reached our hearts. We have great love and good will to our brethren the Indians, and often think of the love and friendship which was maintained between our grandfathers and their grandfathers, and desire the same love and friendship may be continued between us and them, and our children and their children. We are always glad when we hear that our brethren the Indians in the woods are well, and that they live in peace, and are very sorry when we hear any differences happen between them and the white people. When Onas, our first proprietor, came into this country over the great waters, the Indians received him and our grandfathers very kindly. It often reaches our hearts, when we think of this. Onas and our grandfathers loved the Great Spirit above, who

taught them to live in love and peace with the Indians, and if we take care to love and fear the same Great Spirit, He will keep us and our brothers the Indians in love and friendship one with another. Brothers, we are not men concerned in the management of the affairs of government, and therefore cannot do much to serve the Indians on that account. But when any of them are sent down on business to the governor we are glad to see them, and shall be willing to do them any kindness we can. We hope what you have said to the governor will reach his heart, and that he will do everything he can to keep up peace between his people and all the Indians, which will make us very glad.

“Brothers, we should be glad that your young men, when they come down to this city, would be advised by their old men, and not drink rum. There are too many bad people here, who may quarrel with the Indians at those times, and we are always sorry when we see our brothers the Indians get drunk, it makes us ashamed. Brothers, we have got a few small things which we give you as a token of our love, and we wish you a safe journey home, and desire our love to our brothers the Indians in the country.”

I observed our friend James Pemberton in the course of his reading over the declaration, that at the opening or finishing of a paragraph, he generally presented a belt or string of wampum, and in return the Indians gave the Yo-hah. The Yo-hah denotes approbation. The Indians were serious and attentive, and after hearing what was said to them by Friends, and a silent pause among them, a Delaware, the principal of them, expressed their satisfaction, that they would think upon what had been said, and keep it in their hearts, and inform their brethren the Indians, when they returned, of the good disposition and kindness of their brethren, the white people; and he would use his endeavours to promote love between their brethren the English and the Indians, and did not doubt that his relating the kind treatment he had met with would reach their hearts. That though he could not rule his young people, who would do as they pleased, yet he would use his endeavours to prevail with them to keep sober and behave well. He thankfully accepted the token of love manifested in the presents given him, and smoked a pipe of tobacco, expressive of unity and concord, and left the city in a good disposition.

Fifth-day, the 25th, in company with Samuel Emlen, went to Haddonfield, about six miles over the river Delaware, a middling large meeting, and tolerably well. Returned the same evening to town, and attended the meetings in course, and visited many families to good content. My companion as well as myself found our minds closely united one to the other in Gospel fellowship; and though some thought, if we parted for the service sake, it would be best, it appeared to us to be our concern to continue together for the present.

[John Pemberton soon after this date thus writes to Mary Oxley:]

“I received a letter lately from your husband, in which he says, that he and his companion are favoured to meet with the ownings of our heavenly Father's love both in public assemblies and in families, much to their comfort and satisfaction. I went to two meetings with them, and set

them on their way about fifty miles, and they appeared to me likely to be agreeable to each other both in and out of meetings, much more so, than I was apprehensive of, knowing the diffidence and rather backwardness of your beloved spouse. They spent a short time in this city very agreeably, being much united to the spirits of many here.”

CHAPTER IX.

On third-day, the 30th of tenth month, we set forward on our journey southerly, many Friends accompanying us out of the city. Crossed the Susquehanna River, a mile over, and had a large meeting at Warrington, but very much disturbed with little children, and the many dogs which the people brought, as well as a frequent going in and out of meeting, both young men and young women; a practice very unbecoming places of religious worship, and which evidently bespeaks their great lack of spiritual concern and exercise, to preserve them from such unseemly and unbecoming behaviour. This is very customary in many places on this continent, and people frequently leave their seats and come to the fires; in this place there were two, which occasioned the meeting to be greatly interrupted, to the sorrow and grief of the right-minded.

After meeting went to see a sick Friend, with whom we had seasonable service. In coming from there somewhat late, and the evening dark, we lost ourselves in the woods, but after some time got safe to our quarters. From there went to Huntingdon; the meeting was small, but in kindness our good Master manifested his love to the refreshment of our souls.

The next day at Monallen, the meeting was greatly enlarged by the coming in of other professors: the universality of the love of God was freely declared in the demonstration of the Spirit and power, to the comfort of many.

Passing through Pennsylvania into Maryland, we came to Pipe Creek, where we had a small but very good meeting; and continuing our route southerly we entered Virginia by Fairfax. We passed over Shanandoah River up to the Blue mountains, which abound with pines and fir trees; also many tulip-trees, commonly called poplars, which according to the best of my observation grow as tall and as large as our oaks in England. The 27th we went to Jackson Allen's, where a meeting was appointed; it was a mixed gathering, and not altogether to satisfaction. We paid visits to families of the said meeting who had mixed themselves in marriage with those of different principles, and of near kindred, much to their hurt. Fifth-day morning passed over many high mountains; it was very cold and much snow: the country much abounds with pine trees of a very large size; we passed over a deep river, which is often dangerous, and lodged at a public-house, where was but middling entertainment and poor lodging. We carried provision for ourselves and provender for our horses along with us. This is a poor country for travellers. Having travelled seventy miles from the last meeting, we came to John Douglass's, where a meeting is held: here are very few under our name; and the meeting was chiefly made up of other

professors, who were many, and on the whole it was to good satisfaction.

Had also a meeting in the family the same evening, which was a time of close exercise, I wish it may have a tendency to their further improvement. First-day, 2nd of twelfth month, had a meeting at Camp Creek, which was small; I thought my companion had open service. Second-day a meeting at Forkcreek, at which place I was led more particularly to speak to those who kept Negros in bondage; my companion was opened in more general service. The evening spent at Husley Clark's, to which place came many people, and we had a good meeting, which I desire may be had in thankful remembrance. Lodged at said Friend's, who is an unmarried woman, sober and well inclined, but solicited by one not in profession with us, who was then present. I was under great exercise of mind respecting them, and in the morning requested we might have a time of solid waiting before we parted, which we had, and suitable advice and counsel were seasonably ministered, which so affected them, as to make it necessary for them to break off their connection. We then rode twenty-five miles to Beaverdam, at which place lives our kind friend, Thomas Pleasants, where we rested two days, writing letters, etc.

Beaverdam, 7th of Twelfth month, 1770.

My dear and loving wife,

Opportunity has not yet favoured so as to receive a letter from you, or any of my relations or friends in Old England, since my arrival in this country, in which I have been upwards of ten weeks. However pleasing such messengers would be, I dare not murmur, when I consider the vast distance from Europe to America, the few opportunities that offer, and when such advices arrive in Philadelphia, it is very uncertain where I am, or where or how they are to be sent, having no regular post as in England, and much less so in the wilderness tract of country in which lie our meetings; neither can I write with any greater certainty to you. I am through Divine favour in good health, a blessing greatly to be prized, and praised be the Lord for it. But greater trials than these are, when the light of the Lord is withdrawn from those, whose hope and trust has been in him, which state I hope ever to experience, nor to speak murmuringly of the present dispensations, believing all things work together for good unto all those that love and fear God. I am often found in the exercise of my gift, but covet not to be heard for much speaking, nor to speak much to have the praise of men. I have bread daily, and therewith I am sustained from day to day. My companion is hearty and strong, labours zealously in the cause of his God, and I think is truly anointed for Gospel service, and I am thankful for the church's sake, that he is with me. We travel in much brotherly love and condescension, and if we should part I believe it will be in great love and unity: he enjoys a greater share of health than in his own country, and is a fine hearty man. The state of the churches in the other part of the continent I am a stranger to; but as to these parts, we find them much short of that life and zeal, which gathers and cements into holy fellowship and desires after righteousness.

We meet but with few help-mates; they are settled in a state of great indifference and coolness,

very trying to poor travellers. I might say much more on this subject, but I will not permit my pen to do it. We are now within a few days of Carolina, where I expect we shall find the weather warmer, and hope, if I should live, to get to Philadelphia about the third month. My dear wife will perceive by the manner of my writing, the poverty of my spirit, but why should I be ashamed to reveal anything to so near a companion. I think I am right in my coming forth into this country, and I feel the unity of my friends at home to minister greatly to my strength in the lowest times. My dear brother, whom I love as my own self, my children's guardian—my sister, his wife, and their children,—may the Lord bless them and multiply his blessings to him, who never deserted his brother in the greatest calamity, but has sought me in times of joy and sorrow and close besetments, both within and without. My brother and sister Hawks, and their children, whose growth and perseverance in the Truth I much desire, that their and our children may be examples of moderation, both in dress and address, that there may be no just occasion of stumbling through them.

Although, my dear, we are so far separated from one another and absent in body, yet He that separated us is all-sufficient by His love to make up that deficiency; and if ever I return, I hope it will be with sheaves of peace in my bosom. Tomorrow we set forward for Cedar Creek Monthly Meeting. Finally, as says the apostle, “pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course and be glorified, even as it is with you.” The salutation of my endeared love is again unto you all, in which my companion joins, and I remain your loving husband,

Joseph Oxley.

The 13th we forded over a river called Appomattox, and got well to South River on sixth-day evening; the next day was their Monthly Meeting which was small. There are but few meetings in these parts; many Friends came near one hundred miles from other meetings to meet us; and we were favoured to speak to their states and conditions. Some wrong things have crept in to their hurt, yet a precious visitation of Divine favour had been offered to them, and some of them were come forth in more public service. First-day, the 16th, attended this meeting again, where many of other societies came in: Truth was declared to the praise of God and rejoicing of his people.

We rode forty miles to John Embree's; and were ferried over Dan River into North Carolina. The first meeting we had in this province was at Eno, to which meeting belong many Friends, and it was in good degree to satisfaction. Fifth-day at Centre, which was tolerable as to numbers, but much interrupted with the cries of little children, and unbecoming conduct as before related, being very contrary to the nature of inward and spiritual worship. Sixth-day rode to New Garden; took up our quarters at E. Hunt's, whose brother William, an acceptable minister, was on his way to Europe on a religious visit to the churches. Seventh-day was at their Monthly Meeting. In the opening of the meeting for discipline, a young couple proposed their intentions of marriage: it is usual for Friends in these parts to admit those of other societies to see the manner of our proceeding herein, which when done they withdraw: these opportunities draw many young people of other societies to our meetings, whose minds are attended

with too much lightness and instability and other inconveniences, so as to make it painful, and the disuse thereof desirable. Third-day, the 1st of first month, 1771, was at a meeting called Mordecai's: the house not large enough to hold the people, so held it out of doors; and though this season of the year is so very cold in England, it was here so warm as to make it necessary to take off some outside garments: it was a good open meeting, and I trust has made lasting impressions on the minds of many, with suitable acknowledgements to the Author of all good.

Fourth-day crossed over Deep River, which was so high as almost to swim our horses, but got safely through; also had to pass through another place called Drowning Creek: got well through that, though it was very deep; and breakfasted and dined that day in the woods. We sat under a commodious pine tree, with which this country abounds; the day was warm and pleasant. I perceived many creeping insects, etc. which I mention only for the rarity of it, being the 9th of the first month. Fifth-day we had a meeting at Pedee, but few Friends, and many other professors; they were quiet and it was a time graciously owned by the Master, to his praise and our comfort. Sixth-day crossed Pedee River in a ferry boat, and rode twenty miles; and having provision in our bags for ourselves and also for our horses, sat down in the wilderness, and, after a slay of about three quarters of an hour, and getting well refreshed, we mounted again, and rode till after sunset. We then encamped for the night in the woods: our two guides were very assiduous with my companion in forming a camp or cover for us to lie under, which we made of young firs or pine trees; we also made a good fire, having wood in abundance, and near to a good run of water. We put shackles on our horses, and bells about their necks, lest they should stray from us; raked up what leaves we could get, and carried into our camp to lie on, which, with the help of our saddles, bags, great-coats, etc., made a good bed, and after feeding our horses, and getting our suppers, went to rest very contentedly.

In this part of the country the long leafed pine grows in great plenty, whose foliage is seventeen inches long, and found in bunches at the extreme parts like a broom, and much that size; they are very fine stately trees, and make a noble appearance. Seventh-day morning, after a composed night, got on horse-back about seven o'clock, supposing ourselves to be now in South Carolina: we travelled this day about thirty-five miles to a place called Waterree. First-day, the 13th, had a meeting with the few Friends here, about seventy miles distant from any other meeting of Friends. I think it is a great favour from the Lord of mercies, to remember these few of his poor servants in this lonely wilderness, who, through worldly desires, have scattered and separated themselves from their brethren, to their loss both temporally and spiritually. They were well advised and seasonably recommended, in that love which wishes life and salvation to to all men. The meeting was mixed with other professors, and I thought it an open good meeting: in the evening had a meeting in the family, which tended to edification, which I desire may be acknowledged with thankfulness and awful fear.

South Carolina is a very unhealthy climate for English constitutions; the inhabitants are very sickly and of a swarthy complexion; the chief products of the province are indigo, rice and hemp, Indian corn, some tobacco, and cotton. Of trees, there are many white cedars, long-leafed pines, and the cypress. This was in the first month, and though so early I saw our sort of broad-beans just coming into blossom,

and wheat grown up near half-a-yard high.

Here are only three or four meeting-houses belonging to our friends, and they lie very wide one from the other. The 29th we returned to Pedee; it rained all day, and all the next night; the waters rose to a great height, which prevented our travelling for several days: had another meeting here, which the Master owned, to our mutual comfort; let his name be praised forever! Our dear friends, Jeremiah Picket and William Lindley, who had been with us several weeks, left us at this place, and returned home; we parted in tears, but rejoicing in the love of God, and in unity and fellowship of the brotherhood. We visited Friends in their families to good satisfaction, there appearing a good disposition in many to receive the advice given, and it was a day of precious visitation to many of them. We stayed over their first-day meeting, which was the crown of the whole; the Lord's power wrought mightily, to the joy and consolation of our souls: may the remembrance of these moments long continue with me with living praises to the Fountain of all goodness!

Fourth-day, the 6th of second month, we had a meeting at Dunn's Creek, which was very small, a very mean disreputable meetinghouse, without either door or windows, and I thought much lacking in the life of true religion; nevertheless, we had free and open service amongst them. Many Friends in these distant parts have suffered considerable loss to themselves and families, in a religious sense, by removing from larger meetings to these back countries, where there are very few or no Friends. The following day we set forward, and when evening came on, betook ourselves to the woods; the night was clear and serene; we made ourselves a booth, a very good fire, and having sufficient provisions for ourselves and cattle, spent the night peaceful and well. Next day got to Richard Cox's, by whom we were kindly received: this night was remarkably tempestuous and stormy, very different from the night before, when we lay in the woods. We crossed over many rivers and creeks, and through bad and dangerous swamps, in coming to this place, but were wonderfully preserved and helped to get through them all, for which my soul was made truly thankful. Second-day, the 11th, travelled on till evening, and again lodged in the woods: it was a remarkably wet time, but the reward of obedience was more than amply sufficient for the fatigues of the night. The morning more moderate; we dried our wet clothes by a large fire, which we kept burning all night, and mounted about daybreak.

The 28th had a meeting at Wells, which was very large, and I believe edifying to many, praised be the Lord for it, who teaches our hands to war, and our fingers to fight, and gives the victory. This was the last meeting we had in Carolina. I underwent much spiritual suffering, because of the lukewarmness and indifference of many professors here and hereaway. May the Lord, if it be his will, bless the labours of his servants, and cause many people to bring forth fruits fit for repentance!

The roads are very bad in the lower parts of this province, very watery, with swamps and quicksands in abundance, which make it difficult travelling both for man and horse without being mired. The country produces very many pines, which are of great height and bulk, from which turpentine is extracted; from these trees also is obtained great quantities of tar. But what struck my mind with greater astonishment was to behold the great fall of trees, which was general for more than one hundred and fifty miles in

length, occasioned by a violent storm of wind and rain, which is far beyond what my pen is able to describe. To see so large a tract of land covered with fallen trees bespoke desolation, and my mind was affected and impressed with great solemnity.

[After passing into Virginia, where at Petersburg he rested and wrote the following letter to his wife, he remarks:] Virginia is a very thriving government, pretty thickly inhabited, amongst whom are abundance of Negro slaves. Few Friends but what have some of them, though many are disposed to make way for their liberty as opportunity offers. The woods abound with a variety of trees, as pines, hickories, oaks of several kinds, poplars and walnut, etc. The soil is very good, and air pleasant: a great deal of tobacco and Indian corn is raised in this province, which employs great numbers of Negro slaves.

Petersburg, in Virginia, 14th of Third month, 1771.

My dear wife,

I have not yet received any letters from you, nor any of my relations or friends in Europe, which I much long for, being upwards of eight months since I left my own habitation.

Since I wrote from Beaverdam I have continued visiting meetings in Virginia, North and South Carolina, and find myself supported beyond what I could expect; meetings lie very wide in many parts, some from forty to eighty miles and upwards from each other, and this for several weeks together. The work of the Lord is truly great, and no man is able to carry it on but as the Lord is pleased to afford strength, and make way in the hearts of the people for the reception of that good he sees fit to communicate; and though there is a state of obduracy in some, yet there is a tenderness in many, who drink in the Gospel rain with joy and rejoicing, and who I hope will in due time make noble plants in the Lord's vineyard. We are followed from meeting to meeting by many of all ranks of people, and I think my companion has great place amongst them, and I do think the great and good Master has richly qualified him for his work and service; he preaches with authority and power, and has a great reach over the audience, and in private families continues to have good service. He is of a humble, kind disposition, not difficult to please at table or with lodgings, but in all states learns to be content; in religious meetings very considerate to his companion, as also loving and kind to me out of meetings, which is very uniting, and the more so as I think his ministry sound, lively, and much to my edification and comfort: I trust we are agreeable companions to each other. We sometimes think, for the service sake it might be as well if we were to part, but I believe it will not be till we get back again to Philadelphia, if then.

On third-day, the 8th of first month, I received a bad kick from my horse, and was forced to be led into the house by my companion. I hope ever to esteem it a great favour that my leg was not broken, it was very much bruised: I rested about an hour, and afterwards rode about twenty miles further that day, but endured much pain. The next day rode about thirty-five miles to a Friend's house, who did the best they could for me; had a meeting there the next day to pretty

good satisfaction, but yet my leg was very painful. We set forward the next day for Fredericksburg, about seventy miles, which we rode in two days, and lodged one night in the woods, near to a rivulet of water, and a tent which we made of pine trees. The evening was very favourable, and we made ourselves as comfortable as we could: had sufficient provision for ourselves and horses, being four in number. We set forward pretty early, but found, notwithstanding my care, I had taken cold in my leg, and I travelled in much pain the greatest part of the day. At night got into good quarters, called Wateree, where I took rest, having something of a feverish disorder attending me, and let my companion go forward to the next meeting, called Bush River, about eighty miles, the furthest meeting southerly, about seven hundred miles from Philadelphia. I am now waiting his return, which I expect this evening, and being much better, I hope I shall be enabled to join him in the service, for I have much unity with him.

I see by the newspaper that many evils seem to threaten poor England, which probably may more nearly affect me if I should live some time hence. But I hope I shall be enabled to put my trust and confidence in Him, who has hitherto been my fortress and safe hiding place, and shall cheerfully submit to his dispensations in joy and in suffering, saying, in a state of resignation, "Not my will but yours be done," who can, if He please, work deliverance in time of great danger. In my companion's absence, my mind was brought under great exercise, lest by not visiting the meeting my companion went to, I should fall short of my religious duty. I do not remember that I ever underwent a greater combat, but at length being wholly resigned, though in much bodily weakness, my mind grew easier, and though willing rather to go than not, was not permitted.

My companion now returned from said place, much hurt from a fall with his horse, and rested some days, says he hardly thinks it would have been practicable in my weak state to have got through at any rate, and so said those who were with him, which helped to confirm me that I was in my place in not going. Oh! that I might but be preserved in doing that which is right, and from forwardly doing anything that should in any wise bring dishonour to the great Name and his precious truth, and wound my own soul. Am now so far on my journey as Petersburg in Virginia, and am a little comforted, inasmuch as I hear there are letters at John Pemberton's, and he waits to forward them to me.

My dear children, father, brothers, sisters, and near kindred, I am filled with a love towards you beyond expression, and to your children, all of whom I should be glad to see in the Lord's time, if it be his holy will; and oh! if that time should again be permitted to be, that it may be with an increase of heavenly improvement. But on the contrary, it would be great sorrow to my mind, that any of us, great or small, should have departed from the Truth, and gone backward and not forward.

My dear love salutes you all, the nearest in kindred first and so on to all, and all the families throughout the whole meeting. I am, through the Lord's goodness in a good degree of health,

which I esteem a favour, having lain many nights in the woods: I hope I have got the worst of the journey over respecting the outward travel it is likely to be six weeks before I can reach Philadelphia. I remain in great affection your loving husband,

Joseph Oxley.

On second-day, the 25th of third month, we crossed Potomac River in a boat, being three miles wide; and next day rode to Piscataway, a small but pretty town in Maryland, within a few miles of a navigable river; from there on to Patuxent, Indian Spring, Elkridge, and Baltimore, which is a very pretty place; has a court-house and market-house, a navigable river comes up to the town, and it is a place of considerable traffic. Fourth-day, 3rd of fourth month, had a meeting at Patapsco, at which I was silent; a large gathering of other people, amongst whom my companion had, I trust, seasonable service. Fifth-day rode to Gunpowder, which is the largest meeting I have seen in all Maryland, both my company and myself sat through this meeting in silence: it was a time of close exercise to us both. Sixth-day we had a little meeting at Little Falls. Seventh-day, not being free to go further without returning to Gunpowder, rode to Mordecai Price's, whose wife was daughter to Ann Moore, an eminent minister of the Gospel, in which capacity she made a visit to England in the year 1760, to general good satisfaction. She was with us at this time, as well as others of her children. First-day rode to Gunpowder; it was a very large meeting; we had each an opportunity, as also had Ann Moore, but for all this, the state of the meeting was low, and not open. Our said friend Ann Moore, went with us after meeting to dinner; she had a seasonable opportunity at table in supplication. Third-day to Bush River, fourth-day to Deer Creek: many of other professions came to this meeting, and very many Negros, which much increased the meeting; the largest meetings are not always the most favoured, yet it was a time of love to the honest-hearted in Israel. We accompanied a Friend home, who is a minister, as is also his wife. He related to me, that when my uncle Edmund Peckover was in that country on a religious visit, he was high-sheriff for the county, and one of his uncles at the same time a justice of the peace; and hearing of a meeting which was to be at Deer Creek, inclined to be at it, though they were in attendance at court, which was then sitting, and his uncle the sitting justice. Nevertheless, excusing themselves to the court, they two, with another of his uncles, came to this meeting, and so effectual was the preaching of the Gospel that day, that they were all convinced, and became serviceable members of our Society.

Maryland is for the most part hilly and stony; the soil strong and fertile; its produce much like that of Virginia. Seventh-day crossed the Susquehanna River, a mile over, in a very bad boat, very leaky and dangerous, into Pennsylvania; lodged at Joshua Brown's, a Friend in the ministry. First-day, the 15th, had a meeting at Little Britain. Second-day, one at West Nottingham, which was tolerably large and satisfactory. We were met here by our worthy friend, that good man, John Churchman, an eminent minister of the Gospel, whose services are well known to many in England, Wales, Scotland, Ireland, Holland, Germany, etc.; his labour was great, instructing, convincing, and edifying to many, by whom he is had in sweet remembrance. Dear John Pemberton of Philadelphia, accompanied him a great part of the time, a young man of a sweet disposition, sober and religious, of a humble and meek spirit; as he was rich in earthly possessions, so he was a lover of hospitality; he communicated freely to the neces-

sities of the poor and needy, both of our own and other societies, a generous subscriber on public occasions for general good. He was an enemy to slave-keeping, but a friend to slaves. During the course of his journey, his mouth was opened in a ministerial capacity, in which he moved with great caution, and spoke of the things which he knew by experience. His conduct was consistent with the doctrine he preached, and recommended to others.

From West Nottingham we continued with our above-mentioned friend John Churchman, to East Nottingham, the place of his residence, where we tarried all night. Third-day we had a meeting there, which was very large, chiefly of our own Society; it was mercifully favoured with the overshadowings of Divine love, to the tendering of the hearts of many, which the good old man afterwards acknowledged with fear and reverence: let the Great Name be praised for all these benefits! Fourth-day at Londongrove: Fifth-day at Newgarden, a large congregation, and I trust the meeting was profitable to many, being owned by the Master with that love and life that make glad the heritage of God, unto whom be praises forever! Sixth-day a large precious meeting at Bradford. Seventh-day went to Susanna Lightfoot's, who is well known both in Ireland, from which she removed, and England, for her many labours and acceptable services in those parts, and also in America, where she now resides, in great reputation.

[The editor trusts the following extract from James Gough's MS. Journal, will be acceptable to his readers.]

“I was accompanied by my dear friend Susanna Lightfoot, then Hatton, to such meetings as she could get out to attend. She was a servant to Ruth Courtney, and in that station accompanied her mistress in a religious visit to North America in 1737, and there first appeared as a minister. On their return, they landed at Cork; Susanna being then eighteen or nineteen years old. The work of the Lord appeared to me to be deeply rooted in her: I was much affected with her inwardness, fervency, and tenderness of spirit out of meetings, as well as her awful utterance in meetings.

Some time after they had been at home, her mistress took her to the west of England in 1740, and made her not only wash their linen constantly, but supply with her own hands the horses with hay and oats, and rub them with straw several times a day, and would let no other Friend's servants intermeddle. Her public services in meetings were generally acceptable to Friends, and they pitied her. I heard, that on this journey, a young man in good circumstances took such a liking to her, as to make her an offer in marriage, and that she replied, that she was under engagement to one in her native country. After her return, in 1742, she married Joseph Hatton, a linen weaver. Robert Richardson coming to the Half-year's meeting at Dublin, collected for them from a few Friends about thirty pounds, which enabled them to open a huckster's shop in Lisburn. While she was capable of attending it, the shop seemed likely to do well, but having twins a second time, and having them both to nurse, as soon as she could inspect the state of affairs, she found them neglected and impaired, which fixed such a weight on her mind, that she went herself to the creditors, and desired them to come and seize what was left, hoping there

would be enough to pay them, though little or nothing over. Hereupon a Friend in Lurgan, having about three years to come of a lease of a little land and a cabin upon it at a moderate rent, out of regard to her, offered her the remainder of his lease. Here then, in a poor plight, they moved. When I was in Ulster in 1749, their time on this spot was almost expired. I was often at Lurgan on this journey, passing and repassing, and I daily went to see her, and always thought I got good by it, I ever found her in such an excellent frame of mind.

Her husband kept two looms going, and she kept two cows, and they saved money; but seeing no prospect of any land to be taken thereabout, except at an exorbitant rent, they concluded to remove themselves and children to America, and while I was there applied for a certificate: but several Friends were so affected with the thoughts of her leaving them, that they contributed their cares and endeavours to get her resettled amongst them. Yet trials and troubles were to attend her. Sometimes she had not a bit of food for herself or her children, nor a farthing to procure any; but when reduced to the last extremity, and ashamed to make her case known, sudden relief would come in from one quarter or another. Besides, she underwent harsh and severe persecution for her testimony to plainness, against pride, and the violation of our Christian testimony, which was required of her as a duty. Through all these things, she grew brighter and more excellent in her ministry. Her situation continued in this destitute way, until it was discovered by Friends of Leinster and Munster, on a national visit.

She had then several invitations; but her way opened to Waterford, where she was assisted by her friends to remove herself and family. She left Ulster, much regretted by the religious part of Friends in that province, amongst whom she had been a bright and excellent instrument.

Not one in those large meetings rose up with that Divine authority and dignity that she did. In this journey, I was at two province meetings in Lurgan, after which Robert Richardson and I went to see Susanna; we found many Friends of the better sort in her cabin:—a sweet silence arose amongst us, after which she preached the Gospel to us with such penetrating energy, that there were few or any dry eyes present. After her coming to settle in Waterford, she visited Carlow, Mountmelick, etc. A Friend put four guineas into my hand, and desired me to present her with them, which I did; but she refused to accept them, telling me, she had others offered before in that journey, but dared not receive them, being under no present necessity. Her children grew up, and many Friends conceived such an affection and esteem for her, that her sons were readily taken as apprentices gratis, and her daughter or daughters taken under the care of another rich Friend. Her husband died in 1759, and she travelled to visit Friends in America. In the interim, a rich Friend of Waterford died, and left her fifteen pounds per annum during her life. After her return from America, Thomas Lightfoot, a Friend in good esteem, followed her to Waterford, and married her.”

First-day, the 21st, was at Uwchland, which was very large, and to good satisfaction; second-day came to Philadelphia, where I received many letters from my wife and children, brother John Oxley, sister

Ann Hawks, John Gurney, and Sarah Grafton; these were the first from home I had received since I had been on the continent, being upwards of nine months, which made me very anxious to know the contents. Those from my dear wife and children were most pleasing, giving me an account of their welfare, and from which I was able to form some idea of the precious visitation that had attended them during my absence, which was much to their and my comfort and satisfaction. These letters also brought me the sorrowful tidings of dear sister Elizabeth Oxley's death, which was no small affliction to me. Not being very well, on seventh-day I went with my friend Benjamin Swett to his house at Burlington, his wife as well as himself in the ministry; they were indeed, affectionately loving and kind to me, and I was much better for being there.

Philadelphia, 26th of Fourth month, 1771.

My dearly beloved wife,

I returned to this city the 23rd inst. from our long journey southerly, at which place I met with sundry letters from my dear relations and friends, which I had been greatly longing for, it being ten months since I left my native country, and these the first letters received on the continent. I think my last to you was from Petersburg, and four I have now received from you, all which are filled with so much good, that I think mine to you on this paper will still leave me very short of paying you what you justly merit. Being so fully satisfied of my incapacity herein, I will turn the eye of my mind inward, and pray to him that hears in secret, that he may be pleased to reward you openly, and more largely and fully than heretofore, which will far excel anything I can do or write, as light excels darkness; and, however the lot of my inheritance may be on this side the water, I am certain yours is in a good land. I judge from the various testimonies I have from under your own seal, as also from several others, and from the secret evidence I have in myself, that you live in a good land, flowing as with milk and honey; for which my spirit reverently bows in contrition and in thankfulness, to acknowledge the descendings of his heavenly goodness, mercy and truth, who is become the guardian of the beloved of my bosom, the feeder and teacher and preserver of the wife of one, who is in his own estimation least of all, and unworthy! I am separated from all my nearest connections, and am made to endure suffering upon suffering, even unto death: but of these, there are various kinds; some of which are occasioned through our own folly and misconduct in temporal things; such as these, if rightly and properly attended to, would lead to better order and regulation. There is also a suffering of another kind, of a religious nature, but for lack of being religious enough, the creature slain and self become of no reputation; while in this state, the creature is not sufficiently brought into subjection to the will and mind of the Greater, but remains in a state of disobedience and unfaithfulness to his will. This is a suffering, which neither you nor I are altogether strangers to, but it is a righteous and just judgment upon those that know the Master's will and do it not, and such indeed are worthy of many stripes; such unfaithfulness occasions Divine withdrawings, which to the pious soul are hard to bear; but are expedient to prevent in future such disloyalty, whereby we become robbers of the churches, and dishonourers of God. Therefore let all such as have received their

gifts and qualifications, stand in the Divine counsel, and minister in that ability which the Great Master is pleased to give; and in so doing, they will become of the number of the righteous, who hold on their way, and being of clean hands will grow stronger and stronger. This is a faithfulness acceptable in the sight of God, and is to the edification of the churches; its reward is peace, and the effect of it righteousness, quietness, and assurance forever.

There is also another sort of suffering, of a different nature, though spiritual, more sensibly experienced by those that are seeking above all things the heavenly kingdom, and to stir up the minds of the children of men in a like godly concern: an arduous outward labour, added to an inward exercise, is oftentimes the lot of these, who are most devoted to the cause of God; and they are more or less affected, according to the state of the churches. It is from a sense of man's wickedness, his wilfulness, his sins and transgressions, which are manifold, and contrary to that pure, holy witness in him, from time to time testified of by those who from living experience can speak of the goodness and mercy of God. But how little avails it in the hearts of the people generally; they are grown into such a state of stupefaction, as to love darkness rather than light; and it is because of these thoughtless, heedless souls, that many are brought into this state of suffering and great trial. Yet as we abide properly under it without shrinking, it will tend more and more to our purification and refinement. But what are all these sufferings to those of the holy martyrs and faithful servants of God in former ages? There is One, who by the turning of his hand can and does at his pleasure make our wilderness like Eden, and our desert and solitary places as the garden of God: therefore, whatsoever my sufferings may have been, inward or outward, I dare not, I do not repine, at the dispensations of Divine Providence, whose visitation is so mercifully extended to you, my dear wife, and my children, which I trust is more to us than thousands of gold and silver.

It has been matter of comfort to me to be informed of your and family's health from time to time, and I may say so of myself except colds, and at times fatigue in riding. I am pretty much fallen away with long travel and exercise, and my spirits sunk, as you know how it was once with me; but in all things, my dear, I am easy and resigned, and am learning contentment in every state. There is a probability of my companion and I parting, as we seem to be led different ways; he thinks to take the Eastern Shore of Maryland, my mind seems to draw towards New England, and to be at the Yearly Meeting at Flushing, if it please Providence so to enable me. William Hunt, a ministering Friend, comes by this vessel, whom I have mentioned in former letters; he is now in this city. Our friend S. Morris, also before mentioned, intending for your parts, has had a long time of indisposition, both inwardly and outwardly, is now better, and has revived her concern to the Monthly Meeting of Philadelphia. Her companion is Elizabeth Smith of Burlington, at which place I now am, as is also S. Morris; they are two weakly women, but in good reputation in conduct and ministry. I was at Burlington meeting yesterday, where the Master was graciously pleased to own us, to mutual comfort and edification. I left my companion in town, being somewhat indisposed.

I am at the house of Benjamin Swett, whom you probably may remember in England: I rest here a few days to recruit body and spirit, to write letters, etc. I have received a very kind affectionate epistle from dear John Gurney, which I intend answering; my kind love to him and all his family. If I am preserved in health, I shall not loiter away my time, but not being so strong as some who have passed before me, I take it more leisurely: some have travelled too fast, and thereby have rendered themselves and service not so useful, as if more time had been taken. At present I think little about home, or whether I have a home, otherwise than where I am led by my great and good Master. So with my very dear love to Friends in general, and if you have freedom to all the women Friends of your Monthly Meeting in a collective capacity, whom I love in the Lord Jesus Christ; grace, mercy, and peace be with them and you; let them know I am well, and fully resigned to the disposal of the Divine will.

From your loving husband,

Joseph Oxley.

First-day, 28th, was at Burlington meeting; there were also from Philadelphia Sarah Morris and Joyce Benezet, two valuable ministering Friends. Deborah Morris was also an attendant on her aunt, whose respect and kindness to me was not a little, I loved her much for the Truth's sake. We had two good comfortable meetings, being owned by the Master, to the increasing of our love to him and one unto another. Fourth-day had a meeting at Mount Holly; fifth-day was at Burlington week-day meeting; also their select meeting of ministers and elders, which in some part was well, but not throughout. I thought there was lacking more of that love and unity which should harmonize and cement Friends together in those religious stations. Rode to Philadelphia, and on seventh-day attended their Quarterly Meeting of ministers and elders, which was large. William Hunt, an able minister of the Gospel from North Carolina, was here, and said much in this meeting. This Friend had it long on his mind to pay a religious visit to Friends in different parts of Europe, and all things being in readiness for his embarkation, I accompanied him a part of the way to Chester, where he was to go on board, and returned in the evening. First-day, 5th of fifth month, attended all the three meetings in the city. Second-day came on the Quarterly Meeting for business, which was entered upon after a solid meeting for worship, and conducted with becoming condescension and brotherly affection.

CHAPTER X.

My companion and myself having travelled in much love and unity, through a long desolate wilderness, now finding our minds drawn to different parts of the continent, for our own peace, and we hoped for the more general service, we in the same love agreed to part, and requested the company of several Friends on the occasion, to commune with them thereon: and after a solid time of waiting, Friends expressed their approbation and unity therewith, believing, according to their feelings, that it was the

pointing of Truth, and they were well pleased and satisfied with our conduct in calling them together, and hoped others would follow our example under the like circumstances.

[The following is an extract of a letter from William Brown to Mary Oxley.]

Philadelphia, 6th of Fifth month, 1771.

Dear friend, Mary Oxley,

It is in my mind to visit you with a few lines, to give you an account of your dear husband, who with his companion is now with us at our Quarterly Meeting, they being returned from the southern parts of this continent, which we think the most difficult part of their work as to travelling and entertainment for man and horse.

It was with me at their meeting in this city, to give a caution about joining as companions through their religious labours in this country; but to that they both seemed to lend a deaf ear; for I feared they might give more time and place to each other, than the nature of their gifts and the necessity of their labour would admit of: for their Master fails not to furnish them with his hidden treasures to deal out to the churches, and though your honourable companion thinks himself a little man every way, yet it is the pleasure of Him that called him to the work of the ministry, and separated him to this part of the service, to give him part with the great, and a name with his princes in Israel. I affectionately salute you, who am your loving friend,

William Brown.

Third-day attended their youth's meeting the public service fell on Sarah Morris, Samuel Nottingham, Isaac Andrews, and my companion: I thought it a favoured meeting. Sixth-day had a meeting at Plainfield, where the Lord was pleased to own his people with his life-giving power and presence, to his praise and our rejoicing. Seventh-day at Woodbridge, Elizabeth Morris and myself had each opportunities, to the stirring up those who were careless and indifferent about the attendance of religious meetings, and of that worship which is to be performed in spirit and in truth.

First-day, 12th, was at two meetings at Rahway, both which were large, open and satisfactory. Elizabeth Morris had good service; the Gospel was preached with life and power, blessed be His name, who is still continuing such gifts to his churches. Second-day rode to New York; fourth-day crossed over to Long Island; fifth-day had a meeting at Newtown; in the evening rode to Matthew Franklin's, a ministering Friend who attended us to most of the meetings on the island. At Bethphage we visited a poor woman Friend, whose name was Clement Willis, who was taken ill when she was about nineteen years of age, with the rheumatism, soon after which she was confined to her bed, even until the time I saw her, which she then told me, in the presence of many other Friends, was thirty eight years. She is so emaciated and reduced as to be an object of wonder to those that see her; she is so decrepit as scarcely to be able to move one joint, or any part about her, and has not seen her hands for very many years. She has almost

outlived all her pains, which are now centered in weakness; that she continues to live, is marvellous, and through all her sore afflictions and trials praises the Lord for his blessings to her soul, lies in great composure of mind, and wholly resigned to his pure will and pleasure. The time we sat by her bedside was one of renewal of heavenly favour to her and many present, which was acknowledged in humble supplication, with thanksgiving and praise to Him that makes hard things easy, and bitter things sweet to the afflicted soul. We parted in much love and sympathy, and went to our lodgings at Samuel Willis's.

At Flushing attended their Yearly Meeting, where were also Elizabeth Morris and William Horn from Pennsylvania, and Timothy Davis and Patience Brayton from New England. These meetings were resorted to by many besides those of our Society; I hope all was well, yet not so open as I have known some smaller gatherings. In the meeting for discipline there appeared a considerable defection, from one quarter in particular, refusing to answer the queries in the form recommended by the Yearly Meeting of London. This was a matter very exercising to the right-minded, and a committee of weighty and judicious Friends were appointed on that service to visit them, which I hope may tend to the honour of Truth, and strengthen the feeble of the flock. Second-day the meeting for discipline sat again, which was large and solemn, far excelling any of the former. Sundry affairs were spoken to in that authority which Truth gives, and Israel prevailed that day. A number of Friends were chosen to visit those who kept Negroes in slavery, in order that they might be set at liberty. Our friend Israel Pemberton from Philadelphia, attended this meeting, and was particularly instrumental in forwarding this good work of visiting the masters of these poor enslaved Africans, which in the end will I hope prove successful. These meetings being over, I finished my visit to the island, which, however it might prove to my friends, was very much to my satisfaction and peace.

Benjamin Swett to Mary Oxley.

Burlington, 5th of Seventh month, 1771.

Dear friend,

As every instance of attention to you, though from a distant junior brother, during the absence of the partner of your life, may have a tendency to strengthen your mind, under so trying a circumstance, I have engaged to inform you, that early in the fifth month I accompanied him to New York and Long Island, and we were at several meetings, particularly the Yearly Meeting at Flushing; and I think I may say his service was attended with evident demonstration that it proceeded from the influence of the Minister of the sanctuary and true tabernacle, which God has pitched and not man. Being thus called to act under so great a Master, I hope the time of his absence will be alleviated by the reflection thereof; and I make no doubt but he that promised to be a Father to the fatherless, will abundantly fulfil his gracious promise to the children of my dear friend, during the privation of so tender a parent, and that He will be as a husband to you in this your temporary state of widowhood. As I am convinced you are well acquainted with the proper place of waiting for a renewal of your strength, and increase of that patience which alone

can reconcile you to your present situation, I would not presume to dictate anything on that head; but allow me to suggest a sincere wish, not only on your behalf, but the children of my dear friend—that the Lord may be pleased to grant a double portion of his Spirit to rest on you respectively; and that when he may be pleased to unite the family again, it may be with an increase of Divine favour and wisdom, whereby you may all reflect upon his absence as a time of improvement in the things of God, and as I know the encouraging prospect of the state of your family, transmitted by you, has greatly comforted his mind, I doubt not the fruition of that account will afford him still greater satisfaction.

I am with the united love of my wife, though personally a stranger, to you and your family, your affectionate friend and well-wisher,

Benjamin Swett, Jr.

Third-day returned to New York in company with other Friends, at which place was a meeting appointed for our friends, Timothy Davis and William Home. Joshua Thompson, near Salem, in New Jersey, a worthy experienced elder, joined me, having come from his own home to Flushing with that intent, with a certificate of recommendation, and he proved to be a choice companion, and very serviceable in the discipline of the church.

Fifth-day, 30th of fifth month, we embarked for Rhode Island: the New York Friends were so kind as to send a young man along with us, whose company was both useful and pleasant, his name was William Rickman. We had a pleasant passage and landed at Newport, the principal town on the island, but old; and here they build their houses almost altogether of wood. They have a very commodious haven for ships, also a House of Assembly which sits as occasion requires. We lodged at our ancient and worthy friend, Joseph Jacob's, and next day were at both their meetings, which were very large of Friends, and a great many of the towns-people; the morning meeting was silent, but not so the afternoon. There are many in profession with us at this place, but scarcely a minister amongst them: a very large commodious meeting-house, with two tiers of galleries round, except over that of the public Friends, and there only one. Second-day had a meeting at Portsmouth, and then went to Jacob Mott's, an ancient Friend upwards of fourscore, and had a sitting in his family to edification.

Attended their Yearly Meeting for New England at Newport, of which I have nothing extraordinary to remark, save that the meetings were large. First-day, the 16th, the morning meeting very large, all the galleries filled, and it was a favoured meeting. Peter Davis, an ancient and honourable Friend and minister, attended this meeting, though in the ninety-second year of his age, and I thought he preached the Gospel with Christian boldness, and stood unshaken in the cause of his great Master, and the meeting concluded in supplication and praise to Him that lives forever and ever! On second-day were held two meetings for discipline, which were expressive of brotherly kindness. Friends uniting their endeavours to afford help where need required.

Our select meeting was adjourned to the conclusion of this, and was to good satisfaction, and so these

meetings ended, and Friends parted in great love and peace. Sixth-day had a large meeting at Joseph Rotch's at Bedford, amongst a seeking people, who were very attentive to the testimony of Truth; the good old man, Peter Davis, had good service, and the meeting concluded in supplication and praising the Lord for his goodness to us this day.

[In a letter to his brother John Oxley, he remarks:]

Peter Davis was born at Dover in Old England, and was brought over into America in a state of infancy; he now resides at a place called Westerly, about thirty miles from Newport in Rhode Island. He visited some parts of Old England in the year 1749, is an able minister of the Gospel, being sound, living, and his labours to edification. Though in the ninety-second year of his age, he mounts his horse very actively, without taking advantage of rising ground. His company to me has been very pleasing: we are just returned from a very large meeting at Bedford, in which the Lord got himself the victory, and his name was praised, who is over all and above all, worthy forever and ever! I have written you a little, my dear brother, though I owe you much, and love you more: I might write you many sheets and quires of paper, yet owe you much, and love you more. May Infinite Wisdom keep us and ours in this mutual love, happiness and joy, which neither pen can fully describe, nor tongue utter, this is a love which remains beyond time, and is everlasting! Though I am yet in the world, my mind is redeemed from it, and desire to have no more fellowship with it, no more to be a partaker of its cares or its joys. Once more my love to my endeared spouse, to my beloved children, whom the Lord in his love has blessed, to your dear self, etc., from your affectionate brother,

Joseph Oxley.

On third-day went on board a vessel, and set sail for Nantucket; we passed a place called Wood's Hole, near which is a strait so narrow as not to be safe for two ships to go abreast of each other; the rocks were considerably above the water, and our vessel so near on each side as that a person might jump from the vessel on the rocks. It was proposed by the captain and passengers that we should go into harbour that night, but I was of a different judgment, so kept out at sea: the night was very foggy, as was the next morning, till about the middle of the day, so that our captain and passengers were well pleased that we kept out, for had we gone into harbour, the foggy weather would not have admitted our coming out next morning, and so might have been disappointed in attending some part of the Yearly Meeting at Nantucket, which was our principal view in going there at this time.

[Fifth-day wrote the following letter to his wife.]

Nantucket, 2nd of Seventh month, 1771.

My dear and loving wife, I take up my pen in order to essay something in answer to your two last letters received at Flushing on Long Island, dated the 5th and 20th of the second month; the former giving me a very pleasing and satisfactory account of your and our family's welfare, also

of the kind visit of our dear and worthy friend Robert Willis, whose labours of love amongst you have been to your comfort and edification; likewise of the growth and prosperity of Truth in general, and in particular amongst my own children. Such pleasing accounts, my dear, create reverence and fear, humility and lowliness of mind, to approach with thankful acknowledgements the great, good and all-wise Creator, without whose presence we are not, nor can be, perfectly happy.

I rejoice with you, my dear and welcome messenger of these glad tidings: you are a mother in Israel, a guardian to many begotten of God and made precious, being bound to the testimony, and your faithfulness in the great Master's precious cause productive of much good fruit, better than the increase of corn, wine or oil, which are great and good blessings but perish with the using; but the pure unchangeable Truth waxes not old as does a garment, but as its nature throughout is purity, so it preserves all those pure that walk in it to the end. I think, my dear, both you and I have cause to be thankful, and have great encouragement to hold on our way, and in order to it let us walk in fear and trembling, and not seek after the praise and exaltation of men, but as we dwell in a state of humiliation we shall dwell safely and in a teachable state, and improve more and more in religious experience, to our own and others' good. Since I last wrote you from Philadelphia, you will be informed of my visits from there to Long Island, Rhode Island, etc., by letters to my dear children, and lastly to my brother. I am through Divine favour in good health, a blessing which I covet may be the enjoyment of my dear wife, my children, relations and friends.

My dearest companion,

I have now to notice your affectionate address of the 20th of second month, which was a mixture of sorrow and joy, but as I had heard of the departure of dear sister Oxley, so I was the better prepared to receive it in that full manner as represented by you. It was an afflicting circumstance, a great loss to dear brother and his children, as also to ourselves, yet no great surprise to me, as I thought I should scarcely see her again when I parted with her. I am well pleased that brother is so well supported under it, as also that she herself was so given up to the trying dispensation of the Divine will, and as she was willing, so I believe she also was ready to be offered up, which I greatly desire may be the case with all of us, when we meet with the like summons, that our end, as I trust hers was, may be eternal life.

I have found my travels, since I have left Philadelphia, much easier than my southern journey, both as to the outward and inward, also as to health of body and peace of mind; and however little I have got for the little I have done, there remains no condemnation: when anything of dissatisfaction would arise, it is judged down with the remembrance of that exhortation, "Be content with your wages." I love the people wherever I go, for the work sake, and trust I am in part beloved of them; but of all who have travelled in these parts, none exceeds dear Rachel Wilson, whose labours of love to and amongst all people have gained general esteem: and many

there are who have been convinced through her ministry, and others renewedly strengthened thereby. In New England there are but few ministers, and still less of faithful labourers, on which account let us ask of Him who can alone send more faithful labourers into his harvest.

Since I left the city, I understand my kind friend John Pemberton has been very ill, but now is better; have had a letter from him in which he takes notice of a letter he received from my virtuous religious wife, which he expresses was much to his comfort and satisfaction: he shows himself upon every occasion affectionately loving and kind to me. I am much pleased, my dear, that we feel ourselves so happy in our present separation, wherein our love has not abated, but in the Truth grown stronger; and our resignedness and faithfulness I believe has so wrought as to bring our children to be more in love with it; and this is my great comfort, my joy and rejoicing, when at times I am almost ready to despair of ever seeing my native country again, that there remains a hope of spiritual survivors in some of my posterity, who may with greater dignity fill up my place when I may be removed. Let us so continue to live in a state greatly given up and resigned to the will of God, that of a truth we may say with the apostle, "To me to live is Christ and to die is gain."

Remember me very affectionately to all, beginning at the house of Joseph, to his brethren, and so on. Should I be favoured once more to get to Philadelphia, I should think the greatest danger over respecting health; but I trust in Him who is able to keep and preserve both body and soul.

Think of me, my dear wife, relations and friends, as I do of you more often than the day; and in a state of resignedness to the Divine will, do I once more salute my dear wife and affectionate children; yours till death.

Joseph Oxley.

Sixth-day opened their Yearly Meeting, first holding a select meeting at eight in the morning, which was very small; at eleven a public meeting for worship, which was exceedingly large of our own Society, and a great many of the neighbourhood. I think the meeting-house is the largest of any I have seen in America or elsewhere; the meeting for the most part was silent. Seventh-day, another general meeting for religious worship only, which was still and quiet, becoming the occasion. First-day, the 30th, two public meetings for worship were held, which were more open, very large, profitable and good: bless the Lord for his goodness and mercy! Second-day at eight, a select meeting, which though small was owned by the Great Master, to the consolation and strength of his little flock and family; at eleven another large public meeting for worship, which was mercifully favoured with a degree of the same life, by which an increase of heavenly love was experienced, and Gospel fellowship maintained and preserved.

At the close of this meeting was held their usual Monthly Meeting, which was large both of men and women, but, according to the answers to the queries, the state of the church was low in many places, and indifferent in various respects; yet there remained in some a holy concern for the prosperity of Truth:

after this meeting Friends parted in much brotherly love. I had many meetings in Friends' families, and visited the sick, in all which Truth favoured, and the hearts of many were made thankful. Sundry Friends came to our quarters at William Rotch's, in the evening of the last day we were with them, and after a time of solemn retirement, which tended to reunite and encourage to persevere in the way of truth and righteousness, we parted in much love and brokenness of spirit. I visited an ancient wealthy widow woman, Mehetabel Pollard, in her 79th year, who informed me that her mother, Mary Gardner, was the first white woman born on that island, also that her grandmother, Sarah Gardner, who died in the 93rd year of her age, left at the time of her death, children, grandchildren, great grandchildren, and great great grandchildren, five hundred and fifty-five. This island is said to be about fifteen miles long, and three or four broad; with little or no wood upon it; and is a level sandy country; its chief produce is Indian corn; and the inhabitants are mostly employed in the whale fishery, which is very considerable.

Third-day, 2nd of seventh month, between three and four o'clock in the morning, we took our solemn farewell of our dear landlord, his wife and family, whose kindness I hope to remember with a grateful mind, and embarked on board the same vessel that brought us.

Mary Callender, Amy Thurston, our dear friend C. Russel and his wife, with several other Friends, returned with us. After we had sailed, I queried with our friend M. Callender, how she fared, and if she apprehended herself clear of her service in the island; at which she was much cast down and wept, and finding her not easy, brought sorrow over many of our minds on her account, the ship being under sail with a fair gentle breeze. The unfaithfulness of our friend made our going very irksome, and we gladly would relieve her, but did not know how. After a time, we perceived at a considerable distance a boat with two sets of oars, double manned, coming from the shore, and as if she was making for our vessel, and gained upon us fast, and as they approached nearer, they gave signals of their wanting to come with us, which they did in a little time, having with them a pair of bags of our said sorrowful friend's, which were by mistake left behind. This gave a favourable opportunity for our dear friend to return, which she did, and Amy Thurston, who bore her company from home, returned with her. This providential circumstance wrought greatly to the delivering our minds out of much trouble: let it be a caution for all concerned Friends, that they discharge themselves faithfully in the Lord's service, and then the Lord will reward them with peace, but if otherwise, with trouble. So we parted in much love and tenderness, after giving some admonition and counsel toward promoting and encouraging faithfulness on future occasions.

We landed about noon at Falmouth; where we parted with Caleb Russel in much brokenness of spirit. Fifth-day rode to Sandwich, and attended their Monthly and Quarterly Meetings. Second-day set forward to Pembroke, and stopped at a place called Plymouth, a pretty large sea-port town, with wooden houses, and but indifferent accommodations. In our way, passed by one or two large rocks by the roadside, which were called by the Indians Sacrifice Rocks, which they suppose and believe were those rocks which were rent or cleft asunder at the time of the crucifixion of our Saviour, and it remains to be a custom and practice with these poor creatures, the Indians, that whenever they pass by these rocks, to lay either stick or stone thereon, in commemoration of that day, otherwise they think they shall not

return without some evil befalling them; and once a year they were used to assemble to make a sacrifice by fire of these offerings. Seventh-day went to Hampton Quarterly Meeting, which opened the same day with a select sitting, as is common in this country on this day of the week.

Second-day another select meeting, and afterwards the Quarterly Meeting for business, which was little more than answers to some few queries. There appeared great remissness in several respects, and a lack of faithfulness, by which spiritual worship and the discipline of the church is become too formal and dry, which is cause of mourning to Zion's travellers.

Sixth-day set forward for Falmouth, and first-day, 24th, had two meetings with them, which were held in the life and power of Him who rules in the hearts of his obedient children. There is a considerable body of Friends here, and many of their sober neighbours are pleased to attend our meetings, especially when they are visited by strangers. Second-day rode to a place called Casco, and took boat for Marriconeaque. In Casco bay are very many islands; it is generally said there are as many as there are days in the year: there are also a great many sharks in and about this place. We had a meeting with our friends at Marriconeaque, who are very few and I fear not so mindful as they ought to be; the testimony of Truth was open to reprove and call sinners to repentance and amendment of life: we spent the evening at Lemuel Jones's. Second-day had a meeting at Barrington, which was held in a barn; the people were many, and though I was very unwell, yet the Master strengthened the servant who spoke, to the praise of His own great name, and the meeting ended comfortably.

After meeting rode to Lee, and had a meeting there next day, and many people came to it of other professions, among whom were those called New Lights and their preacher. I was still ill with a disorder that reduced me low in body and mind, but abundantly strengthened in the Lord's blessed cause, and witnessed his holy presence to attend us, which gave strength to our endeavours; and we had a glorious meeting, to his praise and our edification.

Fourth-day had a meeting at Epping, to which came many of those called New Lights, Separatists and others. Some of these endeavour to outdo Friends in plainness of dress, the women not wearing any border to their caps, nor do they put their hair under their caps, nor allow themselves to wear any clothing that is dyed: the men also had white clothing from head to foot. They have set up a meeting of themselves, in the form and manner of Friends, and hold a Monthly Meeting, etc. One of them, a woman, appeared in this last meeting; what she said gave trouble to some; she was requested to be silent, but persisted till she was easy to sit down of her own accord, and afterward the meeting settled to better purpose.

Third-day had a meeting at Newbury, which was small and dull, but suitably ministered unto. We dined at our ancient friend, Daniel Sawyer's, whose wife is an acceptable minister, and had some service in the aforesaid meeting; in the afternoon set forward to Salem, twenty-five miles; in our way there rode through Newburyport, the place where George Whitfield departed this life a little before. He was a man in great estimation with many for his unwearied labours and services, both in England and America, as well as in several other places, and his removal occasioned much lamentation and sorrow amongst his

followers, which he justly merited.

Fifth-day rode to Boston, it was their Monthly Meeting, which was heavy and dull, much unsettled by frequent going out and coming in; some few of the town's people came in, but I had not liberty to open my mouth amongst them by way of testimony. An ancient Friend at Casco, James Winslow, told me, his father would often be telling him of the execution and sufferings of our dear Friends at Boston; that his father was at that time apprenticed in that town, and saw them all hanged. I saw the place near to where they suffered, which is now pretty much hid by buildings. I have also to remark, what before I have read and also been informed, that whereas before our friends were put to death in this place, the ground used to produce very good crops of wheat, even very near to the town; but ever since that time there has not been any of account. Benjamin Bagnall, an ancient and honourable Friend at Boston, at whose house I lodged, told me that one of his neighbours related to him, that three years before, he had a pleasing prospect of a very good crop of wheat, but when it came into the ear it mildewed and came to little or nothing. I also made my observation, while on my religious travels in those parts in the seventh month, 1771, that there was no wheat growing within twenty miles of the town of Boston.

At their last Yearly Meeting, held at Newport on Rhode Island, for New England, a proposition was made to address the governor, who was then lately entered into office, which after weighty consideration was agreed to, and is as follows:

To Thomas Hutchinson, Governor-in-chief in and over the Province of the Massachusetts bay, in New England. The Address of the people called Quakers, at their General or Yearly Meeting for worship, and transacting the affairs of our Society, held on Rhode Island for New England, by adjournments from the 13th to the 17th day of the sixth month, 1771, inclusive.

May it please the Governor,

As many of us have had an opportunity of observing your conduct in the various public stations in government which you have hitherto sustained, and it appearing to us that you made justice and equity the rule of your actions; your being appointed to the chief seat of government is very agreeable and satisfactory to us. We earnestly desire that your administration may be to the honour of God, acceptable to the king, and a blessing to the province over which you preside, afford peace and satisfaction to yourself, and in the end tend to promote your immortal happiness. We hope to be always ready and willing to contribute to the support of government, in every respect consistent with our religious principles; and where any of us are or may be restricted thereby within your jurisdiction, we entreat your assistance and protection. With sincere love to you, we conclude, and remain your assured friends.

Signed in and on behalf of our said Yearly Meeting, by Isaac Lawton, Clerk.

The Governor's Answer.

“I desire it may be made known to the Friends within the several governments of New England, that I have a very grateful sense of the regard and esteem which they have expressed in this kind address. It is the more obliging because a great proportion of the members present at their General Yearly Meeting do not live within my own government. I shall always delight in confirming and cultivating the orderly benevolent disposition of the Friends among the several societies of that denomination, and among all other Christian societies, as far as my influence may extend.”

Very different now, to what it was in the days when Governor Endicott presided over this province! Then the sheep of Christ and lambs of the true Shepherd were beaten and bruised, scoffed and denied, whipped and banished and martyred for the testimony of Jesus, and for maintaining a conscience void of offence towards God and towards men. Let thanksgiving and praise be given to the great and holy One, who has subdued our enemies and given us the victory! May we not now, in a time of ease and liberty, live carelessly and indifferently towards Him, but in deep reverence and fear worship him, our great Deliverer, who powerfully wrought in the king's heart to the setting at liberty those sons and children of the morning!

Boston, 8th of Eighth month, 1771.

My dear wife and affectionate children,

I am thankful I am now making my return back again toward Philadelphia, though many hundred miles from it, and not with less peace than in my journey southerly. Here are many in profession with us, who I am afraid are contenting themselves too much therewith only, which makes it very trying to the true and faithful labourers; yet good is the Lord to all those that are putting their trust and confidence in him; he feeds such at times in green pastures and leads them by the still waters, and so we witness preservation from day to day, out of the reach of the archers.

The letters I receive from my dear wife are comfortable and edifying; I long for more of them. My heart is renewedly thankful at this time to Him, who is the Father and Fountain from whom have proceeded all my blessings, that raised you up for me and my dear children; and for your faithfulness, I trust He will reward you far beyond what is in my power to do. Dear son and daughter, write to me again, I entreat you! Your epistles to me have been as sweet and precious ointment, and have had a tendency to tender many hearts both young and old. I thank the Lord for his precious visitation to you, desiring he may make your way prosperous, that in his hand you may be made instrumental to turn many from darkness to light, and from satan's power to the power of God. And may He preserve you through the various dispensations of his providence to his praise, and to the comfort and peace of your own souls. I exhort you, therefore, to love one another as brethren, and endeavour to be helpful one unto another, both in things that

appertain to this life, as also to that which is to come; and this I recommend with great earnestness, if I am never to see you any more, and so remember it.

The weather is hot and sultry, and somewhat hard to bear; I have sometimes been out of order, with feverish complaints, etc., but my trust is in Him who is the Physician of body and soul. I will trust in Him still, who has hitherto preserved me, and delivered my soul from trouble. I am just now returned to Boston, and much overcome with heat; many have within this week fallen down dead; the heat of the weather causing great drought and some imprudently drink largely of cold water, and to many it has proved almost immediate death.

The first opportunity I intend to write to my dear brother, who is often in my thoughts; my love to him, and all our nearest and next kindred, relations and friends everywhere, from, my dear, your affectionate husband, and dear children, your affectionate father,

Joseph Oxley.

We came from Boston to Lancaster, Leicester, Uxbridge and Brickhouse, where we had a large meeting and silent, but I hope profitable to such as waited not for words, but on the Word Himself! [Passing on through New England] came the 18th of eighth month to our dear, aged and honourable friend Peter Davis's, of whom I have already made mention. Third-day had a meeting at Westerly, which was long in gathering, but after some time of solid waiting. Truth favoured, and I believe it was a good meeting. This night we lodged at Thomas Wilbur's: our friend Peter Davis was at this time with us, also Amy Thurston and Mary Rodman, two valuable women Friends from Newport.

Fourth-day had a meeting at Hopkinton, which was large both of our own and other societies, but long and tedious in gathering. Suitable advice was given, and I hope with a proper degree of authority, and the latter end was better than the beginning. This seems to finish my visit to New England, wherein I have laboured faithfully according to the ability and strength afforded me, and much more to my own satisfaction than in the southern part of this continent. This country, called New England, is more cleared, and thickly inhabited than Maryland, Virginia, or the Carolinas; the chief produce is Indian corn, some oats and rye, but very little wheat.

CHAPTER XI.

We reached New York on the 6th of ninth month, and were at both their meetings the first-day following; our friend Samuel Nottingham, a ministering Friend well known in that capacity both in England and America, was there; the service in the morning fell on me, and on him in the afternoon, and I hope to some edification. Second-day we passed into Jersey, attended by Samuel Bowne. At Mount Holly lodged at a widow woman's, who with another Friend of that town was at some difference; and both being present and desirous that the cause of the difference might be opened, and themselves again

reconciled one to another, left the affair for my companion Joshua Thompson and myself to judge thereon and determine, according to the best of our understanding. This we did, in that wisdom which was given us, and two other Friends were present as witnesses; we experienced the Truth to cover our minds, and the parties were brought to acquiesce in our judgment, and were thoroughly reconciled to each other, for which our hearts were made thankful.

Fourth-day rode to Philadelphia, where I received many letters from Old England. This same evening also, came into the city my dear companion, Samuel Neale; we were much pleased to see each other, and the next day, with several other Friends went to Haddonfield Quarterly Meeting; it was large and to pretty good satisfaction. On seventh-day following, the 21st of ninth month, began the Yearly Meeting of ministers and elders for Pennsylvania and the Jerseys, held at Philadelphia, which we attended throughout. At this meeting were presented certificates on behalf of our friends Sarah Morris of Philadelphia, an able minister of the Gospel, and Elizabeth Smith of Burlington, an excellent minister, and who for many years past have had it on their minds to pay a religious visit to Friends in Old England; and produced certificates from their Monthly and Quarterly Meetings for the Yearly Meeting's approbation.

After many weighty sittings and solid deliberation, the meeting having a near sympathy with them in their religious concern, recommended them to the Lord for protection and to the guidance of his Holy Spirit, and granted them certificates to proceed as their way might more fully open to their satisfaction. These, and the preceding meetings for worship and discipline, continued till late on the fifth-day following, and were very large, many weighty matters were brought before them, and spoken to according to Gospel order. It may be said that the meetings both for worship and discipline were to the glory of God, the praise of his great name, and to the comfort and edification of his church and people. Great is his power and goodness, and worthy to be had in everlasting remembrance, even forever and ever!

Second-day went to Abington Monthly Meeting; the meeting for discipline not satisfactory: many having gone out in marriage, contrary to the good order established amongst us; some recent instances appearing at this time, brought sorrowful exercise upon well concerned Friends. Many also showed themselves very disorderly in going frequently out of meeting during the time of worship, and very much so in time of transacting the service of the discipline, which was painful to bear. Fourth-day was at Byberry; lodged at James Thornton's, who came from Old England some years since and settled in this country: he is a worthy minister and elder.

Sixth-day rode to Philadelphia, where I received a melancholy letter from my dear brother John Oxley, giving me an account of his being attacked with a paralytic stroke, and though he was getting better, I was much concerned and affected with the news, lest another attack of the same kind should soon follow, and be of still worse consequence. Third-day, in company with Samuel Emlen, senior and junior, went to Woodbury and had a meeting there; it was a time of laborious exercise, but I hope not without some advantage.

Went home with our friend and elder David Cooper, in whose family we had a comfortable meeting: he has some promising children, inclined to sobriety and virtue; such I think are an honour to parents, and also such parents an honour to children. Fourth-day, rode to a meeting at Upper Greenwich which was much crowded. I was led to speak of the variety of dispensations that were allotted to the righteous for their purification: it was an open good meeting, and the name of the Lord was praised for it, who is worthy of all praise.

First-day, the 13th, was at Salem meeting, which was very large, both of our own and other societies. I had to speak of the universality of the love of God to all people of every profession everywhere, and to exhort those who were more immediately called into religious services to be faithful therein: the meeting ended in prayer and praising the Lord.

Next day to Lower Alloways Creek, and after meeting went home with James Daniel, an able minister of the Gospel, who visited some part of Europe in the year 1752 in a religious capacity, which was to his own peace and the satisfaction of Friends: had a meeting in his family, which was mercifully owned to the refreshing of our souls. He accompanied us the next day to Lower Greenwich meeting: after dinner several Friends coming in, we had a short but profitable sitting, and some bread was cast upon the waters, which I believe will remain after many days. First-day, the 20th, had a meeting at Middle Egg-harbour, which was low and small, but the Lord was with his ministers, helping them to divide the word rightly, blessed be his name for it!

Seventh-day, the 26th, began their Yearly Meeting at Shrewsbury: amongst others who attended were Robert Valentine from Pennsylvania, Mark Reeve from West Jersey, Isaac Andrews from Haddonfield, Richard Titus from Long Island, Sarah Morris, Benjamin Swett and wife, and some others. In the meetings on first-day I was silent: the meeting for worship on second-day previous to that for business was very large, and though it gathered very badly, yet afterward it settled into solemn and profitable waiting, and it was a glorious good meeting, the Lord got himself the victory, and it ended in supplication and thanksgiving to him for all his mercies and benefits. The discipline of the church was carried on in the spirit of love and condescension; sundry necessary remarks were made and advices given for counsel and instruction, and were well received, all tending to edification.

These meetings being over, went with many other Friends to Richard Lawrence's, who was formerly a member of parliament, but he became convinced of the Truth and took up the cross, so that he had not freedom to continue his seat in that house; he, as also his wife, are steady valuable Friends, and he himself waited on his guests at table, as one being redeemed from all worldly pomps and honours.

Shrewsbury, 7th of Tenth month, 1771.

My dearly-beloved wife.

Your kind and affectionate epistle of 23rd of seventh month, I have received with the usual marks of the loving and faithful wife; and in return please to accept these lines from your dear

and affectionate husband, though separated so long and at so great a distance.

This I think nothing temporal should have occasioned, but He on whose account it is, is still worthy to be served and obeyed; and here I trust we consider ourselves as being married in the Lord, and so he is become our husband and head. It is our incumbent duty to be subject to him however nearly we are united as husband and wife, yet his commandment is above all to rule us and to be attended to; and in this matter, I trust, we are of one heart and one mind, and are one another's in the Lord.

I am through Divine favour in good health and spirits, and at times made strong to declare the goodness of the Lord, and to invite to him, whose ways are ways of pleasantness and whose paths are peace; and sometimes I have a hope that my labour is not altogether in vain in the Lord, though my all be only as the two mites.

This letter, and indeed all that I have received from you, are proofs not only of your integrity as a loving wife and an affectionate mother, but also as valiant and bold in the cause of Israel's God: if it should please Him for whose cause we are separated, to bring us together again, I trust it will be a joyful meeting. I have now travelled over great part of the continent, so far as even to think, at least if health is preserved and nothing unforeseen prevent, I may finish what remains with the year; but if it should be so, there is great probability that the frost and other impediments may prevent, that I shall not say more at present on that head, nor draw hasty conclusions.

I am now at Shrewsbury attending this Yearly Meeting, at which there are many Friends of higher degree, but none so little and mean as I am. We have been favoured this day with a large and good meeting. Truth rose into dominion, and the Lord's great name became glorious, his own arm wrought salvation: the meeting ended in prayer and praising him, who is worthy forever!

Seventh-day, 2nd of tenth month, had a meeting at Hardwich or the Great Meadows, which was large, but gathered in so much disorder as to make it quite burdensome; and as it met so dishonourably, the Great Master would not condescend to honour as at other times. I faithfully spoke what was given me, which I believe will be long had in remembrance.

Second-day was at their Monthly Meeting at Buckingham, which I think was the largest I have yet seen in Pennsylvania: Grace Fisher, a ministering Friend from Philadelphia, also Susanna Lightfoot were there, and we were much pleased to see each other.

The meeting for worship was to good satisfaction, but that for discipline not so, many of other societies crowding themselves in, on account of seeing some young couples present their intentions of marriage, which when over they generally withdraw, and many of our young Friends go out after them, to the great disturbance of the meeting, and it is to be feared many times it has a hurtful tendency to our young people. Much was said in order to put a stop to this unbecoming and disagreeable custom, which is

painful to many Friends, and it is to be hoped the advice that was given would have a happy effect.

Third-day went to Wright's Town Monthly Meeting, after which went to our friend Joseph White's, an able minister of the Gospel, well known by many in Old England for his acceptable service there. Sixth-day, had a meeting at Bordentown, in the afternoon visited Joanna Sykes, who had buried her husband but a few days before, who was in the ninetieth year of his age, and his widow almost eighty-eight; they had lived together in a married state sixty-seven years, and both of them acceptable ministers of the Gospel. I felt some good in my heart, while sitting in retirement, of which I communicated, and we were comforted together thereby. About this time, there came down out of the wilderness into Pennsylvania many bears, which did considerable damage; we heard that a child was killed by one of them, and a man and woman much hurt by another. The coming down of bears so near Philadelphia has not been known for many years past.

Seventh-day, had a meeting at a place called Robins; this meeting and meeting-house was fallen much into decay; scarcely any Friends left to uphold the meeting with any degree of reputation; yet it was to us a time of Divine favour, and strength was given to speak well of the name of the Lord, whose presence is near, and able to preserve those who put their trust in him. We afterwards set forward for Philadelphia; and ferrying over Rancocas and Delaware Rivers to the city, was made thankful in that I witnessed the protection of the Lord to preserve my body in health, and my mind from sinking into unprofitable lowness: blessed be his name forever and ever!

The soil of the Jerseys towards the east is very barren, but abounds with cedar-swamps and pine trees, much made use of for building. The timber in the northern part, which is mountainous, is oak of various kinds, some of which are three, four, five and six feet over; black walnut, commonly called in Old England Virginia walnut, much used by joiners for desks, drawers, tables, coffins, etc.; poplar, hickory, chestnut, ash, beech, sassafras, with swamp bushes of various kinds, as the bay, magnolia, white and black alder, sumac of various kinds; one of which, called the swamp sumach, is of so poisonous a nature that even handling it will so poison a person's flesh as to blind them. Peaches they have in great abundance, also quinces, pompions, squashes, melons, etc. Their horses in a common way are not handsome, but travel much easier and are much more hardy than ours in England. Of wild beasts there are bears, wolves, panthers and deer, which decrease as the inhabitants increase: also foxes, raccoons, otters, musk-rats, opossums, etc. On the sea-coast and bay are numerous quantities of flies and mosquitoes, which extremely annoy both man and beast by their biting and injecting a poisonous quality, which is painful to bear.

Fourth-day, 13th of eleventh month, was held a meeting for the Negros; the service that day fell on Sarah Morris, Samuel Emlen, and John Pemberton; there were few at this meeting but Negros, they generally sat soberly, and conducted themselves well; these meetings for the benefit of the poor Africans are held quarterly. Fifth-day, left the city in company with John Pemberton. My late companion Joshua Thompson returned home, having travelled with me upwards of two thousand miles, whose company was very agreeable and useful, he being an elder worthy of double honour. We passed over the river

Schuylkill to Derby, where there was a marriage of a son of William Home, a ministering Friend well known in England for his services there in the year 1762. Sarah Morris was at this meeting; and it was an opportunity of Divine favour to many, which our souls were made thankfully to acknowledge. The same evening to Springfield, and lodged at Mordecai Yarnall's, an excellent minister of the Gospel, who visited Old England in the year 1757, and whose services are remembered by many.

Seventh-day to Providence, then to Chester, and lodged at Joshua Hoskins's, who was husband to Jane Hoskins, an able and well approved minister, who visited Europe in company with Elizabeth Hudson in the years 1749 and 1750. Third-day had a meeting at Center, to which many were gathered, wherein was preached the testimony of Truth in a good degree of heavenly life and power; thanksgiving and praise be given to Him who gives strength and power to do it. Fifth-day attended a very large meeting at Wilmington: the chief part of the inhabitants of this town, which is a very improving one, are under our denomination. In this meeting I gave way to fear, and discouragement prevailing, I let go that faith which before I had known to be my support, and without which we are not able to please God. At this place live Elizabeth Shipley and Esther White, both eminent in the ministry, particularly the former: they visited Friends in Great Britain, etc. in company, in the year 1745, to great satisfaction: they are now far advanced in years. I visited them to my spiritual comfort and refreshment.

First-day, the 1st of twelfth month, attended a meeting at Marshey Creek, where were some of the people called Nicholites and also of other professions. After taking some refreshment at William Edmundson's, at whose house we had lodged the night before, we bent our course toward Little Choptank. The wind blew very hard, and we had to pass over a bad and dangerous causeway about half a mile long; it was with great difficulty we got our horses through without being mired: at the end of this causeway was a ferry over Choptank River. When we came to the river-side, we were all afraid; the ferrymen said, the wind was so boisterous, it was not possible for us to get over but with the greatest danger. We overtook three Negros who were also going over; one of them said he had been used to that sort of work, and he did not fear but that we should get over very well. For my own part, I was very much discouraged, and exceedingly reluctant to come away from our friend William Edmundson's house; but my companion was very much for it, so, in condescension to him I complied and set forward. We all of us got into the boat, being nine in number besides three horses. The wind being exceeding strong, it was with great difficulty we could put off from the shore, which at length we did, and soon got driven far beyond the usual place of landing; the wind being ahead of us, we could make very little way across the river, and it increasing, blew the water out of the river like rain; also at the same time it froze very severely, so that we became quite benumbed with cold. The men rowed with all their might, and sometimes got a little forward, at other times lost what they had gained, and night coming on, there was very little better prospect than our being cast upon a wide swampy marsh, where was no landing, and in a dark, frosty night in an open boat: we concluded we must be all dead by morning. At length it pleased Divine Providence to cause the wind to lull, as the sailors term it, and we got a little forward, but it soon increased again, and we were in great distress, and it was now almost dark; our horses also began to be very unruly, which increased our difficulty. Some of the men would have us endeavour to go back again to the place where we entered into the boat; others said it was impossible, and advised our using our

utmost strength to get forward, which we did, and with long and hard labour we at length got happily over to the other side, but far wide from the landing-place, and reached a Friend's house not far distant. I hope to be thankful for this merciful deliverance, and in future to be more attentive to my inward feelings, which when duly attended to are many times preservatives both from spiritual and temporal dangers.

First-day, the 15th, rode to Goshen, where we lodged at our worthy friend Thomas Goodwin's, a minister of the Gospel, who paid a religious visit to England in the year 1762. Second-day was at their meeting, and went home with Aaron Ashbridge, an elder in good esteem, who was husband to Elizabeth Ashbridge, a minister well approved; she visited some parts of England and Ireland in company with Sarah Worrall, who was also well approved of in the same religious capacity. Yet it pleased the Lord to visit them with sickness, under which affliction they long lingered, and with hard travel, and inward and spiritual exercise grew weaker and weaker, and at length quietly departed this life, and I doubt not are at rest and peace with the Lord. Fourth-day, was at Concord Meeting, which was a day of great power, wherein the Gospel of Christ was preached in good authority, and the great Name praised, who is worthy forever and ever. From hence to Nathan Lewis's, who is a minister, as is also his wife; she visited some parts of Europe about the year 1753. Seventh-day at the Valley meeting; I thought it like unto Rephidim, a place where there was no water: I was altogether silent, but my companion, Thomas Carleton, communicated a little matter. After meeting to Edward Jones's, where I was met by my kind friend and landlord John Pemberton, who brought me letters from my dear wife and children, with good accounts respecting their welfare, for which my mind was made humbly thankful.

First-day, 22nd, was at Radnor meeting. Second-day to Haverford, and so to Philadelphia; through Divine favour, in very good health: blessed and praised be his great and excellent name for ever more, who has so wonderfully preserved me in this great and arduous engagement, through this long wilderness, with a measure of that peace, which he the Lord only can give, and it pleases him to bestow it upon those who in faithfulness follow him, in the way of his requiremings.

[John Pemberton about this time writes thus to Mary Oxley:]

“Your dear husband has stepped along wisely, and has gained the love of Friends, and, indeed, it is a great blessing and mercy to be so preserved, and I expect he will leave us much united to him. Visiting the churches in our time is attended with much suffering: frequent baptisms into death, in sympathy with the suffering seed, is the allotment of the Gospel labourers; but where faith and strength are vouchsafed to discharge duty, there is a satisfaction; and the sweet evidence which at times through adorable condescension is granted to the sincere in heart, who have nothing in view but the glory of God, and the good of souls, and that they may be found faithful, tends to support in seasons of secret mourning.”

[The following is an extract of a letter from Joseph Oxley to his wife:]

Philadelphia, 1st of First month, 1772.

Since my last to you I have been visiting Pennsylvania and the Jerseys, and about two days since was met by my kind friend John Pemberton, who gave account of the Pennsylvania packet. Captain Osborne, being arrived, and brought me yours of 2nd of ninth month, which is truly acceptable, with the comfortable tidings of your and our family's welfare. My last would acquaint you with my intention of returning by Osborne. The time of her sailing is settled to be the middle of next month, if nothing unforeseen prevent. Having finished what I apprehend to be my duty, I am waiting in the city, visiting Friends. I think I may say I find much freedom and openness in their hearts, as well as in their houses to receive me, and am shown much respect by Friends in general, though undeservedly. I am, through the favour of a kind Providence, in good health and tolerable spirits, content with my wages, and murmur not.

Dear Elizabeth Smith continues in great bodily weakness, and more likely to die than to live. Samuel Emlen, at our last Monthly Meeting at Philadelphia, laid before the meeting a concern he had on his mind, to pay a religious visit to Friends in some parts of Great Britain; also another Friend, John Woolman, a wise sensible man, having a good gift in the ministry and well approved of, has a concern of the like kind, more particularly to Yorkshire. I suppose the latter will hardly leave the continent till the summer.

May Divine Providence bless us, keep us, and preserve us temporally and spiritually, by sea and land, that we may once more meet together, rejoice in the mercy and goodness of God, and live to praise and adore his great and excellent name, who is worthy for ever! I again salute you, my endeared wife and affectionate companion, and you, my beloved children, with the blessing of a loving husband and tender father: you still remain the objects of my care, with strong cries to the Lord for preservation both for you and me. During this long separation, I have had many trials, exercises, and besetments you know not of, through all which the Almighty's power has wrought my deliverance, praised be his great name for it; and you, though not in the same way, have, I doubt not, had your trials, even to the trial of your faith and patience; and it is as we endure these siftings and provings that our souls are purified, and our understanding and judgment ripened; thus we are fitted for service, some in one way, and some in another: therefore, live and walk in him, in whom you have believed.

Joseph Oxley.

The hard frost being now set in, stopped the navigation; I spent much of my leisure time in paying religious visits to Friends in their families, which being numerous, occupied my time till the first month, 1772. This service, I had cause to believe was in the will of the Lord, who gradually leads his servants forward into service, step by step, to their joy and his people's rejoicing. The 6th of second month, I was at the Youths' Meeting in Philadelphia, which was attended by some Friends from the country. At this meeting was Nicholas Wain, who had his education amongst the Society, but was brought up to the law, and became great in his profession as a counsellor, and who had pleaded at court but a very few days before. He sat under an awful weighty exercise of mind from the early sitting down of the meeting, and

removed his seat into the ministering Friends' gallery; he appeared to be agitated, and trembled very much: after sitting about half an hour, he kneeled down and prayed; but his behaviour and dress being so contrary to such an appearance, occasioned Friends to be much divided, and made some disorder in the meeting, but afterwards it settled and ended to the edification of many. The said Nicholas Wain declined his practice as a counsellor, which it was said brought him in from one thousand five hundred to two thousand pounds per annum. I went, at his request, to visit him, in which visit I had much satisfaction; I found him solid and weighty, and since that time have heard well concerning him.

On the 12th went with Benjamin Swett to Mount Holly meeting; and, in our way there, about four miles from Burlington, we went into the woods to see a person of whom Samuel Smith in his history of the Jerseys writes thus: "Four miles from hence, a recluse person, who came a stranger, has lived alone near twelve years, (now twenty,) in a thick wood, through all the extremities of the seasons, under cover of a few leaves, supported by the side of an old log, and put together in the form of a small oven, not high or long enough to stand upright or lie extended. He talks Dutch, but unintelligibly, either through design, or from defect in his intellects: Where he came from, or what he is, nobody about him can find out. He has no contrivance to keep fire, nor uses any in very cold weather: he lies naked, stops the hole he creeps in and out at with leaves: he mostly keeps in his hut, but sometimes walks before it; lies on the ground, and cannot be persuaded to work much, nor without violence, to forsake this habit, which he appears to delight in, and enjoy full health. When the woods and orchards afford him no nuts, apples, or other relief as to food, he applies now and then for bread to the neighbourhood, and with that is quite satisfied; he refuses money, but has been frequently clothed by charity: he seems to be upwards of forty years of age (now sixty,) as to person rather under the middle size—calls himself Francis."

After meeting at Mount Holly, which was low, went to Evesham, and lodged at William Foster's, a justice of the peace. After meeting at Evesham, went to the house of our ancient friend and minister of the Gospel Thomas Evans, and lodged; and from there next day to Philadelphia, where I met with my dear companion Samuel Neale: we greeted each other in brotherly love and affection, and were pleased to see one another in the enjoyment of health and peace. On the 18th was at London Grove Quarterly Meeting, which was large, and owned by the Master's presence to our mutual comfort and strength: his works praise his name! John Churchman, William Brown, John Pemberton, and many other men who were in the ministry, besides many women Friends in the like capacity, attended on this occasion. The next day returned to Philadelphia, where I continued my friendly visits to Friends' families, and prepared myself for embarking to Europe.

All things being now got in readiness for my departure, Sarah Morris, of whom I have several times made mention, having at length yielded in obedience to what she believed to be her duty, in paying a religious visit to Friends in England, and having Friends' concurrence, approbation, and certificate, it was thought well we should accompany one another over the great ocean. She had also a kinswoman to accompany her, and though one not in the ministry, yet was exercised in spirit for the prosperity of Truth, and having near sympathy with her aunt in her present concern, gave up to attend her in her said undertaking: her name was Deborah Morris; and, indeed, I thought her an excellent mother, raised up in

our Israel.

On the third-day of the week, being 3rd of third month, we had a short but weighty sitting together in the house of our dear friend John Pemberton, to which place many were gathered, in order to take their last farewell; it was a time of love, wherein our minds were much affected, and our spirits broken and contrited before the Lord, who was pleased to bless us together; in this heavenly frame, we took our leave and parted! Several of our kind friends from the city accompanied us to Chester, the place where we were to embark, Samuel Neale, John Pemberton, and I suppose more than thirty in number: after we had taken some little refreshment at Chester, we retired into a humble awful reverent waiting, which was again graciously owned, and crowned with heavenly life and power. After thus taking our farewell of our dear Friends, many of whom went with us to the brink of the waters and then returned, we set sail on board the Pennsylvania packet, Peter Osborne commander. The nearness of unity into which I was brought with these beloved Friends and citizens has made deep impressions on my mind, which I trust will prove lasting, and made it very hard for me to part with them.

We ran aground twice before we left the Capes of Delaware, and the latter time threatened great danger; the captain and sailors said there was but little likelihood of getting the ship off again, the wind blowing pretty hard. But the men used their utmost endeavours, which Providence was pleased to bless, and the ship worked off, but the captain said he hardly knew how: my soul reverently praises Him who wrought this deliverance for us. We passed through much stormy weather, but through mercy were in a good degree preserved in stillness, trusting in him who has power to still the winds and calm the seas at his pleasure.

About thirty-one days after we left the Capes we got to soundings, and the next day brought us in sight of land, and on the 10th of the fourth month, my companions and I landed at Dover, which time from our going on board was five weeks and three days. My mind was made thankful for this great mercy and favour, the Lord's mighty preservation and protection, while on this large continent, as also on the wide ocean; in consideration of which, my soul praises His holy name, who is worthy for ever and ever! The next day I came up to London with my companions, and was kindly received by our friends and my dear relations. After two or three days stay in London, I set out for Norwich on the 15th of fourth month, 1772, and got well home the same evening to my dear wife and children and friends, who all expressed great joy and thankfulness at seeing me; and so it was to me, after an absence from them of about one year and nine months, in which time I travelled, by a moderate computation, thirteen thousand seven hundred and fifty-five miles.

The End of Joseph Oxley's Journal.

It does not appear that this humble-minded servant of the Lord Jesus Christ, continued his journal, or left much if anything on record of his life or religious exercises, after his return from America. This sacrifice seemed like the winding up of his day's work, and was crowned with the sheaves of peace in his bosom, and the answer of "Well done" from his great and good Master, as to a faithful steward in the Gospel vineyard; likewise, with the approbation of his friends in various parts of the heritage, amply

expressed by them in their public documents, where his lot had been cast, as well as in private correspondence.

Of the few additional particulars that have come to hand respecting Joseph Oxley, the editor has only to produce an extract from the testimonial of his friends, given forth after his removal by death, respecting his character and latter end; and to close the volume, by inserting a letter from his valued companion in ministerial labour and travel, Samuel Neale, addressed to his widow, on receiving the intelligence of his release from the probations of time.

“Joseph Oxley was a man exemplary in conduct, and agreeable in conversation, honest in advice, charitable in sentiment, universal in benevolence, deservedly esteemed by his neighbours, and beloved by his friends.

“A few months before his decease, he was impressed with a sense that his departure was at no great distance; and sometimes hinted to some nearly connected with him, that it would be sudden;—yet, not as fearing it, but rather in a serious and pleasing acquiescence with the prospect.

“Accordingly, after attending two meetings on first-day the 22nd of the tenth month, 1775, which were held in silence, and spending the evening with his family, in a disposition more than ordinarily pleasant, he cheerfully went up to bed; where he laid but a few minutes, before it pleased Almighty Goodness to take him from the vicissitudes of mutability, without a struggle, or passing through the tedious and afflicting pains commonly incident to nature: no doubt, to him, an easy passage to a heavenly mansion.

“His remains were interred in Friends' burial-ground at Norwich, the 26th of the tenth month, 1775, in the sixty-first year of his age, and thirty-fourth of his ministry.”

Samuel Neale to Mary Oxley.

Springmount, 19th of First month, 1776.

About a month ago I heard of the removal of my truly near and dear companion, your dear deceased husband, whose translation is to a better inheritance than to continue on this theatre of probation. A letter from dear Edmund Gurney brought the tidings to Robert Dudley, and he to me at our last Quarterly Meeting: it struck me with surprise, and yet, when I consider the man and where he dwelt, I look upon it only as a remove from a limited Goshen here, to a Goshen of endless light and duration. I seldom or ever have known him appear in his vestment, but it covered him: diffident and humble he was, preferring others before himself. He waded along with becoming fortitude in his visit to the churches in America and Ireland, and was universally esteemed. In his last moments the great Master unveiled his kindness to him, in removing him without much conflict or pain, his spirit escaping from a mansion of mortality into a mansion of

immortality and eternal life, where he has entered his lot, and sings with the sanctified the songs of thanksgiving and praise!

Your letter I received two days ago, which I acknowledge as a favour, and can sympathize with you in the removal of a living branch of your family, who had not only leaves, but fruit also: his residence was near the spring which replenished his life, covered his head in the hour of Gospel labour, and kept him in the union and fellowship of the faithful at home and abroad.

Dear friend, when I consider how many are called from works to rewards, it raises a desire, that I may so fill my lot here in the church militant, as to be ready when the messenger arrives, to give an account of my stewardship, so as to meet acceptance, and an entrance into the church triumphant. There are many called, but when made willing to be chosen, something interposes, dazzling, worldly pomp, splendour, or the cords which allure that way, and which sink the mind in supineness, stop the ardency of the awakened intention, and so turn into the wilderness, where many are torn as with the briars and thorns; and some are corrected, but sustain so many wounds, that they become lame and impotent, and centre down in an unprofitable state both to themselves and the church, and the stream of Divine life becomes dried up in them.

May this never be our lot, but may we daily know the girding of the heavenly Master, keep on the armour that he has once given, and feel the unction that brightens the shield; that we may have fellowship with the living; gradually ascending the hill, where the clean-handed have their residence, and are replenished with the water that issues therefrom, that ever did and still makes glad the heritage. I trust, dear friend, the Lord of living mercies will be with you in your pilgrimage, sustain you with food convenient, strengthening your bow, and fitting for whatever he requires. When we are shaken with an uncommon, unexpected stroke in our experience, we are like the needle in the compass-box, greatly agitated, and it will take some time before we settle so as to be able to traverse truly; but by centering in a state of quietness and acquiescence to the Master's will, we shall feel the influence of the heavenly attraction, and our spirits will be directed in the right line of duty, to our own peace and the Master's praise.

It gives me pleasure to hear how my dear friend's family is likely to settle; and, if they keep to the saving Truth their worthy father loved, and served, and lived in, they may be ornaments in their day in the church and in the world, and inherit his virtues. My dear love to them, and particularly my friend Joseph, whose union I trust is established in the counsel of best wisdom; the reward annexed is righteousness and peace. I salute you and them in near sympathy and affection, and remain, in the fellowship of Gospel love,

Your nearly united friend,

Samuel Neale.

The End