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The Legacy Book in America, 1664–1792

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The Legacy Book in America, 1664–1792

Edited and with an Introduction by
Roxanne Harde & Lindsay Yakimyshyn

Legacy books in colonial America were instruments for the transmission of cultural values between generations: the dying mother (usually) instructing and advising children on the path to salvation and heavenly reunions. They were a popular and influential form of women's discourse that distilled the ideologies of the religious establishment into practical and emotional lessons for lay persons, especially the young.

This collection draws together legacy texts written by colonial American women and girls: five mother's legacy books and two legacies by children, organized here chronologically. These legacies were written in anticipation of dying, making awareness of death central to the texts. All are highly personal, revealing the thought processes and emotive patterns of their authors, and all are meant for the comfort and instruction of the loved ones these dying women and girls were leaving behind. Published between 1664 and 1792, these texts provide insight into early New England culture through to the first years of the republic. Included are:

Anne Bradstreet, *To My Dear Children* (1664)

Susanna Bell, *The Legacy of a Dying Mother to Her Mourning Children* (1673)

Sarah Goodhue, *The Copy of a Valedictory and Monitory Writing* (1681)

Grace Smith, *The Dying Mother's Legacy* (1712)

Sarah Demick, *Memoirs of the Life of Mrs. Sarah Demick* (1792)

Hannah Hill, *A Legacy for Children* (1714)

Jane Sumner, *Warning to Little Children* (1792)

Benjamin Colman, *A Devout Contemplation on ... the Early Death of Pious & Lovely Children* (1714)

A Late Letter from a Solicitous Mother To Her Only Son (1746)

Memoirs of Eliza Thornton (1821)

Cover: Grace Allison McCurdy (Mrs. Hugh McCurdy) and Her Daughters, Mary Jane and Letitia Grace, c. 1806 (Joshua Johnson) National Gallery of Art

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Lincoln, Nebraska 2021

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Roxanne and Lindsay
dedicate this book to their children:
Erin, Jillian, and Rosalind

*Opposite: Ornament from A Late Letter from a Solicitous Mother To Her Only Son. Both
Living in New England (1746), p. 15.*

For my deare Sonne
Simon Bradstreet

Parents perpetuate their lines
in their posterity, and their
manners in their imitation
Children do naturally rather
follow the failings, then the ver-
tues of their predecessors, but I
am perswaded better things of
you once desired me to leave some
thing for you in writing that
you might look upon, when you
should see me no more, I could
think of nothing more fit for you
nor of more ease to my self then
these short meditations follow-
ing. Such as they are bequeath
to you, small legacies are accepted
by true friends much more, by
Dutyfull children, I have avoyded
in teaching upon others conceptions
because I would leave ^{you} nothing

Introduction

The Mother's Legacy; The Child's Legacy

By the time Anne Bradstreet completed *To My Dear Children* in 1664, some eight years before her death, the mother's legacy was an established genre in Early Modern England, one Bradstreet seems aware of in her own legacy writings. The legacy books published in England—among them Elizabeth Grymeston's in 1604, Dorothy Leigh's in 1616, Elisabeth Jocelin's in 1624, and Elizabeth Richardson's in 1645—were both popular and influential throughout the period.

The legacy form draws on the modes deployed in private letters, spiritual diaries, public testimonies, funeral elegies, and conduct manuals, and it becomes closely aligned with conversion narratives and Sunday School books. While funeral sermons, like Benjamin Colman's *A Devout Contemplation* (appendix A), extol women for piety and adherence to cultural prescriptions, surviving private correspondences provide clearer insight into the extent to which women adopted the “proper” positions of wife and mother. The anonymous *A Late Letter from a Solicitous Mother* (appendix B) falls within a tradition of letter-writing, and its focus on the writer's son's salvation echoes concerns expressed by parents over a century earlier in various manuals and meditations. Advice tracts—one of the more widely published genres in Tudor England—were predominantly written and published by men, who advised their wives, children and friends on matters both domestic and political. For instance, King James wrote *Basilicon Doron* for his son, Prince Henry. In it, he provides his son guidance on ruling a kingdom, and underscores the connection between kingship and religion by drawing heavily on scripture. Although the mothers' legacy implicitly draws inspiration and legitimacy from King James'

writing, Nicholas Breton provides the clearest model for the genre in *The Mother's Blessing*, in which he adopts a maternal voice, that of Mrs. Rowe, to counsel his friend, Thomas Rowe. Following the lead of Breton, women began to compose legacies for their children in early seventeenth-century England, and the works were remarkably popular. In the latter half of the century, mothers' legacies emerged in New England and found similar success. Attending to divergent matters, but always advocating piety and conversion, the text would be a mother's voice if and when the author should die.

Arguably, the predominant feature of a seventeenth-century heteronormative woman's identity was maternity, as it affirmed her biological womanhood and her status as a "good wife"—one which produces heirs and self-abnegates. An abundance of tracts appeared in the early modern milieu which dissected the maternal role. Edward Jorden's *A Briefe Discourse of a Disease called the Suffocation of the Mother* (1603) fashions maternity as an important, albeit frightening, period for a woman. He argues that prenatal issues, including pain, deformities, and death, stem from subversive female conduct. According to Jorden, behavior which does not conform to cultural prescriptions results in problematic, distorted reproduction (4). William Shakespeare's *Richard III* similarly conveys anxiety about motherhood, as the Duchess of York is accused of cursing her son and subsequently becomes responsible for his deformed morality. Failed performances of motherhood endanger the mother's life and reputation. Examining the tenuous position of the early modern woman, Donna J. Long astutely observes, "The woman who could not or did not [become a mother] suffered from humiliation or fear of damnation if her 'failure' was, for example, sterility or miscarriage, and from imprisonment if her 'failure' was abandonment or infanticide" (186). Although Kathryn M. Moncrief and Kathryn R. McPherson's *Performing Maternity in Early Modern England* does not offer any in-depth analysis of legacy texts, the editors and contributors of the collection situate legacies alongside advice manuals, representing legacies as early illustrations of proper maternity:

With cultural norms (for instance, in sermons and conduct books) weighing upon them, women knew the appropriate parameters of the maternal role Women crafted

exemplary roles for themselves in their personal writing, often intending it for circulation within the family—witness the ‘mother’s legacy’ phenomenon. (7)

If, as Moncrief and McPherson suggest, midwifery manuals are “Some of the most accessible representations of maternity, and clearest attempts to regulate maternal behavior” (5), then it is the mother’s legacy texts that enact that regulated behavior, as the authors offer individual performances of motherhood. The multitudinous prescriptions for maternal behavior established the early modern mother as responsible for her child’s physical and spiritual well-being, and, through their legacies, Anne Bradstreet, Susanna Bell, Sarah Goodhue, Grace Smith, and Sarah Demick demonstrate their eagerness to fulfill their maternal role.

This collection draws together legacy texts written by colonial American women and girls: five mother’s legacy books and two legacies by children, organized here chronologically. These legacies were written in anticipation of dying, making awareness of death central to the texts. All are highly personal, revealing the thought processes and emotive patterns of their authors, and all are meant for the comfort and instruction of the loved ones these dying women and girls were leaving behind. Published between 1664 and 1792, these texts provide insight into early New England culture through to the first years of the republic. Anne Bradstreet and Susanna Bell are part of the first waves of immigration; Sarah Goodhue’s and Grace Smith’s texts show evidence of the tensions surrounding the erosion of the Puritan theocracy; Sarah Demick and Jane Sumner are citizens of the new republic; and Hannah Hill writes from within the second largest religious group, the Quakers of Pennsylvania. Generically, the legacy books offer the final words of a dying female; a sub-genre of the advice book, the legacies offer various types of instruction; most of them are conversion narratives, as the authors describe their process of self-examination and repentance; the children’s legacies anticipate the Sunday School text and its intended effects on the reader. The mothers—Bradstreet, Bell, Goodhue, Smith, and Demick—write their lives with authority; they narrate their conversions and instruct their audience in matters of religion; they evangelize with passion and each instructs her audience in some way. The girls—Hill and Sumner—also evangelize, but

their message is filtered through transcription. Therefore, even as we call the books “Hill’s legacy” and “Sumner’s legacy,” that their words have been edited and supplemented with acrostics and, particularly with Hill’s, male testimonies, affects the reading of these as the girls’ legacies. Still, the girls’ books possess the traits of a legacy: acute death-awareness, self-reflection, and desire to redeem loved ones.

Most of the writers in this text follow the stages of conversion, best described by Puritan divine Thomas Hooker in several books. Generally, the stages of conversion or regeneration include the preparatory stages of conviction and humiliation for sin, acceptance of vocation in God’s call, growing faith in the soul’s response, justification as the soul accepts the merits of Christ, ingrafting into or union with Christ, adoption of the Spirit from Christ, sanctification in the restored image of God, and glorification in the final blessing of the saints. In the legacies that follow, the writers largely conform to these stages, but often exhibit increased or repeated contrition and humiliation for their sins, as part of the preparatory process and beyond. This increased frequency might be attributed to their gender, their act of writing, or their connection to Eve. Even so, they describe their religious understanding with passion and eloquence, and they evangelize with authority. As they understood it, grace came to these women as a direct operation of God’s spirit, but the Bible prepared them for this operation. Their knowledge of the Bible and ability with exegesis is profound, as is their ability to describe their emotive responses to the stages of regeneration. The biblical passages and excerpts from sermons that they quote (from memory, at length, and usually perfectly) demonstrate their understanding of grace as a combination of covenant theology and experiential religion.

In one of the earliest published texts to anthologize women’s writing, *The Monument of Matrones*, Thomas Bentley casts the female writers and subjects as guiding lights, who will aid in the reader’s religious pilgrimage. *The Monument of Matrones* markets itself as a proto-self help book, which will improve the whole of England through its promotion of individual faithfulness. In the legacies, the mothers clearly write for the benefit of their children. For whose benefit, though, were the legacies published? For the most part, the legacy books were private works, and publication was likely not intended by the author. The self-examination that is central to the mothers’

legacies echoes and sustains the tradition of spiritual meditations by men and women. That women's legacies enjoyed substantial popularity in early modern England and colonial America—two cultures which were skeptical of, if not hostile towards, the female author—is remarkable. The controversy surrounding Mary Wroth's printing and retraction of *The Countess of Montgomery's Urania* (1621) indicates the precarious nature of the dissemination of women's writing; through publication, a woman exposed herself to public censure. Wroth denied her part in the printing of *Urania*. Likewise, Anne Bradstreet accused her brother-in-law of publishing her manuscript of *The Tenth Muse Lately Sprung up in America* without her knowledge. Whether these women indeed disapproved or, on the contrary, facilitated the publication of their texts is contentious. Their refutation of and dissociation from the published materials illustrates their resistance to occupy the problematic position of the female author. Still, with the exception of Bradstreet's *Tenth Muse*, these Colonial authors were not published in their lifetimes. Because they were not writing or speaking for the public, they do not exhibit the anxieties of women who were. For example, Bradstreet wrote a poem comparing her first book to an ill-raised child, and Elizabeth Rowe was both bold enough to send her spiritual narrative to Isaac Watts to be published and anxious enough about this public act that she exhorted him to "suppress what you think proper" (unp.). Like several of the legacy books published in England, these women wrote only to benefit their families and sometimes their communities; publication was not their goal; by no means could they have viewed themselves as breaching Pauline codes of silence for females. Even Bradstreet kept her legacy writings hidden among her personal papers, so that they were found only after her death.

In contrast to the mothers', the girls' legacies were transcribed, probably specifically for the purpose of publication. The particular intentions behind the publications and re-printings of the mothers' and girls' legacy books can only be speculated. Monetary gain is one possibility. However, the emphasis on early conversion in all of the legacies point to potential cultural and religious motivations for their publication. In advising, "Let's bring our children as neer to Heaven as we can," Thomas Hooker does not limit one's responsibility to the reformation of one's own children (357). Likewise, the messages contained in the legacies were not maintained as private directions for

the families of the women and girls, but were extended to the children of the New England community through publication. Death was not a private matter, and, as evinced in the girls' legacies in particular, ministers, family, and friends often bore witness to the pious deaths. Retha M. Warnicke describes the bed "as a kind of stage" on which a woman would perform "her prayers, her psalm singing, [and] her struggle to overcome the temptations of Satan" (170). Rendering the deaths of devout women even more public, funeral sermons and legacy texts which recalled the final days of such women were printed and reprinted.

Even as women were discouraged from publishing their writings, mothers in the Renaissance were expected to master several types of writing and to teach their children to write. As Germaine Greer notes, women were expected to "contribute epitaphs and panegyrics on their friends," or offer farewells to husbands about to be widowed (11). At a time when up to forty-five percent of women died before reaching age fifty, more than half from complications due to pregnancy, mothers were encouraged to prepare for the possibility of death (Dobbie, *passim*). One way to prepare was to write letters of farewell and instructions to the husband and children about to be left behind, legacies "of advice and guidance for the children who might have to grow up motherless" (Greer 11). While the legacy books tend to be highly personal, they suggest a general thought process and emotive pattern for the mothers of this time. There are often deep and intimate emotions expressed in literature on child rearing, described by Betty Travitsky as "the integration of natural maternal feeling with the religious and intellectual development of women advanced through the theory of the new mother" (51). The maternal role became increasingly important in this period, perhaps because of the conflict between the changes inherent in the development of the new mother and the feeling that wives and mothers should be confined to the new domestic sphere. Travitsky describes the paradox between prescribed active mothering that demands using one's voice and prescribed silence as a conflict "realized by writers of tracts who wrote knowing they overstepped themselves by writing" (51). Ultimately, Travitsky sees the new mother of the Renaissance gaining power "in what was still a family-centered, religiously-oriented time" (51). The maternal voice acquired authority as the role of women shifted into that of spiritual educator and guide.

The colonial mother's legacy and the legacy and advice genres in general were no less concerned with religion or the family than those of England, nor were they less popular. In addition, the New England authors of legacy books seem less concerned with justifying their right or authority to speak; their texts seem a natural progression following those published in England. For one thing, the books published in England were the products of a culture experiencing religious turmoil, and several of the English legacy writers experienced persecution for their faith. In New England, the Puritan theocracy offered a greater freedom of religion that, in turn, liberated women in the practice of their faith. In part contingent upon restraint in expressing ideas which could be construed as heretical, this liberation was dependent upon its relegation to the feminine sphere of the domestic, or to the patriarchal-controlled church. Punished for challenging the boundaries of religious 'freedom,' Anne Hutchinson (1591-1643) sparked dissension in the Puritan community of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Influenced by the 'true' preachings of John Cotton, Hutchinson became a Puritan and moved to New England in 1634. Shortly following her emigration, a 'Hutchinsonian' sect emerged which contradicted the theological teachings of John Winthrop. Division in Massachusetts Bay Colony stemmed from the 'Hutchinsonian' view that "God's grace was critical and absolute: Human beings contributed nothing by way of preparation" (Lindley 3). This view was deemed heretical and Hutchinson was excommunicated, because she and the theological ideas associated with her undermined the authority of patriarchal ministers and disrupted the homogeneity of the young Puritan colony. In her study of women's position in religion in America, Susan Hill Lindley contends that the Hutchinson controversy shut down the potential for women's agency in ministerial matters (6-7); however, as she highlights, Puritan women were supposed to enjoy spiritual—but not social—equality with men (16). That Hutchinson led meetings, spurred theological discussion, and was considered a threat by Massachusetts' authorities demonstrates the dangerous power of the female voice in patriarchal society. Puritan women were by no means silent; yet, they were subject to penalization and marginalization when their speech subverted their position as obedient subordinates. Conversely, they were publicly exalted when their words reiterated community norms.

Although the majority of the legacies in this collection are composed by (or about) Puritans, Quakers also had a substantial presence in America, and they are represented here in the legacy text of Hannah Hill. Also known as the Society of Friends, Quakers were ostracized, banished, and even executed by the Puritans. Margaret Fell (1614-1702), the wife of Judge Fell, converted to Quakerism in 1652 and became a vocal supporter of women's spiritual equality with men. Unlike Hutchinson, Fell's preaching aligned with the tenets of her religious community and allowed her to fulfill a gender-appropriate role as the "*mother of Quakerism*." Yet, gender roles were less limiting than in Puritanism in that, for Quakers, higher spiritual calling superseded woman's heteronormative role as wife and mother. In Puritanism, adherence to the sect's ideology was privileged, but woman's subordinate, though instructive, position in the family was inextricable from such conformity to the religious tenets and culture.

The high instance of female members in Puritan congregations reflects the early modern English belief that women possessed a heightened spirituality, but is also suggestive of women's heightened death-awareness linked to procreation. Rosemary Radford Ruether and Rosemary Skinner Keller note that in the Massachusetts and Connecticut colonies church members made up the majority of the population, often as high as 80%, but women joined in greater numbers than their actual proportion of the total population. Ruether and Keller find that "increased female membership did have two significant long-range implications. First, women began to assume a larger role than men in the religious training of children in the home. Second, wives began to act as their husbands' spiritual guides, rather than as simply their spiritual supporters" (138-39). Indeed, the legacy of Sarah Goodhue elucidates her role in her children's religious education. However, contrary to Ruether and Keller's assertion, Goodhue fashions herself as her husband's *supporter* rather than guide. Even as she instructs her children to foster a relationship with Christ, she encourages them to learn from and be obedient to their father, reinforcing her husband's authority. Nonetheless, Goodhue's stress on religious knowledge and the remarkable ability of the women included in this volume to deploy scripture and contemporary sermons points to the education that they had received and its purpose.

As Protestant and Reformist Christians, these women and girls were all educated in support of their faith traditions, and religious tracts played an important role in such education. While the advice book remained a popular genre in America through the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries because of the rise of the middle class and the changing nature of the family, the Sunday School book was equally popular, even in the face of an increasingly secular society. One reason for this popularity was the growing conviction that the best way to protect youth from vice was to promote religious conversion at an early age, a conviction that grew out of the religious revivals of the Great Awakening in the 1730s and 1740s. Early conversion is, either implicitly or explicitly, promoted in the legacies of the mothers and the girls. It was, though, a mother's responsibility to prepare their children for their conversion. The Massachusetts colony enacted a law in 1642 requiring the heads of households to teach their children and apprentices to read: no one should "suffer so much barbarism in any of their families as not to endeavour to teach by themselves or others, their children and apprentices so much learning as may inable them perfectly to read the english tongue.... Also that all masters of families doe once a week (at the least) catechize their children and servants in the grounds and principles of Religion" (qtd. in Jernegan 11). There is a paradoxical relationship between women's religious rhetoric, their eloquence, and how they claim religious authority from certain elements of Puritan culture, even as other parts of Puritanism forbid them to claim such authority, or even to speak. "Puritanism shares the general misogynous assumption of early modern culture that the only good woman is a silent one," notes Sylvia Brown, even as "Puritan culture also, paradoxically, values women's words" (188). Nancy Cott describes the dichotomy in this way:

the submission required of those who were saved was consistent with female socialization, but this submission was also an act of initiation and assertion of strength by female converts. Conversion set up a direct relation to God's authority that allowed female converts to denigrate or bypass men's authority—to defy men—for God. (21)

As Laurel Thatcher Ulrich puts it, "while a godly woman was expected to act appropriately in all relations in which she found herself,

to be a dutiful daughter, and obedient and faithful wife, a wise parent and mistress, a kind friend, and a charitable neighbor, in her relationship with God she was autonomous" (64). However, as Brown points out, there was a general agreement among Puritans that "what mattered was one's personal response to the Word as it was inspired and guided by the Spirit," and therefore both speaking and writing that response was endorsed by the culture, even the spoken and written word of women (189).

This endorsement became something like doctrine as the theocratic nature of the growing colonies developed. Brooks Holifield points out that "after 1633 the churches in New England began to insist that candidates for membership give a credible narration of their conversion," which further suggests that every Puritan was encouraged to think about her spiritual and life experiences as a narrative, and then to tell that story (42). Patricia Caldwell sees in those stories the beginnings of an American voice, emerging from ordinary people who "tried to act on the idea that their lives were worth writing—or talking—about. Their minds saturated with the Bible, struggling to express in an unfamiliar public arena their most vital and private religious concerns, they somehow started to speak 'New Englandly'" (41). Moreover, while the private stories of these New England women and girls grew out of religious mandates, from early on theirs was a print-driven culture. The first colonial printing press was established in 1638, and the first colonial copyright law passed in 1672. Between 1641 and 1660, New England clergy wrote and published at least fourteen catechisms, and the Bay Psalm Book was reprinted on an almost annual basis after its first publication in 1640. In a print-oriented society that insisted upon personal narrative, even the conversion stories of girls and women, it seems only natural that several female legacy texts would have been printed and widely read.

If the English mother's legacy books gave way to more assured speaking voice in the legacy books from the colonies, then the books by women led to a receptive audience for the books by girls. Like King James' *Basilicon Doron* and Breton's *The Mother's Blessing*, Lady Jane Grey's ventriloquized final exhortation functions as a model for women's and girls' legacies. The "nine days' queen," Grey (1537-1554) was declared Queen of England when only sixteen, and tried for high treason the same year. She was executed on February 12, 1554. Grey's

young age at death and the form of her confession align her work more closely with the legacies of Hill and Sumner. While the circumstances of her death differ significantly from the illnesses to which Hill and Sumner succumbed, all three girls' dying testimonies were recorded and then publicly disseminated for the reiteration and reinforcement of religious tenets. The children's literature of the milieu worked to instruct on proper behavior, instill death-awareness, and promote early conversion. Seventeenth-century educator and editor Sarah Trimmer asserts, "[C]hildren should not be permitted to make their own choice, or to read any books that may be accidentally thrown in their way" (30). Popular books such as *A Token for Children* by Puritan minister James Janeway (1636-1674) underscored the dangers of not being prepared for death, suggesting that children "are not too little to dye" (A4). It is very likely that Sumner was familiar with *A Token for Children*, a text which includes quasi-legacies. That is, Janeway extols dying male and female children whose conversion narratives—recounted and filtered by Janeway—provide examples for children to follow. More than anything, these tracts, including the well-distributed *The New England Primer* (ca. 1687), stress the possibility of early death and the necessity of preparation. Impending death produces anxiety and incites reflection on personal salvation in the legacy texts, for the young girls as much as for the mothers.

Aside from demonstrating concern for their own sinfulness and spiritual condition, the writers in this text show anxiety for the state of grace of others: the mothers focus on their children; the children focus on other children. In both cases, they demonstrate the ongoing cultural preoccupation with the doctrine of original sin and infant damnation. The sole exception here is the Quaker Hannah Hill, who nonetheless seeks for her young sibling and cousin an assurance of grace, replicating the brave self-abnegation of Jane Grey's exhortation before her execution. Puritans followed Calvin's doctrines of original sin and native depravity until the reformulations of Jonathan Edwards, so until then, infants were born with the burden of sinfulness and the guilt of Adam. In his catechism, *Milk for Babies*, John Cotton includes a dialogue meant to teach children about saving grace and their innate depravity: "'God hath made me, He keepeth me, and He can save me' / 'Are you then born holy and righteous?' 'No my first

father sinned, and I in him” (1). The opening alphabet of *The New England Primer* begins “In Adam’s Fall / We Sinned all” (10). However, with the notable exception of Michael Wigglesworth’s *The Day of Doom* (1662), this doctrine was not widely discussed. In the poem, God allows that dead infants, though born sinful, have not committed any sin. They are, however, not among his Elect, and Verse 182 allows for them “The easiest room in hell.”

Generally, the culture considered the problem of infant damnation in various ways. Norman Pettit describes a long debate among theologians about whether or not saving grace could be inherited, whether reprobate children of regenerate parents could be seen as members of the Church (12). Puritans also debated whether or not a child might even possess grace without being conscious of it. Infant baptism was also a subject of debate, as theologians involved in the Cambridge Platform of 1648 asserted explicitly that covenanted, baptized children were “in a more hopefull way of attayning regenerating grace” (Hollifield 54). Both Cotton and Shepard linked baptism to grace through the actions of pious parents, and when Cotton Mather’s infant son died in 1693, rather than consigning him to “The easiest room in hell,” he wrote on the baby’s gravestone “Reserved for a Glorious Resurrection” (164). In their legacies, the mothers write to save children and grandchildren and the girls write to save unconverted children, echoing Mather’s hope for the redemption of loved ones.

Coupled with the doctrine that consigned those outside of election to hell was the mortality rate of children in the period. Steven Mintz notes that “In New England’s healthiest communities, around 10 percent of children died in their first year, and three of every nine died before reaching their twenty-first birthday” (15). Conversion became a doubly important issue for mothers who were anxious about living long enough to see their children joined to the church. Mintz cites figures demonstrating that a mother in the New England colonies had at least a ten percent chance of dying during childbirth (14). When, in her legacy book below, a pregnant Sarah Goodhue pauses fearfully over the fact that children are “by nature, miserable sinners” (3), she exhibits both widely accepted beliefs and the culture’s anxieties about them. With the significant rate of young death and stillbirth, women’s attention appropriately fell on the well-being of their children, as is evinced in the private meditations of Elizabeth Egerton, Countess

of Bridgewater. Women worked hard to teach their children to read so that they might bring them to God. As Mintz points out, "Puritan mothers did not divide reading and religion. Children were expected to learn to read by listening to others read aloud and then by memorizing the Lord's Prayer, psalms, hymns, catechisms, and scripture passages" (21). Hooker exhorted parents to "bring our children as neer to Heaven as we can. It is in our power to restrain them, and reform them, and that we ought to do" (357). Leaving legacy writing behind meant that dying women could continue to restrain and reform their children.

As for those regenerate and pious children, many of them, especially girls, took seriously the female role in the family's religious matters. The girls who wrote the child's legacies included here were noted early on both for their faithfulness and their care in spiritual matters; it is because of their exemplary nature that their deaths were made available for public consumption. Rather than demonstrating rote obedience and parroting scriptures and sermons, both girls were seen to understand their religions and to show acuity in evangelizing. Increase Mather (1639-1723) did not stop with simply exhorting parents to bring their children to regeneration. Rather, asking that "a Spirit of Converting grace shall be poured upon their Children," he saw children as absorbing that spirit and then using it to convert those around them: "so doth converting grace soften the dry and hard hearts of the children" (8). The legacies of Hannah Hill and Jane Sumner are far more concerned with spreading the sanctifying oil of grace than with doubting their own regenerate states or fearing their imminent deaths. They are as assured in their religious understanding and evangelizing as the five women in this book.

The mother's legacies included here offer a far more diverse generic mix than do those from England. Three of these women include their poetry, and while Bradstreet is famous as a poet, Ulrich points out the "rather complex internal rhyme scheme" of Goodhue's poetry and suggests that "she had obviously been sharpening her pen after the spinning was done" (62). The texts also feature various narratives and narrative patterns, and remarkable Biblical exegesis and application of sermons to lived experience. They offer insight into how prominent Puritan divines and Quaker leaders interacted with the members of their churches. The texts by Hill and Sumner also adumbrate

where print culture in America would go next as the advice manual and spiritual narrative came together to form the Sunday School book. The final appendix in this text is both a legacy book, the last words of a dying child, and a Sunday School book. The narrative of the life of Eliza Thornton, published first on its own, was later included into several Sunday School texts, surrounded by illustrations, other narratives of pious children, and some of Isaac Watt's hymns for children. Like the legacies that precede it, the letter from the anonymous "Solicitous Mother," and the funeral sermons, Thornton's words offer insight into a culture that was extraordinarily preoccupied with the afterlife.

All of these writings give a personal perspective of the lives of colonial girls and women. They demonstrate just how much family members and friends meant to each other in the period. Their words are often poignant and eloquent as they link physical and emotional experience to their spiritual state for the good of their loved ones, and leave for readers, then and now, an important legacy.

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Editorial Principles: Intentions and Practices

Intentions

The governing principles behind this edition are the presentation of an accurate and accessible text. Because this edition of legacy books is intended for the specialist, but also the non-specialist reader, we have aimed for both detail and ease of use. To that end, each of the books is introduced with a discussion of the author that examines her writing practice and places her and her text in the wider cultural and historical context. The introduction to each legacy book is followed with the text of the book itself, presented in as clear a manner as possible, and with extensive (numbered) footnotes that give further contextual and explanatory information. Our aim is to make clear both implicit and explicit reference to scripture and other sacred texts, and to place them in the socio-political and historical contexts of the lives of these women and girls. Following the text of each book, we include endnotes (lettered) that discuss textual variants between editions and manuscript copies. We also include as appendices relevant companion texts: Benjamin Colman's sermon for Elizabeth Wainwright's funeral, a popular anonymous mother's epistolary legacy, and memoirs of pious children. The book ends with a bibliography and a comprehensive index.

Editorial Practice

There are no silent corrections or emendations in our transcriptions of the original publications and manuscripts. We have retained the

original spelling but regularized the use of i/j and u/v. In a like fashion, and only for the sake of consistency, we use the em-dash for all typeset dashes. Brackets indicate editorial additions made to complete abbreviations, words, or phrases in the interest of easy comprehension. When the meaning is clear, superscript and other types of abbreviations will be duplicated in the transcription. When we transcribe from manuscripts, underlining will be approximated. A question mark in brackets indicates a transcription about which some doubt remains, and an ellipses within brackets indicates a gap in the manuscript or illegibility. We retain original capitalization and punctuation, however random and inconsistent their use, as a reflection of both the print and educational culture and codes of these women. The one exception to this is a regularized abbreviation and punctuation of the biblical passages, used by most of these authors and typesetters anyway.

One thing that has not concerned us in the transcription, and in this our edition differs from that of Sylvia Brown, is the appearance of the pages in the originals. Each book's introduction describes its original appearance along with its publication history, and we copy a page/s from the original publication or manuscript to familiarize the reader with how the legacy book originally appeared. Other than that, these transcriptions do not indicate original line or page breaks, or catch words. We follow original paragraphing and add footnotes to benefit the modern reader.

Bibliographic Practice

These Puritan authors drew their biblical quotations largely from the Geneva Bible of 1610, annotated by Lawrence Tomson and Franciscus Junius and printed by Robert Barker in London. At different times, however, these authors draw from other Bibles, and use the King James and the 1539 Tyndale/Coverdale Great Bible. We make clear in the introduction to each woman's text which Bible they most commonly use, then note where they borrowed from other versions, or conflated two or more versions in the editorial footnotes.

We use the following abbreviations for the Bibles and for other frequently cited works. Their full citations are in the bibliography:

<i>BPB</i>	<i>The Bay Psalm Book</i>
<i>DAB</i>	<i>Dictionary of American Biography</i>
<i>DNB</i>	<i>Dictionary of National Biography</i>
Douai	The Douai Old Testament
Geneva	The Geneva Bible
Great	The Great Bible
KJB	King James Bible
<i>OED</i>	<i>The Oxford English Dictionary</i>
Rheims	The Rheims New Testament

Chapter 1

Anne Bradstreet

Introduction to Anne Bradstreet, *To My Dear Children* (1664)

Born to Thomas Dudley and Dorothy Yorke in Northampton, England, Anne Bradstreet (ca. 1612-1672) through no intention of her own became America's first poetess. Her work was published in numerous contemporary volumes and has received more critical attention than that of the other women of this collection. In her lifetime, Bradstreet's poetry and private writings were allegedly taken and published in England under the title *The Tenth Muse Lately Sprung up in America*. The unauthorized publication of Bradstreet's work was famously facilitated by her brother-in-law, Reverend John Woodbridge, and his action apparently encouraged her to refine her already impressive writing voice. Bradstreet's poetic skill is evident in her legacy text, as she employs iambic pentameter, anaphora, and a simple rhyme scheme. Like other early female authors, the social and economic standing of her family permitted her to receive education denied to working-class women. Her literary ability was fostered by private tutors, which her father's prominence in both the Old World and New England had afforded her.

Bradstreet's father, Thomas Dudley (1576-1653), was a devout Puritan and held a respectable position as the chief steward of the Clinton estates in England before serving as deputy governor of the Massachusetts Bay Company. An alliance between Dudley and John Winthrop developed during their emigration in 1630 and solidified—despite minor disputes—with the marriage of their children, Samuel Dudley and Mary Winthrop, in 1633. Alongside her parents and the Winthrops, Anne and her husband Simon Bradstreet moved to America. Likely having met around 1625, Simon and Anne married in 1628, when Anne was sixteen years old. Like Dudley and Winthrop, Simon took the position of governor of the Massachusetts Bay Company (from 1679-1686). After residing in Cambridge and Ipswich for relatively short time periods, the Bradstreet family lived in North Andover, where Anne passed away. Surrounded by strongly religious and politically-minded patriachs, her submission to masculine authority is affirmed through her fulfillment of her proper role as mother. At age twenty, Bradstreet

produced the first Dudley-Bradstreet progeny and became responsible for the education and overall well-being of her child.

The same year that Bradstreet became a mother, she battled illness, as she had throughout much of her youth and adulthood. Following her journey to New England, she seems to have contracted something like consumption, to which she refers in "Upon a Fit of Sickness, Anno. 1632. Aetatis suae, 19". In 1628 Anne survived smallpox; an illness she implies was a plague from God because of her "vanity" and the "follyes of youth" (4, 5). Bradstreet's later meditations are preceded by an apology from the writer, in which she blames the imperfections of her writing on her weakness from ill health. If her legacy book was inspired by and affected by her state of health, then much of her writing may have been, and her bouts with various sicknesses strengthened, if not incited, her faithfulness and obedience to God. When ill, she found that humility was an effective remedy, indicating that she possessed control over her own well-being. In this way, Bradstreet implicitly encourages her children to take individual responsibility for their health – physical, emotional and spiritual – early in the text.

Through her legacy book, Bradstreet hopes to impart spiritual knowledge to her children. In contrast to Sarah Goodhue, who addresses her legacy to her husband, Bradstreet directs hers to her children, thereby underlining her role of mother. In her poetry, she famously alludes to her eight young children as "eight birds hatcht in one nest" ("In Reference to Her Children, 23 June, 1659"); here, she speaks directly to her children, also making reference to them and their lives in her poetic sections (Hensley, 232-234). The beginning of her legacy book focuses on her sinful youth and her conversion. In this way, Bradstreet highlights the possibility that her children might become sinful, but also their ability to repent their sinfulness. According to Bradstreet, God is gracious and good, and any suffering or punishment should be accepted "thankfully and Joyfully" (p. 36 below). Despite her assertion that God's judgment is just, Bradstreet works to ensure that her children enjoy God's blessings rather than his wrath.

Although it is clear that Bradstreet's legacy is for all of her children, a poem appears in the book which specifically elucidates her relationship with her son Samuel. In the poem, she notes how she has cared for him in his youth, and, because he is journeying abroad, she must entrust him to God. The trust which she places in God to protect

Samuel implicitly extends to her other children; just as she cannot oversee her son on his trip to England, she cannot take care of her children once she dies. Therefore, the concern that Bradstreet demonstrates as her son travels continues her preparation for her own death and, following the legacy genre convention, she appeals to her children to turn towards God so that He might protect them. Her desire to have her children convert early may stem from her own battles with illness mentioned above, but that this desire resonates through nearly a decade of writings is remarkable and exemplifies her strong position as spiritual guide, as well as her sustained death-awareness.

The poems and prose that comprise Bradstreet's legacy text span eight years. The first dated entry was written on July 8, 1656 and the final section, "*Meditations Divine and morall*," is dated March 20, 1664. That the legacy book is a compilation of various pieces that had been written over a long period of time suggests that she was consistently conscious of her mortality, though her death came long after her final entry. On September 16, 1672, Bradstreet succumbed to illness, likely tuberculosis or consumption. Bradstreet's legacy remained unpublished during her lifetime, and it was not discovered until after her death. As two of her children, Simon and Sarah, made copies of their mother's legacy book, it is evident that Bradstreet's children cherished her words. Perhaps influenced by his mother's legacy, her son Simon became an ordained minister. Bradstreet's legacy book was published nearly one hundred years following her death, and was subsequently reprinted in various collections. Although Bradstreet intended her legacy as a spiritual guide for her children, her book also stands as an important work for New England and its female community, as she displays remarkable literary skill and provides us with the first American mother's legacy text.

Manuscript copies of Bradstreet's legacy, made by her children Simon and Sarah, are held in the Boston Public Library and the Houghton Library at Harvard, respectively. The text was first published in John Harvard Ellis's *The Works of Anne Bradstreet in Prose and Verse* (Gloucester, MS: Peter Smith, 1867), and was reprinted several times. A facsimile was published in 1962, and Jeannine Hensley's *The Works of Anne Bradstreet* (Cambridge, MS: Belknap, Harvard UP, 1967) also includes the legacy book. Despite Bradstreet's popularity, her legacy writings have not been recognized widely, nor has her work been

printed in a scholarly edition. However, her manuscript makes clear that this is a legacy text, meant to serve all the purposes of a genre with which she would have been familiar from the popular legacies published before she left England. Her children were of primary concern to her, and her legacy demonstrates that she was as concerned for their physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being when they were adults as when they were younger.

Both of her children's manuscripts use the title "*Meditations, Divine and Morall*," which offers insight into how adult children perceived the legacy writings of their dead mothers. However, this work is referred to with a range of titles and descriptors, from "To My Dear Children" to "her prose remains," and we use the title Bradstreet put at its head: "To My Dear Children." In all its printed appearances, the components of the Andover Manuscript are not reproduced in their original order, nor do these editions come close to reproducing the sense of legacy inherent to the genre and the manuscripts. As Sarah Bradstreet appends in her copy book: "The following are the excellent sayings and performances of Lady Ann Bradstreet, Consort of Governor Bradstreet; designed for her son, Simon Bradstreet, afterwards the worthy Minister of Charlestown, and father of the later venerable Simon Bradstreet, of Marblehead: never before in print."

Copy Text

The manuscript copies of Bradstreet's legacy, made by her children Simon and Sarah, are held in the Boston Public Library and the Houghton Library at Harvard, respectively. These are the copy texts for all subsequent publications and are available to scholars. With Bradstreet's original manuscript missing, we rely on Ellis's edition as the next most authoritative source, as the original was his copy text.

Early Editions

The Works of Anne Bradstreet in Prose and Verse. Ed. John Harvard Ellis. Gloucester, MS: Peter Smith, 1867. Charleston: A. E. Cutter, 1867. Facsimile ed. 1932, 1962.

The Poems of Mrs. Anne Bradstreet Together with Her Prose remains. Intro. Charles Eliot Norton. New York: Duodecimos, 1897.

Contemporary Editions

To My Dear Children has been included in *The Tenth Muse: and, from the Manuscripts: Meditations Divine and Morall, together with letters and occasional pieces*. Ed. Josephine Ketcham Piercy. Gainesville, FL; Delmar, NY: Scholars' Facsimiles & Reprints, 1965, 1978; *The Works of Anne Bradstreet*. Ed. Jeannine Hensley. Cambridge, MS: Belknap, Harvard UP, 1967; and, *The Complete Works of Anne Bradstreet*. Ed. Joseph R. McElrath and Allan P. Robb. Boston: Twayne, 1981.

To my Dear Children.

This Book by Any yet unread,
I leave for you when I am dead,
That, being gone, here you may find
What was your liveing mother's mind.
Make use of what I leave in Love
And God shall blesse you from above.

A.B.

My Dear Children,—

I, knowing by experience that the exhortations of parents take most effect when the speakers leave to speak, and those especially sink deepest which are spoke latest—and being ignorant whether on my death bed I shall have opportunity to speak to any of you, much lesse to All—thought it the best, whilst I was able to compose some short matters, (for what else to call them I know not) and bequeath to you, that when I am no more with you, yet I may bee dayly in your remembrance, (Although that is the least in my aim in what I now doe) but that you may gain some spiritual Advantage by my experience. I have not studyed in this you read to show my skill, but to declare the Truth—not to sett forth myself, but the Glory of God. If I had minded the former, it had been perhaps better pleasing to you, —but seing the last is the best, let it bee best pleasing to you.

The method I will observe shall bee this—I will begin with God's dealing with me from my childhood to this Day. In my young years, about 6 or 7 as I take it, I began to make conscience of my wayes, and what I knew was sinfull, as lying, disobedience to Parents, &c. I avoided it. If at any time I was overtaken with the like evils, it was a

great Trouble. I could not be at rest 'till by prayer I had confest it unto God. I was also troubled at the neglect of Private Dutyes, tho: too often tardy that way. I also found much comfort in reading the Scriptures, especially those places I thought most concerned my Condition, and as I grew to have more understanding, so the more solace I took in them.

In a long fitt of sicknes which I had on my bed I often communed with my heart, and made supplication to the most High who sett me free from that affliction.

But as I grew up to bee about 14 or 15 I found my heart more carnall, and sitting loose from God, vanity and the follyes of youth take hold of me.

About 16, the Lord laid his hand sore upon me and smott mee with the small pox. When I was in my affliction, I besought the Lord, and confessed my Pride and Vanity and he was entreated of me, and again restored me. But I rendered not to him according to the benefitt received.

After a short time I changed my condition and was marryed, and came into this Country, where I found a new world and new manners, at which my heart rose. But after I was convinced it was the way of God, I submitted to it and joined to the church at Boston.

After some time I fell into a lingering sicknes like a consumption, together with a lamenesse, which correction I saw the Lord sent to humble and try me and doe mee Good: and it was not altogether ineffectuall.

It pleased God to keep me a long time without a child, which was a great greif to me, and cost mee many prayers and tears before I obtained one, and after him gave mee many more, of whom I now take the care, that as I have brought you into the world, and with great paines, weaknes, cares, and feares brought you to this, I now travail in birth again of you till Christ bee formed in you.¹

Among all my experiences of God's gracious Dealings with me I have constantly observed this, that he hath never suffered me long to sitt loose from him, but by one affliction or other hath made me look

1. Gal. 4:19. "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again, until Christ be formed in you" (Geneva).

home, and search what was amisse—so usually thus it hath been with me that I have no sooner felt my heart out of order, but I have expected correction for it, which most commonly hath been upon my own person, in sicknesse, weaknes, paines, sometimes on my soul, in Doubts and feares of God’s displeasure, and my sincerity towards him, sometimes he hath smott a child with sicknes, sometimes chashtened by losses in estate,—and these Times (thro: his great mercy) have been the times of my greatest Getting and Advantage, yea I have found them the Times when the Lord hath manifested the most Love to me. Then have I gone to searching, and have said with David, Lord search me and try me, see what wayes of wickednes are in me, and lead me in the way everlasting: and seldome or never but I have found either some sin I lay under which God would have reformed, or some duty neglected which he would have performed.² And by his help I have layd Vowes and Bonds upon my Soul to perform his righteous commands.

If at any time you are chastened of God, take it as thankfully and Joyfully as in greatest mercyes, for if yee bee his yee shall reap the greatest benefit by it.³ It hath been no small support to me in times of Darknes when the Almighty hath hid his face from me, that yet I have had abundance of sweetnes and refreshment after affliction, and more circumspection in my walking after I have been afflicted.⁴ I have been with God like an untoward child, that no longer then the rod has been on my back (or at least in sight) but I have been apt to forgett him and myself too. Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I keep thy statutes.⁵

I have had great experience of God’s hearing my Prayers, and re-
turning comfortable Answers to me, either in granting the Thing I

2. Ps. 139: 23, 24. “Try me, O God, and know mine heart: prove mee, and know my thoughts. And consider if there be any way of wickednesse in me, and leade me in the way for ever” (Geneva).

3. 1 Cr. 11:32. “But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, because we should not be condemned with the world” (Geneva).

4. Isa. 59: 2. “But your iniquities have separated between you, and your God, and your sinnes have hid his face from you, that he will not heare” (Geneva). [?]

5. Psa. 199:67. “Before I was afflicted, I went astray, but now I keep thy word” (Geneva).

prayed for, or else in satissfying my mind without it; and I have been confident it hath been from him, because I have found my heart through his goodnes enlarged in Thankfulness to him.

I have often been perplexed that I have not found that constant Joy in my Pilgrimage and refreshing which I supposed most of the servants of God have; although he hath not left me altogether without the wittnes of his holy spirit, who hath oft given mee his word and sett to his Seal that it shall bee well with me.⁶ I have somtimes tasted of that hidden Manna that the world knowes not, and have sett up my Ebenezer, and have resolved with myself that against such a promis, such tast of sweetnes, the Gates of Hell shall never prevail.⁷ Yet have I many Times sinkings and droopings, and not enjoyed that felicity that somtimes I have done. But when I have been in darknes and seen no light, yet have I desired to stay my self upon the Lord.⁸

And, when I have been in sicknes and pain, I have thought if the Lord would but lift up the light of his Countenance upon me, altho: he ground me to powder, it would bee but light to me; yea, oft have I thought were it hell itself, and could there find the Love of God toward me, it would bee a Heaven.⁹ And, could I have been in Heaven without the Love of God, it would have been a Hell to me; for, in Truth, it is the absense and presence of God that makes Heaven or Hell.

Many times hath Satan troubled me concerning the verity of the scriptures, many times by Atheisme how I could know whether there was a God; I never saw any miracles to confirm me, and those which I

6. Jhn. 3:33. "He that has received his testimony, hath set to his seal that God is true" (KJV).

7. Rev. 2: 17. "Let him that hath an eare, heare what the Spirit saith unto the Churches[;] To him that overcommeth, will I give to eate of the Manna that is hid"; 1 Sam. 7: 12. "Then Samuel tooke a stone, and pitched it betweene Mizpeh and Shen, and called the name thereof Ebenezer, and he said, Hitherto hath the Lord helped us" (Geneva).

8. Isa. 50: 10. "Who is among you that feareth the Lorde? let him heare the voyce of his servant: he that walketh in darknesse, and hath no light, let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God" (Geneva). "Stay": "To stand one's ground, stand firm (as opposed to fleeing or budging). Now rare" (*OED*).

9. Ps. 4: 6. "Many say, Who will shew us any good? but Lord, lift up the light of thy countenance upon us" (Geneva).

read of how did I know but they were feigned. That there is a God my Reason would soon tell me by the wondrous workes that I see, the vast frame of the Heaven and the Earth, the order of all things, night and day, Summer and Winter, Spring and Autumne, the dayly providing for this great houshold upon the Earth, the preserving and directing of All to its proper end. The consideration of these things would with amazement certainly resolve me that there is an Eternall Being.

But how should I know he is such a God as I worship in Trinity, and such a Saviour as I rely upon? tho: this hath thousands of Times been suggested to mee, yet God hath helped me over. I have argued thus with myself. That there is a God I see. If ever this God hath revealed himself, it must bee in his word, and this must bee it or none. Have I not found that operation by it that no humane Invention can work upon the Soul? hath not Judgments befallen Diverse who have scorned and contem'd it? hath it not been preserved thro: All Ages maugre all the heathen Tyrants and all of the enemyes who have opposed it?¹⁰ Is there any story but that which shoves the beginnings of Times, and how the world came to bee as wee see? Doe wee not know the prophecyes in it fullfilled which could not have been so long foretold by any but God himself?

When I have gott over this Block, then have I another putt in my way, That admitt this bee the true God whom wee worship, and that bee his word, yet why may not the Popish Religion bee the right? They have the same God, the same Christ, the same word: they only enterprett it one way, wee another.

This hath somtimes stuck with me, and more it would, but the vain fooleries that are in their Religion, together with their lying miracles and cruell persecutions of the Saints, which admitt were they as they terme them, yet not so to bee dealt withall.

The consideration of these things and many the like would soon turn me to my own Religion again.

But some new Troubles I have had since the world has been filled with Blasphemy, and Sectaries, and some who have been accounted

10. The *OED* defines "maugre," now obsolete, as "ill will (considered in relation to its object)."

sincere Christians have been carryed away with them, that somtimes I have said, Is there ffaith upon the earth?¹¹ and I have not known what to think. But then I have remembred the words of Christ that so it must bee, and that, if it were possible, the very elect should bee deceived.¹² Behold, saith our Saviour, I have told you before.¹³ That hath stayed my heart, and I can now say, Return, O my Soul, to thy Rest, upon this Rock Christ Jesus will I build my faith; and, if I perish, I perish.¹⁴ But I know all the Powers of Hell shall never prevail against it. I know whom I have trusted, and whom I have beleived, and that he is able to keep that I have committed to his charge.¹⁵

Now to the King, Immortall, Eternall, and invisible, the only wise God, bee Honoure and Glory for ever and ever! Amen.¹⁶

This was written in much sicknesse and weaknes, and is very weakly and imperfectly done; but, if you can pick any Benefitt out of it, it is the marke which I aimed at.

11. A "sectary," according to the *OED*, is "an adherent of a schismatical or heretical sect. In the 17-18th c.," the word was "commonly applied to the English Protestant Dissenters."

12. Matt. 24: 24. "For there shal arise false Christs, & false prophets, and shal shewe great signes & wonders, so that if it were possible, they shoulde deceive the very elect" (Geneva).

13. Matt. 24: 25. "Behold, I have tolde you before" (Geneva).

14. Ps. 116: 7. "Returne unto thy rest, O my soule: for the Lord hath beene beneficiall unto thee"; Esth. 4: 16. "Go and assemble all the [...] Jewes that are found in Shushan, and fast yee for mee, and eate not nor drinke in three dayes, day nor night, I also and my maides will fast likewise, and so will goe in to the king, which is not according to the law: and if I perish, I perish" (Geneva).

15. 2 Tim 1: 12. "For the which cause I also suffer these things, but I am not ashamed: for I knowe whome I have beleived, and I am perswaded that hee is able to keepe that which I have committed to him against that day" (Geneva).

16. 1 Tim 1: 17. "Now unto the King everlasting, immortall, invisible, unto God onely wise, be honour and glory, for ever and ever, Amen" (Geneva).

Occassional Meditations.

Here follow severall occasionall meditations.

I.

By night when others soundly slept,
And had at once both ease and Rest,
My waking eyes were open kept,
And so to lye I found it best.

II.

I sought him whom my Soul did Love,
With tears I sought him earnestly;
He bow'd his ear down from Above,
In vain I did not seek or cry.

III.

My hungry Soul he fill'd with Good,
He in his Bottle putt my teares,
My smarting wounds washt in his blood,
And banisht thence my Doubts and feares.¹⁷

IV.

What to my Saviour shall I give,
Who freely hath done this for me?
I'll serve him here whilst I shall live,
And Love him to Eternity.

17. Ps. 56: 8. "Thou hast counted my wandrings: put my teares into thy bottell: are they not in thy register?" (Geneva).

For Deliverance from a fever.

When Sorrowes had begyrt me round,
And Paines within and out,
When in my flesh no part was found,
Then didst thou rid me out.

My burning flesh in sweat did boyle,
My aking head did break;
From side to side for ease I toyle,
So faint I could not speak.

Beclouded was my Soul with fear
Of thy Displeasure sore,
Nor could I read my Evidence
Which oft I read before.

Hide not thy face from me, I cry'd,
From Burnings keep my soul;
Thou know'st my heart, and hast me try'd;
I on thy Mercyes Rowl.

O, heal my Soul, thou know'st I said,
Tho' flesh consume to nought;
What tho' in dust it shall bee lay'd,
To Glory't shall bee brought.

Thou heardst, thy rod thou didst remove,
And spar'd my Body frail,
Thou shew'st to me thy tender Love,
My heart no more might quail.

O, Praises to my mighty God,
Praise to my Lord, I say,
Who hath redeem'd my Soul from pitt:
Praises to him for Aye!¹⁸

18. Aye: "Ever, always, continually" (OED).

ffrom another sore ffitt.

In my distresse I sought the Lord,
When nought on Earth could comfort give;
And when my Soul these things abhor'd,
Then, Lord, thou said'st unto me, Live.

Thou knowest the sorrowes that I felt,
My plaints and Groanes were heard of Thee,
And how in sweat I seem'd to melt;
Thou help'st and thou regardest me.

My wasted flesh thou didst restore,
My feeble loines didst gird with strenght;
Yea, when I was most low and poor,
I said I shall praise thee at lenght.

What shall I render to my God
For all his Bounty shew'd to me,
Even for his mercyes in his rod,
Where pittty most of all I see?

My heart I wholly give to Thee:
O make it fruitfull, faithfull Lord!
My life shall dedicated bee
To praise in thought, in Deed, in Word.

Thou know'st no life I did require
Longer then still thy Name to praise,
Nor ought on Earth worthy Desire,
In drawing out these wretched Dayes.

Thy Name and praise to celebrate,
O Lord! for aye is my request.
O, graynt I doe it in this state,
And then with thee which is the Best.

Deliverance from a fitt of ffainting.

Worthy are Thou, O Lord of praise!
 But ah! it's not in me;
 My sinking heart I pray thee raise,
 So shall I give it Thee.

My life as Spider's webb's cutt off,
 Thus fainting have I said,
 And liveing man no more shall see,
 But bee in silence layd.¹⁹

My feblee Spirit thou didst revive,
 My Doubting thou didst chide,
 And tho: as dead mad'st me alive,
 I here a while might 'bide.

Why should I live but to thy Praise?
 My life is hid with Thee;
 O Lord, no longer bee my Dayes,
 Then I may fruitfull bee.²⁰

*Meditations when my Soul hath been refreshed with the
 Consolations which the world knowes not.*

Lord, why should I doubt any more when thou hast given me such as-
 sured Pledges of thy Love? First, thou art my Creator, I thy creature;
 thou my master, I thy servant. But hence arises not my comfort: Thou
 art my ffather, I thy child. Yee shall [be] my Sons and Daughters, saith

19. Job 8:14. "Whose hope shall be cut off, and whose trust a spider's web" (KJV).

20. Col. 3: 2, 3. "Set your affections on things which are above, and not on things
 which are on the earth. For yee are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in
 God" (Geneva).

the Lord Almighty.²¹ Christ is my Brother; I ascend unto my ffather and your ffather, unto my God and your God.²² But least this should not bee enough, thy maker is thy husband.²³ Nay, more, I am a member of his Body; he, my head.²⁴ Such Priviledges, had not the Word of Truth made them known, who or where is the man that durst in his heart have presumed to have thought it? So wonderfull are these thoughts that my spririt failes in me at the consideration thereof; and I am confounded to think that God, who hath done so much for me, should have so little from me. But this is my comfort, when I come into Heaven, I shall understand perfectly what he hath done for me, and then shall I bee able to praise him as I ought. Lord, haveing this hope, let me purefie myself as thou art Pure, and let me bee no more affraid of Death, but even desire to bee dissolved, and bee with thee, which is best of All.

July 8th, 1656.

I had a sore fitt of fainting, which lasted 2 or 3 dayes, but not in that extremity which at first it took me, and so much the sorer it was to me because my dear husband was from home (who is my cheifest comforter on Earth); but my God, who never failed me, was not absent, but helped me, and graciously manifested his Love to me, which I dare not passe by without Remembrance, that it may bee a support to me when I shall have occasion to read this hereafter, and to others that shall read it when I shall possesse that I now hope for, that so they may bee encourag^d to trust in him who is the only Portion of his Servants.

21. 2 Cor. 6: 18. "And I will be a father unto you, and ye shall be my sonnes and daughters, saith the Lord Almightye" (Geneva).

22. John 20: 17. "Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not: for I am not yet ascended to my Father, but goe to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and to your Father, and to my God, and to your God" (Geneva).

23. Isa. 54: 5. "For hee that made thee, is thine husband, (whose Name is the Lord of hosts) and thy redeemer the holy One of Israel shall be called the God of the whole world" (Geneva).

24. I Cor. 12: 27. "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members [?] for your part" (Geneva).

O Lord, let me never forgett thy Goodnes, nor question thy faithfullnes to me, for thou art my God: Thou hast said, and shall not I beleive it?

Thou hast given me a pledge of that Inheritance thou hast promised to bestow upon me. O, never let Satan prevail against me, but strengthen my faith in Thee, 'till I shall attain the end of my hopes, even the Salvation of my Soul. Come, Lord Jesus; come quickly.

What God is like to him I serve,
What Saviour like to mine?
O, never let me from thee swerve,
For truly I am thine.

My thankfull mouth shall speak thy praise,
My Tongue shall talk of Thee:
On High my heart, O, doe thou raise,
For what thou'st done for me.

Goe, Worldlings, to your Vanities,
And heathen to your Gods;
Let them help in Adversities,
And sanctefye their rods.

My God he is not like to yours,
Your selves shall Judges bee;
I find his Love, I know his Pow'r,
A Succourer of mee.

He is not man that he should lye,
Nor son of man to unsay;
His word he plighted hath on high,
And I shall live for aye.²⁵

25. Num. 23:19. "God [is] not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do [it]? Or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?" (KJV).

And for his sake that faithfull is,
That dy'd but now doth live,
The first and last, that lives for aye,
Me lasting life shall give.

My soul, rejoyce thou in thy God,
Boast of him all the Day,
Walk in his Law, and kisse his Rod,
Cleave close to him alway.

What tho: thy outward Man decay,
Thy inward shall waxe strong;
Thy body vile it shall bee chang'd,
And glorious made ere-long.

With Angels-wings thy Soul shall mount
To Blisse unseen by Eye,
And drink at unexhausted fount
Of Joy unto Eternity.

Thy teares shall All bee dried up,
Thy Sorrowes all shall flye;
Thy Sinns shall ne'r bee summon'd up,
Nor come in memory.

Then shall I know what thou hast done
For me, unworthy me,
And praise thee shall ev'n as I ought,
ffor wonders that I see.
Base World, I trample on thy face,
Thy Glory I despise,
No gain I find in ought below,
For God hath made me wise.

Come, Jesus, quickly, Blessed Lord,
 Thy face when shall I see?
 O let me count each hour a Day
 'Till I dissolved bee.

August 28, 1656

After much weaknes and sicknes when my spirits were worn out, and many times my faith weak likewise, the Lord was pleased to uphold my drooping heart, and to manifest his Love to me; and this is that which stayes my Soul that this condition that I am in is the best for me, for God doth not afflict willingly, nor take delight in greiving the children of men: he hath no benefitt by my adversity, nor is he the better for my prosperity; but he doth it for my Advantage, and that I may bee a Gainer by it.²⁶ And if he knowes that weaknes and a frail body is the best to make me a vessell fitt for his use, why should I not bare it, not only willingly but joyfully? The Lord knowes I dare not desire that health that somtimes I have had, least my heart should bee drawn from him, and sett upon the world.

Now I can wait, looking every day when my Saviour shall call for me. Lord graunt that while I live I may doe that service I am able in this frail Body, and bee in continuall expectation of my change, and let me never forgett thy great Love to my soul so lately expressed, when I could lye down and bequeath my Soul to thee, and Death seem'd no terrible Thing. O let me ever see Thee that Art invisible, and I shall not bee unwilling to come, tho: by so rough a Messenger.

May 11, 1657.

I had a sore sicknes, and weaknes took hold of me, which hath by fitts lasted all this Spring till this 11 May, yet hath my God given me many a respite, and some ability to perform the Dutyes I owe to him, and the work of my famely.

26. Lam. 3:33. "For he doth not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men" (KJV).

Many a refreshment have I found in this my weary Pilgrimage, and in this valley of Baca many pools of water.²⁷ That which now I chiefly labour for is a contented, thankfull heart under my affliction and weaknes, seing it is the will of God it should bee thus. Who am I that I should repine at his pleasure, especially seing it is for my spirituall advantage? for I hope my soul shall flourish while my body decayes, and the weaknes of this outward man shall bee a meanes to strenghten my inner man.

Yet a little while and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.²⁸

May 13, 1657.

As spring the winter doth succeed,
And leaves the naked Trees doe dresse,
The earth all black is cloth'd in green;
At sun-shine each their joy expresse.

My Suns returned with healing wings.²⁹
My Soul and Body doth rejoice;
My heart exults, and praises sings
To him that heard my wailing Voice.

My winters past, my stormes are gone,
And former clowdes seem now all fled;
But, if they must eclipse again,
I'le run where I was succoured.

27. Ps. 84: 5, 6. "Blessed is the man, whose strength is in thee, and in whose heart are thy wayes. They going th[?]w the vale of Baca, make welles therein: the raine also covereth [?] the pooles" (Geneva).

28. Heb. 10: 37. "For yet a very litle while, and hee that shall come, will come, and will not tarie" (Geneva).

29. Mal. 4: 2. "But unto you that feare my Name, shall the Sunne of righteousness arise, and health shal be under his wings, and ye shall go forth and grow up as fat calves" (Geneva).

I have a shelter from the storm,
 A shadow from the fainting heat;
 I have accesse unto his Throne,
 Who is a God so wondrous great.³⁰

O hast thou made my Pilgrimage
 Thus pleasant, fair, and good;
 Bless'd me in Youth and elder Age,
 My Baca made a springing flood?

I studious am what I shall doe,
 To show my Duty with delight;
 All I can give is but thine own,
 And at the most a simple mite.³¹

Sept. 30, 1657.

It pleased God to viset me with my old Distemper of weaknes and fainting, but not in that sore manner somtimes he hath. I desire not only willingly, but thankfully, to submitt to him, for I trust it is out of his abundant Love to my straying Soul which in prosperity is too much in love with the world. I have found by experience I can no more live without correction then without food. Lord, with thy correction give Instruction and amendment, and then thy stroakes shall bee welcome. I have not been refined in the furnace of affliction as some have been, but have rather been preserved with sugar then brine, yet will he preserve me to his heavenly kingdom.³²

30. Isa. 25: 4. "For thou hast bene a strength unto the poore, even a strength to the needy in his trouble, a refuge against the tempest, a shadow against the heat: for the blast of the mightie is like a storme against the wall" (Geneva).

31. Luke 21: 2, 3, 4. "And hee saw also a certaine poore widow, which cast in thither two mites: And hee said, Of a trueth I say unto you, that this poore widow hath cast in more then they all. For they all have of their superfluitie cast into the offerings of God: but she of her penury hath cast in all the living that she had" (Geneva).

32. Isa. 48: 10. "Behold, I have fined thee, but not as silver: I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction" (Geneva).

Thus (dear children) have yee seen the many sicknesses and weaknesses that I have passed thro: to the end that, if you meet with the like, you may have recourse to the same God who hath heard and delivered me, and will doe the like for you if you trust in him; And, when he shall deliver you out of distresse, forget not to give him thanks, but to walk more closely with him then before. This is the desire of your Loving mother,

A.B.

In the same book were upon speciall occasions the Poems,
&c., which follow added.

Upon my Son Samuel his goeing for England, Novem. 6, 1657.

Thou mighty God of Sea and Land,
I here resigne into thy hand
The Son of Prayers, of vowes, of teares,
The child I stay'd for many yeares.
Thou heard'st me then, and gav'st him me;
Hear me again, I give him Thee.
He's mine, but more, O Lord, thine own,
For sure thy Grace on him is shown.
No freind I have like Thee to trust,
For mortall helpes are brittle Dust.
Preserve, O Lord, from stormes and wrack,
Protect him there, and bring him back;
And if thou shalt spare me a space,
That I again may see his face,
Then shall I celebrate thy Praise,
And Blesse the for't even all my Dayes.
If otherwise I goe to Rest,
Thy Will bee done, for that is best;
Perswade my heart I shall him see
For ever happely'd with Thee.

May 11, 1661.

It hath pleased God to give me a long Time of respite for these 4 years that I have had no great fitt of sicknes, but this year, from the middle of January 'till May, I have been by fitts very ill and weak. The first of this month I had a feaver seat'd upon me which, indeed, was the longest and sorest that ever I had, lasting 4 dayes, and the weather being very hott made it the more tedious, but it pleased the Lord to support my heart in his goodnes, and to hear my Prayers, and to deliver me out of adversity. But, alas! I cannot render unto the Lord according to all his loving kindnes, nor take the cup of salvation with Thanksgiving as I ought to doe.³³ Lord, Thou that knowest All things know'st that I desire to testefye my thankfullnes not only in word, but in Deed, that my Conversation may speak that thy vowes are upon me.³⁴

My thankfull heart with glorying Tongue
Shall celebrate thy Name,
Who hath restor'd, redeem'd, recur'd
From sicknes, death, and Pain.

I cry'd thou seem'st to make some stay,
I sought more earnestly;
And in due time thou succour'st me,
And sent'st me help from High.

Lord, whilst my fleeting time shall last,
Thy Goodnes let me Tell.
And new Experience I have gain'd,
My future Doubts repell.

33. Ps. 116: 13. "I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the Name of the Lord" (Geneva).

34. "Conversation," archaic in this sense, refers to a "Manner of conducting onself in the world or in society; behaviour, mode or course of life" (*OED*).

An humble, faitefull life, O Lord,
 For ever let me walk;
 Let my obedience testefye,
 My Praise lyes not in Talk.
 Accept, O Lord, my simple mite,
 For more I cannot give;
 What thou bestow'st I shall restore,
 For of thine Almes I live.

*For the restoration of my dear Husband from a burning Ague,
 June, 1661.³⁵*

When feares and sorrowes me besett,
 Then did'st thou rid me out;
 When heart did faint and spirits quail,
 Thou comforts me about.

Thou rais'st him up I feard to loose,
 Regau'st me him again:
 Distempers thou didst chase away;
 With strenght didst him sustain.

My thankfull heart, with Pen record
 The Goodnes of thy God;
 Let thy obedience testefye
 He taught thee by his rod.

And with his staffe did thee support,
 That thou by both may'st learn;³⁶

35. The *OED* defines "ague" as "a malarial fever, marked by successive fits or paroxysms, consisting of a cold, hot, and sweating stage," adding that "the name *ague* was apparently at first given to the burning or feverish stage."

36. Psa. 71:21. "Thou shalt increase my greatness, and comfort me on every side" (KJV).

And 'twixt the good and evill way,
At last, thou mig'st discern.³⁷

Praises to him who hath not left
My Soul as destitute;
Nor turned his ear away from me,
But graunted hath my Suit.³⁸

*Upon my Daughter Hannab Wiggin her recovery from a
dangerous feaver.*

Blest bee thy Name, who did'st restore
To health my Daughter dear
When death did seem ev'n to approach,
And life was ended near.

Graunt shee remember what thou'st done,
And celebrate thy Praise;
And let her Conversation say,
Shee loves thee all thy Dayes.

On my Sons Return out of England, July 17, 1661.

All Praise to him who hath now turn'd
My feares to Joyes, my sighes to song,
My Teares to smiles, my sad to glad:
He's come for whom I waited long.

37. Psa. 23:4. "Yea, though I should walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me: thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me" (KJV).

38. Ps. 141: 8. "But mine eyes looke unto thee, O Lord God: in thee is my trust: leave not my soule destitute" (Geneva).

Thou di'st preserve him as he went;
 In raging stormes did'st safely keep:
 Did'st that ship bring to quiet Port.
 The other sank low in the Deep.

From Dangers great thou did'st him free
 Of Pyrates who were neer at hand;
 And order'st so the adverse wind,
 That he before them gott to Land.

In country strange thou did'st provide,
 And freinds rais'd him in every Place;
 And courtesies of sundry sorts
 From such as 'fore nere saw his face.

In sicknes when he lay full sore,
 His help and his Physitian wer't;
 When royall ones that Time did dye,
 Thou heal'dst his flesh, and cheer'd his heart.

From troubles and Incubers Thou,
 Without (all fraud), did'st sett him free,
 That, without scandall, he might come
 To th'Land of his Nativity.

On Eagles wings him hether brought
 Thro: Want and Dangers manifold;
 And thus hath graunted my Request,
 That I thy Mercyes might behold.³⁹

O help me pay my Vowes, O Lord!
 That ever I may thankfull bee,
 And may putt him in mind of what
 Tho'st done for him, and so for me.

39. Exod. 19: 3, 4. God instructs Moses to tell the "house of Jaakob, and tell children of Israel ... Yee have seene what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I carried you upon Eagles wings, and have brought you unto me" (Geneva).

In both our hearts erect a frame
 Of Duty and of Thankfullnes,
 That all thy favours great receiv'd,
 Oure upright walking may expresse.

O Lord, graunt that I may never forgett thy Loving kindnes in this
 Particular, and how graciously thou hast answered my Desires.

Upon my dear and loving husband his going into England,
Jan. 16, 1661.

O thou most high who rulest All,
 And hear'st the Prayers of Thine;
 O hearken, Lord, unto my suit,
 And my Petition signe.⁴⁰

Into thy everlasting Armes
 Of mercy I commend
 Thy servant, Lord. Keep and preserve
 My husband, my dear freind.⁴¹

At thy command, O Lord, he went,
 Nor nought could keep him back;
 Then let thy promis joy his heart:
 O help, and bee not slack.

Uphold my heart in Thee, O God,
 Thou art my strenght and stay;
 Thou see'st how weak and frail I am,
 Hide not thy face Away.⁴²

40. 1 Sa. 1:27. "For this child I prayed; and the LORD hath given my petition which I asked of him" (KJV).

41. Psa. 103:17. "But the mercy of the LORD [is] from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children" (KJV).

42. Psa. 69:17. "And hide not thy face from thy servant; for I am in trouble: hear me speedily" (KJV).

I, in obedience to thy Will,
Thou knowest, did submitt;
It was my Duty so to doe,
O Lord, accept of it.

Unthankfulnes for mercyes Past,
Impute thou not to me;
O Lord, thou know'st my weak desire
Was to sing Praise to Thee.

Lord, bee thou Pilott to the ship,
And send them prosperous gales;
In stormes and sicknes, Lord, preserve.
Thy Goodnes never failes.

Unto thy work he hath in hand,
Lord, graunt Thou good Successe
And favour in their eyes, to whom
He shall make his Adresse.

Remember, Lord, thy folk whom thou
To wilderness hast brought;
Let not thine own Inheritance
Bee sold away for Nought.

But Tokens of thy favour Give—
With Joy send back my Dear,
That I, and all thy servants, may
Rejoice with heavenly chear.

Lord, let my eyes see once Again
Him whom thou gavest me,
That wee together may sing Praise
ffor ever unto Thee.⁴³

43. Psa. 138:1. "A Psalm of David. I will praise thee with my whole heart: before the gods I will sing praise unto thee" (KJV).

And the Remainder of oure Dayes
Shall consecrated bee,
With an engaged heart to sing
All Praises unto Thee.

In my Solitary houres in my dear husband his Absence.

O Lord, thou hear'st my dayly moan,
And see'st my dropping teares:
My Troubles All are Thee before,
My Longings and my feares.

Thou hetherto hast been my God;
Thy help my soul hath found:
Tho: losse and sicknes me assail'd,
Thro: the I've kept my Ground.

And thy Abode tho'st made with me;
With Thee my Soul can talk
In secrett places, Thee I find,
Where I doe kneel or walk.⁴⁴

Tho: husband dear bee from me gone,
Whom I doe love so well;
I have a more beloved one
Whose comforts far excell.

O stay my heart on thee, my God,
Uphold my fainting Soul!
And, when I know not what to doe,
I'll on thy mercyes roll.

44. Jer. 23:24. "Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the LORD. Do not I fill the heaven and warth? saith the LORD" (KJV).

My weaknes, thou do'st know full well,
Of Body and of mind.

I, in this world, no comfort have,
But what from Thee I find.

Tho: children thou hast given me,
And freinds I have also:
Yet, if I see Thee not thro: them,
They are no Joy, but woe.⁴⁵

O shine upon me, blessed Lord,
Ev'n for my Saviour's sake;
In Thee Alone is more then All,
And there content I'll take.

O hear me, Lord, in this Request,
As thou before ha'st done:
Bring back my husband, I beseech,
As thou didst once my Sonne.

So shall I celebrate thy Praise,
Ev'n while my Dayes shall last;
And talk to my Beloved one
Of all thy Goodnes past.

So both of us thy Kindnes, Lord,
With Praises shall recount,
And serve Thee better then before,
Whose Blessings thus surmount.

But give me, Lord, a better heart,
Then better shall I bee,
To pay the vowes which I doe owe
For ever unto Thee.

45. 3 Jo. 1:4. "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth" (KJV).

Unlesse thou help, what can I doe
But still my frailty show?
If thou assist me, Lord, I shall
Return Thee what I owe.

*In thankfull acknowledgment for the letters I received from
my husband out of England.*

O thou that hear'st the Prayers of Thine,
And 'mongst them hast regarded Mine,
Hast heard my cry's, and seen my Teares;
Hast known my doubts and All my ffeares.

Thou hast releiv'd my fainting heart,
Nor payd me after my desert;
Thou hast to shore him safely brought
For whom I thee so oft besought.

Thou wast the Pilott to the ship,
And rais'd him up when he was sick;
And hope thou'st given of good successe,
In this his Buisnes and Adresse;

And that thou wilt return him back,
Whose presence I so much doe lack.
For All these mercyes I thee Praise,
And so desire ev'n all my Dayes.

46. Ps. 116: 12. "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me?"
(Geneva).

In thankfull Remembrance for my dear husbands safe Arrivall
Sept. 3, 1662.

What shall I render to thy Name,
 Or how thy Praises speak;
 My thanks how shall I testefye?
 O Lord, thou know'st I'm weak.⁴⁶

I ow so much, so little can
 Return unto thy Name,
 Confusion seases on my Soul,
 And I am fill'd with shame.

O thou that hearest Prayers, Lord,
 To Thee shall come all fflesh;
 Thou hast me heard and answered,
 My 'Plaints have had accesse.

What did I ask for but thou gav'st?
 What could I more desire?
 But Thankfullnes, even all my dayes,
 I humbly this Require.

Thy mercyes, Lord, have been so great,
 In number numberles,
 Impossible for to recovnt
 Or any way expresse.

O help thy Saints that sought thy fface,
 T' Return unto thee Praise,
 And walk before thee as they ought,
 In strict and upright wayes.⁴⁷

47. Ps. 24: 6. "This is the generation of them that seeke him, of them that seeke thy face, this is Jaakob. Selah" (Geneva). [?]

This was the last Thing written in that Book by my dear and hon'd
Mother.

Here followes some verses upon the burning of our house,
July 10th, 1666. Coped out of a loose Paper.

In silent night when rest I took,
For sorrow neer I did not look,
I waken'd was with thundring nois
And Piteous shrieks of dreadfull voice.
That fearfull sound of fire and fire,
Let no man know is my Desire.

I, starting up, the light did spye,
And to my God my heart did cry
To strengthen me in my Distresse
And not to leave me succourlesse.
Then coming out beheld a space,
The flame consume my dwelling place.⁴⁸

And, when I could no longer look,
I blest his Name that gave and took,
That layd my goods now in the dust:
Yea so it was, and so 'twas just.
It was his own: it was not mine;
ffar be it that I should repine.

He might of All justly bereft,
But yet sufficient for us left.
When by the Ruines oft I past,
My sorrowing eyes aside did cast,

48. "Space": "With a and *pl.*: A period or interval of time" (*OED*).

And here and there the places spye
Where oft I sate, and long did lye.

Here stood that Trunk, and there that chest;
There lay that store I counted best:
My pleasant things in ashes lye,
And them behold no more shall I.
Under thy roof no guest shall sitt,
Nor at thy Table eat a bitt.

No pleasant tale shall 'ere be told,
Nor things recounted done of old.
No Candle 'ere shall shine in Thee,
Nor bridegroom's voice ere heard shall bee.⁴⁹
In silence ever shalt thou lye;
Adeiu, Adeiu; All's vanity.⁵⁰

Then streight I gin my heart to chide,
And did thy wealth on earth abide?
Didst fix thy hope on mouldring dust,
The arm of flesh didst make thy trust?
Raise up thy thoughts above the skye
That dunghill mists away may flie.⁵¹

Thou hast an house on high erect
Fram'd by that mighty Architect,
With glory richly furnished,
Stands permanent tho: this bee fled.
'Its purchaséd, and paid for too
By him who hath enough to doe.

49. Jer. 7:34. "Then will I cause to cease from the cities of Judah, and from the streets of Jerusalem, the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride: for the land shall be desolate" (KJV).

50. Lord Byron. "'All Is Vanity,' Saith the Preacher." *Hebrew Melodies*. 1815.

51. Psa. 113:7, "He raiseth up the poor out of the dust and lifteth the needy out of the dunghill" (KJV).

A Prise so vast as is unknown,
 Yet, by his Gift, is made thine own.
 Ther's wealth enough, I need no more;
 Farewell my Pelf, farewell my Store.⁵²
 The world no longer let me Love,
 My hope and Treasure lyes Above.

As weary pilgrim, now at rest,
 Hugs with delight his silent nest
 His wasted limbes, now lye full soft
 That myrie steps, have troden oft
 Blesses himself, to think upon
 his dangers past, and travailes done
 The burning sun no more shall heat
 Nor stormy raines, on him shall beat.
 The bryars and thornes no more shall scratch
 nor hungry wolves at him shall catch
 He erring pathes no more shall tread
 nor wild fruits eate, in stead of bread,
 for waters cold he doth not long
 for thirst no more shall parch his tongue
 No rugged stones his feet shall gaule
 nor stumps nor rocks cause him to fall
 All cares and feares, he bids farwell
 and meanes in safity now to dwell.⁵³
 A pilgrim I, on earth, perplext
 wth sinns wth cares and sorrows vext
 By age and paines brought to decay
 and my Clay house mouldring away
 Oh how I long to be at rest
 and soare on high among the blest.

52. "Pelf" refers to goods or assets and can impart pejorative connotations (*OED*).

53. "Gaule," a variant spelling of "gall" and obsolete in the following sense, means "spirit to resent injury or insult" (*OED*).

This body shall in silence sleep
 Mine eyes no more shall ever weep
 No fainting fits shall me assaile
 nor grinding paines my body fraile
 Wth cares and fears ne'r cumbred be
 Nor losses know, nor sorrowes see
 What tho my flesh shall there consume
 it is the bed Christ did perfume
 And when a few yeares shall be gone
 this mortall shall be cloth'd upon
 A Corrupt Carcasse downe it lyes
 a glorious body it shall rise
 In weaknes and dishonour sowne
 in power 'tis rais'd by Christ alone
 Then soule and body shall unite
 and of their maker have the sight
 Such lasting joyes shall there behold
 as eare ne'r heard nor tongue e'er told
 Lord make me ready for that day
 then Come deare bridgrome Come away.⁵⁴

Aug: 31, 69.

MEDITATIONS, DIVINE AND MORAL.

For my deare sonne Simon Bradstreet.

Parents perpetuate their lives in their posterity, and their mañers in their imitation. Children do natureally rather follow the failings then the vertues of their predecessors, but I am perswaded better

54. Mat. 25:10. "And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut" (KJV).

things of you. You once desired me to leave something for you in writing that you might look upon when you should see me no more. I could think of nothing more fit for you, nor of more ease to my self, then these short meditations following. Such as they are I bequeath to you: small legacys are accepted by true friends, much more by duty full children. I have avoyded inchroaching upon others conceptions, because I would leave you nothing but myne owne, though in value they fall short of all in this kinde, yet I presume they will be better pris'd by you for the Authors sake. the Lord blesse you with grace heer, and crown you with glory heerafter, that I may meet you with rejoyceing at that great day of appearing, which is the continual prayer, of

your affectionate mother,

March 20, 1664.

A.B.

Meditations Divine and morall.

I.

There is no object that we see; no action that we doe; no good that we injoy; no evill that we feele, or fear, but we may make some spiritu[a]ll advantage of all: and he that makes such improvment is wise, as well as pious.

II.

Many can speak well, but few can do well. We are better scholars in the Theory then the practique part, but he is a true Christian that is a proficient in both.

III.

Youth is the time of getting, middle age of improving, and old age of spending; a negligent youth is usually attended by an ignorant middle

age, and both by an empty old age. He that hath nothing to feed on but vanity and lyes must needs lye down in the Bed of sorrow.⁵⁵

IV.

A ship that beares much saile, and little or no ballast, is easily overset; and that man, whose head hath great abilities, and his heart little or no grace, is in danger of foundering.

V.

It is reported of the peacock that, prideing himself in his gay feathers, he ruffles them up; but, spying his black feet, he soon lets fall his plumes, so he that glorys in his gifts and adornings, should look upon his Corruptions, and that will damp his high thoughts.

VI.

The finest bread hath the least bran; the purest hony, the least wax; and the sincerest christian, the least self love.

VII.

The hireling that labours all the day, comforts himself that when night comes he shall both take his rest, and receive his reward; the painfull christian that hath wrought hard in Gods vineyard, and hath born the heat and drought of the day, when he perceives his sun apace to decline, and the shadowes of his evening to be stretched out, lifts up his head with joy, knowing his refreshing is at hand.

VIII.

Downny beds make drowsey persons, but hard lodging keeps the eyes open. A prosperous state makes a secure Christian, but adversity makes him Consider.

55. Prov. 30: 8. "Remove far from me vanity and lies: give me not poverty, nor riches: feed me with food convenient for me" (Geneva).

IX.

Sweet words are like hony, a little may refresh, but too much gluts the stomach.

X.

Diverse children have their different natures; some are like flesh which nothing but salt will keep from putrefaction; some again like tender fruits that are best preserved with sugar: those parents are wise that can fit their nurture according to their Nature.

XI.

That town which thousands of enemys without hath not been able to take, hath been delivered up by one traytor within; and that man, which all the temptations of Sathan without could not hurt, hath been foild by one lust within.

XII.

Authority without wisdom is like a heavy axe without an edg, fitter to bruise then polish.

XIII.

The reason why christians are so loth to exchange this world for a better, is because they have more sence then faith: they se what they enjoy, they do but hope for that which is to Come.⁵⁶

XIV.

If we had no winter the spring would not be so pleasant: if we did not sometimes tast of adversity, prosperity would not be so welcome.

56. Rom. 8: 23-25. "And not onely the creature, but we also which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we do sigh in ourselves, waiting for the adoption, even the redemption of our body. For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seene is not hope: for how can a man hope for that which he seeth? But if wee hope for that wee see not, wee doe with patience abide for it" (Geneva). [?]

XV.

A low man can goe upright under that door, wher a taller is glad to stoop; so a man of weak faith and mean abilities, may undergo a crosse more patiently then he that excells him, both in gifts and graces.

XVI.

That house which is not often swept, makes the cleanly inhabitant soone loath it, and that heart which is not continually purifying it self, is no fit temple for the spirit of god to dwell in.

XVII.

Few men are so humble as not to be proud of their abilities; and nothing will abase them more then this,—What hast thou, but what thou hast received? come give an account of thy stewardship.⁵⁷

XVIII.

He that will undertake to climb up a steep mountain with a great burden on his back, will finde it a wearysome, if not an impossible task; so he that thinkes to mount to heaven clog'd with the Cares and riches of this Life, 'tis no wonder if he faint by the way.

XIX.

Corne, till it have past through the Mill and been ground to powder, is not fit for bread. God so deales with his servants: he grindes them with greif and pain till they turn to dust, and then are they fit manchet for his Mansion.⁵⁸

XX.

God hath sutable comforts and supports for his children according to their severall conditions if he will make his face to shine upon them: he then makes them lye down in green pastures, and leades them besides

57. 1 Cor. 4: 7. "For who separateth thee? and what hast thou that thou hast not received? if thou hast received it, why rejoycest thou, as though thou hadst not received it?" (Geneva).

58. "Manchet" is "wheaten bread of the finest quality" (*OED*).

the still waters; if they stick in deepe mire and clay, and all his waves and billows goe over their heads, he then leads them to the Rock which is higher then they.⁵⁹

XXI.

He that walks among briars and thorns will be very carefull where he sets his foot. And he that passes through the wildernes of this world, had need ponder all his steps.

XXII.

Want of prudence, as well as piety, hath brought men into great inconveniencys; but he that is well stored with both, seldom is so insnared.

XXIII.

The skillfull fisher hath his severall baits for severall fish, but there is a hooke under all; Satan, that great Angler, hath his sundry baits for sundry tempers of men, which they all catch gredily at, but few perceives the hook till it be to late.

XXIV.

There is no new thing under the sun, there is nothing that can be sayd or done, but either that or something like it hath been both done and sayd before.⁶⁰

XXV.

An akeing head requires a soft pillow; and a drooping heart a strong support.

59. Ps. 23: 2. "Hee maketh me to rest in greene pasture, and leadeth mee by the still waters"; Ps. 61: 2. "From the ends of the earth will I cry unto thee: when mine heart is oppressed, bring me up on the rocke that is higher then I" (Geneva).

60. Eccl. 1: 9, 10. "What is it that hath been? that that shall be: and what is it that hath been done? that which shall be done: and there is no new chang under the Sun. Is there any thing whereof one may say, Behold this,[?] it is new? it hath been already in the old time that was before us" (Geneva).

XXVI.

A sore finger may disquiet the whole body, but an ulcer within destroys it: so an enemy without may disturb a Commonwealth, but dissensions within overthrow it.

XXVII.

It is a pleasant thing to behold the light, but sore eyes are not able to look upon it; the pure in heart shall see God, but the defiled in conscience shall rather choose to be buried under rocks and mountains than to behold the presence of the Lamb.⁶¹

XXVIII.

Wisdome with an inheritance is good, but wisdom without an inheritance is better than an inheritance without wisdom.

XXIX.

Lightening doth usually precede thunder, and stormes, raine; and stroaks do not often fall till after threat'ning.

XXX.

Yellow leaves argue want of sap, and gray haire want of moisture; so dry and sallow performances are symptoms of little spiritall vigor.

XXXI.

Iron till it be thoroughly heat is incapable to be wrought; so God sees good to cast some men into the furnace of affliction, and then beats them on his anvil into what frame he pleases.

XXXII.

Ambitious men are like hops that never rest climbing so long as they have any thing to stay upon; but take away their props and they are, of all, the most dejected.

61. Matt. 5: 8. "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God" (Geneva).

XXXIII.

Much labour wearys the body, and many thoughts oppresse the minde: man aimes at profit by the one, and content in the other; but often misses of both, and findes nothing but vanity and vexation of spirit.⁶²

XXXIV.

Dimne eyes are the concomitants of old age; and short sightednes, in those that are eyes of a Republique, fortels a declining State.

XXXV.

We read in Scripture of three sorts of Arrows,—the arrow of an enemy, the arrow of pestilence, and the arrow of a slanderous tongue; the two first kill the body, the last the good name; the two former leave a man when he is once dead, but the last mangles him in his grave.⁶³

XXXVI.

Sore labourers have hard hands, and old sinners have brawnie Consciences.

XXXVII.

Wickednes comes to its height by degrees. He that dares say of a lesse sin, is it not a little one? will ere long say of a greater, Tush, God regards it not!

XXXVIII.

Some Children are hardly weaned, although the teat be rub'd with wormwood or mustard, they wil either wipe it off, or else suck down

62. Eccl. 2: 11. "Then I looked on al my works that my hands had wrought, & on the travell that I had laboured to do: and behold, all is vanity and vexation of the spirit: and there is no profite under the Sun" (Geneva).

63. Ps. 11:2. "For loe, the wicked bend their bow, and make readie their arrowes upon the string, that they may secretly shoot at them which are upright in heart"; Rev. 6: 2. "Therefore I beheld, and loe, there was a white horse, and hee that sate on him, had a bowe, and a crowne was given unto him, and he went forth conquering that he might overcome"; Jer. 9: 8. "Their tongue is as an arrow shot out, and speaketh deceit: one speaketh peaceably to his neighbour with his mouth, but in his heart he layeth wait for him" (Geneva).

sweet and bitter together; so is it with some Christians, let God imbit-ter all the sweets of this life, that so they might feed upon more substantiall food, yet they are so childishly sottish that they are still hugging and sucking these empty brests, that God is forced to hedg up their way with thornes, or lay affliction on their loynes, that so they might shake hands with the world before it bid them farwell.⁶⁴

XXXIX.

A prudent mother will not cloth her little childe with a long and cumbersome garment; she easily foresees what events it is like to produce, at the best but falls and bruises, or perhaps somewhat worse, much more will the alwise God proportion his dispensations according to the stature and strength of the person he bestows them on. Larg indowments of honour, wealth, or a helthfull body would quite overthrow some weak Christian, therefore God cuts their garments short, to keep them in such a trim that they might run the wayes of his Commandment.⁶⁵

XL.

The spring is a lively emblem of the resurrection, after a long winter we se the leavlesse trees and dry stocks (at the approach of the sun) to resume their former vigor and beauty in a more ample manner then what they lost in the Autumn; so shall it be at that great day after a long vacation, when the Sun of righteoussnes shall appear, those dry bones shall arise in far more glory then that which they lost at their creation, and in this transcends the spring, that their leafe shall never faile, nor their sap decline.⁶⁶

64. Hos. 2: 6. "Therefore beholde; I will stop thy way with thornes, and make an hedge, that she shall not finde her paths"; Ps. 66: 11. "Thou hast brought us into the snare, and laid a strait chaine upon our loynes" (Geneva).

65. Ps. 119: 32. "I will run the way of thy commandments, when thou shalt enlarge mine heart" (Geneva).

66. A "stock" is a tree trunk (*OED*). Eze. 37: 4-5. "Again he said unto me, Prophesy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the LORD. Thus saith the Lord GOD unto these bones; Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live" (KJV). Psa. 104:16. "The trees of the LORD are full of sap; the cedars of Lebanon, which he hath planted" (KJV).

XLI.

A wise father will not lay a burden on a child of seven yeares old, which he knows is enough for one of twice his strength, much lesse will our heavenly father (who knowes our mould), lay such afflictions upon his weak children as would crush them to the dust, but according to the strength he will proportion the load, as God hath his little children so he hath his strong men, such as are come to a full Stature in Christ; and many times he imposes waighty burdens on their shoulders, and yet they go upright under them, but it matters not whether the load be more or lesse if God afford his help.⁶⁷

XLII.

I have seen an end of all perfection (sayd the royall prophet); but he never sayd, I have seen an end of all sinning: what he did say, may be easily sayd by many; but what he did not say, cannot truly be uttered by any.⁶⁸

XLIII.

Fire hath its force abated by water, not by wind; and anger must be alayed by cold words, and not by blustering threats.

XLIV.

A sharp appetite and a through concoction, is a signe of an healthfull body; so a quick reception, and a deliberate cogitation, argues a sound mind.⁶⁹

XLV.

We often se stones hang with drops, not from any innate moisture, but from a thick ayre about them; so may we sometime se marble-hearted

67. Eph 4:13. "Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" (KJV).

68. Ps. 119: 96. "I have seene an end of all perfection but thy commandment is exceeding large" (Geneva).

69. "Concoction," now obsolete, refers to digestion (*OED*).

sinner seem full of contrition; but it is not from any dew of grace within, but from some black Clouds that impends them, which produces these sweating effects.

XLVI.

The words of the wise, saith Solomon, are as nailes, and as goads, both used for contrary ends,—the one holds fast, the other puts forward; such should be the precepts of the wise masters of assemblys to their heareres, not only to bid them hold fast the form of sound Doctrin, but also, so to run that they might obtain.⁷⁰

XLVII.

A shadow in the parching sun, and a shelter in a blustering storme, are of all seasons the most welcom; so a faithfull friend in time of adversity, is of all other most comfortable.

XLVIII.

There is nothing admits of more admiration, then Gods various dispensation of his gifts among the sons of men, betwixt whom he hath put so vast a disproportion that they scarcely seem made of the same lump, or sprung out of the loynes of one Adam; some set in the highest dignity that mortality is capable off; and some again so base, that they are viler then the earth: some so wise and learned, that they seeme like Angells among men; and some againe so ignorant and sotish, that they are more like beasts then men: some pious saints; some incarnate Devils: some exceeding beautyfull; and some extreemly deformed: some so strong and healthfull that their bones are full of marrow, and their breasts of milk; and some againe so weak and feeble, that, while they live, they are accounted among the dead,—and no other reason can be given of all this, but so it pleased him, whose will is the perfect rule of righteousness.⁷¹

70. Eccl. 12: 11. "The wordes of the wise are like goades, and like nailes fastened by the masters of the assemblies, which are given by one pastor" (Geneva).

71. Job. 21: 24. "His breasts are full of milke, and his bones [...] full of marrow" (Geneva).

XLIX.

The treasures of this world may well be compared to huskes, for they have no kernell in them, and they that feed upon them, may soon stuffe their throats, but cannot fill their bellys; they may be choaked by them, but cannot be satisfied with them.

L.

Sometimes the sun is only shadowed by a cloud that wee cannot se his luster, although we may walk by his light, but when he is set we are in darknes till he arise againe; so God doth sometime vaile his face but for a moment, that we cannot behold the light of his Countenance as at some other time, yet he affords so much light as may direct our way, that we may go forwards to the Citty of habitation, but when he seemes to set and be quite gone out of sight, then must we needs walk in darknesse and se no light, yet then must we trust in the Lord, and stay upon our God, and when the morning (which is the appointed time) is come, the Sun of righteousnes will arise with healing in his wings.⁷²

LI.

The eyes and the eares are the inlets or doores of the soule, through which innumerable objects enter, yet is not that spacious roome filled, neither doth it ever say it is enough, but like the daughters of the horsleach, crys give, give! and which is most strang, the more it receivs, the more empty it finds it self, and sees an impossibility, ever to be filled, but by him in whom all fullnes dwells.⁷³

LII.

Had not the wisest of men taught us this lesson, that all is vanity and vexation of spirit, yet our owne experience would soon have speld it

72. Ps.107: 6, 7. "Then they cryed unto the Lord in their trouble, and he delivered them from their distresse, And led them foorth by the right way, that they might goe to a citie of habitation" (Geneva); Mal 4:2. "But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall" (KJV).

73. Prov. 30: 15. "The horsleach hath two daughters, which cry, Give[,] give" (Geneva).

out; for what do we obtaine of all these things, but it is with labour and vexation?⁷⁴ when we injoy them it is with vanity and vexation; and, if we loose them, then they are lesse then vanity and more then vexation: so that we have good cause often to repeat that sentence, vanity of vanities, vanity of vanities, all is vanity.

LIII.

He that is to saile into a farre country, although the ship, cabbin, and provision, be all convenient and comfortable for him, yet he hath no desire to make that his place of residence, but longs to put in at that port wher his bussines lyes: a christian is sailing through this world unto his heavenly country, and heere he hath many conveniences and comforts; but he must beware of desire[ing] to make this the place of his abode, lest he meet with such tossings that may cause him to long for shore before he sees land. We must, therefore, be heer as strangers and pilgrims, that we may plainly declare that we seek a citty above, and wait all the dayes of our appointed time till our chang shall come.

LIV.

He that never felt what it was to be sick or wounded, doth not much care for the company of the phisitian or chirurgian; but if he perceive a malady that threatens him with death, he will gladly entertaine him, whom he slighted before: so he that never felt the sicknes of sin, nor the wounds of a guilty Conscience, cares not how far he keeps from him that hath skill to cure it; but when he findes his diseases to disrest him, and that he must needs perish if he have no remedy, will unfeignedly bid him welcome that brings a plaister for his sore, or a cordiall for his fainting.⁷⁵

74. Ecc. 1:14. "I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and behold, all is vanilty and vexation of spirit" (KJV).

75. "Chirurgian," a variant spelling of the archaic "chirurgion," refers to "one whose profession it is to cure bodily diseases and injuries by manual operation; a surgeon" (*OED*). "Plaister": "originally: a solid medicinal or emollient substance spread on a bandage or dressing and applied to the skin, often becoming adhesive at body temperature"; "cordiall": "a medicine, food, or beverage which invigorates the heart and stimulates the circulation; a comforting or exhilarating drink" (*OED*).

LV.

We read of ten lepers that were Cleansed, but of one that returned thanks: we are more ready to receive mercys then we are to acknowledge them: men can use great importunity when they are in distresses, and shew great ingratitude after their successes; but he that ordereth his conversation aright, will glorifie him that heard him in the day of his trouble.⁷⁶

LVI.

The remembrance of former deliverances is a great support in present distresses: he that delivered me, saith David, from the paw of the Lion and the paw of the Beare, will deliver mee from this uncircumcised Philistin; and he that hath delivered mee, saith Paul, will deliver me: God is the same yesterday, to day, and for ever; we are the same that stand in need of him, today as well as yesterday, and so shall for ever.⁷⁷

LVII.

Great receipts call for great returnes, the more that any man is intrusted withall, the larger his accounts stands upon Gods score: it ther fore behoves every man so to improve his talents, that when his great master shall call him to reckoning he may receive his owne with advantage.

76. Luke 17: 12-16. "And as he entred into a certain towne, there met him ten men that were lepers, which stooode afarre off. And they lift up their voyces, and said, Jesus Master, have mercie on us. And when hee saw them, hee said unto them, Go shew yourselves unto the Priest. And it came to passe, that as they went, they were clensed. Then one of them, when hee saw that he was healed, turned backe, and with a loud voyce praysted God, And fell downe on his face at his feete, and gave him thanks" (Geneva); Psa. 50:15. "And call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me" (KJV).

77. 1 Sam. 17: 37. "Moreover David said, The Lord that delivered mee out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the beare, hee will deliver mee out of the hand of this Philistim [?]. Then Saul said unto David, Go and the Lord be with thee." (Geneva); Hbr 13:8. "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever" (KJV).

LVIII.

Sin and shame ever goe together. He that would be freed from the last, must be sure to shun the company of the first.

LIX.

God doth many times both reward and punish for one and the same action: as we see in Jehu, he is rewarded with a kingdome to the fourth generation, for takeing veengeance on the house of Ahab; and yet a little while (saith God), and I will avenge the blood of Jezerel upon the house of Jehu: he was rewarded for the matter, and yet punished for the manner, which should warn him, that doth any speciall service for God, to fixe his eye on the command, and not on his own ends, lest he meet with Jehu's reward, which will end in punishment.⁷⁸

LX.

He that would be content with a mean condition, must not cast his eye upon one that is in a far better estate then himself, but let him look upon him that is lower then he is, and, if he se that such a one beares poverty comfortably, it will help to quiet him; but if that will not do, let him look on his owne unworthynes, and that will make him say with Jacob, I am lesse then the least of thy mercys.⁷⁹

LXI.

Corne is produced with much labour (as the husbandman well knowes), and some land askes much more paines then some other doth to be brought into tilth, yet all must be ploughed and harrowed; some

78. 2 Kings 10: 30. "And the Lord said unto Jehu, Because thou hast diligently executed that which was right in mine eyes, and hast done unto the house of Ahab according to all things that were in mine heart, therefore shall thy sonnes unto the fourth generation sit on the throne of Israel"; Hos. 1: 4. "And the Lord said unto him, Cal his name Izreel: for yet a little, and I will visite the blood of Izreel upon the house of Jehu, and will cause to cease the kingdom of the house of Israel" (Geneva).

79. Eph. 3: 8. "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ" (KJV).

children (like sowre land) are of so tough and morose a dispo[si]tion, that the plough of correction must make long furrows on their back, and the Harrow of discipline goe often over them, before they bee fit soile to sow the seed of morality, much lesse of grace in them. But when by prudent nurture they are brought into a fit capacity, let the seed of good instruction and exhortation be sown in the spring of their youth, and a plentiful crop may be expected in the harvest of their yeares.⁸⁰

LXII.

As man is called the little world, so his heart may be cal'd the little Commonwealth: his more fixed and resolved thoughts are like to inhabitants, his slight and flitting thoughts are like passengers that travell to and fro continually; here is also the great Court of justice erected, which is alway kept by conscience who is both accuser, excuser, witnes, and Judg, whom no bribes can pervert, nor flattery cause to favour, but as he finds the evidence, so he absolves or condemnes: yea, so Absolute is this Court of Judicature, that there is no appeale from it,—no, not to the Court of heaven itself,—for if our conscience condemn us, he, also, who is greater then our conscience, will do it much more; but he that would have boldnes to go to the throne of grace to be accepted there, must be sure to carry a certificate from the Court of conscience, that he stands right there.

LXIII.

He that would keep a pure heart, and lead a blamelesse life, must set himself alway in the awefull presence of God, the consideration of his allseeing eye will be a bridle to restrain from evill, and a spur to quicken on to good dutys: we certainly dream of some remotnes betwixt God and us, or else we should not so often faile in our whole Course of life as we doe; but he, that with David, sets the Lord alway in his sight, will not sinne against him.⁸¹

80. "Husbandman": "A man who tills or cultivates the soil; a farmer" (*OED*).

81. Ps. 16: 8. "I have set the Lord alwayes before me: for he is at my right hand, therefore I shall not slide" (Geneva).

LXIV.

We see in orchards some trees soe fruitfull, that the waight of their Burden is the breaking of their limbes; some again are but meanly loaden; and some have nothing to shew but leaves only; and some among them are dry stocks: so is it in the church, which is Gods orchard, there are some eminent Christians that are soe frequent in good dutys, that many times the waight therof impares both their bodys and estates; and there are some (and they sincere ones too) who have not attained to that fruitfullnes, altho they aime at perfection: And again there are others that have nothing to commend them but only a gay proffession, and these are but leavie christians, which are in as much danger of being cut down as the dry stock, for both cumber the ground.

LXV.

We see in the firmament there is but one Sun among a multitude of starres, and those starres also to differ much one from the other in regard of bignes and brightnes, yet all receive their light from that one Sun: so is it in the church both militant and triumphant, there is but one Christ, who is the Sun of righteousness, in the midst of an innumerable company of Saints and Angels; those Saintes have their degrees even in this life, some are Stars of the first magnitude, and some of a lesse degree; and others (and they indeed the most in number), but small and obscure, yet all receive their luster (be it more or lesse) from that glorious sun that inlightens all in all; and, if some of them shine so bright while they move on earth, how transcendently splendid shall they be, when they are fixt in their heavenly spheres!⁸²

LXVI.

Men that have walked very extravagantly, and at last bethink themselves of turning to God, the first thing which they eye, is how to reform their ways rather then to beg forgiveness for their sinnes: nature

82. Mal. 4:2. "But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall" (KJV).

lookes more at a Compensation then at a pardon; but he that will not Come for mercy without mony and without price, but bring his filthy raggs to barter for it, shall meet with miserable disapointment, going away empty, beareing the reproch of his pride and folly.

LXVII.

All the works and doings of God are wonderfull, but none more awfull then his great worke of election and Reprobation; when we consider how many good parents have had bad children, and againe how many bad parents have had pious children, it should make us adore the Sovereignty of God, who will not be tyed to time nor place, nor yet to persons, but takes and chuses when and where and whom he pleases: it should alsoe teach the children of godly parents to walk with feare and trembling, lest they, through unbeleif, fall short of a promise: it may also be a support to such as have or had wicked parents, that, if they abide not in unbeleif, God is able to graffe them in: the upshot of all should makes us, with the Apostle, to admire the justice and mercy of God, and say, how unsearchable are his wayes, and his footsteps past finding out.⁸³

LXVIII.

The gifts that God bestows on the sons of men, are not only abused, but most Commonly employed for a Clean Contrary end, then that which they were given for, as health, wealth, and honour, which might be so many steps to draw men to God in consideration of his bounty towards them, but have driven them the further from him, that they are ready to say, we are lords, we will come no more at thee. If outward blessings be not as wings to help us mount upwards, they will Certainly prove Clogs and waights that will pull us lower downward.

83. Rom. 11: 33. "O the deepnesse of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgements, and his wayes past finding out!" (Geneva).

LXIX.

All the Comforts of this life may be compared to the gourd of Jonah, that notwithstanding we take great delight for a season in them, and find their shadow very comfortable, yet there is some worm or other of discontent, of feare, or greife that lyes at the root, which in great part withers the pleasure which else we should take in them; and well it is that we perceive a decay in their greennes, for were earthly comforts permanent, who would look for heavenly?⁸⁴

LXX.

All men are truly sayd to be tenants at will, and it may as truly be sayd, that all have a lease of their lives,—some longer, some shorter,—as it pleases our great landlord to let. All have their bounds set, over which they cannot passe, and till the expiration of that time, no dangers, no sicknes, no paines nor troubles, shall put a period to our dayes; the certainty that that time will come, together with the uncertainty how, where, and when, should make us so to number our dayes as to apply our hearts to wisdom, that when wee are put out of these houses of clay, we may be sure of an everlasting habitation that fades not away.⁸⁵

LXXI.

All weak and diseased bodys have hourly mementos of their mortality. But the soundest of men have likewise their nightly monitor by the embleam of death, which is their sleep (for so is death often calld), and not only their death, but their grave is lively represented before their eyes, by beholding their bed; the morning may mind them of the resurrection; and the sun approaching, of the appearing of the Sun of righteousness, at whose coming they shall all rise out of their beds, the long night shall fly away, and the day of eternity shall never end: seeing

84. Jonah 4: 6, 7. "And the Lord God prepared a gourd, & made it to come up over Jonah, that it might be a shadow over his head, and deliver him from his griefe. So Jonah was exceeding glad of the gourd. But God prepared a worme when the morning rose the next day, and it smote the gourd, that it withered" (Geneva).

85. Ps. 90: 12. "Teach us so to number our dayes, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom" (Geneva).

these things must be, what manner of persons ought we to be, in all good conversation?

LXXII.

As the brands of a fire, if once severed, will of themselves goe out, altho you use no other meanes to extinguish them, so distance of place, together with length of time (if there be no intercourse) will coole the affectiones of intimate friends, though there should be no displeasence betweene them.

LXXIII.

A good name is as a precious oyntment, and it is a great favour to have a good repute among good men; yet it is not that which Commends us to God, for by his ballance we must be weighed, and by his Judgment we must be tryed, and, as he passes the sentence, so shall we stand.⁸⁶

LXXIV.

Well doth the Apostle call riches deceitfull riches, and they may truely be compared to deceitfull friends who speake faire, and promise much, but perform nothing, and so leave those in the lurch that most relyed on them: so is it with the wealth, honours, and pleasures of this world, which miserably delude men and make them put great confidence in them, but when death threatens, and distresse lays hold upon them, they prove like the reeds of Egypt that peirce instead of supporting, like empty wells in the time of drought, that those that go to finde water in them, return with their empty pitchers ashamed.⁸⁷

86. Eccl. 7: 3. "A good name is better then a good oyntment, and the day of death, then the day that one is borne" (Geneva).

87. Matt. 13: 22. "And he that receiveth the seed among thornes, is he that heareth the word: but the care of this world, and the deceitfulnes of riches choke [...] word, & he is made unfruitfull"; 2 Kings 18: 21. "Lo, thou trustest now in this broken staffe of reed, to [...] on Egypt, on which if a man leane, it wil go into his hand and pierce it: so is Pharaoh king of Egypt unto all that trust on him." (Geneva).

LXXV.

It is admirable to consider the power of faith, by which all things are (almost) possible to be done: it can remove mountaines (if need were) it hath stayd the course of the sun, raised the dead, cast out divels, reversed the order of nature, quenched the violence of the fire, made the water become firme footing for Peter to walk on; nay more then all these, it hath overcome the Omnipotent himself, as when Moses intercedes for the people, God sath to him, let me alone that I may destroy them, as if Moses had been able, by the hand of faith, to hold the everlasting armes of the mighty God of Jacob; yea, Jacob himself, when he wrestled with God face to face in Peniel: let me go! sath that Angell. I will not let thee go, replies Jacob, till thou blesse me! faith is not only thus potent, but it is so necessary that without faith there is no salvation, therefore, with all our seekings and gettings, let us above all seek to obtain this pearle of prise.⁸⁸

LXXVI.

Some christians do by their lusts and Corruptions as the Isralits did by the Canaanites, not destroy them, but put them under tribute, for that they could do (as they thought) with lesse hazard, and more profit; but what was the Issue?⁸⁹ they became a snare unto them, prickes in their eyes, and thornes in their sides, and at last overcame them, and kept

88. Heb. 11: 33, 34. "Which through faith subdued kingdomes, wrought righteousness, obtained the promises, stopped the mouthes of lions, Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, of weake were made strong, waxed valiant in battell, turned to flight the armies of the aliants" [?]; Deut. 9: 14. "Let me alone, that I may destroy them, and put out their name from under heaven, and I will make of thee a mighty nation, and greater then they be"; Gen. 32; 26. "And he said, Let mee goe, for the morning appeareth. Who answered, "I wil not let thee goe, except thou blesse me"; Matt. 13: 45-46. "Again the kingdom of heaven is like to a marchant[?] man, that seeketh good pearls, Who having found a pearle of great price, went and solde all that he had and bought it" (Geneva).

89. Josh. 17: 13. "Nevertheless, when the children of Israel were strong, they put the Canaanites under tribute, but cast them not out wholly" (Geneva). "Issue": "The outcome of an action or course of proceedings or the operation of something; event, result, consequence" (*OED*).

them under slavery: so it is most certain that those that are disobedient to the Command of God, and endeavour not to the utmost to drive out all their accursed inmates, but make a league with them, they shall at last fall into perpetuall bondage under them unlesse the great deliverer, Christ Jesus, come to their rescue.⁹⁰

LXXVII.

God hath by his providence so ordered, that no one Covntry hath all Commodities within it self, but what it wants, another shall supply, that so there may be a mutuall Commerce through the world. As it is with Countrys so it is with men, there was never yet any one man that had all excellences, let his parts, naturall and acquired, spirituall and morall, be never so large, yet he stands in need of something which another man hath, (perhaps meaner then himself,) which shews us perfection is not below, as also, that God will have us beholden one to another.

My hon^d and dear mother intended to have filled up this Book with the like observations, but was prevented by Death.

90. Num. 33: 55. "But if ye will not drive out the inhabitants of the land before you, then those which yee let remaine of them, shal be [...] prickes in your eyes, and thornes in your sides, and shall vex you in the land wherein you dwell" (Geneva).

THE
LEGACY

OF A
DYING MOTHER

To Her
Mourning **CHILDREN,**
Being the
EXPERIENCES

OF
Mrs. Susanna Bell,
Who Died *MARCH 13. 1672*

With an
EPISTLE DEDICATORY
BY
THOMAS BROOKS Minister of the
Gospel.

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Printed and are to be sold by *John Hancock*
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*Reproduction of the title page of The Legacy of a Dying Mother
to Her Mourning Children*

Chapter 2

Susanna Bell

Introduction to Susanna Bell, *A True Relation of Some of the Experiences* (1672)

From textual evidence we know that Susanna Bell (d. 1672) arrived in the Massachusetts Bay Colony in or soon after 1635, probably settling with her husband and at least one child in New Town (now Cambridge). They were part of the first waves of Puritan divines and their followers who immigrated to New England in order to establish the covenant ideal of a pure church. Bell notes that she and her growing family were still in the colonies during the English Civil War (1642), but they had returned to England in time to witness the Great Plague (1665) and the Great Fire (1666) in London, and she died there 13 March 1672. Bell thus witnessed several of the most notable events of her century, and she makes clear in her narrative how religious persecution, immigration, war, plague, and fire affected followers of Puritanism, on both sides of the Atlantic. It also seems clear that Bell moved in the upper echelons of Puritan society; she heard most of the leading New England Puritan ministers of her day, and she makes references to her material blessings. Moreover, Bell speaks with authority. She was not speaking in public, true, but nevertheless, the words of her legacy demonstrate long and deep consideration of her faith, the conclusions she had drawn, and the spiritual guidance she felt assured in offering.

Even in light of the questions surrounding the author's biography, the editorial imposition and approbation of her life and words, and Thomas Brooks' overlong epistolary dedication, Bell's text is part of the legacy genre for more reasons than its designation as such on the title page. It is true that Bell does not belabor instructions to her children; textual evidence suggests her children are grown. Brooks (1608-80), the Cambridge educated minister Bell knew after returning to London, addresses them as "Mr. T.B. I.B. S.B. I.T. Merchants, and to their Wives, and to the rest of the Children of Mrs. Susanna Bell" in his dedicatory epistle, and her attention to them comes by way of her relation of her conversion rather than through direct addresses on how they should spend their youthful or adult lives (93). The book

therefore functions as both legacy and as conversion narrative, and all of its generic aspects come together to fulfill the evangelistic function of Puritanism. Like all the Protestant mother's legacy books, and especially those written by Puritans, Bell's words, "taken from her own Mouth by a near Relation of hers a little before her death," were published to fulfill the mandate to spread the word and work of God by relating one's conversion experience (92).

Like most Puritans, Bell sees her conversion experience as a major event in her life, one that left her in a state of grace, and one by which she marks all other events. As she relates her conversion, she seems to hold a clear view of the steps that she took, two decades before, to prepare for her death. As the narrative closes, it becomes a series of disjointed memories of times when her faith was tested and found firm. Bell's children and her readers likely viewed her narrative as a legacy meant to help them examine and improve the states of their own faith and conscience, and to interpret their daily experience accordingly. Throughout her text she quotes and cites the scripture through which she interprets and understands her world and her spiritual life. The passages she chooses reflect the foundation of her Puritanism and its connection to the Bible. For Bell, as for all Puritans, grace came as a direct operation of God's spirit, and the Bible prepared them, particularly their hearts, for this operation. In relating this combination of covenant theology and experiential religion, Bell's conversion follows the general pattern of Puritan conversion narratives.

As part of the early wave of Puritan migration, Bell interacted with some of the period's leading Puritan theologians. Bell heard and was influenced by the sermons of John Cotton, Thomas Shepard and John Eliot in New England, and Jeremiah White and Thomas Brooks in England. These men were, and some still are, seen as geniuses of biblical exegesis. Their sermons on preparation and conversion are some of the best written. While her memory of their work is remarkable, even given that she lived in a time when it was common to memorize entire pages of sermons on one hearing, more notable are Bell's revisions of their allegorical tenor into a more immediate and earthly experience. Bell revises their words to explain a woman's religious experience. She expands on Shepard's famous sermon about the ten virgins from Matthew 25, and moves from considering

herself without “the oyle of grace” in her heart to finding a true interest in the coming of the Bridegroom (97). Her use of John Cotton’s sermon based on 1 Peter, Chapter 2, figures herself first as the baby who desires the milk of Christ’s words, and then she turns to offer this milk to her audience as a good mother should. Cotton’s sermon later became a highly popular and often reprinted book. Bell demonstrates acuity at finding the heart of the matter in all of the sermons she hears and texts she reads, and then delivering her exegesis to her listener/reader. Bell follows Cotton in making Puritanism, rather than the exclusionary righteousness we now associate with Calvinism, into an invitation, offered through the opening of scripture in new ways to those who feel bereft. Bell offers promises for salvation through the Word, but more immediately, a promise of community. After the richness of Bell’s spiritual narrative, it is fitting that Thomas Brooks would follow Bell’s last words with a detailed recounting of her many attributes rather than with a sermon of his own. Included in full in *The Complete Works of Thomas Brooks*, as well as in a contemporary collection of advice texts, Bell’s legacy provides a personal perspective on religious doctrine.

This text is available on microfilm (STC 203), at the Boston Public Library, and the British Library. It has been excerpted but not annotated in *Lay by Your Needles Ladies, Take the Pen: Writing Women in England 1500-1700* (Suzanne Trill, Kate Chedgzoy and Melanie Osborne, eds. London: Arnold, 1997), and is included in *Mother’s Advice Books* (Susan C. Staub, ed., Ashgate, 2000). However, Staub’s inclusion of Richardson’s legacy book, even though it also appears in Brown’s edition of legacy books, indicates that a repetition of recently edited works will not go amiss, as each editor brings a new focus to the contents and cultural contexts of the book. In addition, placing Bell in her American and Puritan milieu provides insight that the English and advice-book focus of Staub’s edition does not.

Copy Text

The Legacy of a Dying Mother to Her Mourning Children: Being the Experience of Mrs. Susanna Bell, who died March 13, 1672: with an epistle dedicatory by Thomas Brooks. London: Printed and are to be sold by John Hancock, Senior and Junior, 1673.

The manuscript for Bell's text has disappeared, and this is the copy text used for subsequent editions. We use the copy owned by the Boston Public Library as our source text. The Cambridge University Library and Oxford University's Bodleian Library also hold copies.

Early Editions

The Legacy of a Dying Mother was reprinted in *The Complete Works of Thomas Brooks* (1866), edited by A. B. Grosart.

Contemporary Editions

Bell's book was excerpted in *Lay by Your Needles Ladies, Take the Pen: Writing Women in England 1500-1700*. Ed. Suzanne Trill, Kate Chedgoy and Melanie Osborne. London: Arnold, 1997, and included in full, in facsimile, in *Mother's Advice Books*. Ed. Susan C. Staub. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2002.

A
TRUE RELATION
OF
Some of the EXPERIENCES of
Mrs. SUSANNA BELL, taken from
her own Mouth by a near Relation of hers,
a little before death.

Left as a LEGACY to her Mourning
Children.

It pleased the Lord to order it so, that in my young days I was cast into a Family that feared the Lord. And going to hear Mr. *White*,¹ preaching from those words, *Prov. 15. 15. But he that is of a merry heart hath a continual Feast.*² From these words he did shew, how happy a thing a good conscience was, and what a sad thing it was with *Judas* to have a bad conscience,³ and what a blessed thing it was to have a good

1. Probably Jeremiah White, 1629-1707, chaplain to Cromwell and Puritan divine in London from his Cambridge graduation in 1653, until his death (*Oxford DNB*)

2. Proverbs 15:15, Geneva Version: "All the daies of the afflicted are evil: but a good conscience is a continual feast." Like some of her biblical quotations, Bell's remembrance of this text is a combination of faulty memory, her own biblical exegesis, and her conflation of the quotation with the sermon from which it came. In this case, she forgets to include the conscience in the quotation, but remembers it as the point of White's sermon. Even in light of her eminent death, Bell's opening remarks make herself known to her reader, through her amanuensis, as a woman of great spirit. Her remembrance of Proverbs 15:15 and her focus on the good conscience reinforce Thomas Brooks's description of her as a woman with great abilities for patience and love, whose justified faith was so great that he exhorted her readers to "labour to imitate her in her comfortable passage out of this world" (Appendix A).

3. Matthew 27:3-5 describes the results of Judas' bad conscience: his repentance and suicide by hanging.

conscience.⁴ From that of *Hezekiah, Isa. 38.3. And he said, Remember, now, O Lord, I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight.*⁵ This Sermon God made useful to me, and after this, it pleased the Lord to order it so, that I changed my condition, and the Lord provided for me a good Husband, one that feared him. And some troubles being here, many of the people of God went for *New England*, and among them my Husband desired to go, but I and my friends were very averse unto it.⁶ I having one childe, and being big with another, thought it to be very difficult to cross the Seas with two small children, some of my Neighbors advising me to the contrary, living so well as I did. But I told them that what the Lord would have me to do, that I would willingly do, and it pleased the Lord to bring that Scripture to my mind, *Eph. 5.22. Wives submit your selves unto your own Husbands, as unto the Lord.*⁷ And then my heart was brought off to a quiet submission.

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4. The role of the conscience in seventeenth-century thought cannot be taken lightly, and while it is addressed in the General Introduction, I believe it could be a most fruitful line of inquiry into Renaissance women's writing. See writings of William Perkins and Jeremy Taylor, and critical interpretations by Camille Wells Slights, Meg Lota Brown, John Wilks, and Keith Thomas.
 5. Bell's memory of this passage is near perfect and it suits both her deathbed condition and her relation of a time of indecision. In the passage Hezekiah, King of Judah, son of David, prays from his death bed. The passage continues with the Lord sending the prophet Isaiah to heal the king, saying "I will adde unto thy daies fiftene yeres" (Isaiah 38:5). The passage itself is one of several that discuss Hezekiah's reign, which is surrounded through the Old Testament by the themes of unification, obedience, and husbandry; he was a king faithful to God and as willing to take advice from the priests and prophets as Bell is from her religious community.
 6. Bell eventually sailed for the Colonies sometime after 1635, given that she saw both John Cotton, who immigrated in 1633 with Thomas Hooker, and Thomas Shepard during her conversion process, which began soon after her arrival, and that she does not mention Hooker, who left for Hartford in 1635.
 7. As one who likely heard it from the pulpit with great frequency, Bell quotes the Pauline text perfectly. However, as her narrative goes on to demonstrate, Bell echoes the pattern of a typical Puritan conversion—submission, willful disobedience, then submission again, to which Patricia Caldwell attributes the signs of peace, disturbance, then peace again (16)—in her relationship with her husband. Bell's willfulness in her marriage is not typical of most Puritan marriages: she differs in her resistance to her husband's will from the devout and wifely submission of Anne Bradstreet, Sarah Goodhue, and Grace Smith.

But after this, I being well delivered, and the Child well; It pleased the Lord soon after to take my Child to himself: Now upon this, so far as it pleased the Lord to help a poor wretch, I begged earnestly of him, to know why he took away my Child, and it was given in to me, that it was because I would not go to *New England*.⁸ Upon this the Lord took away all fears from my spirit, and then I told my Husband I was willing to go with him. For the Lord had made my way clear to me against any that should oppose. And then my husband went presently upon the work to fit to go. And the Lord was pleased to carry us as upon Eagles wings, according to that *Deut.* 32.10, 11.⁹ We were eight weeks in our passage, and saw nothing but the Heavens and Waters. I knew that the Lord was a great God upon the shore: But when I was upon the Sea, I did then see more of his glorious power then ever I had done before, according to that of the Psalmist, *Psal.* 107.23, 24.¹⁰ And when the Lord

8. In her introduction to a facsimile edition of mother's advice books, Susan Staub discusses this incident as "a miscarriage, bringing about a crisis of faith and prompting [Bell] to rethink her relationship with God and with her husband" (xiii). Given early modern understanding of a miscarriage as the spontaneous expulsion of a fetus in the first six months of pregnancy, Staub mistakenly describes Bell's delivery of a living child as a miscarriage, although she astutely links the death of the child to Bell's submission to her husband's plan (*OED*).

9. *Deut.* 32:10-12 reads "He found him in the land of the wilderness, in a waste, and roaring wilderness: he led him about, he taught him, and kept him as the apple of his eye. As an eagle stereth up her nest, flotereth over her birdes, stretcheth out her wings, taketh them, and beareth them on her wings, So the Lord alone led him and there was no strange god with him." Bell's use of this section of the Old Testament is notable, because instead of drawing from any number of passages in which God delivers the faithful, or the disobedient for that matter, she chooses the tail end of the exodus narrative. The books of Exodus and Deuteronomy formed the typological signifiers for the Puritans and were used by them to form and justify themselves as a redeemer nation; the works of John Winthrop and William Bradford show the genesis, the works of Cotton Mather the continuation of a typology that informs the American national identity to this day. Bell's selection falls at the end of the giving of the laws in Deuteronomy, when Moses stands before Israel and recites a psalm that contrasts God's faithfulness with Israel's faithlessness. The irony, and it may be conscious, lies in the fact that Bell was delivered, "as upon Eagle's wings" into the howling wilderness, which would not be kind to her and in which she would not remain.

10. This passage reads, "They that go downe to the sea in shippes, & occupie by the great waters, / They see the workes of the Lord, & his wonders in the

was pleased to bring us in safety on shore, his people gave us the best entertainment they could, and then I thought I could never be thankful enough to the Lord for his goodness in preserving us upon the Sea, I being big with Childe, and my Husband sick almost all the Voyage. After this my Husband would have gone by water higher into the Countrey. But I told him, the Lord having been so good in bringing us safe ashore amongst his people, I was not willing to go again to Sea. And it was a good Providence of God we did not; for most of them that went were undone by it. The first Sermon that I heard after I came ashore was out of *Jer.2.13. For my people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me, the Fountain of living waters, and hewed them out Cisterns, broken Cisterns that can hold no water.*¹¹ Now the Minister did shew, that whatever we did build on short of Christ, would prove but a broken Cistern, and by that Sermon the Lord was pleased to shake my foundation: but I being a poor ignorant creature thought if I could but get into the fellowship of the People of God, that that would quiet my spirit, and answer all my Objections;¹² And I did accordingly attempt to joyn with the Church, but they were very faithful to the Lord, and my soul, and asked me what Promise the Lord had made home in Power upon me. And I answered them, *Jer.31.3. Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness I have drawn thee.* But they told me that that was a general Promise; that I must look to get some particular Promise made home in Power upon me, and perswaded me to wait a little longer to see what God would further do for

depe” and the Psalm in its entirety is an exhortation for the faithful to give praise God and give thanks. Its undertone makes clear that the righteous will have reason to celebrate “God’s merciful providence,” which may have helped justify to Bell her insistence on staying in the established New Town colony.

11. Bell’s memory of the passage—in which Jeremiah pleads with the people of Israel to truly open their hearts to God’s word—is fairly accurate and her use of the unnamed minister’s exegesis puts into perspective her struggles with faith.
12. While Bell is inspired by a sermon based on Jeremiah, and while she uses that book to answer congregation’s questions, her reference to a shaken foundation and to a home likely come from Luke 5:47-49, in which Jesus says that those who hear his words and follow them will have unshakeable faith, like a house built on deep rock.

my poor soul, which accordingly I did.¹³ And going to hear Mr. *Cotton*, who did preach out of *Rev.2.28*. *To him that overcometh I will give the Morning Star*, from which words he did observe, that that Star was Christ.¹⁴ And this he came to shew, how a soul might know whether it had an interest in Christ or no, and that was by the Lords giving out such precious Promises as these to the poor soul, *viz.* That God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, *2 Cor.5.19*. and that *John 16. 23*. *And your joy shall no man take from you.*¹⁵ And *Isa.54.22* *I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy transgressions, and as a cloud thy sins:* and that *Isa.43.25*. which Promises afterwards God made sweet to

13. Bell likely did more than wait, as the Puritan doctrine of preparationism held that while a person could not earn grace, they could prepare for grace and examine themselves for certain signs of grace: yearning for grace, virtuous actions, attention to sermons and the Bible. In the Puritan cry, "What must I do to be saved," however, the emphasis was on the "I." Bell's drawing from a passage in the Jeremiad, in which all of Israel receives God's love, lacks the individualism expected in a true confession of faith, but does make clear that group identity, the people of Israel sanctified in God's love and the members of her community joined to the church, motivates the individual's quest for conversion. Her reference to the solid foundation in Luke suggests that she will undertake that quest through Christ's words.

14. John Cotton, 1584-1652. Puritan divine and author. After preaching the farewell sermon when John Winthrop sailed on the *Arbella* in 1630, Cotton immigrated to the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1633 on the *Griffin*, along with Thomas Hooker. Known for his scholarly temperament and sweet disposition, Cotton was the leading clergyman in Boston until his death. Called "The Patriarch of New England," Cotton was highly influential in both the religious and political affairs of the colony. He wrote, among other titles, *The Way of Life* (1641), *The Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven* (1644) and *Spiritual Milk for Babies* (1646), was involved in the trial and banishment of Anne Hutchinson, and was the maternal grandfather of Cotton Mather (*DAB*). Bell's version of the passage on which Cotton based his sermon integrates the beginning of *Rev.2:26* and the end of *Rev.2:28*, and omits the militant language of the intermediate passage; she is, however, true to the general tone of the early chapter of Revelations as they gently encourages sinners to come to Christ.

15. *Cor. 5:19* reads "For God was in Christ, and reconciled the world to him self, not imputing their sinnes unto them, and hath committed to us the worlde of reconciliation." In its entirety, *John 16:23* reads, "And ye now therefore are in sorowe: but I wel se you againe, and your hearts shall rejoyce, and your joye shal no man take from you." Both passages enhance the meaning of her conflation of the passages from Revelation: that there is reconciliation and joy in Christ.

my soul.¹⁶ After this I went to hear Mr. *Shepherd*,¹⁷ and he was preaching out of the Parable of the ten Virgins, *Matth. 25.1, 13*. In his discourse he shewed that all were Professors, but the foolish had nothing, but Lamps without oyle, a Profession without grace in their hearts: but that the wise had got grace in their hearts, and so were ready prepared to meet the Bridegroom when he came.¹⁸ Now, by that discourse of his the Lord was pleased to convince me that I was a foolish Virgin, and that I made a Profession, but wanted the oyle of grace in my heart, and by this means I was brought into a very sad condition. For I did not experimentally know what it was to have oyle in my Lamp, grace in my heart, nor what it was to have union with Christ, that being a mystery to me. And then I did think my self guilty of breaking all the Commandments of God except the sixth.¹⁹ For I thought I had neither desired, wished, or endeavoured any mans death. But then the Lord shewed me, that if

16. Bell means Isaiah 44:22, "I have put awaie thy transgressions like a cloude, and thy sinnes, as a mist: turne unto me, for I have redeemed thee." Isaiah 43:25 reads, "I, even I, am he that putteth awaie thine iniquities for mine owne sake, & wil not remember thy sinnes." It seems very likely, given the Puritan practice of memorizing sermons, that Bell remembered the sermon well enough to cite the five key passages used by Cotton. Cotton often bases a sermon upon a key verse from Revelation or John, then weaves that exegesis with examinations of other passages from the New Testament. He then usually draws from the prophetic books of the Old Testament, and supports his points with minor passages from the whole of the Bible. The sermons in *Gods Mercie* (1641), *Gospel Conversion* (1646), and *Christ the Fountaine of Life* (1651) are good examples of Cotton's patterns of sermonizing.

17. Thomas Shepard (1605-1649). Puritan divine and author. Shepard arrived in the colonies in 1635 and became pastor in Cambridge (New Town) after Thomas Hooker moved to Connecticut to found the town of Hartford. Known as a humble and scholarly minister, and a tireless worker, Shepard was instrumental in the founding of Harvard, and published, among other works, his sermons *The Sincere Convert* (1640) and *The Sound Believer* (1645), and *A Short Catechism* (1654); the former went into twenty-two editions over the next fifty years. Shepard wrote his *Autobiography* in 1646 (first published 1832). He both followed and taught the need for complete submission to Divine Will.

18. *The Parable of the Ten Virgins Opened & Applied: Being the Substance of Diverse Sermons on Math. 25.1-13* was a remarkable series of sermons Shepard delivered between 1636 and 1640. It was published in 1695 from Shepard's notes. Bell's discussion covers Shepard's use of the extended metaphor in Chapter 7, and she is accurate in her remembrance.

19. The sixth commandment, Exd. 20:13, reads, "Thou shalt not kill."

I were saved by Christ, my sins had murdered him, according to that *Acts. 3.15. chap. 4.0.*²⁰ And that did greatly aggravate my sin the more unto me. Now one of my Neighbors observing that I was in a distressed condition, told me that she had been a hearing, and that the Minister she heard was a shewing, that the Lord had more glory in the salvation then in the damnation of sinners. For in their salvation, his Mercy and his Justice were both glorified, but in their destruction only his Justice was glorified. Hearing of this, the *Lord* was pleased to draw out my heart to plead with him. That if he might receive more glory in my salvation then in my destruction, that then his Mercy might be manifested to me.²¹ For *I* thought, although *I* had many worldly comforts, yet *I* had no interest in Christ, and that if *I* should die presently, Hell would be my portion; and in this sad and sore distress, the *Lord* was pleased to imprint that Scripture upon my mind, *Job. 10.2. I will say unto God do not condemn me, shew me wherefore thou contendest with me? Job. 40.2. Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty, instruct him? He that reproveth God, let him answer it, and that word of the Apostle, Rom. 9.20, 21. Nay, but thou, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the Potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour.*²² After this, it pleased God that Mr. *Elliott*, and some other of the people of God, seeing me in this sad condition, told me the Church would have me come in to be a Member with them; but I did reply, that all Church-fellowship would do me no good.²³ Then Mr. *Elliott* asked me, What would do me good? And

20. Acts 3:15 is the middle of a speech by Peter, in which he informs a congregation that because they denied the Lord, they “killed the Lord of life, whome God hath raised from the dead, whereof we are witnesses.” Chapter 4 narrates Peter and John’s conversion of a multitude.

21. Bell likely draws on Isaiah 60:8, “Violence shall no more be heard of in thy land, neither defolation, nor destruction within thy borders: but thou shalt call salvation thy walls, and praise thy gates,” which offers salvation as the better option using again her favored metaphor, a house.

22. Bell quotes these passages fairly accurately and completely.

23. John Eliot, 1604-1690. Puritan divine and missionary to American Natives, Eliot was educated at Cambridge and sailed to Massachusetts on the *Lyon* in 1631. He served as pastor at Roxbury, MS, and in 1646 began to preach to the indigenous people. Eliot used the methods of Jacobus Comenius to teach English to

I told him, Nothing but an interest in Christ. His Answer was, That *I* was already in the pangs of the New Birth; and he did believe it would not be long before the Lord spoke peace to my poor soul.²⁴ After that, reading a book of Dr. *Prestons*, where he did shew, *that when the Lord joined himself to a believer, he did first comprehend the soul, and then enabling the soul by faith to apprehend him.*²⁵ Which double Act of faith *I* then knew not. About fourteen days after, considering what a distressed condition *I* was in, I was bemoaning my self before the Lord: and the Lord was pleased to bring that Scripture to my remembrance in *John 16. I will give you that joy, that no man taketh from you.*²⁶

the Aborigines, and became known as the "Apostle to the Indians." By 1674 his converts numbered 3500 in 14 self-governing settlements; however, those numbers diminished after King Philip's War (1675). Author of *A Primer or Catechism, in the Massachusetts Indian Language* (1653) and other Indian texts, Eliot was fluent in several eastern Native languages, and translated the English Bible into Algonquian, the first complete Bible published in the colonies (New Testament 1661; Old Testament 1663). A contributor to the first edition of *The Bay Psalm Book* (1640), his book *The Christian Commonwealth* (1659) was suppressed for its republican sentiments (DAB; Elliott)

24. Paul discusses conversion as a new birth in his letter to the Galatians, "My little children, of whom I travaile in birth againe, until Christ be formed in you" (Gal.4:19).

25. John Preston, 1587–1628. Church of England clergyman. Educated at Cambridge, Preston was made a lay prebendary of Lincoln Cathedral in 1610, an office he held until his death, although he had no intention of seeking ecclesiastical preferment at this time. He earned an MA in 1611, about the time he heard John Cotton preach, an event that led to his conversion and friendship with Cotton that lasted until his death. Preston was ordained deacon in the diocese of Peterborough in 1614, and soon began to attract notice outside Cambridge, including that of King James. Throughout his career, Preston was suspected of inclining towards Puritanism. In 1622, Preston succeeded John Donne as preacher to the Honorable Society of Lincoln's Inn, his greatest legacy was the large body of posthumously published editions of his sermons, through which he continued to have a great influence in England and New England., where they were critical in establishing a new spiritual genre of protestant devotional publications (DNB). His affiliation with the Church of England notwithstanding, Preston was an important figure in Puritanism in New England. Cotton Mather describes him as "one of the greatest Men in his Age" (3.16). The book in question is most likely Preston's *The Breast-Plate of Faith and Love, Eightene Sermons on Three Severall Texts* (1634), which discusses love inclining the soul to faith in Christ.

26. John 16:22, "And yee now therefore are in sorow: but I will see you againe, and your hearts shall rejoyce, and your joy shall no man take from you."

And then I thought with my self that it was Christ that *I* did want, and not joy. But the Lord brought that Scripture to me, *that Christ was tidings of great joy, Luke 2. 10, 11.*²⁷ And *I* thought how could this be to such a poor wretch as *I* was, and the Lord was pleased to bring that Scripture to my mind, That he looked not as man looked, *1 Sam. 16. 7.* And that he was God and not man, *Hos. 11.9.*²⁸ And by this means he took away all my fears. And then the Lord did help me to discern that this was a mystery indeed, and did so quiet my heart, that all the World seemed as nothing unto me.²⁹ For *I* never heard such a voice before, blessed be his Name.

And then the people of God would have me come into fellowship with them. And soon after *I* was admitted a Babe in Christ among them: Afterwards being to hear Mr. Cotton, on *1 Pet 2.2. As new-born Babes desire the sincere milk of the Word, that you may grow thereby.*³⁰ And from thence he shewed, that if it were a living Babe it would cry out for nourishment, and that that soul that did once really taste of Christ was never satisfied, but would still be crying out for more and more of Christ; when such a soul came to any Ordinance, as Hearing, Prayer,

27. Luke 2:10-11, "Then the Angel saide unto them, Be not afraid: for behold, I bring you glad tidings of great joy, that shall be to all the people. // *That is, that unto you is borne this day in the citie of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.*"

28. Sam.16:7, "But the Lord said unto Samuel, Looke not on his countenance, nor on the height of his stature, because I have refused him: for God seeth not as man seeth: for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord beholdeth the heart." Hosea 11:9, "I will not execute the fiercenesse of my wrath: I will not returne to destroy Ephraim: for I am God, and not man, the holy one in the mids of thee, and I will not enter into the city."

29. In *The Heart Prepared: Grace and Conversion in Puritan Spiritual Life* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1966), Norman Pettit notes that for New England Puritans, grace came as a direct operation of God's spirit, but the Bible prepared them, particularly their hearts, for this operation. Throughout her text, Bell considers her heart to determine her state of grace. Like all Puritans, she demonstrates a combination of covenant theology and experiential religion, and the biblical passages she chooses reflect her foundation of experiential religion and its connection to the Bible.

30. Bell quotes accurately from 1 Peter, which provides the basis for Cotton's sermon, later published as *Spiritual Milk for Babes* (1646).

the Lords Supper, and did get nothing of Christ, they were all as lost Ordinances to it.³¹

It so fell out, that the next Lords day was the day of sitting down at the Lords Table. And the Lord did put it into my thoughts, that if we received nothing but a piece of bread and a sip of wine, it would be but a poor empty thing, and so the Lord did help me to beg, that if what he had been pleased to speak to my soul before were a true manifestation of himself, that he would be pleased to speak again unto my soul. For a threefold cord is not easily broken, *Eccles. 4. 12.*³²

Being at the Ordinance. the bread and wine coming about, I was thus sighing unto the Lord; what shall I have nothing but a bit of bread and a sip of wine this day? And the Lord was pleased to bring that Scripture to my minde, *John 6. 55. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.* And so the Lord was pleased to give something more of himself to my poor soul at that time. After this, a sad Providence attended one of my Neighbors, *I* was full of fears that her condition might be mine.³³ But the Lord brought that Scripture to my mind, *Jer. 29. 11. For I know the thoughts that I think towards you, saith the Lord, thoughts of Peace and not of evil, to give you an expected end.*³⁴ And thereby the Lord stayd my heart in trusting upon himself, and giving me a safe delivery. And being up again, I went to hear Mr. *Cotton*, and he was shewing what Assurance was and how happy that soul was that could say as *Job* did, *Job 19. 25.*³⁵ And with *David Psal. 119.*³⁶

31. In Puritan understanding, an ordinance is that ordained or decreed by God, a dispensation, decree, or appointment of God (*OED*).

32. *Ecc. 4:12*, "And if one overcome him, two shall stand against him: and a threefold cord is not easily broken."

33. Bell explains her fears almost immediately, but this episode discloses her new state of conversion as well as her pregnancy and the birth of a living child.

34. *Jer. 29:11*, "For I know the thoughts, that I have thought towards you, sayth the Lord, *even the thoughts of peace, and not of trouble, to give you an end, and your hope.*"

35. *Job 19:25*, "For I am sure that my Redeemer liveth, and he shall stand the last on the earth." The popular hymn based on this text was composed a century after Bell's text, by Samuel Medley (1738-1799) and John Hatton (1710-1793).

36. *Psalm 119:89*, "O Lord, thy word endureth for ever in heaven."

For ever Lord *thy Word is settled in the Heavens*; and so the Lord was pleased to shew me what a mercy *I* had that had Assurance. Then I went to speak to Mr. *Cotton*, to ask him what he thought of the work of God upon my poor soul. And he told me, that he was satisfied that it was a real work of God. And he did counsel me to walk humbly and thankfully, and to take heed of grieving that Spirit of God by which I was sealed up to the day of Redemption, and to walk humbly towards those that God had not yet revealed so much of himself to as he has to me.³⁷ And then the Lord was pleased by his Providence to call my Husband to come for *England*, and he did tell me, that he should so order business that I should have less of the world to trouble me; *I* was glad to hear it from him, and desired him to go. And then the Lord was pleased to help me to consider whether *I* had not got a better Husband, and the Lord did quiet my heart in himself, my soul being espoused to him, 2 *Cor.* 11. 2.³⁸ After he was gone from me, we did hear of a War broke forth in *England*, and my friends told me my Husband would be in danger of his life if taken.³⁹ I told them the best I knew, and the worst *I* knew; and that if God should take my Husband out of the world, I should have a Husband in Heaven, which was best of all. And Mr. *John Elliott* did visit me in his absence, and asked me how the Lord did bear up my heart in my Husbands absence: And I did tell him, that the Lord was as well able to bring him to me in safety, as

37. Micah 6:8, "Hee hath shewed thee, O man, what is good, and what the Lord requireth of thee: surely to doe justly, and to love mercy, and to humble thy selfe, to walk with thy God."

38. *Cor.* 11:2, "For I am jelous over you, with a godly jelousie: for I have prepared you for one husband, to present you as a pur virgine to Christ."

39. The English Civil Wars. The First, between the Royalist armies of Charles I and the Parliament armies, lasted from June 1642 to May 1646, and the Second, between Oliver Cromwell's Parliamentary forces and Charles I and his Scots allies, lasted from April to August 1648. The evidence shows that Bell writes about the First Civil War: John Eliot, who she discusses almost immediately, left to convert the Indigenous population in 1646; further, she discusses this news as something completely new, and her husband likely would not have been in danger had he arrived later than the beginning of the first set of conflicts. As many as 100,000 (1 in 10) adult males in England died during the Civil Wars, and Bell was correct in taking seriously her friends' warnings.

he did to carry him out. And he answered me, *I believe the Lord will say unto thee as he did to the Canaanitish woman, Matth. 15. 28.* Be it unto thee according to thy faith.⁴⁰ And the Lord was pleased to keep me and all that I had, and to preserve him, and to bring him home in safety unto me. And then in stead of having less of the world which *I* desired, the Lord did cast in more of it. After this, my Husband told me, That he must go again to *England*, and *I* was very unwilling to it; but he told me, if he did not the Name of God would suffer.⁴¹ To prevent which, *I* consented, and it pleased God to bring him home in safety to me. And in a few years after he brought me over to *England* and God shewed much of his goodness to me.

At my coming ashore he brought that scripture to my Remembrance, *Deut. 33. 26, 27. There is none like unto thee, O God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the Heaven in thy Help, and in his Excellency on the Sky, the Eternal God is thy Refuge, and underneath are the everlasting armes.*⁴²

After it had pleased God to bring me back to my Native Countrey. *I* was much troubled that there was no better observation of the Lords day, it being our Practice in *New-England* to begin it at Sunne-set the Evening before, as it is Recorded in *Genesis, That the Evening and the Morning was the first day*, and that Scripture was brought to my Memory, *Prov. 14. 10. The heart knows its own bitterness, but no man intermeddles with its joy: Many trials the Lord hath been pleased to exercise me with, but in the midst of all God hath made that Word sweet to my soul, Isa. 54. 10. For the Mountains shall depart and the*

40. Matt. 15:28, "Then Jesus answered, and sayd unto her, O woman, great is thy faith: be it to thee, as thou desirest. And her daughter was made whole at that hour."

41. Because Bell does not elaborate what might be causing the "name of the Lord to suffer," but the upheavals of 1658 through 1660—the fall of the Protectorate, reassumption of power by the army upon Oliver Cromwell's death, or the restoration of the monarchy under King Charles II—are all possible causes.

42. Deut. 33:26-27, "There is none like God, O Jeshurun [righteous people], which rideth upon the heavens for thine helpe, and on the cloudes in his glorie. // The eternall God is thy refuge, and under his armes thou art for ever: he shall cast out the enemy before thee, and will say Destroy them."

Hills be removed, but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the Covenant of my Peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee.⁴³

It pleased the Lord after a year or two to exercise me with much weakness; but then he made that Word sweet unto me, *Isa. 50. 8. He is near that justifies me, who will contend with me*, And that word, *Job. 15. 11. Are the consolations of God small unto thee?*⁴⁴ After these things, when I was in a very great strait, upon the apprehension of some public dangers that seem'd to threaten us, the Lord was pleased to bring to my mind that Scripture, *Zach. 9. 12. Turn to your strong Holds you Prisoners of Hope.*⁴⁵ And since in the midst of my many bodily infirmities God hath made that word sweet to my soul, *Psal. 116. 7. Return unto thy rest, O my soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee.* And that word, *Psal. 23. 4. Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staffe they comfort me.*⁴⁶ I still remain as a prisoner of hope, waiting for a fruition of that happiness which the Lord Jesus Christ hath prepared for me.⁴⁷ *For I know he that hath the Son hath life, John. 5.12. And if*

43. Gen1:5, "And God called the Light, Day, and the darknesse he called Night. So the evening and the morning were the first day." Prov.14.10, "The heart knoweth the bitternesse of his soule, and the stranger shall not meddle with his joy." Isa.54:10, "For the mountaines shall remoove, and the hilles shall fall downe, but my mercie shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace fall away, saith the Lord, that hath compassion on thee." Bell refers to the Puritan practice of observing the Sabbath, in which all members of the congregational communities of New England were required to participate. Religious Separatists in England had not adopted the same worship practices.

44. Isa.50:8, "He is neere that justifieth me: who will contend with me? Let us stand together; who is mine adversary, let him come neere to me." Job.15:11, "Seeme the consolations of God sahl unto thee? Is this strange unto thee?"

45. These public dangers most likely stem from the Act of Uniformity, passed in 1662 by Charles II, which restored power to the Church of England by requiring use of the Book of Common Prayer in all worship services, and episcopal ordination of all ministers.

46. Both passages from the Psalms are quoted accurately.

47. Zech.9:12, "Turne you to the strong hold, ye prisoners of hope: even to the day doe I dclare, that I will render the double unto thee."

*the Son make us free, then are we free indeed, John 8. 36.*⁴⁸ And blessed is that people that knows the joyful sound, they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance.⁴⁹ *I finde the Lord Jesus very free in the tenders of his love to poor sinners. And that love hath in a great measure been manifested to my poor soul. After this it pleased the Lord to visit one of my Daughters with a great sickness, upon which my heart was drawn out to seek the Lord on her behalf, then that Scripture was brought to my mind, John 11. 21. Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my Brother had not died. But I know that now what ever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it to thee. Jesus saith unto her, thy Brother shall rise again. Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again at the last day. Jesus saith unto her, I am the Resurrection and the Life, and he that believes in me shall never die.*⁵⁰ And it pleased the Lord to give me her life as an Answer of Prayer. It pleased the Lord after this to visit this Land with the Pestilence, a severe stroke of his, that swept away many thousands; and under that sad Providence of his the Lord did help me to rely alone upon himself, for that Scripture, *Psal. 91. 7. A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand, but it shall not come nigh thee.*⁵¹ And according to my faith, it pleased the Lord to preserve both my self and all my Relations from that sad stroke, though some of them were often in the midst of danger, blessed be his Name. The next year after the Lord did again (for our sins) visit us, and that by a dreadful fire, which reduced to ashes many thousand

48. John 5:12, "Hee that hath the Sonne, hat that life: and hee that hath not that Sonne of God, hath not that life." John 3:35, "'If that Sonne therefore shall make you free, you shall be free indeed."

49. Psalm 89:15, "Blessed is the people that can know a joyful sound, they shall walke in the light of thy countenance."

50. Bell quotes John 11:21-26.

51. The Black Death, 1665. While bubonic plague had first appeared England in 1348, in 1665 a particular set of circumstances led to widespread bubonic plague. Spread by fleas living as parasites on rats, the plague of 1665 originated in the Netherlands. London was hit the hardest, reaching a high of over 6000 deaths a week when the plague peaked in August. Estimates put the death total at over 100,000. Bell's accurate quoting of Psalm 91:7 defines the sparing of herself and her loved ones in the midst of plague as an act of God.

houses, and yet his love was then manifested to me in the preservation of my habitation, when many better than my self were burnt out.⁵² Therefore unto my God shall *I*, (who am less then the least of all his mercies) render that praise which is due unto his Name.

Since that, whilst I was upon a languishing bed, and Death even knocking at the door, it pleased the Lord once again to alarme me in that weak condition by a dreadful fire which breake out very near us, and at that time it pleased my good God to support and strengthen my spirit with that Scripture, Isa 43. 2. *When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the Rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire thou shall not be burnt, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.* And that Scripture, Isa. 54.5. *For thy Maker is thy Husband, the Lord of Hosts is his Name, and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel, the God of the whole Earth shall he be called.*⁵³ And this second time also the Lord was graciously pleased to preserve me and my House from that amazing stroke which did so much threaten us; And O that all these new and old Experiences might be high obligations upon me and mine to holiness and fruitfulness all our days.

Whilst I remained in *New-England* there hapned a great Earth-quake which did shake all in the house, and my son being by me, asked me what it was, I told him, our Neighbours were all amazed at it, and knew not but that the world might then be at an end; and did run up and down very much affrighted at it; but I sate still, and did

52. The Great Fire of London, 1666. Fire broke out in a bakery on 2 September 1666 and burned for several days. While loss of life was minimal, the magnitude of the property loss was staggering: some 430 acres, as much as 80% of the city proper was destroyed, including 89 churches and 13,000 houses.

53. Bell accurately quotes both passages from Isaiah. The year after the Great Fire, on 5 May 1667, Samuel Pepys comments on the after effects of the previous September, both in how it affected people's imaginations and renewed outbreaks of fire in a city that, in many places, was still smoldering: "Others of this day where I was in the afternoon, doth tell me of at least six or eight fires within these few days, and continually stories of fires and real fires there have been in one place or other almost every since the last great fire" (766).

think with my self what a Christ was worth to my poor soul at that time.⁵⁴ And then God made these Scriptures sweet refreshings, supporting and quieting my soul.

Psal. 18.46. The Lord liveth, and blessed be my Rock, and let the God of my Salvation be exalted. Heb. 11.13. These all died in faith not having received the Promises but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

Rev. 7. 9. After this I beheld, and lo a great multitude, which no man could number, of all Nations and Kindred, and People, and Tongues, stood before the Throne and before the Lamb, cloathed with white Robes and Palmes in their hands, ver. 14. And he said to me, these are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their Robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

FINIS

54. In 1638, a strong earthquake centered in the St. Lawrence Valley caused damage along the eastern seaboard, in the Massachusetts Bay Colony and further south. Bell's remembrance of this early danger provides a neat segue into the final biblical passages, which she again quotes accurately.

The Epistle Dedicatory by Thomas Brooks*

To his Honoured Friends,

*Mr. T.B. I. B. S.B. I T. Merchants, and to their
Wives, and to the rest of the Children of Mrs.
Susanna Bell deceased, The Author wishes all
Grace, Mercy and Peace.*

Honoured Friends,

My Design in this Epistle is not to Complement you, but to benefit you; 'tis not to tickle your ears, but to better your hearts; nor 'tis not to blazon her name or fame to the World, whose Heaven-born-soul is now at rest with God, and who is swallowed up in those transcendent Enjoyments of that other World, which are above the comprehensions of my minde, and the Expressions and Praises of my Pen; but 'tis to allure and draw you to an imitation of what was praise-worthy in her. Shall I hint at a few things?

First, imitate her in that sincerity and plain-heartedness which was transparent in her. Sincerity is not a single grace, but the Source of all graces, and the Interlineary that must run through every grace, for what is faith if it be not unfeined? and what is love if it be not without dissimulation? and what is Repentance if it be not in truth? Sincerity is the soul of all grace, 'tis the grace of all our graces; what advantage is it to have the *breast-Plate of Righteousness, the Shield of Faith, the Helmet of Hope*, if they be but painted things; it is the *Girdle of Sincerity*

*Eph. 6.13,14,
15,16,17.*

* Thomas Brooks' "Epistle" precedes Susanna Bells' *A True Relation*, as pages 1-43, in the original publication.

that makes all the other parts of our Armour useful; Was she not a true *Nathaniel*, a Person in whom there was no guile, I mean, no allowed hypocricie: and was not this that which carried her through the pangs of death with a great deal of comfort, as it had done *Hezekiah*, *Paul*, and other Saints before.⁵⁵ A sincere Christian is like the Violet which grows low, and hides itself and its own sweetness, as much as may be, with its own leaves: Or like Brutus staffe, gold within and thorn without: Or like the Ark, gold within and Goats hair without. The very Hea-then loved a candid and sincere spirit: as he that wished, *That the was a Glass-window in his breast, that all the World might see what was in his heart. But*

Job. 1.4.

*Isa. 38.3,2.
2 Cor. 1.12.*

Secondly, imitate her in that Humility, which was a grace she was cloathed withal: I ever found her low and little in her own eyes; much in debasing her self upon all occasions, looking upon her self as below the least of mercies with *Jacob*, and as *dust and ashes*, with *Abraham*; and as a *poor worm*, with *David*; and less then the least of all Saints, with *Paul*.⁵⁶ And commonly, the more high in spiritual worth, the more humble in heart; God delights to pour in grace into humble souls, as

1 Pet. 5.5.

*Gen. 32.10.
Gen. 18.27.
Psa. 22.6.
Eph. 3.8.*

55. Brooks' comparison of Bell to Nathaniel is most probably rooted in Jhn. 1:47, which reads, "Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!" (KJV) ; Eph. 6:14 reads "Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness:" (KJV) ; Eph. 6:16 reads "Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked." (KJV) ; Eph. 6:17 reads "And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:" (KJV) ; the *Girdle of Sincerity* refers to "having your loins girt about with truth" in Eph. 6:14 (KJV) ;

56. In Gen. 32:10, Jacob says, "I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast shewed unto thy servant; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan; and now I am become two bands" (KJV) ; Gen. 18:27 reads, And Abraham answered and said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which [am but] dust and ashes" (KJV) ; Psa. 22:6 reads, "But I [am] a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people" (KJV) ; in Eph. 3:8, Paul says, "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ" (KJV).

Mat. 18.10.

men pour in liquor into empty vessels. Humility makes a Person *Peaceable among Brethren, fruitful in well-doing, cheerful in suffering, and constant in holy walking*. Humility makes a man precious in the eyes of God; who is little in his own account is always great in Gods esteem. It is well observed by some, that those brave creatures the Eagle and the Lion were not offered in sacrifice unto God; but the poor Lambs and Doves were; to note, that God regards not your brave, high, lofty spirits; but poor, meek and contemptible spirits. Humility is a rare grace. Many (saith *Augustine*) can more easily give all they have to the poor, then themselves become poor in spirit; be low in your own eyes, and be content to be low in the eyes of others; and think not of your selves above what is meet, as ever you would write after your Mothers Copy; and affect more to be amongst Gods little ones, then the great ones of this world. Be humble Christians; as ever you would be holy be humble; Humility is of the essence of the new creature: He is not a Christian that is not humble.⁵⁷ The more grace the more humble; those that have been most high in spiritual worth, have always been most humble in heart. *Ignatius* would say of himself, *Non sum dignus dici minimus*, I am not worthy to be called the least.⁵⁸ Lord, I am Hell, but thou art Heaven, said blessed *Hooper*; I am a most hypocritical wretch, not worthy that the earth should bare me, said holy *Bradford*.⁵⁹ I have no other name, saith *Luther* then *Sinner*; *Sinner* is my name, *Sinner is my sir-name*: This is the name by which I shall be always know, I have sinned,

57. St. Augustine (d. 604 C.E) was a missionary and archbishop of Canterbury; he led the first official Christian mission to the Anglo-Saxons. (*Oxford DNB*) ; Pro. 18:12 reads, "The fear of the LORD [is] the instruction of wisdom; and before honour [is] humility."

58. St. Ignatius of Loyola (1491-1556) was a Spanish theologian and the founder of the Society of Jesus (*OED*)

59. John Hooper (1495-1555) was bishop of Gloucester and Worcester and a protestant martyr (*Oxford DNB*) ; John Bradford (c.1510-1555), native of the parish of Manchester, was an evangelical preacher and martyr (*Oxford DNB*)

I do sin, I shall sin *in infinitum*⁶⁰. *Ruth* was the Daughter of the King of *Moab*, if we may give credit to the general opinion of the *Rabbines*, or if that be not so profitable, yet she was one that we may well suppose to have been one of good quality in her own countrey, as being Wife of *Mablon*, the elder brother of the Family of the Prince *Naasson*, yet the accounts her self scarce equal to one of the Maid-servants in the house of *Boaz*.⁶¹ So *Abigail* the wit of the time, I *Sam.* 25. 41. So *Elizabeth*, though she was the elder and the better woman for outward quality, yet how confounded was she with *Mary's* visit, as being too great a weight of honour for her to bear. So *Mary*, *Luke* 1.38. *If I were asked, said Austin, what is the readiest way to attain true happiness, I would answer, the first, the second, the third thing is Humility.* Humility doth not only entitle to happiness, but to the highest degree of happiness. *Mat.* 18. 4. Humility is that *Jacobs* Ladder which reaches from Earth to Heaven.⁶²

Ruth 2.13.

Luke 1.43.

Thirdly, imitate her in her charity and mercy towards suffering, needy, and wanting ones; how seldom did you find her ear or hand shut against charitable motions; she knew that those that did good to the poor and needy for Christs-sake, God would do good to them for the Poors sake, most sure for

60. Martin Luther (1483-1546), a German Protestant theologian, was the principle figure of the Protestant reformation (*OED*) ; *ad infinitum* in Latin means "again and again in the same way; forever" (*OED*).

61. Ruth, in attempts to support the mother of her deceased husband, gleanes from the barley field of the wealthy Boaz. In *Rth.* 3:4, Ruth's mother-in-law tells her, "And it shall be, when he lieth down, that thou shalt mark the place where he shall lie, and thou shalt go in, and uncover his feet, and lay thee down; and he will tell thee what thou shalt do." Ruth and Boaz marry and have a son, Obed (*KJV*).

62. In *Gen.* 28:10-15, on Jacob's journey from Beersheba toward Haran, he falls asleep and dreams of a ladder extending to Heaven. God stands at the top of the ladder, and tells Jacob, "the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed; And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed" (*KJV*).

his Sons sake.⁶³ She knew, that he who promised *They should have that asked*, had first commanded such to give unto them that asked; she knew that unmercifulness is a sin which least becomes, and worse beseems one that had so largely tasted of the mercies of God, as she had done both in New and Old *England*. She was much made up of pity and mercy to the poor, the bellies of the hungry, and the back of the naked, did often proclaim her pity and charity. Many Ministers, Widows and fatherless ones, have tasted, not only of her husbands bounty, but of hers also. Vain persons when they give, they will cause their kindness to run in a visible channel, they will sound a Trumpet to be seen of men: but was she not a secret and hidden Reliever of Gods distressed ones? Did she not refresh the bowels of many with her hid treasures? Will you all learn to write after this Copy? Of *Midus* it is Fabled, *That whatever he touched he turned into Gold*; 'tis most sure, That whatever the Hand of Charity toucheth, it turneth it into Gold, be it but a Cup of cold water, nay into Heaven it self; cold water having not fuel to heat it, cold water which costs not the charge of fire to warm it. *Salvian* faith, that Christ is *Mendicorum maximus*, the greatest Beggar in the world, as one that shareth in all his Saints necessities, and will never forget the charitable person, the merciful person. *Cicero* could say, *That to be rich is not to posses much but to use much*; And *Seneca* could rebuke them that so studied to increase their wealth, that they forgot to use it. I have read of one *Enagrius* a rich man, that lying upon his Death-bed, being importuned by *Synesius* a pious Bishop, to give something to charitable uses, he yielded at last to give three hundred Pounds, but first took Bond of the Bishop that it should be repayed him in another world before he had been one day dead. He is said to have appeared to the Bishop, delivering in the Bond cancelled, as thereby

Mat. 6.1,2.

Mat. 10.42.

Heb. 6.10.

63. Pro. 22:9 reads, "He that hath a bountiful eye shall be blessed; for he giveth of his bread to the poor."

acknowledging what was promised was made good, according to that promise, *Matth. 19.29. And every one that hath forsaken houses, &c.*⁶⁴

Fourthly, imitate her in keeping off from the sins and pollutions of the day wherein you live; was she not one of Gods mourning ones for the abominations of the time? did not mens abomination in worship and practice vex, grieve, and wound her poor soul? was it not her great work to live by no Rule, to walk by no Rule, to worship God by no Rule, but by that which she dared to die by, and to stand by in the great day of our Lord Jesus? She knew, that worshipping of God in spirit and in truth was the great worship, the only worship that god stood upon. she did not, she durst not worship God according to the Customs of the World, or the Traditions of the Elders, or the Examples of great men; she knew that that Worship that is not according to the Word, is 1. Worshipping of devils and not God. Those that depart from the true Worship of God, and set upon false worship forbidden by God, do not serve God by it but the devil, what boasting soever they make, as you may evidently see, by comparing the Scriptures in the Margent together. She knew 2. That the worship that is not according to the Word is an Image of Idolatry, which of all sins is most provoking to a holy, jealous God.⁶⁵ *The Devil*, saith *Synesius*, *is as glad to be worshipped in an Idol, as he was by Israel in a Calf*, there being nothing that provokes God to destroy poor sinners more then this.⁶⁶ The learned Jews have a saying, *That no punishment ever*

Ezek. 9.4,6.
Jer. 9.1,2.
2 Pet. 2.7,8.
Psal. 119.53;
136.158.

John 4.23,24.
Phil. 3.3,2.

Rev. 9.20. 2
Chron. 11.15.
Amos 5.25,26.
1 Cor. 10.20.
1 Tim. 4.1.
Ezek. 8.3.

Exod. 32.4

64. Mat. 19:29 reads, "And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life."

65. Exd. 34:14 reads, "For thou shalt worship no other god: for the LORD, whose name [is] Jealous, [is] a jealous God:" (KJV).

66. In Exd. 32:8-35, God sends Moses to destroy a false idol crafted by the Israelites. Exd. 32.34 reads, "Therefore now go, lead the people unto [the place] of which I have spoken unto thee: behold, mine Angel shall go before thee: nevertheless in the day when I visit I will visit their sin upon them" (KJV).

happened to them in which there was not an ounce of the golden Calf; grounding it on Exod. 32. 34. Nevertheless, I will remember to visit this sin upon them. The *Egyptians* worshipped a pide Bull, and whereas some thought it strange, that when one died they should have another of the same colour. *Austin* thinks, that the devil, to keep them in idolatry, might do with their Cowes, as *Jacob* did with the Ewes, present to them when they conceived the likeness of such a Bull. Certainly Satan will use all the Art he can to keep poor sinners in ways of false worship, it being the most compendious way that can be to engage God to destroy them. She knew 3. That that worship that is not according to the Word, hath destroyed the most flourishing Churches and Nations, witness the Church and Nation of the Jews, the seven Churches of *Asia*, and the whole Eastern parts of the Empire. She knew 4. That that worship that is not according to the Word is cursed worship. It is the observation of one well skill'd in the Jewish Learning, that there is only one verse in the Prophecy of the Prophet *Jeremy*, which is written in the *Chaldee* tongue, all the rest being in *Hebrew*, and that is *Jer. 10. 11.*⁶⁷ *So shalt thou say, Cursed be the gods who made neither Heaven nor Earth;* and this so done by the Holy Ghost on purpose, that the Jews when they were in captivity, and solicited by the Chaldeans to worship false gods, might be able to anser them in their own language, *Cursed be your gods; we will not worship them, for they made neither Heaven nor Earth;* That God that made Heaven and Earth, is only to be worshipped according to his own Word; for he will own no worship but what he will accept of, no worship but that; he will bless no worship but that, nor he will reward no worship but that; Your glorified Mother kept close to instituted worship when she had health and strength; in this it will be your wisdom to write after her fair Copy. But

See *Hos.*
8.5,6,7.
Rev. 9.20.
Ezek. 10.2.
2 *Chron.* 7.20.

Weems Christ.
Synag.

67. *Jer. 10:11* reads, "Thus shall ye say unto them, The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, [even] they shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens" (KJV).

Fifthly, imitate her in justifying of the Lord under the sharpest, bitterest, and most afflictive Providences and Dispensations; how often have I heard her to justify the Lord, even whilst he has been a writing bitter things against her; when Gall and Wormwood hath been put into her Cup, hath she not said with *Ezra*, *God hath punished us less then our iniquities deserve*; and with *Nehemiah*, *Howbeit, thou art just in all that is brought upon us, for thou hast done right, but we have done wickedly*; and with *Job*, *The Lord gives, and the Lord takes, and blessed be the Name of the Lord*.⁶⁸ And with *Daniel*, *The Lord our God is righteous in all his works which he doth*.⁶⁹ You know what afflictive Providences she has been under, both in respected of her person, and in the loss of her husband, and in those variety of weaknesses that attended her body, and in the great losses that some of you have met with in this world: Besides several other exercises; yet how has she commonly been taken up in blessing of God, and in justifying of God, and also in admiring the goodnesse of God, that it has been no worse with her; and here I am falsified she would not have exchanged her gains by afflictions for all the gains of this world. Stars shine brightest in the darkest night; Torches are better for the beating; Grapes come not to the proof till they come to the Press. Spices smell sweetest when pounded: Young Trees root the faster for shaking; Vines are the better for bleeding: Gold looks the brighter for scouring: Glow-wormes glitter best in the dark: Juniper smells sweetest in the fire: Pomander becomes most fragrant

Job 13.26.

Ezra 9.13.

Neh. 9.33.

Job 1.21.

Dan. 9.14.

68. *Ezr.* 9:13 reads, "And after all that is come upon us for our evil deeds, and for our great trespass, seeing that thou our God hast punished us less than our iniquities [deserve], and hast given us [such] deliverance as this;" (KJV) ; Brooks quotes *Neh.* 9:33 accurately ; *Job* 1.21 reads, "And said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD" (KJV).

69. *Dan.* 9:14 reads, "Therefore hath the LORD watched upon the evil, and brought it upon us: for the LORD our God [is] righteous in all his works which he doth: for we obeyed not his voice" (KJV)

for chafing: The Palm-tree proves the better for pressing. Camomil, the more you tread it, the more you spread it: such is the condition of all Gods children, they are the most triumphant when most distressed; most glorious when most afflicted, as their conflicts so their conquests, as their tribulations so their triumphs. Gods people are true *Salamanders*, that live best in the Furnace of afflictions, so that heavy afflictions are the best Benefactors to heavenly affections: when afflictions hang heaviest, then corruptions hangs loosest. And grace that is hid in Nature, as sweet-water in Rose-leaves, is then most fragrant when the fire of affliction is put under to distil it out. But

*Vna actio non
dene minat.*

Sixthly, imitate her in the standing, bent and course of her life and conversation. No man is to judge of the soundness or sincerity of his spirit by some particular acts, but by the constant frame and bent of his spirit, and by his general conversation in this world; if particular actions might determine whether a man has grace or no grace, whether he were in Christ or not in Christ, whether he were a Saint or no Saint, whether he were sincere or unsound, we should many times conclude, that those have no grace who indeed have, and that they were not in Christ who indeed are, and that they are no Saints who indeed are; and that they are not sincere, who certainly are true *Nathaniels*: the best Saints on this side Heaven have had their extravagant motions, and have very foully and sadly miscarried as to particular actions, (even then when the constant course and bent of their spirits, and main of their conversations have been God-wards, and Christ-wards, and Holiness-wards, and Heaven-wards, &c.) witness *David's* Murther and Adultery, *Noah's* Drunkenness, *Lots* Incest, *Joseph's* swearing, *Job's* cursing, *Jonah's* vexing, *Peter's* denying, and *Thomas* his not believing; such twinklings do and will accompany the highest and fairest

stars.⁷⁰ As he that foots it best may be sometimes found all along, and the neatest person may sometimes slip into a sloop. He that cannot endure to see a spot upon his clothes, may yet sometimes fall into a Quagmire. So the holiest and exactest Christians may sometimes be surprized with many infirmities and unevennesses, and sad miscarriages. Certainly, particular sinnings are compatible with a gracious frame, though none are with a glorified condition. Our best estate on earth is mixt, and not absolute. Glory annihilates all sinful practices, but grace only weakens them. The most sincere Christian is but an imperfect Christian, and hath daily cause to mourn over his infirmities, as well as he has cause to bless God for his graces and mercies. Look as every particular stain doth not blemish the universal fineness of the Cloth. So neither doth this or that particular Fact disprove and deny the general bent of a persons heart or life. Particulars may not decide the estate either way; 'tis true, a man by a particular sinning is denominated guilty,

70. In 2Sam. 11, King David has an affair with Bathsheba, and after conceiving a child with her, David has Bathsheba's husband, Uriah, killed in battle in order to marry her ; in Gen. 9:20-25, after surviving the Great Flood, Noah plants a vineyard and becomes intoxicated by its wine. He spends the day naked within his tent, and is discovered by his son, Ham ; In Gen. 19:10-38, Lot's daughters, desperate to carry on the family bloodline, decide to partake in incest with their father: "Come, let us make our father drink wine, and we will lie with him, that we may preserve seed of our father" (KJV) ; [insert reference to *Joseph's swearing*] ; In the Book of Job, Job is faced with many hardships in order to test his righteousness, including the death of his children and painful boils, and although his patience with God is admirable, he ultimately curses the day he was born in Job 3:1 ; In the Book of Jonah, Jonah allows his anger to get the best of him, and Jon 4:9 reads, "And God said to Jonah, Doest thou well to be angry for the gourd? And he said, I do well to be angry, [even] unto death" (KJV) ; In Mat 26:34, during the Last Supper, Jesus tells Peter, "That this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice," and Peter inevitably follows through with the three denials (KJV) ; St. Thomas refused to believe that Christ had resurrected without concrete evidence. In Jhn. 20:25, Thomas tells the other disciples, "Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe" (KJV).

but by no one particular can a mans estate be challenged either to be good or bad. He that shall judge of a Christians estate, by particular acts, though very bad, will certainly condemn the Generation of the Righteous; we must always distinguish betwixt some single good actions, and a series of good actions; its not this or that particular good action, but a continued course of holy actions that denominates a person holy.⁷¹ Certainly, as there is no man so holy, but sometimes he falls into this or that particular sin; so there is no man so wicked, but he falls in with this or that particular duty: as you may see in *Pharaoh, Balaam, Saul, the Ninevites, Felix, Herod, Judas*, yea, and the very Scribes and Pharisees.⁷² Now look as every sin which a godly man falls into (through infirmity) doth not presently denominate him ungodly, so neither will a few good actions done by a wicked man prove him godly. 'Tis what the course and tenour of the life is, that must be most diligently and wisely observed, for every man is as his course is; if his course be holy, the man is so; if his course be wicked, the man is so. There is a Maxim in Logick, *viz. That no general Rule can be established upon a particular instance*; and there is another Maxime in Logick, *viz; That no particular instance can overthrow a general Rule*. We are never to make a judgement of our estates and conditions by some particular actions, whether they are good or evil; but we are still to make a judgement of our estates and conditions by the general frame, bent and disposition of on our hearts, and by the constant tenour of our lives. Now I dare appeal to you and all others that have observed the constant tenour of her life and conversation, whether it has not been such as becomes the

Phil. 1.27.
Tit. 2.10.
Gen. 6.9.

71. Psa. 14:5 reads, "There were they in great fear: for God [is] in the generation of the righteous.

72. Mat. 23:13 reads, "But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in [yourselves], neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in" (KJV).

Gospel, and as hath adorned the Doctrine of God our Saviour (humane infirmities excepted).⁷³ And O that this might be the mercy of all her children, to walk with God as she hath done and then I should not doubt but that they would all meet in Heaven at last. But

Seventhly, imitate her in her love to the Saints, to all the Saints, in whom she could discern *aliquid Christi*, anything of Christ Did she not love, delight and take pleasure to see the graces of the holy Spirit sparkling and shining in the hearts, lives, and lips of Saints, secretly wishing in herself that her soul were but in so noble a case. Were there any men in all the world that were so precious, so lovely, so comely, so excellent, and so honourable in her account in her eye as those that had the Image of God, of Christ, of grace, of holiness, most clearly, most fairly, and most fully stamp't upon them. Did she not love Saints as Saints? Was it not the Image of God that drew out her affection to the people of God? Many, like the *Bohemian* Curr, can fawn upon a good suit; but grace was lovely in her eye, though cloath'd with Raggs. Many love godly men as they are Politicians, or potent, or learned, or of a sweet nature, or affable, or related, or as they have been kind to them; but all this is but natural love: but to love them because they are spiritually lovely, because of the seed of God in them, because they are all glorious within, is to love them as becometh Saints; it is to love them at a higher and nobler rate then any hypocrite in the world can reach to. Did she not set the highest price, and the greatest value and esteem upon those that were gracious? had she not an honour in her heart for them that feared the Lord? Did she not value persons according to their worth for another world, and not according to their worldly Greatness or Grandeur? Did she not prefer a holy *Job* upon the dunghill, before a wicked *Ahab*

1 *John* 3.10,14.

Ps. 15.1,4.

Ps. 16.3.

1 *John* 5.1.

1 *Job.* 3.9.

Ps. 45.13.

Pro. 12.26.

Pro. 28.6.

73. Tts. 2:10 reads, "Not purloining, but shewing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things" (KJV).

Luke 16. upon the Throne?⁷⁴ and did she not set a higher price upon a gracious *Lazarus*, though cloathed with Rag and full of sores, then upon a rich and wretched *Dives*, though he were cloathed gloriously, and fared sumptuously every day?⁷⁵ was not her love to the Saints universal? To one Christian as well as another, to all as well as any, to poor *Lazarus* as well as to rich *Abraham*, to a despised *Job* as well as to an admired *David*, to an afflicted *Joseph* as well as to a raised *Jacob*, to a despised disciple as well as to an exalted Apostle? did she not love to see the Image and Picture of her heavenly Father though hung in never so poor a frame, and in never so mean a cottage; without peradventure, he that loves one Saint for the Image of God that is stampt upon him, he cannot but fall in love with every Saint that bears the lovely Image of the Father upon him. And O that this might be all your mercy to write after this Copy that she has set before you. But

Phil. 1.21.
1 Pet. 2.17.

Eighthly, imitate her in her constancy in the ways of God, with a notwithstanding all the hazards, stormes, dangers and troubles that has attended those ways, especially in those latter days of Apostacy wherein God had cast her lot. She was not a Reed shaken with every wind; she was unchangeable in changeable times; whatever stormes beat upon the ways of God, or the people of God, she remained fixt, firm and immovable in the ways of the Lord; and doubtless such souls as are truly good, they will be good in the worst of times, and in the worst of places, and amongst the worst of persons; Principles of grace and holiness, they are lasting, yea, everlasting; they are not like

Psal. 44.
Ps. 119.112.

1 John 3.9.

74. *Dunghill* is more commonly translated as *ashes*. Job 2:8 in the King James Version reads, "And he took him a potsherd to scrape himself withal; and he sat down among the ashes" (KJV); Ahab was the seventh King of Isreal, and is considered the most evil of those before him. 1Ki. 16:30 reads, "And Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the LORD above all that [were] before him" (KJV).

75. In Luke 16, Lazarus is described as a starving beggar full of sores, and he is contrasted with a selfish rich man. When each man dies, Lazarus is "carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom," whereas the rich man is damned to Hell (KJV).

the Morning-cloud, nor the early dew. Let times, and places, and persons be what they will, a sincere Christian will not dishonour his God, nor change his Master, nor quit his ways, nor blemish his profession, nor wound his conscience to sleep in a whole skin, or to preserve his safety, or to secure his liberty; and was it not thus with her in the most trying times? And upright man is a right man. So 𐤒𐤕 *Jashar* is rendered by the Septuagint, *Judg.* 17.6.⁷⁶ He is one that won't be bowed or bent by the sinful customs or examples of the times and places where he lives. Let the times be never so dangerous, licentious, superstitious, idolatrous, and erroneous, yet a sincere plain-hearted Christian will keep his ground, and hold on in his way, as might be made evident by a cloud of witnesses. The Lawrel keeps its freshness and greenness in the Winter-season; a sincere Christian is *semper idem*; let the wind, and the world, and the times turn which way they will, a sincere soul for the main will still be the same.⁷⁷ He will be like Mount *Sion* which cannot be removed; he will stand his ground and hold his own under all changes; he is like the Philosophers good man (*Tetra-gones*) four-square, cast him where you will, like a Dye he falls always square and sure; so cast a plain-hearted Christian where you will into what company you will, and into what condition you will, yet still he will fall sure and square for God and godliness; let the rimes be never so sad, nor never so bad, yet a plain-hearted Christian will still keep close to God and his ways, and will rather let all go then let his God go, or his Religion go, or his Integrity go, or Ordinances go. *Lapidaries* tell us of the *Cbelydorian* stone, *that it will retain its verture and lustre no longer then it is enclosed in Gold*; a fit Emblem of an unsound heart, who is only good while he is enclosed in golden prosperity, safety and felicity. An unsound Christian,

Hos. 6.4.

Gen. 6.9.

Rev. 14.4.

Rev. 3.4.

Job 17.9.

Heb. 12.1.

Ps. 125.1,2.

76. Jdg. 17:6 reads, "In those days [there was] no king in Israel, [but] every man did [that which was] right in his own eyes" (KJV).

77. *Semper idem* (Lat.): Always the same (*Merriam-Webster*).

like green Timber, shrinks when the Sun of Persecution shines hot upon him; the heat of fiery trials cools the courage of unsound Christians; but a sincere plain-hearted Christian is like a massie-vessel of Gold, that keeps its own shape and figure at all times, in all places, and in all companies: when one of the Ancient Martyrs was greatly threatened by his Persecutors he replied, *There is nothing* (saith he) *of things visible, nothing of things invisible, that I fear; I will stand to my Profession of the Name of Christ, and contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the Saints, to come ont what will, in the these evil days wherein multitudes have turned aside into crooked paths.* She kept close and constant to the ways of the Lord, so long as her natural strength lasted. And O that all you her children would make it your business in this as well as in other things to write after your Mothers Copy; remembring, that if you are not faithful unto death, you shall never receive a Crown of life, *Rev. 2. 10.*⁷⁸ And that if you do not continue to the end (that is, in well-doing) you shall never be saved, *Matth. 24. 13.*⁷⁹ But

Phil. 3.8,9,10.
Mat. 13.44.

1 Pet. 2.7.

Ninthly, Imitate her in her high valuations of Jesus Christ what low and little things were her own graces, duties, services and mercies, when she cast her eye upon Christ, when she fell into discourses of Christ. Christ was her (*Summum benum*) chiefest good. What was all the world to a sight of Christ, to a day, yea, to an houres communion with Christ. They are no believers that don't value Jesus Christ above all the world, and all things in the world; *for unto every one that believes he is precious*; most precious, only precious, and

78. Rev. 2:10 reads, "Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast [some] of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life" (KJV).

79. Mat. 24:13 reads, "But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved" (KJV).

for ever precious.⁸⁰ They value him 1. Above their lusts, *Gal.* 5. 24.⁸¹ They can pluck out right eyes for Christ, and cut off right hands for Christ. 2. They value him above the world. Witness *David*, *Psal.* 73. 25. and *Daniel*, *Dan.* 6. and the disciples, *Matth.* 19. 27, and *Moses*, *Heb.* 11. 25.26. and the primitive Christians and the Martyrs of a later date⁸² 3. They value him above their lives, *Rev.* 12. 11. *They loved not their lives unto the death.*⁸³ So *Paul*, *Acts* 20.22. 23, 24.⁸⁴ So the Martyrs. 4. They value him above all their Relations; *If all the World were a lump of Gold* (said the *Dutch Martyr*) *and in my hands to dispose of, I would give it to live all my days with my Wife and Children in a Prison, but Christ and his Truth is dearer to me than all*⁸⁵. You have thousands of such instances upon record. 5. They value him above their goods, *Heb.* 10. 34. *Ye took joyfully*

80. Brooks may be referring to 1Pe. 2:7, which reads, "Unto you therefore which believe [he is] precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner" (KJV).

81. Gal. 5:24 reads, "And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts" (KJV).

82. Psa. 73:25 reads, "Whom have I in heaven [but thee]? and [there is] none upon earth [that] I desire beside thee" (KJV) ; In Dan. 6, king Darius outlaws prayer to any god or man other than himself, but Daniel continues to pray to God three times daily. King Darius casts Daniel into a lion's den, but Daniel's devout faith allows him to survive the lions unharmed ; Mat. 19:27 reads, "Then answered Peter and said unto him, Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore?" (KJV) ; Heb. 11:25-26 read, "Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward" (KJV)

83. Rev. 12:11 reads, "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death" (KJV).

84. Acts 20:22-24 read, "And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there: Save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me. But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God" (KJV).

85. Heb. 10:34 reads, "For ye had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance" (KJV).

Cant. 5.10.
Psal. 45.1.
Phil. 3.7,8.

the spoiling of your Goods. So has many thousands since under sharp persecutions. 6. They value him above all natural, spiritual and acquired excellencies, *Phil* 3. 7, 8.⁸⁶ In all my serious Discourses with her about our Lord Jesus Christ, she would still set the Crown upon Christs heard. She would lay her self low, very low, that he alone might be exalted. The thoughts of Christ was precious to her. The Discourses of Christ were precious to her, the Image of Christ was precious to her, the Ordinances of Christ were precious to her, the Discoveries of Christ were precious to her, the day of Christ was precious to her, the Offices of Christ were precious to her, and the Rebukes of Christ (whilst she enjoyed his Presence under them) was precious to her; but above all, the Person of Christ was most precious to her; In her eye *he was the chiefest of ten thousand, fairer then the children of men*, and all the riches, honours, pleasures and delights of this world were but dung in comparison of him.⁸⁷ O at what a rate has the Saints of old prized our Lord Jesus. *Malleum* (said one) *ruere cum Christo, quam regnare cum Cesare*, *Luther* had rather fall with Christ then stand with Cesare. The same Author elsewhere saith, that he had rather be (*Christianus Rusticus* then *Ethnicus Alexander*;) a Christian-Clown then a Pagan-Emperour. *Theodosius* the Emperour preferred the Title of *Membrum Ecclesia* before that of *Caput Imperii*; professing that he had rather be a Saint and no King, then a King and no Saint. And godly *Constantine* rejoyced more in being the servant of Christ, then in being the Emperour of the World. *Bernard* saith, *That he had rather be in his Chimney-Corner with Christ, then in Heaven without him.* It was an excellent

86. *Phil.* 3:7-8 read, "But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things [but] loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them [but] dung, that I may win Christ" (KJV).

87. *Brooks* is referencing *Psa.* 45:2, which reads, "Thou art fairer than the children of men: grace is poured into thy lips: therefore God hath blessed thee for ever" (KJV).

Answer of one of the Martyrs when he was offered riches and honours if he would recant, said, *Do but offer me somewhat that is better then my Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall see what I will say to you.* It was a sweet Prayer of one, *Make thy Son dear, very dear, exceeding dear, only dear and precious, or not at all.* Another good man cried out, *I had rather have one Christ then a thousand worlds.* I have read of *Johannes Mollius*, *That whensoever he spake of the Name of Jesus, his eyes dropt tears:* And of another Reverend Divine, who being in a deep muse after, some discourse that passed of dear Jesus, and tears trickling down his cheeks before he was aware, and being asked the reason of it, he confessed ingenuously, *It was because he could not draw his dull heart to prize Jesus Christ at that rate he should and fain would.* Christ lay near your Mothers heart, and O that he may lie near all your hearts, that so you may be sate and save for ever. But

Tenthly, Imitate her in the casting a Mantle of love over the infirmities and weaknesses of poor, weak, miscarrying Christians, in the burying of Christians weaknesses under their graces; much I know of this, but some know much more. She was not for blazoning of others weaknesses whether they were nearer to her, or more remote from her. She commonly carried a Mantle of love about her to cast over other mens sins; she seemed to live under the Power of that Word, *Pro. 10. 12. Love covereth all sins;* and that *1 Pet. 9.8. Charity shall cover the multitude of sins.*⁸⁸ By covering must be meant, 1. A favourable Construction of all things, which in right reason might well be construed. 2. A passing by smaller infirmities and private offences. 3. Such a covering as might cure also for love is wife. Love hath a large Mantle and covers all sins, that is all private sins, and all such sins as may be concealed with a good conscience, both towards God and towards men. Again, it must be understood, not

88. Pro. 10:12 reads, "Hatred stirreth up strifes: but love covereth all sins" (KJV); Brooks means 1Pet. 4:8, which reads, "And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins." (KJV).

Pro. 17.9.

To observe and take notice of other mens faults, but not of our own, is the easiest thing in the World, said Thales.

of our own transgressions committed against God, but of other mens sins and transgressions committed against us Love is not suspicious but interprets all things in the best sense. Love will not publish private injuries to the dishonour or shame of the party offending *Prov. 12. 16. A prudent man covereth shame.*⁸⁹ It is recorded to *Vespasians* honour, *That he was more ready to conceal the vices then the vertues of his friends.* Such commonly are best acquainted with other mens infirmities, who are least observant of their own iniquities and irregularities. *The nature of man is very apt, faith Seneca, (Vimur perspicillis magis quam speculis) to use Spectacles to behold other mens faults, rather than Looking. Glasses to behold their own. Erasmus* speaks of one who collected all the lame and defective verses in *Homers Works*, but passed over all that was excellent. The *Donatists* of old were more glad to finde a fault then to see it amended; and to proclaim it then to cover it; to carp at it then to cure it. *If I should finde a Bishop committing adultery (saith Constantine the Great) I would cover that soul fast with mine Imperial Robe, rather then it should come abroad to the scandal of the weak, and the scorn of the wicked. Seneca* unmasking the face of their corrupt State, hath this notable passage, *The Newws from Rome take thus, the Walls are ruined, the Temples are not viesited, the Priests are fled, the Treasuries rob'd, old men are dead, young men are mad, Vices are Lords over all: The Dictator blames the Consul, the Consul checks the Censor, the Censor chides the Praetor, the Praetor falls foul upon the Aedile, and he casts all the fault upon the Questor, and because no man will acknowledge himself in fault we have no hopes of better times.* How applicable this is to our present times I shall leave others to judge; but by the whole you see that all sorts and ranks of men are more apt to observe and quarrel at other mens faults, then with their own. Observable is that of our blessed saviour,

89. Pro. 12:16 reads, "A fool's wrath is presently known: but a prudent [man] covereth shame" (KJV).

*Luke 7. 37.*⁹⁰ *There was a woman in the City which was a sinner:* No wonder, what woman is not? We may guess both who the woman was, and what the sin was, and which City it was: but he neither names the City, nor the sin, nor the sinner. Seeing her Reformation, he consults her Reputation. O that you would all labour to write after this Copy; When *Alexander* was painted, the Painter laid his finger on his wart, and *Apelles* covered *Venus* mole with her finger, that it might not be spied. As you stand in a near relation to one another, so I could wish that you would lay your fingers upon one anothers warts and moles, and not blazon one anothers humane frailties and infirmities to the world, but love and live as brethren and sisters, who are never without a mantle of love to cover infirmities, I say, not enormities: to cover weaknesses, I say, not wickedness: to cover from the world, I say, not from God, nor from one another. But

Eleventhly, Imitate her in her earnest desires and endeavors, that others, especially that her nearest and dearest Relations might taste that the Lord is gracious, that they might all be holy and happy, gracious and glorious; that they might all have changed hearts, renewed natures, and sanctified souls: that they might all be born again, adorned with grace, filled with the spirit, and fitted for Heaven. You know, that upon her dying bed she desired me, that when she was asleep in Jesus, that I would, for the advantage of the living, especially for your sakes (who lay nearest her heart) preach on that *Psal. 34. 8.*⁹¹ *O taste and see that the Lord is good.* Which accordingly I did, one and again. Now what was her design in this but that every one of you might share with her in the same

¹ *Thes. 4. 14.*

The three Sermons that I preached on Psal. 37. 8. I have been desired to Print, but could not answer Friends expectations in that, because I had not the Notes by me, of what I said upon that Text.

90. Luke 7:37 reads, "And, behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that [Jesus] sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment" (KJV).

91. Psal. 34:8 reads, "O taste and see that the LORD [is] good: blessed [is] the man [that] trusteth in him" (KJV).

favour, love, spirit, grace, merit, righteousness and goodness, that her soul had long tasted of. There is not a soul that ever have had any saving taste of the Lord, and of his goodness, but is mighty desirous that others should taste of the same grace and goodness. *O taste and see that the Lord is good.* As if *David* should have said, I for my part have seen, tasted, and experienced much of God and his goodness, and never more then in

Ps. 66.16. the words are without a Copulative in the Hebrew, venite, audite. Calv. Come, Hearken. Like that Gen. 19.14. It not only imports an Invitation, but the affection also of him that speaks.

my greatest streights. I am loth to eat these heavenly viands, and soul-ravishing morself of contentment alone. Come hither all you that fear God, and I will tell you what God hath done for my soul; Come, O come poor souls, taste and see with me how good the Lord is; how comfortable the embraces of Christ are, and how sweet communion with Heaven is. We can-

not advantage others, more then by declaring and communicating unto them our soul-secrets, our soul-Experiments. All the Saints own it as their duty to glorifie God in their Generation, and wherein can they bring more glory to God then in helping souls to Heaven? And how can they finde out a readier way to effect this great business, then by telling them what God has done for their souls; then by making a faithful Narrative of their own conditions, by nature and by grace; when and how the goodness of the Lord was made known unto them upon a saving account. O tell poor wounded sinners what methods of mercy the Lord used to the healing up of your wounds, and to the quieting of your consciences; that so they may be encouraged to a serious use of all Gospel-means, and to a hope of the same grace and goodness of the Lord towards them. O labour more and more to convince others by your experiences, that grace is the only way to glory; and that *without holinesse no man shall see the Lord*; *Paul* had tasted that the Lord was good,

Heb. 12.14. See my Treatise on this Text. Acts 26.29.

92. Brooks is referencing Hbr. 12:14, which reads, "Follow peace with all [men], and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord" (KJV)

and he wish'd that both *Agrippa* and all that heard him were altogether such as he was, except his bonds.⁹² As soon as *Matthew* has tasted that the Lord was good he called together an huge multitude of Publicans and others to meet at his house.⁹³ As soon as *Philip* has tasted of the sweetness of communion with Christ, he runs to *Nathaniel* to invite him to Christ, saying, *Come and see* No sooner has the Woman of *Samaria* tasted of Christs living waters, but she leaves her water-pot, and posts into the City to call out her friends and neighbours to see and taste how good dear Jesus was.⁹⁴ So those young Converts, *Zech. 8. 21. And the inhabitants of one City shall go to another, saying, let us go speedily to pray before the Lord, and to seek the Lord of Hosts I will go also. Mic. 4. 2. And many Nations shall come and say, Come and let us go up to the Mountain of the Lord, and to the House of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths; for the Law shall go forth of Zion, and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem.* These blessed Converts would not come alone, but draw others along in company with them to worship the Lord, which is lively expressed in a *Mimesis* or imitation of the encouragements and invitations they should use one to another, *I will go also*: every one was as forward for himself, as zealous for another. O blessed frame of spirit! O my friends, it is the nature of true grace to be diffusive and communicative; Grace can't be conceal'd; they that have tasted of divine sweetness cannot chuse but speak of it to others, their hearts like bottles of new wine, would be ready to burst if they had not vent. Grace is like fire in the bones, they that have it cannot hide it. All the faculties of the

Luke 5.29.

John 1.45,46.

John 4.28.

*Vide Pemble
in loc.*

Isa. 2.2,3,4.

93. Mat. 9:10 reads, "And it came to pass, as Jesus sat at meat in the house, behold, many publicans and sinners came and sat down with him and his disciples" (KJV).

94. Jhn. 1:39 reads, "He saith unto them, Come and see. They came and saw where he dwelt, and abode with him that day: for it was about the tenth hour" (KJV); Brooks refers to the Woman of *Samaria* in Jhn. 4.

soul, and all the members of the body, will still be a telling of others, that there is a treasure of grace in the soul. The blind men that were cured were charged to be silent, but they could not hold their peace. So here, *Lilmod lelammed, We therefore learn that we may teach*, is a Proverb among the Rabbins.⁹⁵ And I do therefore lay in and lay up (saith the Heathen) that I may draw forth again, and lay out for the good of many And shall not grace do more then nature? Well friends, this I shall only say, that the frequent counsels that your glorified Mother have given you to taste of divine goodness, and the experiences that she has communicated to you of her taste of divine goodness, both in her health and sickness, both in her living and dying, will certainly either be for you, or else be a dreadful witness against you, in the great day of our Lord Jesus. O remember not only these experiences of her, that are now presented to your eyes; but those other experiences of hers as to her inward man that has often sounded in your ears. But

Lastly, labour to imitate her in her comfortable passage out of this world. Those words were more worth then a world which she uttered a little before she fell asleep in the Lord, *viz. Lord, take my [aking] head, and lay it in thy bosome*. How often did she express her longings to be with Christ, that she might sin nor sorrow no more; her outward man was full of

In all my visits of her, my hardest task was still to work her into a willingness to stay in this world, till all her doing and her suffering work was over.

pain, weakness and trouble, yet how was her inward man refresh'd and quieted in a way of believing, according to that blessed Word, *Isa.26.3. Thou wilt keep him in perfect Peace*. The Hebrew runs שוֹלוֹם שוֹלוֹם *Shalom Shalom, Peace, Peace: whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in*

95. "Michtam of David, to teach] The Hebrews have a proverb, *Lilmod lelammed*, Men must, therefore, learn that they may teach." —John Trapp, *A commentary or exposition upon the books of Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Job and Psalms ...* (London, 1657), p. 742 (on Psalms 60.1)

*thee.*⁹⁶ Never did the espoused Maid long more for the Marriage-day, nor the sick man for his health, nor the wounded man for his cure, nor the hungry man for his bread, nor the naked for clothes, the she did long to die and to be with Christ, which for her was best of all. How often were those words in her mouth. *Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly.* The face of none is so comely to the Saints eye, the voice of none so pleasant in his mouth as Jesus Christ. The Name of Jesus hath a thousand treasures of joy and comfort in it, saith *Chrysostome*, and is therefore used by *Paul* five hundred times, as some have reckoned, The Name of a Saviour (saith one) is *Honey in the Mouth, Musick in the Ear, and a Jubilee in the heart*: And how often was that blessed word in her mouth, *Remember, O Lord I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight*; a serious sense of her uprightness in the main of her walking with God, did yield her more then a little sweetness and comfort when she was upon her bed of Pain; one of the last speeches of a dying upright Christian was this; *Satan may as well pluck God out Heaven, as pluck my soul out of his keeping.*⁹⁷ She knew him in whom she had believed, and was perswaded that he was able to keep that which she had committed to him against that day. A child that hath any precious Jewel given him, cannot better secure it, then by putting it into his fathers hands to keep; so neither can we better provide for our souls safety then by committing them to God: *Keep that which I have committed*: that is, either my precious soul, which I have committed to his care and custody to bring it forth glorious at that day of his appearance or my eternal life, happiness and crown of glory, which I have

Phil. 1.23.*Rev.* 22.20.*Bernard**Isa.* 38.3.*John* 10.28,29,30.
2 Tim. 2.12.

96. *Isa.* 26:3 reads, "Thou wilt keep [him] in perfect peace, [whose] mind [is] stayed [on thee]: because he trusteth in thee" (KJV).

97. *2Ki* 20:1 reads, "I beseech thee, O LORD, remember now how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done [that which is] good in thy sight. And Hezekiah wept sore" (KJV).

as it were deposited with him by faith and hope; and thus it was with her.⁹⁸ The Apostle saith, he committed to Gods Custody a Pawn or Pledge, but about this Pawn or Pledge, Interpreters differ; One saith *It is his soul*; Another saith, *It is himself*; And a third saith, *It is his works*: And a fourth saith, *It is his sufferings*: And a fifth saith, *It is his salvation*. In short, he committed to God his soul, himself, his doings, his sufferings, to be sewarded with life and salvation; and so did she who is now at rest in the Lord. Lord (saith *Austin*) I will die that I may enjoy thee. I will not live, but I will die; I desire to die that I may see Christ, and refuse to live that I may live with Christ. The broken Rings, Contracts and Espousals, contents not the true Lover, but he longs for the Marriage-day, and so did she, who has now exchange'd a sick bed for a Royal Throne, and the company of poor Mortals, for the Presence of God, Christ, Angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect. It was well said of one, *So far as we tremble at death, so far we want love*; its sad when the Contract is made between Christ and Christian; to see a Christian afraid of the making up of the Marriage: But your deceased Relation was no such Christian; I know nothing in this world that her heart has so much set upon, as the completing of the Marriage between Christ and her soul. My eye is upon that text, *Isa. 57. 1. The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart, and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous are taken away from the evil to come*. I have read of one *Philo* a Jew, and of another, that when they came to any City or Town, and heard of the death of any godly man, though never so poor, they would both of them mourn exceedingly, because of the great loss that place had by the death of that godly man; and because it was a warning-Piece

98. Brooks is most likely referring to 2Ti. 1:12, which reads, "For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day" (KJV).

from God of evil approaching: but ah, how many famous godly Ministers, and how many choice Christians hath the Lord of Hosts taken away from us; and yet who lays it to heart. There is no greater Prognostick of an approaching storm, then Gods calling home so many Worthies (of whom this world was not worthy) as he has lately done. Now O that God would beautifie all you souls with all these 12 Jewels, with which your Mother was adorned in life and death.

Sir, you having signified to me, that it was your Mothers minde, and your desires, that her following Experiences should be printed. I did think it might be somewhat seasonable to put you all in minde of such things as I has (among many others) observed, and which should be all your ambition to imitate, as you would give up your accounts at last with joy, and be happy with her forever in that other world.

Considering, that these Experiences may fall into other hands besides your own. I thought it meet to let such Readers know, that these were taken from her by one of you, when she was in a very weakly condition, and had little more strength then to speak; and they are but some of those that lay most warm upon her heart at that time. God began to work upon her in the Morning of her days; and had there been a Collection of all her most close, inward, spiritual Experiences, they would have been greatly multiplied beyond what is now presented to the Readers eye; but that was a Task too hard for her under those variety of weaknesses that she was every day contending with. The Experiences of old disciples commonly rise high, but he Ingenious Reader may easily discern by the twelve Jewels with which she was adorned, that she was a woman both of choice and great Experiences, *Austin observes on Psal 16.2. Come and hear all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul:* 'He doth not call them (saith her) to acquaint them with speculations, how wide the Earth is, and how far the Heavens are stretch'd out, or what the number of the

stars are, or what is the course of the Sun; But come and I will tell you the wonders of his grace, the faithfulness of his promises, and the riches of his mercy to my soul.’ Now all Ministers and Christians that had any inward acquaintance with her soul-concernments, they do very well know, that she was most taken up with the wonders of Gods free, rich, and sovereign grace, and with the sweetness, the fulness of his Promises, and with the riches of his mercy in Christ to her soul.

To draw to a close; it is observable, that even the holy Apostles in their Canonical Epistles, have spent some good part of their holy lines in the ample Commendations of those eminent Saints to whom they wrote, as *Paul* in to *Philemon*, and *John* in that of to an Honourable Lady: and the other to a meaner person, viz. *Gaius*; and that they went not behind the door (as we say) to whisper; but on the House-top did proclaim the Religious and pious practices of those more choice Christians to the imitation of others. And further, when I consider that which the Apostle speaketh of, *Demetrius* a rare and not-ordinary Testimony; *Demetrius hath a good report of all men, and of the Truth it self; an dwe also bear Record, and we know that our Record is true:* And yet further, when I consider what is Recorded of *Hezekiah*, *This did Hezekiah throughout all Judah and wrought what was good, and right, and true before his God.*⁹⁹ And in every work that he began in the service of the House of God, and in the Law and Commandments, he did it with all his heart and prospered. And when I consider what high commendations the Apostle bestows upon the Churches of *Macedonia*, 2 *Cor.* 8. I. to the eleventh verse; And upon the Church of *Thessalonica*, 1 *Thessal.* 1.1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. And also 2 *Thessal.* 1.3, 4, 5. And when I consider, that it was the Holy Ghost who writ *Jehoiada’s* Epitaph, *They buried*

99. 2Ch 31:20 reads, “Thus Hezekiah did throughout all Judah, and he did what [was] good and right and true before the LORD his God” (KJV).

*him in the City of David among the Kings, because he had done good in Israel, both towards God and towards his house.*¹⁰⁰ It is also said of Jehoiadah, in his Commendations by the same Spirit, *Like unto him there was no King, Moses and Mordecai, Sarah, Deborah, Esther, Elizabeth,* and others, after their deaths have had their due praises. When I consider of these things I am very well satisfied in what I have said concerning this deceased Sister and friend. I do no ways doubt; but that we may very lately say good of such, when dead, whose ordinary course and practice it was to do good while they lived; but in this censorious Age, No sooner is dust cast upon some Christians head, but there are those that will do what they can to throw dirt in their faces: *Augustine* doth very fitly compare these to *Dives* his dogs, *they lay licking and sucking Lazarus his sores, but his sounder parts they never medled with.* To trample upon the Reputation, and stain the glory of them that die in the Lord, argues such Persons to be akin to Fleas, who bite most when men are asleep. It was one of *Solons Laws*, *that none should dare to speak evil of the dead.* And *Plutarch* tells us, *that that was highly commended and duly observed:* But is it so now? This I am sure, that it well becomes Christians not to dare to speak evil (if they could) of those who for the main have lived holily, and died graciously, as this deceased friend hath done. Let this satisfie us, that she is above the Praises and envies of me. 'Tis the good, the profit, the advantage of all your souls, and theirs into whose hands this little Piece may fall, that has drawn me out to write so large an Epistle. If I had had only the dead in my eye, a few lines should have serv'd the turn. I doubt not but that you will kindly accept of my endeavours to be serviceable to your immortal souls, and who can tell what fruit may grow upon this Tree? I shall improve all the interest I have in Heaven, that both the Epistle

2. King. 23.25.

100. 2Ch. 24:16

and your glorified Mothers Experiences may be blest, to the furtherance of the internal and eternal welfare of all your souls. The goodwill of him that dwelt in the Bush, rest upon you and yours. So I Rest

Honoured friends,

Your Souls Servant

THO, BROOKS.

Chapter 3

Sarah Goodhue

THE COPY
OF A
VALEDICTORY AND MONITORY
WRITING,

Left by Sarah Goodhue,

The wife of Joseph Goodhue, of Ipswich,
in N. E. and found after her de-
cease ; full of spiritual experi-
ences, sage counsels, pious
instructions, and seri-
ous exhortations :

Directed to her Husband and Children, with other near
Relations and Friends, and profitable to all that
may happen to read the same,

She was the youngest daughter of ELDER WHIPPLE, born
at the said *Ipswich*, Anno 1641, and died suddenly, (as she
prefaged she should) July 23, 1681, Three Days after she
had been delivered of two hopeful Children, leaving ten in
all surviving.

CAMBRIDGE, *New-England* : Printed in 1681.

SALEM : Reprinted by SAMUEL HALL, 1770.

PORTLAND : Again reprinted, by request,
by JAMES & SHIRLEY, 1805.

1805 reprint, Portland, Maine

Introduction To Sarah Goodhue, *The Copy Of a Valedictory, and Monitory Writing, Left By Sarah Goodhue* (1681)

Sarah Goodhue (1641-1681), born on November 3, 1641 in Ipswich, Essex, Massachusetts, was the youngest daughter of Deacon John Whipple and his wife Susanna. She was raised with four siblings in a devoutly Puritan family, and at age twenty, Sarah wed Deacon Joseph Goodhue, also of Ipswich. Despite the limited biographical information, her children's births have been relatively well-documented: her oldest child, Joseph, was born on May 13, 1662, ten months following her marriage. Goodhue carried eleven babies—four boys, five girls, and a set of twins—to term before her death at age forty. Two of the boys were christened Joseph, the first having died prior to the birth of the second Joseph, who was born in 1668. The text indicates that Goodhue left “ten in all surviving” (1). Her Valedictory condenses her own experience in Puritanism, and in it she tries to instruct her children on religious and moral matters in less than three thousand words. Like Elisabeth Jocelin, an Englishwoman who composed a legacy in anticipation of childbirth, Goodhue died shortly after writing her book. On July 23, 1681, only three days after giving birth to twins, she passed away. Her words, therefore, are particularly haunting, as she forewarns in her legacy book, “that by sudden death I should be surprised” (7). Conveniently, she provides guidance for the handling of her children in case of her death, as her mother's legacy, in part, reads like a final will and testament.

The opening of the legacy speaks to Goodhue's practicality. Having borne eight surviving children prior to her final laying-in with twins, Goodhue amplifies the usual legacy text topics, such as the outlining of religious tenets, to bequeath some of her children to various relatives. That she does not provide for all of her offspring is unremarkable, as many of her children would have been old enough to be married at the time she composed Valedictory. One child for whom she makes specific provisions, though, is her “hearty” and “helpful”

daughter Susanna, who is willed to Katharine Whipple. Often sent out of the home to work as servants in other households, children were, in some ways, subservient commodities and were considered to be their father's property. The mother had a less concrete claim than the father to her children, so, appropriately, Goodhue does not assert complete authority over the children born to her and Joseph. Rather, in earmarking some of her children for deliverance to other homes, Goodhue simultaneously ensures that her children's needs, physical and spiritual, will be well-attended, and relieves her husband of the burden of raising however many children remain at home.

Notably, in the final section of Goodhue's legacy book, she foregrounds her role as wife, and in addressing her husband, Goodhue does not stress conversion or religious education. Instead, tacitly acknowledging her inability to possess authority over the patriarch, she offers some comfort to her beloved husband—that the will of God will be done, even if it means her death—and expresses gratitude for the way in which he cared for her and her “eternal good” (7). The benefit that she gained from her relationship with Joseph Goodhue is what she encourages her children to gain from their father, as well as from their mother's legacy.

Goodhue's letter is primarily addressed to her husband; however, despite the attention to her husband and divergence into the form of a final will, Goodhue's text belongs to the mother's legacy genre because her concern for her children's salvation dominates the text. In order to encourage her younger children's conversions, Goodhue promotes scriptural education. In large part, the state of their souls will be the children's responsibility, but she advises them to look to her text—as a surrogate for her—and their father for examples of piety. She suggests that they learn and observe their father's sermons, which contain “lively messages” (4), and by linking obedience to God with obedience to their father, she instructs her children to repent their sinfulness and be ever-obedient. Her words are more loving and encouraging than threatening, although she warns her children to expect her curses should they be disobedient to their father or to God.

Pointing to the genre in which she writes, Goodhue notes that “many times by experience it hath been found, that the dying words

of parents have left a living impression upon the hearts of Children” (3), and her advice to her children stresses the importance of death-awareness and the impending Judgment Day. For Goodhue, it was essential that her children be diligent in establishing and maintaining their relationship with Christ, and her words imply that salvation requires the devotion of one’s mind, as well as one’s heart, to God. In spite of her emphasis on education, Goodhue uses religious doctrine in a manner less overt than some of the other women included in this collection. In contrast to, for example, Grace Smith, Goodhue does not provide a multitude of direct biblical references; rather, her knowledge of scripture is evident in her allusions to passages from Matthew, Revelations, Genesis, and Peter. Her subtle use of scripture does not undermine her emphasis on religious education, but indicates the necessary pervasion of scripture into one’s heart. Goodhue’s book is a letter to her husband, and deals with practical and spiritual matters; her use of the Bible and religious doctrine is subtle, and she includes addresses to several of her children and a couplet to her husband. Her affection and hopes for her family are the book’s primary concerns.

How Goodhue’s *Valedictory* came to be printed is unclear, although the copy text indicates that her manuscript was found following her death. Her legacy was first printed in 1681, and enjoyed reprints. Nearly one hundred years after her death, it re-emerged in print, indicating the continued interest in her book, if not in the legacy genre as a whole. The numerous re-printings of her deathbed declaration are remarkable, although not unprecedented; Goodhue’s legacy book was not the first of its kind, but its apparent popularity helped to establish the legacy genre in New England. The book is available in the Early American Imprints collection, at the Andover Harvard Theological Library, and at the Library of Congress. It was reprinted three times, and was popular enough to be included in a historical text, *Ipswich in the Massachusetts Bay Colony*, edited by Thomas Franklin Waters for the Ipswich Historical Society in 1905. Goodhue’s text includes a series of prose addresses to the members of her family, a series of couplets to her children and husband, and a final set of prose instructions and endearments to her husband.

Copy Text

The Copy of a Valedictory and Monitory Writing, Left by Sarah Goodhue, Wife of Joseph Goodhue, of Ipswich, in New-England; and Found After Her Decease. Cambridge, New England: James Allen, 1681. We use the copy held by the Andover Harvard Theological Library. Goodhue's manuscript is not extant, but this first edition of the book is available and is thus the best choice. It was reprinted several times and one of the later reprints was the copy text for the most recent edition of the text.

Early Editions and Reprints

The Copy of a Valedictory and Monitory Writing. Salem: Reprinted by Samuel Hall, 1770; New London: reprinted by Timothy Green by the desire of David Kimball, 1773; Portland: Again reprinted by request by Jenks & Shirley, 1805; Cambridge: Again reprinted by Metcalf & Do., for David Pulsifer of Boston, 1850, Cambridge: Again reprinted by Metcalf & Do., for David Pulsifer of Boston, 1859.

Contemporary Editions

Included in *Ipswich in the Massachusetts Bay Colony*. Ed. Thomas Franklin Waters. Ipswich, MS: Ipswich Historical Society, 1905-1917.

Excerpted in *American Women Writers to 1800*. Ed. Sharon M. Harris. New York: Oxford UP, 1996. 124-27.

The
Copy
Of A
Valedictory,
and
Monitory Writing,
Left By
Sarah Goodhue,

Wife of *Joseph Goodhue*, of *Ipswich*,
in *New-England*; and found after
her Decease: Full of spiritual
Experiences, sage Counsels,
pious Instructions, and
serious Exhortations:

Directed to her Husband, Children, with other near
Relations and Friends, and profitable to all who
may happen to read them.

She was the youngest Daughter of *Elder Whipple*, born at the said
Ipswich, Anno 1641, and died suddenly, (as she presaged she should)
July 23, 1681, three Days after she had been delivered of two hopeful
Children, leaving ten in all surviving.

Dear and loving Husband, If it should please the Lord to make a
sudden change in thy family, the which I know not how soon it may
be, and I am fearful of it.

Therefore in a few words I would declare something of my mind,
lest I should afterwards have no opportunity: I cannot but sympathize
and pity thy condition, seeing that thou has a great family of children,

and some of them small, and if it should please the Lord to add to thy number one more or two, be not discouraged, although it should please the Lord to deprive thee of thy weak help which is so near and dear unto thee. Trust in the living God, who will be a help to the helpless, and a father to the motherless.¹ My desire is, that if thou art so contented, to dispose of two or three of my children. If it please the Lord that I should be delivered of a living child, son or daughter, my desire is, that my father & mother should have it, if they please; I freely bequeath and give it to them. And also my desire is, that my cousin *Symond Stacy* should have *John*, if he please; I freely bequeath and give him to him for his own, if thou art willing. And also my desire is, that my cousin *Katharine Whipple* should have *Susanna*, which is an hearty girl, and will quickly be helpful to her, and she may be helpful to the child, to bring her up. These, or either of these, I durst trust to their care, under God, for the faithful discharge of that which may be for my children's good and comfort, and I hope to thy satisfaction. Therefore if they be willing to take them, [an]d to deal well by them, answer my desire, I pray thee; thou hast been willing to answer my request formerly, and I hope now thou wilt, this being the last, so far as I know.

Honored and most loving Father and Mother, I cannot tell how to express your fatherly and motherly love towards me and mine, it [hat]h been so great, and in several kinds; for the which, in a poor [...]quittal, I give *you hearty and humble thanks*, yet trusting in God [tha]t he will enable you to be a father and mother to the motherless. [B]e not troubled for the loss of an unworthy daughter; but rejoice [in] the free grace of God, that there is hopes of rejoicing together [h]ereafter in the place of everlasting joy and blessedness.

Brothers and Sisters all. Hearken and hear the voice of the Lord, that by his sudden Providences doth call aloud on you to prepare yourselves for that swift and sudden messenger of death; that no one of you may be found without a wedding garment, a part and portion in Jesus Christ, the assurance of the love of God, which will enable you to leave

1. 1 Ti 4:10 reads "For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe" (KJV).

this world, and all your relations, though never so near and dear, for the everlasting enjoyment of the great and glorious God, if you do fear him in truth.²

The private Society, to which while here I did belong, If God by his providence come amongst you, and begin by death to break you, be not discouraged, but be strong in repenting, faith and prayers, with the lively repeatal of God's counsels declared u[n]to you by his faithful messengers: O pray each for another, and with one another; that so in these threatening times of storms and troubles[,] you may be found *more precious than gold tried in the fire*.³ Think not a few hours time in your approaches to God mispent; but consider seriously with yourselves, to what end God lent to you any time at all. This surely I can through grace now say, that of the time that there I spent, through the blessing of God, I have no cause to repent, no not in the least.

O my Children all, which in pains and care have cost me dear, unto you I call to come and take what portion your dying mother will bestow upon you; many times by experience it hath been found, that the dying words of parents have left a living impression upon the hearts of Children: O my children, besure to set the fear of God before your eyes; consider what you are by nature, miserable sinners[,] utterly lost and undone; and that there is no way and means whereby you can come out of this miserable state, but by the mediation of the Lord Jesus Christ; He died a reproachful death, that every poor, humb[le]d and true repenting sinner by faith on God through him, might have everlasting life.⁴ O my children, the best counsel that a poor dying mother can give you is, to get

2. Matt.22:11, 12. "And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment: And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless" (KJV).

3. Rev.3:17, 18 reads, "Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see" (KJV).

4. In Jhn. 10:28, Jesus tells the Jews, "And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any [man] pluck them out of my hand" (KJV).

a part and portion in the Lord Jesus Christ; that will hold when all these things will fail; O let the Lord Jesus Christ be precious in your sight.

O Children neighbours and friends, I hope I can by experience truly say, that Christ is the best, most precious, most durable portion, that all or any of you can set your heart's delight upon[,] forever desire to bless and praise the Lord, that he hath op[ened] mine eyes to see the emptiness of these things and mine own; an[d] to behold the fulness and riches of grace that is in the Lord Jesus Christ. To that end, my children, I do not only counsel you, but in the fear of the Lord I charge you all, to read God's word, and, pray unto the Lord that he would be pleased to give you hearts and wisdom to improve the great and many privileges that the Lord is at present pleased to afford unto you, improve your youthful days unto God's service, your health and strength whilst it lasteth, for you know not how soon your health may be turned into sickness; your strength into weakness, and your lives into death. As death cuts the tree of your life down, so it will lie; as death leaveth you, so judgment will find you out. Therefore be persuaded to *agree with your adversary quickly, while you are in the way* of these precious opportunities; be sure to improve the lively dispensations of the gospel; give good attention unto sermons preached in public, and to sermons repeated in private. Endeavor to learn to write your father's hand, that you may read over those precious sermons that he hath taken pains to write and keep from the mouths of God's lively messengers, and in them there are lively messages. I can, thro' the blessing of God along with them, say, that they have been lively unto me; and if you improve them aright, why not to all of you? God upbraideth none of the seed of Jacob, that seek his face in truth.⁵ My children, be encouraged in this work; you are in the bond of the covenant—altho' you may be breakers of covenant, yet God is a merciful keeper of

5. In Gen.28:13, 14, God tells Jacob, "the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed; And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed" (KJV).

covenant.⁶ Endeavor as you grow up, to own and renew your covenant, and rest not if God give you life, but so labour to improve all the advantages that God is pleased to afford you, that you may be fit to enjoy the Lord Jesus Christ in all his ordinances. What, hath the Lord Jesus Christ given himself for you, if you will lay hold upon him by true faith and repentance? And what will you be backward to accept of his gracious and free offers, and not to keep in remembrance his death and sufferings, and to strengthen your weak faith? I thank the Lord, in some measure I have found that ordinance, a life making ordinance to my soul.

O[h] the smiles and loving embraces of the Lord Jesus Christ, that they miss of, that hold off, and will not be in such near relation unto their Head and Saviour. The Lord grant that Christ may be your portions all.

My Children, One or two words I have to say to you more. In the first place besure to carry well to your father; obey him, love him, follow his instructions and example, be ruled by him, take his advice, and have a care of grieving him; for I must testify the truth unto you, and I may call some of you to testify against yourselves; that your father hath been loving, kind, tender hearted towards you, and laborious for you all, both for your temporal and spiritual good. You that are grown up, cannot but see how careful your father is when he cometh home from his work, to take the young ones up into his wearied arms; by his loving carriage and care towards those, you may behold as in a glass, his tender care and love to you every one, as you grew up. I can safely say, that his love was so to you all, that I cannot say which is the child that he doth love best; but further I may testify unto you, that this is not all that your father hath been doing for you, and that some of you may bear me witness, that he hath given you many instructions, which hath been to the end your souls might enjoy happiness, he hath reprov'd you often for your evils,

6. Gen. 9:15 reads "And I will remember my covenant, which [is] between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh" (KJV).

laying before you the ill event that would happen unto you, if you did not walk in God's ways, and give your minds to do his will, to keep his holy sabbaths, to attend unto reading God's word, hearing it preached with a desire to profit by it, and declaring unto you this way that he had experienced to get good by it; that was, to pray unto the Lord for his blessing with it and upon it, that it might soke into the heart and find entertainment there; and that you should meditate upon it; and he hath told you, meditation was as the key to open the door, to let you in, or that into your heart, that you might find the sweetness of God's word.

Furthermore, *My Children*, Be encouraged in this work. Your father hath put up many prayers, with ardent desires and tears to God on behalf of you all; which if you walk with God, I hope you will find gracious answers, and showers of blessings from these bottled tears for you. O carry it well to your father, that he may yet be encouraged to be doing and pleading for your welfare. Consider that the scripture holdeth forth many blessings to such children that obey their parents in the Lord; but there are curses threatened to the disobedient.

My Children, In your live and conversation, live godly, walk soberly, modestly, and innocently; be diligent, and be not hasty to follow new fashions, and the pride of life, that now too much abounds. Let not pride betray the good of your immortal souls.

And if it please the Lord that you live to match yourselves, and to make your choice, besure you chuse such as first do seek the kingdom of heaven.⁷

*My first, as thy name is Joseph, labour so in knowledge to increase,
As to be f[ree]d from the guilt of thy sins, and enjoy
eternal [Peac].*

7. Mat 6:33 reads, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (KJV).

*Mary, Labour so to be arrayed with the hidden man
of the heart,
That with Mary thou mayst find thou hast ch[use]
the better part.⁸*

*William, thou hadst that name for thy grandfather's
sake,
Labour so to tread in his steps, as over [sin conquest]
thou mayst make.*

*Sarah, Sarah's daughter thou shalt be, if thou con-
tinu[...st] in doing well,
Labour so in holiness among the daughters to walk,
as that thou may excel..
So my children all, if I must be gone, I with tears bid
you all Farewel.*

The Lord bless you all.

*Now, dear Husband, I can do no less than turn unto
thee,
And if I could, I would naturally mourn with thee:*

*And in a p[o]or requital of all thy kindness, if I
could, I would speak some things of comfort to
thee, whilst thou dost mourn for me.*

A tender hearted, affectionate and [inthe] loving husband thou hast been to me several ways. If I should but speak of what I have found as to these outward things; I being but weakly natured, in all my burthens

8. In 1 Pet.3.3, 4, Peter advises wives to avoid "that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel"; instead, he says, "let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price" (KJV).

thou hast willingly with me sympathized, and cheerfully thou hast helped me bear them; which although I was but weak natured, and so the more unable to go through those troubles in my way; yet thou hast by thy chearful love to me, helped me forward in a chearful frame of spirit. But when I come to speak or consider in thy place, thy great pains and care for the good of my soul.

This twenty years experience of thy love to me in this kind, hath so instamped it upon my mind, that I do think that there never was man more truly kind to a woman. I desire forever to bless and praise the Lord, that in mercy to my soul, he by his providence ordered that I should live with thee in such a relation. Therefore dear husband, be comforted in this, (although God by his providence break that relation between us, that he gave being to at first) that in thy place thou hast been a man of knowledge to discharge to God and my soul, that scripture commanded duty[,] which by the effects in me wrought[,] through the grace of God, thou mayest behold with comfort [our] prayers not hindered; but a gracious answer from the Lord which is of great price and reward. Although my being gone be thy loss, yet I trust in and through Jesus Christ, it will be my gain.

Was it not for this end that the Lord was pleased to enable thee and give thee an heart to take [(a)s an instrument) so much pains for his glory and my eternal good, and that it might be thy comfort: As all thy reading of scriptures and writing of sermons, and repeating of them over to me, that although I was necessarily often absent from the public worship of God, yet by thy pains and care to the good of my soul, it was brought home unto me; and blessed be the Lord, who hath set home by the operation of his Spirit, so many repeatales of precious sermons and prayers and tears for me and with me, for my eternal good.

And now let it be thy comfort under all, go on and persevere in believing on God, and praying fervently unto God. Let not thy affectionate heart become hard, and thy tears dried away; and certainly the Lord will render a double portion of blessing upon thee and thine.

If thou couldst ask me a reason why I thus declare myself? I cannot answer no other but this; that I have had of late a strong persuasion

upon my mind, that by sudden death I should be surprised, either at my travel or soon after it—the Lord fit me for himself. Although I could be very willing to enjoy thy company, and my children longer; yet if it be the will of the Lord that I must not, I hope I can say chearfully, *The Will of the Lord be done*; this hath been often my desire and thy prayer.⁹

Further, if thou couldst ask me, why I did not discover some of these particulars of my mind to thee before? My answer is, because I knew that thou wert tender hearted towards me, and therefore I would not create thee needless trouble.

O dear Husband, of all my dearest bosom friend, if by sudden Death I must part from thee, let not thy trouble and cares that are on thee, make thee to turn aside from the right way.

*O dear heart, if I must leave thee and thine here behind,
Of my natural affection here is my heart and hand.*

Be courageous, and on the living God bear up thy heart in so great a breach as this.

Sarah Goodhue.

Dear Husband, If by sudden death I am taken away from thee, there is infolded among thy papers something that I have to say to thee and others.

JULY 14, 1681.

FINIS

9. *The Will of the Lord be done* may refer to Acts 21:14, which reads “And when he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, The will of the Lord be done” (KJV).

Chapter 4

Grace Smith

THE
Dying Mothers Legacy.

OR THE
Good and Heavenly
COUNSEL

Of that Eminent and Pious Matron,
Mrs. GRACE SMITH,
Late Widow to Mr. RALPH SMITH
of *Eastham in New-England.*

Left as a Perpetual Monitor to her Sur-
viving Children ; as it was taken from
her own Mouth a little before her
Death, by the Minister of that Town
where She Died.

Prov. i. 8.

*My Son, Hear the Instruction of thy Father,
and Forsake not the Law of thy Mother.*

B O S T O N,

Printed and Sold by *Timothy Green*, at the
Lower-End of Middle-Street, 1712.

Introduction to Grace Smith, *The Dying Mothers Legacy. Or the Good and Heavenly Counsel of that Eminent and Pious Matron, Mrs. Grace Smith* (1712)

Because evidence about Smith's life is scant, we must primarily look to the text for direction. Smith's legacy provides clues about her family and her life, however it remains difficult to pin down who she was with any certainty. We have no reliable birth, marriage or death dates for Smith, but there is textual evidence that she was married to a Ralph Smith of Eastham, New England. There was indeed a Grace married to Ralph Smith in Eastham, although the marriage record does not seem to exist, and the Ralph Smith to whom it seems Grace was married was a Puritan. He immigrated to Massachusetts in 1633, and was married twice; his first marriage was to Elizabeth Hobart, and after Hobart's death, Ralph married Grace, whose maiden name is difficult to trace. Grace's marriage to Ralph Smith was not her first, which makes it more problematic to determine her lineage. However, there is some indication that her maiden name was Lewis, and it is evident that, before her marriage to Ralph Smith, Grace was married to Thomas Hatch. In 1624, Thomas Hatch wed Grace Lewis of Kent, and the marriage produced two children, Jonathan and Lydia. However, some records indicate that Grace Lewis died in 1658, and was survived by her husband, Thomas. It is highly improbable, then, that the author of the legacy book is Grace Lewis, because, assuming she married Ralph Smith prior to her 1658 death, their marriage would have been troublesome at best, as remarriage after separation was not acceptable in the seventeenth-century. No record of divorce between Grace and Thomas exists.

Without her maiden name, then, one must focus on her married life, which is, albeit poorly, documented. Her first husband, Thomas Hatch, passed away in 1661, and her second husband died in 1685. The legacy book suggests that she was widowed, another indication that she could not be Grace Lewis. There are some difficulties, as well, in confirming how many children Smith had. It is most probable that

Grace did not have any children with Thomas Hatch or Ralph Smith, and that Ralph's six surviving children were born of his first wife, Elizabeth Hobart, who passed away in 1654. The six children's birth dates range from 1641 to 1654, suggesting that they were not Grace Smith's, but, rather, were the offspring of Ralph Smith and Elizabeth Hobart.

Smith's book is unique, then, in that the children for whom she writes the legacy are more likely her stepchildren than her own flesh and blood. Of course, this point is difficult to confirm and seems to be refuted by Smith herself; in the opening verse, she addresses her children, "whom [she] did bear" (1). The possibility that Smith was childless, though, provides an interesting lens through which to read the book. A widow to Ralph, Smith was the only surviving parent at the time she wrote, and she underscores her role as a mother throughout the piece, suggesting that, even if the children were not hers biologically, she had fully adopted and accepted her husband's children as her own. The strength of her relationship with her children is reinforced by the way in which the eldest Smith child, Samuel, named one of his children after Grace. Perhaps she was assumed by her community to be the children's biological mother, as the extended title which was given to the legacy book foregrounds her motherly position. Like other mothers whose legacies are included in this collection, Smith focuses on the spiritual well-being of her children.

Although Smith highlights individual responsibility for salvation, she also attends to more earthly, practical matters in her entreaties to her children to be Christ-like; her attention to their personal salvation is primary, but she is also concerned with how they manage their domestic and public lives. Both of her poems bring her temporal concerns into the text, and emphasize her role as mother to her primary audience. Throughout the text, Smith instructs her children on religious tenets and attempts to draw their attention away from "vain Toys" and "worldly [j]oys" (1). Even as they work to be good, morally-upright citizens of the world, she would prefer for them to be focused on the afterlife. However, Smith tacitly contradicts her own advice, as she remains tied to earthly concerns, her children, for the majority of the book. It is only after she makes a poetic plea for her children's souls that she releases herself from this world and looks towards the

glory of the afterlife.

Comprised of a series of aphoristic meditations, Smith's book is similar to Grymeston's and Bradstreet's in prioritizing religious advice. Much of her exegesis and advice is quite conventional, but she tends to foreground the New Testament in a bid to have her children be more Christ-like. Despite its similarities to Bradstreet's text, Smith's legacy text differentiates itself in its structure; where Bradstreet's work is a patchwork of meditations and motherly admonitions, Smith's last testament is constructed, either by Smith or her editor, with precision. It consists of two poems and twenty maxims, each of which opens with a concise rule and, with the exception of the final maxim, directs the reader to several biblical passages—she employed the King James Bible—which serve to reinforce the rule. Her knowledge of scripture is clearly on display in the legacy; however, the text indicates that Smith's dying words were transcribed by the minister of Eastham, rather than written by her own hand, which may account for the careful attention paid to structure, as well as the myriad of biblical references. Smith's poems appear at the beginning and end. The book also has an elaborate and informative title page.

Copy Text

The Dying Mother's Legacy, or, the Good and Heavenly Counsel of that Eminent and Pious Matron. Boston: Printed and sold by Timothy Green, 1712. This is the sole edition of Smith's book, and there are copies at Harvard, the Boston Public Library, and the New York Historical Society. The book is also available on microfilm in the Early American Imprints collection. We use the Houghton's copy for my copy text, and verify from the Boston Public Library copy, reproduced in Eighteenth Century Collections Online.

THE
Dying Mothers Legacy.
OR THE
Good and Heavenly
COUNSEL

Of that Eminent and Pious Matron,
Mrs. GRACE SMITH,

Late Widow to Mr. RALPH SMITH
of *Eastham* in *New-England*.

*Left as a Perpetual Monitor to her Surviving
Children; as it was taken from her own
Mouth a little before her Death, by the
Minister of that Town where She Died.*

Prov. i. 8.

*My Son, Hear the Instruction of thy Father,
and Forsake not the Law of thy Mother.*

THE
Dying Mothers Legacy.

M^T Children dear, whom I did bear;
O lend your Ear to my Instructions;
Let not vain Toys nor worldly Joys
Shut out these my Directions:
Silver and Gold, such glistening Mould,
Tis not my chief Care to leave you:

*But Riches sure, that will endure;
 Whereof this World can't Rob you.
 Those I Covet, you to Inherit;
 That each enjoy both Grace and Glory:
 After few Days might Sing JAH's Praise.¹
 In blest Heavens highest Story.
 Unto this End I do Commend,
 These dying Words you'd bear in mind:
 O hear their Voice, therein Rejoyce,
 Whenas you here no more me find.
 Let not me see, one of you be
 'Mongst Goats standing at Christ's Left Hand.²
 At Judgment-Day, Oh! that I may,
 Find you Heirs of Immanuel's Land.³*

[I.]

Remember your Baptismal Vows and Covenant, and solemn Engagement therein and thereby lying on you to be the Lords.⁴ Remember also your many and frequent Personal Vows and Promises which your Lips have uttered and your Mouths have spoken; and whereby you have bound your Souls in the Days of Adversity. The

1. Psalm 68.4, "Sing unto God, sing praises to his name: extol him that rideth upon the heavens by his name **JAH**, and rejoice before him" (KJV). JAH is a shortened form for Jehovah (Strong's Biblical Concordance).

2. Mat. 25:32-33. "And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth [his] sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left" (KJV).

3. Heirs of the land of Jesus; Emmanuel being another name for Jesus. See Mat.1:23 (KJV).

4. In the Book of Common Prayer, baptismal vows include renouncing "the devil and all his works, the vain pomp and glory of the world, with all covetous desires of the same, and the carnal desires of the flesh" and endeavoring to "obediently keep God's holy will and W commandments, and walk in the same all the days of [one's] life" (The 1662 Book of Common Prayer. <http://www.eskimo.com/~lhowell/bcp1662>).

Great GOD certainly expecteth when Pay-day, and when Performance-day will come. How should the Lord trust you or take your word for the time to come, if you do not prove true to Him in former Promises. *Prov.* 31. 2. *Eccl.* 5. 4, 5, 6. *Isa.* 63. 8.⁵

[II.]

Beware of the World as being your greatest Snare and Tempter. The very best account that Long-liv'd Experience can give of this world is, that tis a Vain, Empty, Soul entangling ensnaring world. Remember poor Gehazi; what got he by his Gifts, when the Leprosy of *Naaman* cleaved unto him?⁶ *2 Kings* 5 26. *Mat.* 16 26. *Jam.* 4 4.⁷ Remember how far the Young man in the Gospel went with Christ, and yet broke off from Christ on this very account, *Mat.* 19 21, 22.⁸

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5. *Prov.* 31.2. "What, my son? and what, the son of my womb? and what, the son of my vows?" *Eccl.* 5.4, 5, 6. "When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed. Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay. Suffer not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin; neither say thou before the angel, that it was an error: wherefore should God be angry at thy voice, and destroy the work of thine hands?" *Isa.* 63.8. "For he said, Surely they are my people, children that will not lie: so he was their Saviour" (KJV).
 6. Naaman was a leper cured by the prophet Elisha. A servant of Elisha took the reward that the prophet had refused, and for this Elisha cursed him and his descendants with the leprosy of Naaman. See *2 Kings* 5. (KJV)
 7. *Kings* 5:26,27. "And he said unto him, Went not mine heart with thee, when the man turned again from his chariot to meet thee? Is it a time to receive money, and to receive garments, and oliveyards, and vineyards, and sheep, and oxen, and menservants, and maidservants? The leprosy therefore of Naaman shall cleave unto thee, and unto thy seed for ever. And he went out from his presence a leper as white as snow." *Mat.* 16.26. "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (KJV). *Jam.* 4:4. "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God" (KJV).
 8. *Mat.* 19:21,22. "Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me. But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions" (KJV).

[III.]

Remember in your highest Estate to keep a lowly Heart. The Great God respecteth not the Proud and Lofty, (Psal. 138.6) but the Humble and Lowly; to them will He give Grace. The high GOD is very Condescending. Oh! How low does He stoop to Dust and Ashes? *Psal.* 113.6.⁹ Christ your blessed Master is meek and lowly; learn of Him, *Mat.* 11.29.¹⁰ Learn that Golden Lesson to know your selves; and this will make you loathe your selves. *The Meek will He guide in judgment: and the Meek will He teach His way*, *Psal.* 25. 9.¹¹ Meekness is an Ornament in the Soul; an Ornament in the Conversation; an Ornament of great Price in God's sight, *I Pet.* 3. 4.¹²

[IV.]

If God give you of the World plentifully; serve Him the more plentifully & abundantly. Look on these things as Talents, given not for the Napkin; but for Use, and your Masters Praise and Glory.¹³ If God raise your Estates, then let your hearts be proportionably raised: As was that good Kings heart, when the Lord gave him Honour and Riches, his heart was lift up in the ways of the Lord his God. If Gods hand be open to you, let your hearts be open and not strait to Him, *Neh.* 9. 35. *Chron.* 17.6.¹⁴

9. *Psal.* 138.6: "Though the Lord be high, yet hath he respect unto the lowly: but the proud he knoweth afar off" (KJV). *Psal.* 113:6. "Who humbleth himself to behold the things that are in heaven, and in the earth!" (KJV).

10. *Mat.* 11:29. "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls" (KJV).

11. *Psal.* 25:9. "The meek will he guide in judgment: and the meek will he teach his way" (KJV).

12. *Pet.* 3:4. "But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price" (KJV).

13. In the Parable of the Talents three servants are given money, one hides it and the other two trade with it to double the amount. On the master's return, he praises the servants who have gained and punishes the servant who hid the money. See *Mat.* 25:14-30 and *Luk.* 19:12-26.

14. *Neh.* 9:35. "For they have not served thee in their kingdom, and in thy great goodness that thou gavest them, and in the large and fat land which thou gavest before them, neither turned they from their wicked works." 2 *Chron.* 17:5,6. "Therefore the LORD stablished the kingdom in his hand; and

[V.]

If a Low Estate be your Lot and Portion here in this lower world, then furnish yourselves with *Paul's* spirit of Divine Contentment.¹⁵ The least Mercy that we enjoy, is more than is deserved by us, *Phil.* 4. 11, 12.¹⁶ Let infinite Wisdom alone with Carving out your Portion for you, and set down Contented therewith: Let the great GOD, and not poor silly Man Rule the world and Order all the affairs thereof. Let not God hear the voice of your Murmurings, when He leads you like *Israel* of old into a Wilderness of wants and sufferings.¹⁷ Man's Life consists not in the abundance of Earthly enjoyments, *Luk.* 12.15.¹⁸ Neither does Man live by Bread alone; but by every Word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord, *Mat.* 4. 4.¹⁹ GOD alone without any thing of this world is a fair Portion, *Heb.* 13. 5.²⁰

[VI.]

Let your dwelling be where God's Ordinances are. It is good dwelling near Neighbour to the God of Glory, *Psal.* 65. 4. & 84. 1.²¹ And

all Judah brought to Jehoshaphat presents; and he had riches and honour in abundance. And his heart was lifted up in the ways of the LORD: moreover he took away the high places and groves out of Judah" (KJV).

15. 1 Ti. 6:6. "But godliness with contentment is great gain" (KJV).

16. Phil.4.11,12. "Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need" (KJV).

17. When Moses first led the people of Israel out of Egypt they went into the Wilderness of Sin, "And the whole congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness." See Ex.16 (KJV).

18. Luke.12:15. "And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth" (KJV).

19. Mat.4:4. "But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (KJV).

20. Heb.13:5. "Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee" (KJV).

21. Psal.65:4. "Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts: we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple." Psal. 84:1. "How amiable are thy tabernacles, O LORD of hosts!" (KJV).

where God's Ordinances are, there God dwells. Love and frequent the House of the King of Glory, for there has He commanded the Blessing, *Psal.* 133. 3.²² The worlds accommodations, the best of them are but husks: but the Dainties and Provisions of God's House are full of Marrow and Fatness, *Psal.* 63. 1,--- A Feast of fat things, *Isa.* 25. 6.²³ O wretched is that Soul, that like miserable *Cain* goes out from the Presence, House, and Worship of God into the Land of *Nod* for meer worldly advantages and greatness; starving his Soul to feast that which will in a little time become meat for Worms to feast upon, *Luk.* 15. 16, 17.²⁴

[VII.]

Remember to be careful in a strict Observation of Lord's Day: For then it is that manna and heavenly Dew falls:²⁵ Those are the Golden Seasons; and therefore one of those days spent in Service of God, is better than a thousand elsewhere.²⁶ Let not the World or Vanity rob

22. *Psal.* 133:3. "As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the LORD commanded the blessing, even life for evermore" (KJV).

23. *Psal.* 63:1-5. "O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is; To see thy power and thy glory, so as I have seen thee in the sanctuary. Because thy lovingkindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee. Thus will I bless thee while I live: I will lift up my hands in thy name. My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips:" *Isa.* 25:6. "And in this mountain shall the LORD of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined" (KJV)

24. Cain was the son of Adam and Eve who killed his brother Abel and so was forced to wander the earth. He ended up in the Land of Nod. See *Gen.* 4:1-16. *Luke.* 15:16,17, "And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him. And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger!" (KJV).

25. When the Israelites were wandering in the wilderness after the exodus from Egypt (See *Exd.* 16), manna and dew fell from the sky to feed them, although it did not fall on the Sabbath. *Exd.* 16:26. "Six days ye shall gather it; but on the seventh day, [which is] the sabbath, in it there shall be none" (KJV).

26. *Psa.* 84:10. "For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness" (KJV).

the Lord. *Will a man rob God?*²⁷ Verily, the great God accounts Himself to be as robbed, when His Day is profaned by vain Thoughts, idle Words, Sloth and Sluggishness in His Service. Grace nor your Souls will never thrive or flourish, when Sabbaths lie waste and are not duely Sanctified, *Isa.* 56. 4 5. & 58. 13, 14.²⁸

[VIII.]

Dearly Love and Prize the Word of God. God bless'd the house of *Obed-Edom* for his love to and care of the Ark, wherein the word of God was kept.²⁹ Hide the Word of God in your hearts, as *David, Psal.* 119. 11.³⁰ Lay up this as your Spiritual Riches, Treasures, and Jewels in the Cabinet of your hearts.³¹ Lay in and lay up against a spending time, times of Adversity, Temptation, Trial, Spiritual Darkness, Death, &c. These are all spending-times: Oh! how good is it to be well-stored against Famine? Tis bad to have Promises and Evidences then to seek. If you love not the Word of God, then be sure you love not the God of the Word. Love it, live and walk by it; let it be your daily Bread, Light and Comfort, *Job* 23. 12.³²

27. Mal. 3:8. "Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings" (KJV).

28. Is. 56:4,5. "For thus saith the LORD unto the eunuchs that keep my Sabbaths, and choose [the things] that please me, and take hold of my covenant; Even unto them will I give in mine house and within my walls a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters: I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off." Is. 58:13, 14. "If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, [from] doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the LORD, honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking [thine own] words: Then shalt thou delight thyself in the LORD; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father; for the mouth of the LORD has spoken" (KJV).

29. 2 Sam. 6:11. "And the ark of the LORD continued in the house of Obedom the Gittite three months: and the LORD blessed Obedom, and all his household" (KJV).

30. Psal. 119:11. "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee" (KJV)

31. Mat. 6:20. "But lay up for yourself treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal" (KJV).

32. Job. 23:12. "Neither have I gone back from the commandment of his lips; I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food" (KJV).

[IX.]

Remember that GOD be Served, what ever be Neglected. Let the Lord have a peculiar allowance; and not become an Underling to other Concerns. Reserve and keep your hearts intire for the Lord. Settle this upon your hearts as the One thing Needful. Other things let them be your helps and not your hindrances, in your Maker's Service. Our Particular Callings must not interfere with our General Callings. This world must not over-top that World which is to come. *David* was of that frame, that he had rather his Meat and Drink, Sleep and Rest should be omitted or shortned, than the Lord neglected; rather Nature should be denied, than that the great God should be forgotten, *Psal.* 119.61.³³ See Christ's Example for this, *Luk.* 6.12.³⁴

[X.]

Be oft Convening with your Dust to awaken you for Eternity. Put not the Evil Day far from you. Carry Death and the Grave daily in your Bosom: Remember that you daily walk on the borders of the Grave, and dwell near Neighbours to it. Be not strangers at home, at and with your long home. *Eccl.* 12.5.³⁵ Be often looking into your little under-ground Cottage, whither you are on the point of transporting. Your goodliness and worldly estates is like the Flower of the field, *Isa.* 40. 6.³⁶ Boast not of To-morrow, *Prov.* 27. 1.³⁷ Make haste and delay not to do the work of the Day, *Psal.* 119. 60.³⁸ Let your work

33. *Psal.* 119:61. "The bands of the wicked have robbed me: but I have not forgotten thy law" (KJV).

34. *Luk.* 6:12. "And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God" (KJV).

35. *Eccl.* 12:5. "Also [when] they shall be afraid of [that which is] high, and fears [shall be] in the way, and the almond tree shall flourish and the grasshopper shall be a burden, and desire shall fail: because man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets" (KJV).

36. *Isa.* 40:6. "The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field" (KJV).

37. *Prov.* 27:1. "Boast not thyself of to morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth" (KJV).

38. *Psal.* 119:60. "I made haste, and delayed not to keep thy commandments" (KJV).

be rather afore-hand than behind with your time. Be ripe in holiness betimes, *Psal.* 39. 4, 5.³⁹

[XI.]

Let your main Care and Concern be for the things of another World, whatever becomes of this. O be wise for Eternity; that's the wisdom which will make your Face to shine, *Eccl.* 8. 1.⁴⁰ That will be Life to thy Soul, and Grace to thy Neck, *Prov.* 3. 21, 22.⁴¹ Be found wise Virgins at the last: Get Oyl into your Vessels: Get on the Wedding-garment: Put ye on the Lord Jesus: Deny all Ungodliness and worldly Lusts: Live Soberly, Righteously and Godly in this present evil world, so shall you lay up treasure in Heaven, and be wise for your latter End, *Prov.* 19. 20.⁴²

[XII.]

Command your Children and your House-hold after you to keep the ways of the Lord, *Abraham* did, *Gen.* 18. 19.⁴³ Watch over them as those that must give an account for their Souls. Know that their Souls are your peculiar Charge above their Bodies. Your melting Compassions, endearing Love, yearning Bowels are best seen in your tender

39. *Psal.* 39:4,5. "LORD, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is; that I may know how frail I am. Behold, thou hast made my days as an handbreadth; and mine age is as nothing before thee: verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity. Selah" (KJV).

40. *Eccl.* 8:1. "Who is as the wise man? and who knoweth the interpretation of a thing? a man's wisdom maketh his face to shine, and the boldness of his face shall be changed" (KJV).

41. *Pro.* 3:21,22. "My son, let not them depart from thine eyes: keep sound wisdom and discretion: So shall they be life unto thy soul, and grace to thy neck" (KJV).

42. In the Parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins ten virgins are waiting for their bridegroom. Five of them bring extra oil and five do not. When the lamps run out of oil and the virgins go to buy more, the bridegroom arrives and the door is shut against them. See (*Mat.* 25:1-12). *Prov.* 19:20. "Hear counsel, and receive instruction, that thou mayest be wise in thy latter end" (KJV).

43. *Gen.* 18:19. "For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him" (KJV).

Care and diligent Endeavours for their Souls. Lay up a stock of faithful and believing Prayers in Heaven for them; for that is better than the best Earthly Stock or Inheritance you can make them heirs to. The Seed of the Righteous are Blessed, I *Sam.* 3. 13.⁴⁴

[XIII.]

Ever Prize a Dram of Grace before a Talent of Wealth.⁴⁵ Honour and Love them that fear the Lord. *David* would chuse such for his Companions, *Psal.* 119. 163.⁴⁶ And above all labour after an interest in Christ: Tis good to dwell nigh to Him, *Psal.* 73. 28.⁴⁷ Get an interest in the Covenant of Grace, those sure Mercies.⁴⁸ Be restless till you get your Natures Renewed, your Hearts Changed: Be restless till Sin become exceeding Odious; and Christ and Holiness be infinitely Precious to your Souls. Chuse *Mary's* good part, *Moses's* Choice.⁴⁹ Sell all for the Pearl of great Price.⁵⁰ Christ's Fruit is better than Rubies, *Prov.* 8. 19. *Luk.* 10. 42. *Heb.* 11. 26.⁵¹ Ever prefer Holiness before honour, Grace before greatness.

44. "Seed" refers to descendants. 1Sam.3:13, "For I have told him that I will judge his house for ever for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not" (KJV).

45. "Dram" and "talent" are both units of measurement. A dram is a small amount, while a talent is a large amount. Websters.

46. *Psal.* 119:163. "I hate and abhor lying: but thy law do I love" (KJV).

47. *Psal.* 73:28 "But it is good for me to draw near to God: I have put my trust in the Lord GOD, that I may declare all thy works" (KJV).

48. There are many Covenants referred to in the Bible. The Covenant referred to could be the Covenant between God and Noah, where God promised that there would never be another flood, see *Gen.* 9:12-16, the Covenant between God and Abraham, where God gave the land of Canaan to Abraham and his descendants, see *Gen.* 15:18, or the Covenant between God and the Israelites, where He claimed them as his chosen people, see *Jer.* 31:31-34 (KJV).

49. Jesus visited Mary and her sister Martha. Martha chose to busy herself with serving, but Mary chose to sit and listen to Jesus. When Martha complained, Jesus told her that Mary was doing the right thing. See *Luke.* 10:38-42. Moses chose to leave the Pharaoh's family in order to be one of the people of Israel. See *Heb.* 24-26 (KJV).

50. Refers to the Kingdom of Heaven. See *Mat.* 13:45, 46 (KJV).

51. *Prov.* 8:19. "My fruit is better than gold, yea, than fine gold; and my revenue than choice silver" (KJV).

[XIV.]

Make the Pleasing of God the Business of your Life. If God is not Pleased with you all is lost, whatever you have been or done whatever bustle you have made, Splendor or great ends aimed at, or professions made you, if after all God be not Pleased with you, tis all lost. Make it your care to Please Him in all things. Should not Children seek to please their Parents, and Servants their Masters? O keep your Eye & Heart here fixed, and you shall steer aright thro' all difficulties, *Heb.* 11. 5. *Job.* 8. 25. *Isa.* 26. 4.⁵²

[XV.]

Keep in with God and a good Conscience. If you would enjoy a sure and lasting Peace, then do not violate or wound your Peace with God and a good Conscience. Get an interest in God, and be watchful over your interests: Get a Conscience sprinkled with the Blood of Christ; and be tender of it: Avoid all known Sins, Perform all known Duties.⁵³ And when through Sin and Temptation, God has been provoked and Conscience wounded, Oh! Then heartily rise again, and turn to the Lord; lest your hearts grow secure and hardened therein, *Prov.* 16. *Heb.* 3. 13.⁵⁴

52. *Heb.* 11:5, "By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God." *John.* 8:25, "Then said they unto him, Who art thou? And Jesus saith unto them, Even the same that I said unto you from the beginning." *Isa.* 26:2, "Trust ye in the LORD for ever: for in the LORD JEHOVAH is everlasting strength" (KJV).

53. *Hbr.* 9:14, "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, pure your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" (KJV).

54. *Prov.* 16 details how to live a life that will please the Lord. *Heb.* 3:13, "But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin" (KJV).

[XVI.]

Endeavour after a true Brotherly Love: Love as Brethren: As *Joseph* Counsels his Brethren when Travelling towards *Canaan*, *See that ye fall not out by the way*, Gen. 45 24, 25.⁵⁵ You are Travelling towards the Heavenly *Canaan*; see then that ye fall not out by the way, but be mutually helpful one to another; especially in Soul-Concernments, serve one another in Love; Direct and Counsel, Watch over and faithfully Reprove each other in Meekness, as there is occasion. It was graceless *Cain*, that wretchedly said, *Am I my Brothers Keeper?*⁵⁶ One live Coal kindles many dead ones. Each help to Row one another to the Haven of Blessedness. Let not any root of Gall or Bitterness spring up among you *Heb.* 12. 15.⁵⁷

[XVII.]

Remember that what ever Mercy you enjoy you must trace it to Heavens gate. Look to the Spring and Fountain of every Mercy, to make you thankful and fruitful, *Jam.* 1.[...].⁵⁸ Know and Consider, that it is Divine Bounty that Feeds and Cloathes you, that Heals and Ransoms thy Life from Destruction.⁵⁹ God's Bounty supplies, His Power supports, His Wisdom directs, His Everlasting Arm upholds, His Goodness and Mercy hath followed us all our Days.⁶⁰ Oh! Know

55. Gen.45:24,25, "So he sent his brethren away, and they departed: and he said unto them, See that ye fall not out by the way. And they went up out of Egypt, and came into the land of Canaan unto Jacob their father" (KJV).

56. Gen. 4:9, "And the LORD said unto Cain, Where [is] Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not: [Am] I my brother's keeper?" (KJV).

57. Heb.12:15, "Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled" (KJV).

58. Jam. 1:18, "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures" (KJV).

59. Mat. 20:28, "Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (KJV).

60. Psa. 23:6, "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever" (KJV).

that Door from whence all your good comes.⁶¹ The Ox knows his Owner and Feeder; the Lion his Keeper. *Isa.* I. 3.⁶² Be ye not then like those, in *Hos.* 2. 8.⁶³

[XVIII.]

Be most Watchful against those Sins and Evils that you find your Tempers, Constitutions, Places and Callings mostly Expose you to. There is the weak place in the Hedge, and usually the Serpent, the subtle Tempter goes in at that Door, as being most easily opened.⁶⁴ Oh! Set a Watch there. Keep your Souls from your Iniquity, as *David* says, *Psal.* 18. 23.⁶⁵ Every Place, State and Calling carries with them their peculiar Temptations. *Joseph* in *Egypt* learns to Swear: And *Lot* in the Mountain has his Snares and Temptations.⁶⁶

[XIX.]

Be ever more strict and severe against your own Failings, than you are against the Failings of others. Dwell at home, within-doors, and you will see and find Work enough to do: Censure and Judge your selves, and Loathe your selves; and keep you from Censuring and Judging others. Ever think when you see or hear of others fall into Sin; He falls to Day; it may be my turn To-morrow, except God's

61. Jhn. 10:9, "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture" (KJV).

62. Isa.1:3, "The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider" (KJV).

63. Hos. 2:8, "For she did not know that I gave her corn, and wine, and oil, and multiplied her silver and gold, [which] they prepared for Baal (KJV).

64. Ecc. 10:8, "He that diggeth a pit shall fall into it; and whoso breaketh an hedge, a serpent shall bite him" (KJV).

65. Psal.18:23, "I was also upright before him, and I kept myself from mine iniquity" (KJV).

66. Lot was the nephew of Abraham. He lived in Sodom, but God decided to destroy this evil city. Lot and his family were allowed to escape, on the condition that none of them looked back to see what they were leaving behind. Lot's wife did look back, and was turned into a pillar of salt. Lot and his daughters ended up in the mountains. See Gen.19 (KJV).

Mercy prevent it. Pity others and Pray for them under their Failings: but be ever Severe against thine own, *Matth.*, 7. 2, 3, 4, *I Cor.* 11. 12.⁶⁷

[XX.]

Finally, Remember that before many *Days* be out; a *Holy, Just, Impartial* GOD will call you to an Account, and Summons You before His Righteous Tribunal to Answer for all the Mercies You ever Enjoyed, as Life, Health, Strength, Sabbaths, Sermons, Chastisements; Yea, for all Your Thoughts, Words and Actions: Therefore so Live and Walk as that You may be able to stand before the Son of Man in the *Great Day* of His Appearing; and Your Works abide the Trial; You enter into Your Lord and Master's JOY.⁶⁸

67. Mat.7:2-4, "For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye?" 1Cor.11:12, "For as the woman is of the man, even so is the man also by the woman; but all things of god" (KJV).

68. Rom. 14:12, "So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God" (KJV).

THESE dying Groans and hearty Moans
Let them be laid up in you Mind.
Oh! JESUS dear, do thou me hear,
According to thy Mercies Kind:
My Children all I have, and shall
Unto thy tender Mercies leave:
Them Keep and Teach, and Save them Each;
From Sin and Hell do them Reprieve.
And now I Rest; for me tis Best
To bid Vain Sinful World Farewell:
Here's Vanity, Sin and Misery;
Glory, Glory with Christ doth dwell.
Oh! There's my Hope; those Doors will Ope,
My Longing Soul to Entertain;
For Bridegroom's Face, that Mansion-place:
Oh! Ever there for to Remain.

Grace Smith.

FINIS.

Chapter 5

Sarah Demick

MEMOIRS

OF THE LIFE OF

MRS. SARAH DEMICK,

THE AMIABLE CONSORT OF

DEACON OLIVER DEMICK,

OF MANSFIELD.

D A N B U

PRINTED BY H. DOUGLAS, FOR JAMES

Introduction to Sarah Demick, *Memoirs of the Life of Mrs. Sarah Demick, the Amiable Consort of Deacon Oliver Demick of Mansfield* (1793)

The headnote of the legacy of Sarah Demick (b. 1744) provides biographical information for the author and, to a more limited extent, her family.¹ As the anonymous writer of the headnote indicates, Demick was the daughter of Captain Samuel Gurley and his wife Sarali (Sarah) Ward, who had resided in Mansfield, Connecticut. There is some confusion regarding the date of Demick's birth; the legacy text notes that Demick was born on September 9, 1744, however Captain Gurley and his wife are recorded as having had a child on August 27 of that year. Although conjectural, we posit that the anonymous writer may have mistaken Demick's date of infant baptism for her birthdate. The error speaks to the relationship between the headnote's author and Demick: the anonymous writer is probably someone who had personally known Demick or her family, as the date of birth seems to have been gleaned from anecdotes rather than official records. Likely because the anonymous author was more familiar with Demick as an adult and had little knowledge of her childhood, he or she quickly shifts from discussing biographical information to praising Demick's exemplary faithfulness in adulthood. From Demick's own words, though, we are able to glean more of a picture of her life.

Dubbed the "amiable consort" of Deacon Oliver Demick in the title of her *Memoirs*, Demick wed the deacon, who was a farmer, in April 1764 (1). Like Anne Bradstreet, Demick was survived by eight children. Demick herself was the second of eight children, and, in her book, she mentions three of her siblings by name. From textual evidence we can discern that, before her illness, she had suffered the deaths of several of her siblings; within four months of each other, two of Demick's

1. Alternate spellings of the surname include Dimock and Dimick.

brothers, Israel and Nahum, and one of her sisters, Eunice, died. This attention to her siblings differentiates her text from the other mothers' legacies of this collection, yet Demick's attribution of her conversion to the sudden deaths of these siblings renders the inclusion of her Israel, Nahum, and Eunice appropriate for the legacy genre. Seeing her brothers and sister die, she wished to ensure her own preparedness for God's final tribunal. Demick's mother, it would seem, also had a tremendous effect on her faith and on her understanding of the personal responsibility for salvation.

When Demick was twelve years old, in 1756, her mother died. Her father remarried twice before passing away at age eighty in 1796, and it is interesting that neither of her stepmothers receive mention in the legacy, particularly as Demick tacitly stresses the importance of the role of the mother. Near the beginning of her conversion narrative, she notes that she felt "motherless and alone" and, therefore, sought out God (4). It was her mother's detached attitude regarding her children's salvation and the subsequent death of her mother that ignited Demick's heightened concern for her own soul. The attitude towards death that Demick displays replicates Sarali Ward's consideration of God's judgment as supreme and flawless. However, Demick demonstrates more concern for the welfare of her children's souls than did her mother. Ward, Demick recounts, was focused on her own redemption and would "acquiesce and rejoice in [her children's] condemnation" if any of them were discovered to not be members of the elect (4). Although Demick asserts that her legacy is her "dying testimony for God"—in contrast to Bradstreet, whose legacy is for her "dear children," and Sarah Goodhue, who addresses her text to her husband—she attends to her children as much as to her self-reflection (Demick 12, emphasis added, Bradstreet 3).

In this straightforward conversion narrative, Demick is candid about her sinfulness and her doubt. In particular, she openly discusses her distrust of God's grace during her husband's illness and following the deaths of her siblings. Although the headnote alludes to Demick's faithfulness, her own words indicate that she experienced confusion regarding the will of God. Downplaying her piety, she humbly confesses her imperfection and her fear of judgment. The guilt of sin

burdens her as she begins to turn towards God, and once she resolves to “do all the good [she] can,” she is relieved of her guilt (9). Demick intends for her friends and children to be blessed by God and to observe and be inspired by the way in which she was redeemed through Christ. Shifting her focus to her children, she entreats her loved ones to “seek first the kingdom of God” (11). She refers to the grim fate of those who are placed at the left hand of Christ on the Day of Judgment, and encourages her children to convert in their youth so that they may avoid the fires of hell. As a young mother, Demick attempted to discern God’s will regarding “various doctrinal disputes,” including infant baptism (6). She reveals her decision to have her children baptized, and deploys scripture to support this action. Her desire to be a good mother is consistent with her desire to be obedient and fulfill her duty to God.

Demick becomes an example of piety and virtue through her conversion, and in her legacy book, she affirms the righteousness of God and his judgment. Alluding to the concept of the elect—those who are predestined to reach heaven—Demick professes that, following her redemption, she saw the “electing love” of God (10). It is only through “electing love,” she suggests, that anyone is able to be saved, and that she could potentially not be one of the elect, surprisingly, does not disturb her. She has given herself up to God, confessing her sins and trusting in her affirmed faith, and leaves her children with her example to follow. Opening with a biographical headnote by an anonymous contributor, who concentrates on Demick’s wish to leave a legacy for her children’s salvation even as she was dying of consumption, the rest of the legacy is largely a spiritual narrative, as Demick recounts her coming to grace. Overall, it is like the early part of Bradstreet’s legacy, since both are conversion narratives written to convince surviving children to come to God. Like Bradstreet, Demick emphasizes the happiness and peace she found when she gave herself up to God, and she wants the same for her children. The book is a straightforward prose conversion narrative that quotes the Bible and Demick’s ministers.

Copy Text

Memoirs of the Life of Mrs. Sarah Demick, the Amiable Consort of Deacon Oliver Demick, of Mansfield. Danbury, CT: Printed by N. Douglas for James Crawford, 1793. This is the sole edition of Demick's text. It is part of Early American Imprints, and the Connecticut Historical Society holds a copy, which is our copy text.

MEMOIRS
OF THE LIFE OF
MRS. SARAH DEMICK,
THE AMIABLE CONSORT OF
DEACON OLIVER DEMICK
OF MANSFIELD

MEMOIRS, &c.

MRS. SARAH DEMICK was born Sept. 9, 1744, of pious, reputable parents, Captain Samuel Gurley, and Sarah his wife, of Mansfield, Connecticut, in New-England. Her mother departed this life in the twelfth year of the age of this her daughter, in the triumph of faith, hope, and holy joy, at or about which time began the following exercises of mind, which she is desirous to have recorded for the glory of an infinitely good God, and as a testimony of his goodness, grace, truth and faithfulness, and upon the earnest desire of her friends, and for the comfort of her consort, and profit of her dear children, she had for several years past had it in her mind to have written with her own hand, some account of the dealings of God with her, and her exercises of mind[;] but her whole time being taken up in attending upon her numerous family, and the aged parents of her husband, prevented her having leisure to set about such a work, till she was so far weakened by a consumption fixed on her lungs, that she was wholly unable to undertake such a labour; and indeed such is her weakness at the penning of the

following account, that she can only give some general hints of her exercises; whereas had she wrote herself, or been able to recollect for others to write, a large, pleasant, and profitable account might have been obtained and transmitted to her family and friends. And so sensible she is of her inability to give a proper account of her past exercises of mind, and so fixed is her mind on the great and glorious things which are but just before her, that it is with regret she attempts to turn her thoughts back on things past, from reaching forward to things which are before. Now she begins her own account.²

I was thoughtful about my soul's salvation from childhood, and entertained a hope that I met with some change of heart more than ordinary, when I was about nine or ten years of age. My mind was then very tender, and often affected with eternal things. I remember that my mother once said in my hearing, if she should be saved, and any of her children be lost, she should acquiesce and rejoice in their condemnation; which very much affected my mind, to think that my own dear and tender mother must consent to, and rejoice in my damnation if I should die impenitent. When my mother was taken from me, and I felt myself left motherless and alone in the world, I began to feel the necessity of having a friend in God, and to have my sins forgiven, and my soul renewed: accordingly I set about seeking his face and favour more earnestly, but by degrees youthful lusts and vanities drew off my attention, and abated the fervour of my mind about things eternal, which afterwards I greatly bewailed, and thought my sins so great that they could not be forgiven.³ When this loss of my pious and tender mother was fresh in my mind, and I felt the weight of it, my concern for my salvation was so great that I thought that if the loss of my mother might be sanctified to bring me to make choice of God for the guide of my youth, and my eternal portion, I could be willing to submit to the loss of so dear a mother – yea, I thought that I could be willing to submit to the [like] loss daily, if it might finally

2. This introduction was written by an anonymous author. The account that follows was written by Mrs. Sarah Demick.

3. 1 Ch. 16:11, "Seek the LORD and his strength, seek his face continually" (KJV).

issue in my eternal salvation: but this engagedness lasted not long, I soon grew more careless and remiss in duties, though I had frequent alarms, and as frequently renewed my repentings and resolutions to be for God and devote myself to his service. I was followed with such like exercises of mind till I was about twenty years old, when it pleased God to give me a deep sense of the evil of sin, and its *intolerable burden*: – Now sin appeared in its true colour, exceeding sinful, and I felt myself exceedingly pressed down with the weight of it – this lasted [four] months. In the 20th year of my life I entered into the married state, soon after which (this burden of sin continuing) Satan was permitted to worry my mind with buffetings, and to inject fiery darts, which greatly wounded and distressed, and almost distracted my mind – he would suggest that I must stand up immediately in prayer time – that I must open such a particular door of the house – do this or that duty, or be damned – and would sometimes suggest that I should be carried away in an awful and surprising manner – that my sins were unpardonable, and my damnation sure and certain: he harrassed me with doubts and scruples about the being of a God, and blasphemous thoughts about his perfections and government; till my mind being worried out and saw that I could do nothing, that I had no strength to help myself, that if I perished I must perish, and that all my struggles availed nothing, and I was brought to give up all, and leave all events: when to my apprehension Satan was restrained and chained up from worrying me, and things appeared in my view in a far different manner from what they had done for months and years before.⁴ I viewed the blood of Christ sufficient to wash away sin – all sin – and felt surprisingly freed from the burden of sin, which I had long lain under the weight of, and salvation for my soul appeared possible.⁵ Often did I groan out whilst borne down with the burden of sin. O who

4. Eph. 6:16, “Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked” (KJV).

5. Hbr. 9:14, “How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?” (KJV).

will deliver me from the body of this death!⁶ But now I saw the blood of Christ sufficient to remove the guilt, subdue the power and wash away the stain and pollution of sin: this state of mind and these views I had at and about the time my first child was born, and in the 22nd year of my age.⁷ At this time I found my mind much disquieted about the various doctrinal disputes about religious matters, being unable to determine what was the will of God respecting Infant Baptism, the use of the means of grace, – all which were much talked of, and disputed about in that day, and indeed ever since.⁸

I spent much thought and labour about these things till I found my mind involved in darkness and doubts about these and many other doctrinal points. But here I would observe respecting Infant-Baptism in which after much labour of mind, I was fully and clearly established – my mind was fully satisfied as to the right of Infant-Baptism from clear scriptural evidence: The Doctrinal Speculations which have perplexed many serious minds respecting the use of the means of grace, the terms of admishon into full communion in the church, owning the baptismal covenant, and the like have I laboured in my mind for several years, till I was satisfied that the most essential thing to be attended to was the practice of religion . – The duties of the first and second table I found to be plain, and there was no doubt as to my duty to love God, and obey him in all his revealed will; accordingly I took up a resolution to spend more of my time and strength in doing what God in his providence pointed out to be my present duty, and leave these speculative points, and God was pleased to make duty and obedience very delightful for that I could say I run the way of his

6. Rom. 7:24, “O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” (KJV).

7. Act. 22:16, “And now why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord” (KJV).

8. The controversy surrounding infant baptism was based on the question of whether baptism was necessary to be reborn and to belong to the Kingdom of God, in which case it is necessary for infants, or whether it was “an external sign or symbol of inner regeneration” made by someone who was old enough to make the choice to follow Christ. “Baptism.” Encyclopedia Britannica Online.

commands with great delight, my whole mind and heart seemed to center in obeying God's will with all my might and though I saw my daily and continual short comings: yet this did not discourage me from trying for greater perfection in obedience, and my soul greatly desired perfection in obedience, not that I wished to be justified in this way, the way of justification by the blood of Christ appeared all glorious, God becoming, and soul satisfying, and to this my soul cleaved in the utter rejection of all others.⁹ It was the reasonableness and suitableness of obedience to God that captivated my soul to it and I longed to express my love and submission to God by it (that is obedience) here I would note, that in this time I frequently felt heart-risings and oppositions to the providential dealings of God, and when my husband was repeatedly laid upon a sick-bed, and brought to death's door and his parents aged and needing constant attendance, care and help, where my whole time, strength and care were swallowed up and I felt almost overwhelmed, and was often ready to say as Jacob, all these things are against me; and to query why I should thus be distinguished by affliction and be ready to think myself hardly dealt with; yet such checks and reproofs were again laid before my mind, as would silence my repining and such a sight of the reasonableness and beauty of obedience as would animate and stir me up still as vigorously and perseveringly to go on in the discharge of duty.¹⁰ I now upon recollection loath and abhor myself for the stubbornness and perverseness of my heart, and do admire at the patience and long suffering of the infinite Jehovah, whose compassions fail not that he should bear with my

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9. The first and second tables refer to the two stone tables upon which were written the Ten Commandments. Exd. 24:12, "And the LORD said unto Moses, Come up to me into the mount, and be there: and I will give thee tables of stone, and a law, and commandments which I have written; that thou mayest teach them" (KJV). Jos. 22:5, "But take diligent heed to do the commandment and the law, which Moses the servant of the LORD charged you, to love the LORD your God, and to walk in all his ways, and to keep his commandments, and to cleave unto him, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul" (KJV).
10. Gen 34:30, "And Jacob their father said unto them, Me have ye bereaved [of my children]: Joseph [is] not, and Simeon [is] not, and ye will take Benjamin [away]: all these things are against me" (KJ V).

stubbornness and forgive my rebellions, and not blot my name out of his book of life: this state of mind continued from my 22d to the 32d or 33d year of my life, in which time I was not much exercised with fears of dying although I was not assured of my interest in Christ, for the blessings of the new covenant my whole attention and desire was to perfect obedience in the fear of God.¹¹ About the 33d year of my life, it pleased the Lord to take away my brother Israel by death – as also my brother Nahum and my sister Eunice – all in the compass of 4 months – these several deaths of my brothers and sister, so sudden and unexpected, especially my brother Israel, with whom I had been more especially conversant, and who was nearer my own age, alarmed me much, and I began to enquire into my own preparedness for death[.] God seemed now to call upon me to be also ready – and upon reflection I could not assure myself that I was prepared – it now appeared to be my duty, and what God required of me, to make my calling and election sure – accordingly I set about the great work with full resolution, and fixed determination to go through with it, determining never to give out to my dying day – being willing to wait God’s time to manifest himself to my soul, if it were the last moment of my life well knowing his time and that if he was pleased to delay to the last to manifest himself, he would do me no wrong: but it would be infinite condescension and grace, even then to appear for me – I wished to have a true gospel discovery of Christ, and the way of salvation by him: – I greatly dreaded a delusion, and having my mind lead away by any false, and imaginary discovery of things, and so be fixed upon a sandy foundation, which would fail me at last – I was sensible that my heart was deceitful above all things, and was resolved not to trust to any shew of religion it might make but begged of God to search it through and through, and see if there was any evil way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting: – I still retained an ardent desire of being perfect and perfectly obeying my holy God in a more perfect manner

11. Rev. 3:5, “He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels” (KJV).

– and among other things I questioned with myself, whether I had any sufficient warrant to believe the change of the Sabbath [from the last to the first day of the week – and that it was the will of God [that] I should observe the 7th day of the week and not the first, I would obey God let it cost me what it would – it should not be in the power of man to influence me by threats or punishments to disobey God.¹² – And as I sat musing upon this, and desiring perfectly to know and do the will of the great and blessed Lawgiver, I was led to see the great imperfection of all my duties, and that notwithstanding all my endeavours to yield an acceptable obedience to God, yet I came short in every thing, and my best and most holy duties were full of imperfections. I saw the law to be holy, just and good, and all its requirements to be right and fit; but saw that I had come short, and that one, even the least defect, spoiled all: Oh how guilty then am I, who have come short in all things! – this view brought a great weight of guilt upon my mind, and seemed as if it would overwhelm and sink me.¹³ I felt myself sinking under this heavy load, as if I should rise no more: but this occurred to my mind, I have present duty to attend to and I will do all the good I can, and if I perish I can but perish – And I will attempt to do for my family what God is calling me to – upon which resolution I arose out of the seat where I then sat – and immediately the burden went off, and I felt relieved: no particular views of divine things presented to my mind for some minutes – as I was going to prosecute my resolution of doing all the good I could, I had occasion to open the door of the house, and as I opened the door, God opened to the view of my mind, the door of hope set open in the gospel; in such a manner as filled my soul with amazement – the wisdom love and grace of God [...] in the plan of salvation with such lustre upon my mind, that I stood like one in amaze and could think of nothing more expressive of what I saw[, than] what is said of Stephen in the

12. Jhn. 14:21, “He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him” (KJV).

13. Rom. 3:23, “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (KJV).

acts of the Apostles, who saw the heavens opened and the son of man sitting at the right hand of God full of glory and splendor: now the way of salvation appeared with such a lustre as I never beheld before – I saw Jesus the mediator of the new covenant had fulfilled the law which I had broke to a tittle – and that he was the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth; this effectually removed my burden, which a sense of my defects had brought upon my mind, and enlarged my desires after, and delight in God to an inconceivable degree – my whole soul was in a transport with a view of the wondrous plan of salvation which God had devised for guilty sinners, and I could not but wonder why all men were not ravished and transported with this glorious plan of salvation which is the effect of the eternal wisdom and counsel of the triune God.¹⁴ And now I beheld such a beauty and glory shining in the sovereign, free, eternal, electing love I saw to lie at the bottom of the whole scheme of redemption – and I longed to declare and shew this glorious truth so as to convince the whole world that were it not for electing love and graces never would any creature be saved: This I take to be a special sealing time in which the blessed God sealed his love to my heart though as to any own particular interest in the great salvation, I had no special assurance but I had not then, nor have I had any uncomfortable thoughts about it — Upon reading in the evening after in the books entitled the Sacramental Exercise, I read words to this purport “Oh that I could love thee better than ever a saint on earth, or an angel in heaven did” Upon reading this I felt my heart a going out in desires corresponding with this petition and rapturously repeating “love Jesus, love Jesus” with this I felt my heart so filled with ravishing views of the glory of God shining in the face of Jesus Christ that for months my whole work was praise, and there seemed to be no room for petition, only as Mr. John

14. Acts of the Apostles, more commonly referred to as Acts, is the fifth book of the New Testament. Stephen was a Christian martyr, stoned after being accused of blasphemy. Act. 7:55, “But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God;” Hbr. 12:24, “And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than [that of] Abel” (KJV).

Welsh petitioned, “Lord stay thine hand, thy servant is a clayey vessel” — This I often then and since said in my heart is a weight of glory.¹⁵

These things have possessed and filled my mind ever since and many sweet and pleasant hours I have had from time to time since in viewing the wonders of redeeming love manifest in this glorious plan of salvation; yet my spirit groans under a sense of sin and imperfection, and desires to be freed from the body of this death.¹⁶ And now my dissolution approaches, and I expect soon to be dissolved, and I can say thro’ grace, that death is no terror to me, or rather I can say to be dead I am not afraid. Death is the effect of sin and bears the signature of the displeasure of an holy God, which makes death in itself to appear terrible; yet as it is sweetened by Christ’s dying, and lying in the grave, and is a blessed avenue appointed by God for the passage of his people to mansions of eternal bliss, death has lost its sting; and I can join the apostle in his holy triumph, “Oh Death where is thy sting?” — and also in what he says, “I have fought the good fight, I have kept the faith, henceforth is laid up for me a crown of glory, and not for me only, but for all them who love his appearing.”¹⁷

These few hints of what God has done for my soul I leave as my dying testimony for God, and his truth and his ways. And now may the God of grace bless them to all my dear friends, especially my dear children the offspring of my own bowels. Come my dear children[,] hear and read something which God has done for your dying mother. and be followers of her wherein she has followed Christ: and be intreated

15. *Sacramental exercises In two parts. I. the Christian employment before, at, and after the Lord’s supper. II. The Christian’s conduct in his after-life* was written by Jabez Earle and published in 1784.

16. Col 1:22, “In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight” (KJV).

17. 1 Cr. 15:55, “O death, where [is] thy sting? O grave, where [is] thy victory?” 2 Tim. 4:7-8, “I have fought a good fight, I have finished [my] course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing” (KJV).

by your dying mother to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and then all other things shall be added unto you: I do not ask great worldly things for you, but that you may [...] the blessings of the new covenant.¹⁸ Oh how can I bear the thought of being the means of bringing you into the world to be eternally miserable, [...] to join the glorious Judge in that dreadful sentence, which will be pronounced at the last great day upon all who are found at his left hand, “Depart ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.”¹⁹ Oh be exhorted to secure an interest in Christ whilst you are young: diligently use the means of grace, plead your baptismal dedication to God, fear God and keep his commands.²⁰ Seek the Lord whilst he may be found, call on him whilst he is near.²¹ This is the dying request of your loving, dying mother,

SARAH DEMICK.

F I N I S.

18. Mat. 6:33, “But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you” (KJV).

19. Mat. 25:41, “Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels” (KJV).

20. Ecc. 12:13, “Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments, for this [is] the whole [duty] of man” (KJV).

21. Isa. 55:6, “Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near” (KJV).

Chapter 6

Hannah Hill

A
LEGACY
FOR
CHILDREN:

Being some of the
Last *Expressions*

AND
Dying Sayings
OF

Hannah Hill, Jun^r.

Of the City of PHILADELPHIA, in the
Province of *Pennsylvania* in A M E R I -
C A: Aged Eleven Years, and near
Three Months.

*Out of the Mouth of Babes and Sucklings, thou
hast perfected Praise. Matt. 21. vers. 16.*

*Whosoever shall receive one of such Children in
my name, receiveth me. Mark 9. 37.*

*But Jesus called them unto him, and said, suf-
fer little Children to come unto me, and for-
bid them not: for of such is the Kingdom of
God. Luke 18. 16.*

Dublin: Re-printed by Sam. Fairbrother, in
Skinner-Row, over against the Tholsel,
1719.

Dublin reprint, 1719

Introduction to Hannah Hill, *A Legacy for Children* (1714)

Hannah Hill (1703-1714) was a member of one of Philadelphia's first families, and her maternal grandfather was Governor Thomas Lloyd. Hannah's father, Richard Hill was born and raised in Maryland; he settled in Philadelphia where he married Hannah Delaval, widow of John Delaval and eldest daughter of the Governor. Richard Hill was a member of the Governor's Council for over two decades, and he held several offices, including Speaker of the Assembly, First Commissioner of Property, and judge of the Provincial Supreme Court. A member of the City Council for several years, he served as Mayor between 1710 and 1717, and he was a noted member of the Society of Friends and a trustee of William Penn's will. Richard Hill's political, economic, and religious prominence afforded his children a first-rate education and religious upbringing. Hill's last words, as recorded by anonymous members of her family and first printed in the year of her death, demonstrate the ways in which she benefitted from her family's position, and the friends and family members she names were or went on to become some of Pennsylvania's preeminent citizens. She was attended at her deathbed by her community's leading physician, Griffith Owen, and by Thomas Chalkely, a prominent leader in the Society of Friends. They each contributed a testimonial to her legacy book, and Chalkely composed an acrostic of Hill's name to conclude the book.

Over the days it took her to die, Hannah Hill preached and prayed to bring her family and those community members at her death bed to grace. Her text opens with a preface by the anonymous person who transcribed Hill's final prayers and sermons, and then offers her words interspersed with her narrator's. At the conclusion of her text, the editor includes a postscript that narrates Hill's premonition of the death of her friend John Lowdon, a letter from Hill to her cousin, and testimonies on Hill's superior intellectual and spiritual abilities from two leading members of the community, Dr. Griffith Owen and Thomas Chalkely. Although her dying testimony is filtered through an amanuensis, those parts that give Hill's words, in italics, are particularly

interesting in demonstrating the child's awareness of her religious and cultural milieu and the legacy left is hers.

While Hill's legacy was likely published because of her family's position and resources, its continued popularity—it went into several editions and printings—suggests that its audience found it compelling for other reasons. At the center of this text is Hill, a dying child with something to say that people wanted to hear. As the daughter of devout Quaker parents, Hill was encouraged to speak rather than to be silent, and her legacy book reflects her long meditations on faith and grace. Before taking ill with “a violent Feaver and Flux,” she had already gained a reputation for being a deeply religious child, known for her kindness, sensitivity, and thoughtfulness (5). In his testimonial, Chalkely pauses over the period when he resided with the Hill family, some years before Hannah's death. He describes her finer qualities but does not attribute them to the conventional standard of obedience, instead finding in the child a “Soul so Ripe” (33).

Hannah's ripened soul, a soul that seems fully joined to Christ, comes through both in the main text of her legacy in her transcribed words and in her letter to her cousin appended to the text. Her familiarity with scripture is strongly evident; being “conversant in the Holy Scriptures, beyond most of her Age,” she makes numerous references to biblical passages (17). The narrative parts of the book, those sections that describe Hill's illness, are blandly descriptive compared to the heat of her discourse. She is passionately devout and rarely questions her faith or her assurance of grace, and when she does, it seems more a rhetorical device to comfort her loved ones than a wrestle with faith. Despite conveying her eagerness to meet Jesus in heaven, she is willing to try new remedies for her mother's sake; the prolonging of her suffering is necessary for the benefit of others. She self-abnegates, wondering, “Why is there so much to do about me, Who am but poor Dust and Ashes? We are all but as Clay” (9). Hill uses the gospels as her primary scriptural texts, and she follows Jesus' example of using parables to teach and to comfort. On her deathbed, Hill follows Christ's egalitarianism by declaring her forgiveness and love for everyone she knows. Chalkely affirms this trait in his testimonial when describing her kindness to everyone, including “Servants, both White and Black” (31).

Hill was also known as something of a seer; before she became ill, she had a dream that the minister in nearby Abington, John Lowdon, was dying. A postscript describes her dream and her request that Lowdon's body be brought to Philadelphia for burial, and her letter describes his funeral to her cousin, Elizabeth Norris. The postscript also describes her premonition of her own impending death. Both Owen and Chalkely testify to Hill's extraordinary spirituality, and Owen in particular sees her life as "the Lord's doings" (28). Setting a precedent for young children to embrace death—which we will see again in Sumner's legacy—Hill trusts in Christ and asserts that she is prepared and "very Willing" to die (6). Hill's assurance of grace, her confidence in using scripture to teach and assure the people at her bedside, and her willingness to suffer on their behalf offer a remarkable portrait of a young girl with profound ability to engage fully and authoritatively with her faith. The text includes a Preface, a private letter by Hill, and the testimonies of Owen and Chalkely. The book concludes with an acrostic of Hill's name by Chalkely.

Copy Text

A Legacy for Children, Being Some of the Last Expressions, and Dying Sayings, of Hannah Hill, Junr. Of the City of Philadelphia, in the Province of Pennsylvania, in America, Aged Eleven Years and near Three Months. Printed by Andrew Bradford at the Sign of the Bible in the Second Street, in Philadelphia, 1714. Bradford issued a second edition in 1715 and a third in 1717. The book was reprinted in 1719 by Sam Fairbrother. Hill's *A Legacy for Children* also appears in *Memoirs of the Lives of Hannah Hill, George Chalkely, and Catharine Burling with Some of Their Last Expressions*, which was printed in New York in 1815 by Samuel Wood & Sons. Copies of the 1717 edition are held by the New York Historical Society and the New York Public Library. An 1815 edition is held by the University of Florida's Special Collections Baldwin Library. The first edition is available only from the Early American Imprints collection; we use both that edition in microform and the edition held by New York Public Library as my copy texts.

Contemporary Editions

Excerpted in *American Women Writers to 1800*. Ed. Sharon M. Harris.
New York: Oxford UP, 1996. 127-29.

A
Legacy for
CHILDREN,

BEING

Some of the Last Expressions, and

Dying Sayings,

OF

Hannah Hill, Junr.

Of the City of *Philadelphia*, in the Province
of *Pennsylvania*, in *America*, Aged
Eleven Years and near Three Months.

Matthew Chap. 21. v. 16. *Out of the Mouth of Babes and
Sucklings, thou hast perfected Praise.*

Mark 9.37. *Whosoever shall receive one of such Children in my
Name, receiveth Me.*

Luke 18. 16. *But Jesus called them unto him, and said Suffer
little Children to come unto Me, and forbid them not: For
of such is the Kingdom of God.*

Printed by *Andrew Bradford*, at the Sign of the *BIBLE* in the Second
street, in *Philadelphia*, 1714.

THE PREFACE.

Tender Reader;

As the Ardent Desires of the Deceased, were for the General Good and Wellfare, of all the Sons and Daughters of Men, under what Denomination soever, So 'tis hoped, the Effect of that same Love, which fill'd her Heart, will, more especially, redound to the Refreshing each Particular, in their Serious perusal of this little Book, which is Published, as her Last Bequest, to the World, That God over all may be Glorified in his own Works, and thy Heart with Her's, may livingly Say, *So be it*, now and for Evermore, *AMEN*.¹

SOME
Of the last Expressions and Dying
Sayings of
HANNAH HILL, Junior,

On the Twenty-third day of the Fifth Month (commonly called *July*) 1714. being the Sixth day of the Week, this Dear Child was Seized with a violent Feaver and Flux, which so Increased upon her by the third Day of the Week following, that both herself and others present, expected she would then have Departed:² But the Lord was pleased to continue Her a little longer, to testify of his goodness

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1. The phrase "so be it" is repeated a number of times in the bible, including in Jos. 2:20, which reads, "And she said, According unto your words, so [be] it. And she sent them away, and they departed: and she bound the scarlet line in the window" (KJV).
 2. The Julian calendar emerged in 46 B.C.E. and was followed in New England through the eighteenth century; the fifth month was named after Julius Caesar by the Romans (*OED*). Flux was the name given for common dysentery (*OED*).

for the Encouragement of the Living; At this time she was in a deep Travail of Spirit, Concerning her Future State, and divers times crying out, would say. *Am I prepared! Am I prepared!* Adding, *Oh! that I might dye the Death of the Righteous, and be Numbered with them at Thy Right Hand! O Almighty God! Prepare me, Prepare me for thy Kingdom of Glory.*³

Then She Earnestly intreated those that stood about her, to help with their Prayers, that her passage might be made Easy.

A Friend present (being moved thereto, and Sympathizing with her Afflictions; Kneeled down to Prayer, during which (notwithstanding her extreem pain) she lay still, with great Attention, and Lifting up of Hands and Eyes: a little after she said, *Father, I shall Dye, and am now very Willing;* And being Admonished (without Fear or Doubting to Rely on GOD's Mercy, whose Love to Innocent Children was so exceeding great, that Christ had bid them come unto him; and that she should freely Forgive all Injuries done to her, by any Person whatsoever, so would the Lord forgive her Offences against him, and freely receive her into Mercy; To which she Replyed, *I do freely Forgive all, and have nothing in my Heart but Love, to both White and Black. But Father* (said she) *will every Body Forgive me?* It was answered, Yes, doubtless, every one will readily Forgive thee.⁴ Then she desired her Father and Mother to forgive her Offences against them; and having their Answer, she seemed to Rejoyce, and be well satisfied.

After some Pause, she said, *O most Glorious God now give me Patience, I beseech thee, with Humility to bear what it shall please thee to*

3. Numbers 23:10 reads, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!" (KJV) There are many biblical references to sitting at the right hand of God, including Matthew 25, where Jesus separates the sheep from the goats, places the sheep at his right, and welcomes them into the kingdom of heaven.

4. 1Ki. 8:50 reads, "And forgive thy people that have sinned against thee, and all their transgressions wherein they have transgressed against thee, and give them compassion before them who carried them captive, that they may have compassion on them" (KJV).

*lay upon thy poor Afflicted Hand-Maiden.*⁵ After this she entirely made Death her Choice, and would oft say, *I had rather dye and go to God, than to continue in this World of Trouble*; Adding, *When will the Messenger come Oh! hasten thy Messenger.*⁶ Then turning to her Father, she said, *Oh! that I could Launch away like a Boat that Sails! So would I go to my Dear Brother; who is gone to Heaven before me.* Desiring the By-standers not to grieve *Because* (said she) *I am but going to a better place.*

Doctor Owen who was one of her Physicians (after all their hopes of her Recovery fail'd) came to visit her, she prayed him to sit down by her, and said, *My dear Doctor! all the Town knows thou art a good Doctor; but I knew from the beginning that I should dye, and that all your endeavours would signify nothing*; But Doctor (added she, with a pleasant Air) *The Lord has heitherto given me Patience and I still Pray to him for more, that I may be enabled to hold out to the End, for my Extremity of Body is very Great.*⁷

She was very Importunate in requesting her Parents freely to give her up to the Will of God, saying, *It would be better both for them and her, so to do.* And when she thought to have prevail'd, *Now* (said she) *I am Easy in Mind.* Then asked her Father for a piece of Silver (which he gave her) and after she had held it and looked at it a little while, return'd it to him again, saying, *Now I give it to thee freely, for it was mine, because thou gavest it me.* Thereby Intimating herself Gods Gift to them and her Example therein, for their Resigning her to him again Chearfully.⁸

5. Hill thus becomes both the handmaiden Mary of Luke 1, blessed by God to be the mother of his son, and the handmaiden of Acts 2, raised from a servant to a prophet.

6. Reminiscent of Jon. 4:3, which reads, "Therefore now, O LORD, take, I beseech thee, my life from me; for [it is] better for me to die than to live" (KJV).

7. Dr. Griffith Owen (c.1647-1717), whose testimony follows Hill's text and letter. One of the doctors to sign William Penn's death certificate, Owen was a Welsh immigrant and leading Pennsylvania physician and Quaker (*Oxford DNB*).

8. John 17:6 reads, "I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word" (KJV). If this is the passage to which Hill and her editor refer, then she is equating herself with God's word as well as using a Jesus-like parable to instruct her parent on how to understand her death.

When any would seem to Encourage her, with hopes of Recovery, She made light of it, Saying, *Why is there so much to do about me, Who am but poor Dust and Ashes? We are all but as Clay, and must Dye; I am going now; Another next Day; And so one after another: The whole World Passes away.*⁹

One taking leave of her said, I intend to see you again to Morrow; To which she sharply-Replied, *Thou mayst see me, but I shall scarcely see thee any more; though I'll not be Positive Gods Will be done.*

She would, divers times, say (to her dear Mother) *Art thou sorry I am going to my Dear Brother?* And to others about her, *Why are you Troubled and Weep, seeing I am but going to a better Place?* Adding, *Oh! that the Messenger would come! That my Glass was Run!* Turning her Eyes, and Discourse to *Hannah Carpenter* (who came to Visit her) she said, *My Namesake, I am going to my Dear Uncle,* (meaning her Husband *Samuell Carpenter*) *who is gone to Heaven before me.*¹⁰ Another time she said, *Dear Frances, I am coming to be with thee!* Meaning her School-Mistress *Frances Janney* Deceased. Another time *Thomas Chalkley* being present, she said, *Oh! my Dear Martha!* (meaning his Wife, Deceased) *How do I long to be with thee!*¹¹

She would be oft speaking of her Funeral, and desired that Friends, and others might generally be invited to her Burial; and mentioned

9. The reference is most probably to Genesis 18:27 ("And Abraham answered and said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the LORD, which am but dust and ashes"), and Job 13:12 ("Your remembrances are like unto ashes, your bodies to bodies of clay") (KJV).

10. Samuel Carpenter (1649-1714) was a leader of the Philadelphia Quakers. In 1701 William Penn had appointed him a Member of the Council of State. He was Treasurer at the time of his death, 10 April 1714, a few months before Hill died. His wife, Hill's namesake, was a leading Quaker preacher.

11. Thomas Chalkely (1675-1741) was a Quaker mariner and missionary preacher. After 1702, he made his home in Philadelphia. He traded chiefly with the West Indies, navigating his own ship, and made preaching tours up and down the colonies from New England to the Carolinas and also through England, Scotland, and Wales. Chalkely's journal (1747), simple in style and elevated in thought, was widely read by many generations of Quakers (*Oxford DNB*).

divers Persons particularly by Name, that were Non-Resident, and some Strangers, that but lately came into the Country, lest they should be omitted.

At a certain time, near the Medium of her Six Days, most Violent Extremity of Pain, (for so long was she accounted Dying, or at least more than once each Day, had the Symptoms of Death strongly upon her) with a Sorrowfull Countenance and very Mournful Voice she said, *O my Dear Mother! I Fear the Lord is displeased with me again;* One Answered, Dear Child, Why should'st thou Entertain such thoughts? *Because* (said she) *I am continued, thus long, to endure this Extremity of Body, which none knows but my selfe, nor can any think how great my Pains are.*¹²

Her Afflicted Mother being Sore Distrest, to see her Languishing Child lie thus without Help (and willing to try the Effect of a Dose of Medicine, which the Doctor had before prepared) prevail'd with Her to take up the same, but it Immediately came up again; at which her Mother, in an Extacy of Sorrow, said, O my dear Child! I am in a great Strait, what shall I do for thee? to which she in a Solemn manner Reply'd, *My Dear Mother! Pray to God for Direction;* Then Pausing a little, she said, *Dear Mother! if thou desires it, I'll take another Dose.*

Not long after, it Pleased the Lord, in his tender Mercy to this Dear Soul, to Remove her Doubt, (as appear'd) *For*, said she, *Father, I think the Lord, has shewed me that I do not bear all this for my self only; Hath he not?* added she, To which one Answered, It might be so. *Ah!* (replyed she) *He has; Glory to his Infinite Name! For he is better than Kings, Queens or Governours, and there's nothing can be Compared to him.*

12. Hill is most probably referencing God's punishment of women in Gen. 3:16, which reads, "Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire [shall be] to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee" (KJV).

As her Mind was fully bent Heavenward, so she would oft speak, with earnest Desires of drawing to a Conclusion here, and giving some Directions about her Internment, Desiring that she might be Neat, and Decently laid out; and said she, *I shall go Clean to God, for no Unclean thing can enter his Kingdom.*¹³ Prayed her Father to Provide a Horse least her Mother should not be able to go to the Burying Ground; Desired her Mother to take her Breast smell Bottle, and have a Chair brought to the Grave, least she should Faint there.¹⁴

The Seventh Day before her Departure, (after querying what Day it was) she said, *I long for First Day.* One replied, Why seeing all Days are alike to the Lord? *I Know that,* said she, *but my fervent Desire is, to be gathered into the Heavenly Church.* Then turning to her Father said, *If I Dye to day, Pray let me be carried to the Meeting-House to Morrow.*

When First Day came, she asked if her Mother intended to go to the Meeting? who Answered, No, she could not leave her Dear Child in that Condition: *Then* (says she) *let my Cousins go for it may be the Lord will be displeased if all the Family stay at home.* Adding *not to look upon one another, but to wait upon God.*¹⁵ Then with much thankfulness she exprest the great Satisfaction and Comfort she had enjoyed, by the Publick Testimonies of Friends; and called those that Traveled amongst us, of late, in that Service, to wit, *Thomas Wilson* and *James Dickinson, &c,* Gods Messengers, sent from far to Visit and Warn us.¹⁶

13. Rev. 21:27 forbids anything unclean from entering Heaven. It reads, "And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither [whatsoever] wicked abomination, or [maketh] a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life" (KJV).

14. A small decorative bottle for scent or smelling salts to revive the faint, and often worn on a chain around the neck, therefore "breast smell bottle" (OED).

15. Psa. 37:34 reads, "Wait on the LORD, and keep his way, and he shall exalt thee to inherit the land: when the wicked are cut off, thou shalt see [it]" (KJV).

16. Wilson (1663-1775) and Dickinson (1659-1741) were recorded as visiting meetings of the Society of Friends in Philadelphia between 1713 and 1714 in *History of Philadelphia, 1609-1884*, by J. Thomas Scarf and Thompson Westcott (Oxford DNB).

She would repeatedly say, she was freely Resigned and Willing to Submit to the Will of God, whether in Life or Death; and was frequent in Prayer and Supplication to the Almighty, not only on her own behalf, but a real Concern was upon her for the Wellfare of others: still humbly beseeching the Lord to grant her Patience, and that he would be pleased, with an Eye of Pity and Compassion, to look down upon the Poor Bowed-Down-Ones and on her his Afflicted Servant; *O my good God, said she, Comfort the Mourners in Sion, and Support their Drooping Heads; Be pleased to provide for the Widdows and Fatherless, and be thou both Husband and Father to them.*¹⁷

These were her frequent, and repeated Cryes unto the Lord, and indeed it was Astonishing (in one of her Years) to see and hear, how Powerfully she was drawn forth, at times, on Various Subjects, for the space of a quarter of an hour together, to wit, *That GOD in Mercy would, yet more abundantly shower down his blessings on Philadelphia, and the Inhabitants of these parts of the World; The Restoration of her Beloved Aunt Preston, from her long continued and present Indisposition; Earnestly desiring the Lord to accept her Life and spare her Dear Aunt, who was, and might be so Eminently Serviceable in the Church.* A like Concern came upon her Expresly to Pray for her Uncle *Loyd* and his Family at *London*; and with great Fervency of Spirit, did she beseech the Lord very particularly, on behalf of her Honoured Mother, that he would be pleased to continue her; and turning to her, said, *O my Dear Mother! don't grieve so for me, God will bless my Father;* Then turning to him said, *My Dear Father! Comfort, Comfort, my Dear Mother and the Lord will Comfort thee.*

At another time she Prayed Earnestly to the Lord of the Harvest, (in regard it was very great, and the Labourers but few) *That he would be pleased to Raise up and send forth, many more Faithful Labourers into the Harvest.* She was divers times, concerned to Supplicate the Lord for

17. Sion (translated as Zion in the King James Version) is said to be the city of God, and Psa. 87:2 reads, "The LORD loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob" (KJV).

Living Water, *Oh!* said she, *that it might Spring up in me to Eternal Life!* (Alluding to our Saviours Discourse with the Woman of *Samaria* at *Jacobs Well*) Amplifying and very Suitably applying the Text.¹⁸

In the time of Health, she greatly delighted to Read, had a good Memory and was conversant in the Holy Scriptures, beyond most of her Age. At a time after drawing to a Conclusion of her aforesaid Prayer, she asked some present, *If they had ever tasted of this Water of Life?*¹⁹ Who Answered, Yes; *Ay* [Replied she] *and so do I Glory be given to thy most Excellent Name, O my God!*

Not long before her Departure she said, *Father the Lord hath assured me I shall be Happy*, it was Answered, That is Comfortable Indeed, 'tis better than a Thousand Witnesses; *Ay* [Replied she] *This is matter of Joy and Rejoycing, can my Soul Pay, by Living Experience.* After she had lain still some time, One offered her the Cup to Drink, but she put it by, saying *Not that Drink, 'tis the Divine Spring of Life, in my Self, I long after, and that I might neither Thirst, nor need to Drink any more of this.*

She Desired to see *John Wright*, [a Friend of the Ministry who, upon Notice thereof, came to Visit her] she asked him how he did, and how his Dear Wife and Children did? Told him, she was glad to see him, and that her Heart was filled with Love, to him, and them. She was very respectful to all that came to see her, and Gratefully acknowledged the kindnesses of all those that were any ways Aiding about her; Thanked even the Servants of the House for the Services done her; and desired the Lord would bless them, that had been helpful [as she said] to Poor helpless *Hannah*, She very respectfully thanked *Mary Dickinson*, for her Kindnesses, and said She had been as a Mother to her in this Sickness, and duly acknowledged *Sarah Rolfs* and *Ann Brown's* good Will in their Neighbourly Visits to her. To some she gave small Tokens of her

18. John 4: 7-10.

19. Hill is referencing Rev. 22:1, which reads, "And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb" (KJV).

Love, and desired her parents to do something further of that kind, to such particulars whom she named to them, in Remembrance of her.²⁰

The Council which she gave, to her Dear and only Sister and Cousin *Lloyd Zachary*, whom she dearly loved, was very grave and Pithy, at the time when she took her Final Leave of them, viz.²¹ *Dear Sister! my desires are, that thou mayest Fear God; be Dutifull to thy Parents, Love Truth; Keep to Meeting, and be an Example of Plainness: And Dear Cousin! Be a good Boy, Observe thy Uncle and Aunts Advice and the Lord will Bless thee, and they will regard thee as their Own, and do for thee. Will ye not* [says she] *Father and Mother?* And continued, *But 'tis better to have Treasure in Heaven where neither Moths, Rusts nor Thieves can Destroy.*²²

She had indeed an Admirable Fluency of Pertinent Expressions, Suitable to the Subject matter, which pressed upon her Mind, For which she was often Thankful to the Lord, that he had not only enlarged her Heart in Prayer, but had also hitherto Enabled her to utter those Things, that were, as a Concern, upon her Mind to deliver.

A little before her Departure, [finding a shortness of Breath, and greater difficulty of Speech, her Spirits being now much Exhausted]

20. The people listed were all members of the Quaker community in Philadelphia. John Wright later traveled further west to minister and preach to the Indians.

21. Lloyd Zachary was born in Boston, the son of Daniel and Elizabeth Zachary. Orphaned as a child, he moved to Philadelphia to live with his uncle, Richard Hill. He studied medicine with Dr. John Kearsley. After traveling and studying in Europe, Zachary began his practice of medicine in Philadelphia in 1726. He served as health officer for the port of Philadelphia from 1729 until 1741. He was a founder and trustee of the College and Academy of Philadelphia, now the University of Pennsylvania, and Pennsylvania Hospital. Deeply devoted to the latter institution, he served as one of the original medical staff until he was paralyzed by a stroke in 1753. He died in 1756 and left £350 and his personal library to Pennsylvania Hospital.

22. Refers to the emphasis that should be placed on heavenly rewards. Matthew 6:19-20: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal, But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal" (KJV).

She desired her Father and Mother's Assistance, on her Failure to Express the Things, which they conceived to be upon her Mind, as Doubtless finding it her Duty to Declare what she did, though with great Difficulty, for she was in all other respects very sparing of Speech, during the whole time of her illness.

About an hour before her Decease, being in a Slumber, she said, *The Fire would not cease burning, until all the Chaff was consumed, though Men Strive never so much in Vain, to Quench it.*²³ Then desired the Watchers Care of her Sister, least she should take Cold, Took some Drink at her Mother's Hand, and said, *Now my Dear Mother! Pray lay thy Head close to mine,* and pressed hers towards her Mother's Bosom, which sufficiently betokened the strength of her Affection and Duty to continue, even beyond Expression of Words.

Then she recommended her Spirit to God saying *Glory! Glory! Glory!* And so as with the Sound of an *Hymn*, this Innocent Lamb closed her Eyes and Expired as one fallen into a sweet sleep, without groan or sigh. She Departed this Life the Second Day of the Sixth Month 1714. Being the second day of the Week, about two a Clock in the Morning.

And being her self Translated from this Life to that which is Eternal, in the Heavenly Mansion of Rest and Peace, with God her Maker and Redeemer hath left these Fruits of Love and Good Will to her Dear Relations, Tender Companions and Young People, For whose sakes, Chiefly, 'tis made Publick, as a genuine Collection, from those who were most constantly present with this Noble Spirited, Valiant, little Maid, during the time of her Sickness, untill Death; By one whose humble prayer to the Lord, is, That it might have the Blessed Effect of exciting Children *To Remember their Creator in the Days of their Youth,* And to live Answerable to his Holy Will, that so they may be Eternally

23. Hill may be referring to Isa. 1:31, which reads, "And the strong shall be as tow, and the maker of it as a spark, and they shall both burn together, and none shall quench [them]" (KJV).

Happy, And God over all may Everlastingly be Glorified, in the Young and Rising Generation, World without END, *AMEN*.²⁴

H. H.

POSTSCRIPT,

Since the Decease of this dear Child, *Hannah Hill* junior, it is Evident, That She had a Sence of her Approaching Death, for some Considerable time before she was Seized, and would be often speaking of it to divers of the Family (as they now declare) and in particular to her most Intimate Associate and Cousin *Elizabeth Norris* to whom she also divulged the Matter, with such a Sollid Assurance, as broke them both into great Tenderness; When being at the Burial of a Relation) she told her said Cousin, *The next Burial she would be at, should be hers*, which did indeed so happen accordingly; Whereby it appears, this Innocent Soul was Preserved near unto the Lord in Spirit, who had thus highly favoured her with this Secret.

And the Sence that was given her, of our Friend *John Lowdon's* Decease is very Remarkable, *viz.* Being asleep in bed the Night before his Departure, she Suddenly broke forth into an Extacy of Sorrow, with Weeping and Sighing, which very much Surprized her Father and Mother (who lodged in the same Room) they speak tenderly to her, and queried what was the matter? She replied, *Oh! I dream't my dear Friend John Lowdon was a Dying*.²⁵ They endeavoured to Pacyfie and divert her Thoughts, saying, it was but a Dream, and that they hoped to see

24. Ecc. 12.1 reads, "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them" (KJV).

25. Lowdon emigrated from Ireland in 1711, and settled at New Garden, in Chester County, Pennsylvania where he was engaged as a Quaker preacher and leader. In 1714, he expanded his ministry to the counties of Bucks and Philadelphia but suddenly fell ill and died at Abington. In *The History of the Society of Friends* (1854), James Bowdon describes him as "much esteemed and beloved" among Pennsylvania Quakers (256).

him to morrow, &c. But she continued under the same Exercise, beyond what is common (she said *John Lowdon* being then Twelve Miles distant, where he had appointed a Meeting at *Abington*, and Preached the day before at *Germain-town*, about Six Miles off, so that there was then no Tydings of his Indisposition, he being taken Ill in the aforesaid Meeting, and Dyed the next Day following) And when the Account of his Death came, she was most sorrowfully Affected, and earnestly desired the Corps might be brought to their House, and Buried in Town.

The Substance of a Letter from *H. H. junior*, to her Cousin
E. Norris.

Dear Cousin E. Norris;

The Burial of our worthy Friend, *John Lowdon*, was perform'd in the most Solemn manner, the Corps being carried from our House, first to the Meeting, which was very large and from thence to the Grave, where many exprest their Sorrow, for the Churches Loss: But it must needs be his exceeding gain, who expresly said (a few minutes before his Departure) he had done his days Work in his Day; and that he laid down his head in Peace with God, and in Unity with his People; Which that thee and I may do, is the Earnest desire of,

Thy Affectionate loving Cousin,
H. Hill, Junior.

Griffeth Owen,

His Testimony.

The Lord God hath been pleased, in his great Love and Favour, to give a Gift, or Manifestation of his Holy Spirit Light, and Grace of his Dear Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, to the Sons an Daughters of Men, to shew

unto them, the Way to Eternal Happyness, and to Direct them, and help them, to Walk in it. And although it is universally extended to all, yet it is those who gave up their Hearts, in thankful Reverence, to Obey and follow the Manifestations and Requirings of it, have found Favour with God. And those he raised up and Established, by the Power, and Spirit of his Dear Son, to be Good, Living and Bright Examples to the Children of Men, in their Generations; Paterns of *Righteousness, Meekness, Humility, Self-Denyal, Patience, Temperance, Godlyness, Brotherly Kindness and Charity*; Which are the Fruits of the Holy Spirit of Christ Jesus which appeared, and shined forth, through them, to the World.²⁶ And some hath the Lord been pleased to make Willing to give up their Hearts, to Obey and Follow the Discoveries, and Leadings of his precious Gift; And to take pleasure in the Fruits and Way thereof, in their Young Years, Which the Lord did Adorn with the Beauty of Holiness and made to shine as Lights to the World, And among these, or in this Calendar, may be Recorded Young and Innocent *Hannah Hill*, Daughter of *Richard Hill*, and *Hannah Hill* his wife, of *Philadelphia*, in *Pennsylvania*; Considering how she spent the short time, the Lord was pleased to give her in this World. Her Meek and Godly Behaviour from a Child, since she had any Knowledg of Good and Evil; Her Dutifulness to her Parents; Her love and Good Will to all, but especially to those who walked in Obedience to the Truth. I knew her from a Child, and I never beheld any airy, light or undecent Carriage, Behaviour or Expressions, from her, but attended with much Gravity, Modesty, Meekness, and Plainness. I was several times with her on her Death-Bed, and was much Tendered and Comforted, in the Sence of the Love and Power of God, that attended her; in which and by which, She uttered many Wise, Heavenly, and Excellent Expressions, beyond what could be expected from one of her Age; Some of them are, set down, as in the foregoing may be read. I was made to say, It is the Lord's doings, and it is Marvelous in my Eyes. These things are Published, not

26. These "fruits of the Holy Spirit" are mentioned in 1Ti. 6:11, which reads, "But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness" (KJV).

thinking that any thing that can be Written or Spoken, by any Man or Woman whatsoever can add any thing to the State or Condition, of the Deceased, Whom the Lord (I believe) hath taken to himself, from the troubles of this World, to rest and dwell in the Mansions of Glory for ever and ever, but for the sake of the Living, who are yet upon the Stage of this World, and especially our *Young People*, for whom my Secret Cryes and Prayers go often up to the Lord, That he would be pleased, to work upon their Hearts, as he did upon the Heart of this Maiden; a Willingness to leave off and Forsake the Vanities, Follies, Pride High-Mindedness, and the many Evils, which by Nature, they are inclined to; and bring them to live a Godly Life, Innocent and Righteous Conversation, That the Work of Regenerations may clearly appear in all their Actions and Behaviour; That those who may Converse with them, and behold their Good Works (coupled with the Fear of God) may be made to acknowledge, That they are the Seed, whom the Lord hath blessed. These are the Fervent Prayers of Him, who Sincerely Desires the Prosperity and Well-being of all People, that they may come to Dye unto Sin, and to Live unto Righteousness, the way to Eternal Happyness,

Griffeth Owen.

Thomas Chalkely,

His Testimony

There is some thing in my Mind to Write, in Memory of that Dear Innocent Soul *Hannah Hill*, jun. Who Departed this Life about the Eleventh Year of her Age, in Peace with God, and in great Love and Unity with his People, and in much Assurance of her own Eternal Happyness.

I Was well Acquainted with this tender Young Maiden, for several Years before she dyed, and I took good notice of her Conversation, and the more by how much it was bright and shining, in that which is

commendable in Youth. Oh! (saith my Soul) that the *Youth of our Age* and this City might follow her Example! she was a pattern of Piety, Plainness and Obedience to Parents, and of a Womanly and Obliging temper unto all.

It was my Lot (for which I have many times been truly thankful) to be for some Months a Co-habiter in the Family, and I Observed that she was always very Dutiful to her Parents, Loving to her Friends and Neighbours, and kind to the Servants, both White and Black. I have seen some Children very Rude and Imperious to their Parents, Negroes, but I observed the contrary in her; And Doubtless, it is a Great and Cry-ing Sin, in either Old or Young to abuse poor Slaves.

I also Observed, That many times when other Children would be at Play in the Streets, (the which our *Youth* are too much addicted to in this City, and too much Winked at by their Parents) she would be either at her Book or her Needle, at both which she was very Dexterous, and it rather seemed a Delight to her, than a Burden.

She could Write well, and would Indite Letters. that were full of Intelligence, her Conversation, that Way, was very desirable, as well as *Viva Voce*.²⁷

She had an extraordinary Gift in Reading of the Holy Scriptures, and other Good Books, in which she took much Delight; And if any Friend gave her a Book, she would not seem to be satisfied untill she had Read it through; and would sometimes get much of it by Heart.

May the Minds, of *Young People* be Stirred up, by her Example, to put the same in Practice, is my Hearty Desire. This Testimony I am Constrained to give concerning her, That she Lived and Dyed Beloved, and her Loss Lamented of, or by, all that knew her. One great Virtue I may not omit mentioning, which would be very Be-coming in Christians of Riper Years, she would oft Sympathize with

27. She had a living or lively voice (*OED*).

those that were in Affliction, or under Exercise; Of which my Poor Self was a Feeling Witness; For when I Buried my Loving and Beloved Wife, after I came home from the Burial, she came to me and took me by the Hand with both hers, and leaned her Head upon my Side, in much Tenderness of Spirit, which greatly Affected my Heart at that time, to Consider, that her Years were so Green and her Soul so Ripe, she being then about nine Years of Age. And the Dolorousness of my Mind at that Instant, and now also, causeth my Heart to Affect my Eyes, Oh! may I meet with them in Gods time, in his Eternal Rest and Glorious Kingdom! To which I doubt not but that those Dear Souls are ascended.

I made a Visit to this *Dear Young Woman* the Day before she Dyed, and she looked upon me, and Remembering my Wife (whom she loved Dearly) *I am going to her*, said she, *and to my Brother*; another Dear Soul, who a little before he Dyed, being about four Years of Age, said, *He should have a golden Chair in Heaven; and that he would take Wings and fly thither*. And may all who cast their Eyes on these lines say, with the Man of God of Old, *Oh! That I had Wings like a Dove, Then would I fly away and be at Rest*.²⁸ Even so come sweet *LORD JESUS* Prayeth thy Servant

Thomas Chalkely.

28. Psa. 55:6.

Hannah a Sweet and tender Flower,
Ah! She's gone to Heavens Bower,
Now She's out of Mis'ry and Pain,
Now She's in the Glorious Plain,
Assurance to her Soul was Giv'n,
Hail Saints of Light I come to Heaven.

Her Piety and Vertues Bright,
In her most tender Years Invite,
Love of all that knew her right well,
Lowe now she's gone on High to dwell.

*Though she be gone before her Noon.
Christ Jesus thought it not too soon.*

T. C.

THE END

Chapter 7

Jane Sumner

W A R N I N G
TO LITTLE
CHILDREN,

From the DYING WORDS of
JANE SUMNER,
Of ASHFORD:

Who died FEBRUARY 19th, 1783.
Ætat 12.

Written nearly verbatim:

TO WHICH IS ADDED
AN
ACROSTICK,

By HENDRICK DOW.

NEW-LONDON.
Printed by T. GREEN and Son
M,DCC,XCII.

Introduction to Jane Sumner, *Warning to Little Children* (1792)

Little is known about Jane Sumner (1771-1783) beyond the information that is provided in her legacy book. Born on January 14, 1771 in Ashford, Windham, Connecticut, she was the daughter of Captain John Sumner and his wife Kate Elizabeth Bishop. The text indicates that she had several siblings, including Robert, Benjamin, John, Betsy, and Persa, an infant. After suffering from a cold, Sumner died on February 19, 1783. She may have had prominent relatives, as several important families with the same surname resided in Windham County; in particular, Edward Sumner, with two associates, had purchased a good deal of land in Ashford in 1722, establishing his family there. Whether Jane's family is connected with Edward, or any of the other influential Sumners in the area, is unclear. However, the publication of her dying message may be indicative of the prominence of her family in Connecticut, as well as the continued popularity of the legacy text in New England more than one hundred years after the publication of Bradstreet's *To My Dear Children*.

Sumner's legacy was "not designed as an entertainment," as Hendrick Dow (1761-1814), the child's editor, tells the reader in the preface (2). Rather, fitting nicely into the legacy genre, it is a call for the conversion of young children. The book opens with a justification for the publication of a child's legacy, suggesting that such texts required justification. Yet, as the transcription of a twelve year old girl's dying words, *Warning to Little Children*, was printed three times in just over two decades, it seems evident that the text enjoyed a healthy readership. Why, then, does Dow—the son-in-law of Deacon James Gilbert—include the defense of the text? Perhaps he had wrongly anticipated poor sales or feared that a young girl's conversion narrative would be dismissed. However, by editing the text, Dow recognized the importance of recording the last words of a pious, converted child. The potential influence of Sumner's legacy book on other children was reason enough for its publication.

Sumner focuses her legacy on observing the religious tenets that had been outlined in earlier texts, which she probably read, such as the *New England Primer* (ca. 1687). Like previous advice tracts and early children's texts, her legacy delineated behavioral prescriptions. Sumner acknowledges her responsibility for the state of her soul, and subsequently narrates her conversion process—an important attribute of the legacy text. Repenting her sinful behavior, she says, "if I were to live my life over again I would make better use of it, and live more to the glory of God," implicitly encouraging readers to turn away from sin and towards God (7). Counseling her peers, she also suggests, "consider that you must hereafter give an account for all your actions" (9). Indeed, Sumner's text is intended as a "warning".

Where Hannah Hill's text is dubbed a *Legacy for Children*, Sumner's text is marketed as a *Warning to Little Children*. It is clear that, in Hill's legacy, the amanuensis intends for the book to have a "Blessed Effect;" in contrast, Sumner's legacy, which enjoyed three printings in twenty-four years, becomes a site for the instilment of godly fear in children (Hill 22). Although not as explicit as Michael Wigglesworth's *Day of Doom* (1662), Sumner's *Warning* emphasizes the "sad effects of sin" and the importance of repentance (2). Even following her conversion, Sumner fears that her sins are too many and that she is unworthy of God's forgiveness. Throughout the text, she begs the forgiveness of her family and friends, afraid that God will not show her mercy. Similar to Lady Jane Grey, who provided spiritual advice for her sister in her final exhortations, Sumner tries to impart lessons to her siblings and friends so that their sins might be washed away and they may "depart in peace" (9). Her words, therefore, are not the sermonizing and biblical quotations of Hill, but a series of direct appeals to her siblings and other children of her acquaintance to repent their sins and come to God. As Sumner withers away, her conviction to advise each of her young siblings strengthens. It becomes her task to save others from the regrets of sin: "'Could the children of my acquaintance,' said she, 'know ... how dreadful death appears to the guilty soul...it would work for their good'" (12-13). She most notably begs for another year of life in order to help them all to conversion.

Constructing Sumner's legacy constructs the book as a fearful warning to children, the amanuensis establishes Sumner as an exemplary Puritan child. The text foregrounds her sinfulness and

conversion, indicating the potential for children to surrender to natural sin and break free from it. In the legacy, she is fashioned as a sinner, and, ultimately, a redeemed sinner. Leaving a legacy of self-abnegation and piety, Sumner is immortalized as an example of the elect, and her voice, however muffled by the voice of the pastorate, reiterates the tenets of a religious culture. She sets a precedent for the righteous embracement of death, dying with “a spirit of repentance, humiliation, prayer, and benevolence” (14). Through her exemplary life and death—though filtered through an amanuensis and an editor—the twelve year old girl underscores the cultural stress on redemption through individual conversion and the importance of adherence to the tenets of the pastorate.

Like Hill’s, this legacy from Sumner is the transcribed words of a dying girl. The book also opens with a preface from the child’s editor, Hendrick Dow, who emphasizes Sumner’s desire to see all the children of her acquaintance in a state of grace. The book closes with an “Acrostick” of Sumner’s name.

Copy Text

Warning to Little Children, From the Dying Words of Jane Sumner, of Ashford: Who died February 19th, 1783. Ætat 12. Written nearly verbatim: To Which is Added an Acrostick, by Hendrick Dow. New-London [Conn.]: Printed by T. Green and Son., M,DCC,XCII. [1792]. This book was reprinted by James Springer, also of New-London, in 1796. A third edition was printed in 1816 by an unnamed press in Bridgeport, CT. Aside from the electronic/microform copy in Early American Imprints, a print copy of Sumner’s 1792 edition is held at the American Antiquarian Society. A 1796 edition is held at Brown University. We use the first edition held by the American Antiquarian Society as our copy text.

W A R N I N G
TO LITTLE
C H I L D R E N,
From the D Y I N G W O R D S of
J A N E S U M N E R,
O F A S H F O R D;
Who Died F E B R U A R Y 19th, 1783.
Ætat 13.
Written nearly verbatim :
TO WHICH IS ADDED
A N
A C R O S T I C K,

B Y H E N D R I C K D O W.

P R E F A C E.

*P*ROBABLY some will be ready to censure the following work as a mere trifling and puerile production, and wonder why any body should think of exhibiting such jejune and trivial composition to the world.

But let it be considered that this is not designed as an entertainment to the admirers of refined and elegant composition; but to exhibit, in a manner intelligible to the minds of children, an example the sad effects of sin, and the dreadful anguish and horror, that seizes the guilty soul upon the real and solemn prospect of inevitable death, and entering into the eternal world of incorporeal beings.

And if it may have any happy influence upon their tender minds, by inculcating the important lesson of remembering their Redeemer in their early days, it will fully answer the benevolent purpose of its publication.

A

WARNING TO LITTLE CHILDREN, &c.

JANE SUMNER, daughter to Capt. JOHN SUMNER, of Ashford, having taken a sudden cold, was seized with violent distress and anguish, together with cramp-convulsion fits, which cut off all probability of recovery, and threatened her with sudden death. And to make her condition truly, if not compleatly, wretched, the excruciating pains, that were incessantly preying upon her mortal frame, and hastening her final dissolution, were attended with the most striking anguish of soul, upon the dreadful consciousness of her guilt in transgressing the precepts of the divine law, and the solemn prospect of being suddenly called out of the world to appear before the awful tribunal of the supreme Judge.

UPON being asked whether she were willing to die? She replied: "Oh ! no ;[?] for I am a great sinner. Oh! what a great sinner I have been ! what a great sinner I have been ! can God have mercy on such a great sinner? Oh ! I am afraid God will not have mercy on me, I have been such a great sinner. — Do pray for me, do pray for me."

BEING told that God was able and willing to forgive sins, she prayed: "O Lord Jesus! have mercy on me a poor sinner; have mercy on me, and forgive my sins. Oh! that I might be spared one year, or one month longer; or even one week, or one Sabbath more to hear God's precious word."

BEING asked by her parents, whether they should send for Mr. Judson? She answered, "yes; I would rather he should come than all the

doctors in the world.” Her father asked why? “Because,” said she, “he is our minister, and prays for us, and for every body.”

“OH ! how I have disobeyed God’s holy commands ! — Oh ! that I could see Mr. Judson, to talk with him one hour : — How long will it be before he will come ? — How have I disobeyed my parents in not going quick, and in not doing as they bid me. O my dear father! can you forgive such a wicked creature, as I have been?” Yes, my dear child, reply’d the father, and I believe that God will forgive you. “I hope God will, said she, and I hope God will have mercy on you—and upon you too, my dear mother, and upon every body.” Her mother at this time being dangerously ill, she adds:

OH ! there lies my poor mother, just going into eternity—but I must go before you: young as I am, I must go before you: young as I am, I must go and leave you, and you will never see me any more upon earth — The [Lord] have mercy upon us.

“OH ! my father, and my mother ! my brothers, and my sisters ! my relations and acquaintance! forgive me; I have been a great sinner: I have been a wicked wretch — Oh ! what a [great] sinner I have been ! Oh ! I want every body should forgive me; I can freely forgive every body, and I hope God will.”

UPON reviving from a very distressing fit, being informed that Mr. Judson was come, she gave him her hand, asking how he did, and said “O Mr. Judson ! do pray for me; [that] my sins may be forgiven, and that my soul may be washed in the blood of Christ.”¹ Being asked if she desired to live ? She reply’d: “yes; if my life might be spared one year longer to glorify God.”

PRAYERS being ended, she desired to hear a portion of God’s holy word. Accordingly there was read and explained to her the 5th chapter of Matthew, from the 1st verse to the 12th, to which she attended with

1. Rev. 1:5, “And from Jesus Christ, [who is] the faithful witness, [and] the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood” (KJV).

manifest pleasure, and then appeared more calm in her mind, expressing herself satisfied with what she had heard.² “But,” said she, “I want to love Christ more — O Jesus, thou precious Lord of glory, enlighten my mind, and enable me more and more to see the beauty of thy holiness and glory.”

“GOD made the earth and all that is therein, the sea and every thing that is in it; and the whole world, and all creatures that are in the world, and he rested the seventh day.³ God also made me, and has kept me alive ‘till this day, — But oh ! how little have I thought of God and his goodness while I was well! how little have I thought of the Lord Jesus, and his precious blood that was shed for sinners ! Oh ! how foolishly I have spent my time ! if I were to live my life over again I would make a better use of it, and live more to the glory of God.”⁴

A stranger, coming into her apartments during her illness, she cast her eyes upon him, and earnestly cried out: “do pray for me; do pray for me — I can pray for you, and for every body; and I wish you would pray for me; for my days are just at an end, and I shall soon be in another world, which neither you, nor I have seen; and then it will be too late to pray for me.” —

A little before she died, she called for her brothers and sisters, that she might speak to them a few words before her separation from them, and from the world, and turning to her eldest brother, Robert, she said: “I am just a going to leave you in this wicked world. Oh ! forsake all bad company: never swear, never lie, never steal, never take God’s holy

2. The passages in Matt. 5:3-12 are commonly known as the Beatitudes, or “any of the blessings said by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount...Named from the initial words (*beati sunt*, “blessed are”) of those sayings in the Latin Vulgate Bible, the Beatitudes describe the blessedness of those who have certain qualities or experiences peculiar to those belonging to the Kingdom of Heaven” (“Beatitude.” Encyclopedia Britannica Online).

3. Exd. 20:11, “For [in] six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them [is], and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it” (KJV).

4. 1 Cr. 10:31, “Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do it all to the glory of God” (KJV).

name in vain; but obey your parents in the Lord; repent of all your bad conduct past, and for the future always obey the will of God, your Creator, considering that there is virtue enough in the blood of Christ to wash away all your sins, and make you forever happy.”⁵

To her second brother, Benjamin:

“OH ! my dear brother ! how glad am I to see you, that I may talk with you before I die; for I am just going into eternity. Oh ! be always obedient to your parents in the Lord, and do pray mind what your poor mother shall say to you; for she has but a little time to stay with you in the world ; — Oh ! for the Lord’s sake obey her while she lives; for yet a little while, and she will be with me in the silent grave, and you will see her no more. Never steal; never use any bad language; but be careful always to speak truth; shun all bad company; remember the Sabbath to keep it holy, and you shall see the good of it in your soul — Oh ! my dear brother ! what would I give to live one week longer, and see one Sabbath more, that I might live a few days to the glory of God upon earth. Oh ! how long have I lived carelessly in this wicked world, little thinking of the awful moment of death, which is just coming upon me ! — O Lord Jesus ! blessed glory to thy holy name. Blessed Lord Jesus ! have mercy on me a poor sinner.”

To John, her youngest brother:

“OH ! my brother; hear me speak, and be careful to remember the words of your dying sister. Never tell a lie for all the world; never take God’s holy name in vain; but be obedient to your parents, and when they bid you do any thing, do it quick, and never murmur nor be sullen: never use any bad words in your talk; but consider that you must hereafter give an account for all your actions: and oh! think of death, while you are young and in health, think of your last hour; for it will surely come, and you cannot avoid it: Oh! then spend your time well,

5. 1 Jo. 1:7, “But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin” (KJV).

and live in such a manner that when you come to die, you may depart in peace.”

To her sister Betsy :

“YOU see, my dear sister, that I am just going to leave you forever, and how greatly my soul has been troubled at the thoughts of my wickedness, and bad actions past: Oh! be careful then to behave yourself well; speak no bad words; call no ill names; obey your parents, that you may have length of days. And oh! think of your last hour, for you cannot live always, and mind to behave as you may wish you had done when you come to die.”⁶

To her youngest sister, a babe:

“PERSA, you dear little soul, you precious youth, you don’t know, and I can’t tell you what pains I feel. You don’t know what it is to sin, and feel the trouble of a guilty soul. May you live longer than I have, and may the Lord keep you from the sins of this wicked world – Fare you well, you precious youth, I must leave you, and see you no more.”

To Micah Brown, one of her companions:

“COME, you dear little soul, and hear me, a few words, before I die. Never steal upon any account; speak the truth in all things; never swear, nor quarrel, nor keep bad company, nor do any thing that you may afterwards be sorry for; but remember your Creator in the days of your youth, and obey all his commands, that God may bless you, and that when your last hour shall come, you may not be afraid to die, but willing to leave this world for a better.”

To some of her play-mates:

“OH ! there stands my dear play-mates with tears trickling down their cheeks ! Oh ! come hear me talk, for I am dying — Obey your parents; study God’s word, and keep his commandments while you live; for your time will come when you must leave this world forever:

6. Jane appeals to her brothers and sister to follow many of the same commandments that God gave to Moses. See Exd. 20:3-17 (KJV).

— And though I must go before you into the other world, and leave you alive, and in health, yet the time will soon come, when you must all follow me: do then, I pray you, my dear little friends, be good children: spend your time well; fear, love, and serve God, your maker, that you may have the love of God, which is better than all the world, to keep you from all evil, and make you forever happy, and that when you come to die you may not feel any such trouble in your souls as I have felt in mine — Time is good: time is precious. Oh! that I were spared one year longer to praise my blessed Lord Jesus! — But my time is come: I am called [...] : I must go and leave you, and not see you any more: so fare you well. —

“O Lord have mercy upon my poor soul: thou hast created me, and kept me alive ‘till now; but I have sinned against thee, and been a wicked child.⁷ I have been a great sinner, and my sins are more than I can reckon up: but, O Lord, as thou art a gracious, and merciful God, have mercy upon me, and forgive my sins, and comfort my soul before I die. May it not be in vain to me that Christ died for sinners — O blessed Lord Jesus! have mercy upon me a sinful wretch: wash my soul from all sin with thy precious blood, and fill it with thy love.”

MANY such ejaculations she offered up, between the violent fits, which she had during the short time of her illness, greatly lamenting the careless manner, in which she had spent her days, and frequently expressing her fervent desire of loving Christ more before she died. She likewise expressed her desire of seeing some of her neighbours, and acquaintance, that she might give them an admonition, and warn them to be faithful in giving their children food and seasonable instructions, to guide them in the ways of virtue and piety.

“COULD the children of my acquaintance,” said she, “know the anguish both of my body and mind, and how dreadful death appears to the guilty soul, when just going into eternity, perhaps, it would work for their good. Oh! that parents would be more careful to teach children

7. Psa. 41:4, “I said, LORD, be merciful unto me: heal my soul; for I have sinned against thee” (KJV).

their duty, and to instruct them early in religion, and train them up in the way in which they would go, that they may live to the glory of God, and die in peace.

“OH ! my friends! I am just going to leave you all: I have but a few hours more to stay in this world; but I hope I shall not die ‘till I love Christ better.

“O Lord Jesus have mercy upon me, a poor sinner, have mercy upon me, and save my soul from sin and death. Though my sins are many, I pray that thou would’st forgive them all, and help me to love thee, that as soon as my breath is gone, thou may’st take me to thyself.”

BEING more calm in her mind than usual she repeated very distinctly, and in a most humble, devout manner, the Lord’s Prayers.⁸ And soon after added these words:

“Now I lay me down to sleep,
I pray the Lord my soul to keep:
If I should die before I wake,
I pray the Lord my soul to take.”⁹

A little before she died, she, in a very tender and endearing manner, expressed her gratitude to those who had attended her in her sickness; and gave particular thanks to the person, who went after Mr. Judson.

YEA there appeared in her, to the admiration of all who saw her, ‘till her last hour, a spirit of repentance, humiliation, prayer, and benevolence, expressed in many very pathetic terms. And having repeatedly with great ardency, implored divine mercy for herself, and given admonitions to her friends and attendants, more than would have been thought consistent with her excruciating pains, she at last cried out: LORD JESUS ! LORD JESUS ! and was heard to say no more: but died peaceably; being twelve years old.

8. The Lord’s Prayer can be found in Mat. 6:9-13 and Luk. 11:2-4 (KJV).

9. This children’s prayer first appeared in the New England Primer, first published by Benjamin Harris before 1690 (“Benjamin Harris.” Encyclopedia Britannica Online).

AN ACROSTICK.

JUST as the fragrant rose in beauty drest,
A thousand charms unfolding to the sun,
N o pity moves, within the savage breast —
E mbalms the morn, but withers e'er 'tis noon;
S o falls the blooming maid by fate's command;
U surp'd by death's inexorable hand
M ust yield her body to the tomb—
N o more her eyes on earthly objects roll;
E xtatic pleasures fill her virgin soul
R estor'd to heav'n, her native home.

FINIS

Appendix A

Benjamin Colman

A
Devout Contemplation
On the *Meaning* of
Divine Providence,
in the Early
DEATH
Of Pious and Lovely
Children.

Preached upon the *Sudden* and Lamented
DEATH of
Mrs. *Elizabeth Wainwright*.
Who Departed this Life, *April* the *8th*. 1714.
Having just compleated the Fourteenth
Year of Her *Age*.

By *Benjamin Colman*,
Pastor to a Church in *Boston*.

Boston, Printed by *John Allen*, for *Joanna Perry*, at her Shop on the North-side
of the *Town-House*. 1714.

Introduction to Benjamin Colman, *A Devout Contemplation On the Meaning of Providence, in the Early Death Of Pious and Lovely Children* (1714)

A graduate of Harvard University, Benjamin Colman (1673-1747) became a prominent American clergyman. He was born in Boston, Massachusetts on October 19, 1673 to William and Elizabeth Colman, but ventured to England to be ordained. Colman had adopted the more liberal service procedures of London, and, consequently, found himself in conflict with other important New England clergymen, including Increase Mather and Cotton Mather, over Congregationalist practices. Colman began ministering at Brattle Street Church in Boston in 1699, and continued to work at the church until his death in 1747. Shortly after becoming the pastor at Brattle Street Church, he wed Jane Clark, and the marriage produced one son and two daughters. Jane died in 1731, and Colman married his second wife, Sarah Clark in 1732. After about twelve years of marriage, Sarah passed away, and Colman's third and final wife, Mary Frost, whom he married in 1745, survived him.

A Devout Contemplation is a funeral sermon, which, similar to the girls' legacies in particular, emphasizes the pious life and faithful death of a young woman. Colman's sermons addressed a wide variety of topics; "A Practical Discourse on the Parable of the Ten Virgins," one of his earlier sermons, highlights Calvinist doctrine as he demonstrates the significance of preparation, repentance, and conversion. In one of his more touching sermons, "Reliquiae Turellae et Lachrymae Paternae," Colman discusses the death of his daughter, who passed away at the age of twenty-seven. His praise of his daughter echoes early English and American funeral sermons for godly women, which focus on their adherence to religious tenets. By the early 1700s, almost half of the funeral sermons published in New England were about pious women. Ministers followed a tradition founded by Cotton Mather in *Magnalia Christi Americana* and began to praise women—who

early on comprised more than half of their parishioners—for converting early, praying and fasting, going to church faithfully, reading their Bible through at least once a year, submitting to God’s will, and managing their households well. The father of Jane Colman Turrell, a promising poet who died young in childbirth, followed this pattern. However, Colman both educated his daughter and ignored her intelligence and abilities in his sermon for her funeral. Rather, Colman follows the tradition that had been deployed by Mather to revere women who were—because of their demonstration of ‘proper’ pious womanhood—examples for parishioners to follow. A *Devout Contemplation* establishes Elizabeth Wainwright, upon her death, as such an exemplary girl.

Textual evidence indicates that Wainwright died at the age of fourteen, which would place her birth in 1700. From Colman’s account, it seems that her illness did not last long, but that she passed away suddenly. In the dedication, therefore, he entreats her family and friends to prepare for the final Day of Judgment, as they, like her, may not have the luxury of time. The sermon is prefaced by his dedication and the dedicatory epistle by Judith Sewalls, which both emphasize, as does the sermon, the child’s agency in the matter of his or her sin and state of grace. In the dedicatory epistle, Sewalls warns the children of the town to seek God’s grace and to be concerned with the afterlife. Tacitly, Sewalls asserts that Wainwright was the best, most pious child, as she asks the children, “Where is there any One among you fairer in Body or in Mind?” (1) Whereas Sewalls directs her warning to children, Colman’s sermon speaks to adults and children as it points to the notion of the elect. He preaches that elect children, and, implicitly, adults, “cannot too soon be in heaven” (10). Because Wainwright was an exemplary child, then, her death is not a sad occasion, but a time to reflect on the state of one’s own soul, and Colman takes this opportunity to remind his parishioners of that.

Copy Text

A Devout Contemplation on the Meaning of Divine Providence, in the Early Death of Pious & Lovely Children: Preached upon the Sudden

& Lamented Death of Mrs. Elizabeth Wainwright Who Departed this Life, April the 8th. 1714. Having just completed the Fourteenth Year of Her Age, by Benjamin Colman, Pastor to a Church in Boston. Boston: Printed by John Allen for Joanna Perry at her shop on the North-side of the Town-House, 1714. I use the copy held by the Library of Congress. There are also copies held at the British Library, Essex Institute, Free Library of Philadelphia, and New York Public Library.

A
Devout Contemplation
On the *Meaning* of
Divine Providence,
in the Early
DEATH
Of Pious and Lovely
Children.

Preached upon the *Sudden* and Lamented

DEATH of

Mrs. *Elizabeth Wainwright*.

Who Departed this Life, *April* the 8th. 1714.

Having just compleated the Fourteenth
Year of Her *Age*.

By *Benjamin Colman*,
Pastor to a Church in *Boston*.

To my Honoured FRIENDS, the Mournful
RELATIVES of the *Deceased*

Mrs. *Elizabeth Wainwright*.

It may doubtless become that *Pastoral Relation* which it has pleased the
DIVINE PROVIDENCE to Honour Me with toward *many of You*,
to give You this publick *Expression* of my deep *Sympathy* in your *present*
Sorrow, and to *minister* as I am able to your *Support* under it, and
Profit from it.

I pray GOD to *Sanctifie* to Your *Selves*, & to your *Families* the many *Surprizing Breaches*, which have within a *few years* been made upon that *late Flourishing part* of your Family; and in particular the *sudden Death* of this *Lovely BRANCH* which we now mourn.

You had a great deal of *Pleasure & Comfort* in Her the few days that GOD spar'd Her to you; nor did the *Town* show a *Child* more *Amiable* in Person, or more *Innocent* and Vertuous in Behaviour; of a more sweet *Disposition*, or seemingly better *Inclin'd*: not a *Child* scarce of greater *Hopes*, or more universally *Esteem'd*. So fair a *Mind* in so fair a *Body* was indeed worthy to be *lov'd*. Nor was *She* without the happy *Signs* of a Spirit of true *Devotion* toward GOD, as well as full of endearing *Love* and *Goodness*, *Humility* and *Meekness* toward all whom She Convers'd with: those *Ornaments which are in the sight of GOD of great Price*.¹

I shall never forget the *Agonies of Distress* I found *You* in, as *Many* of you as could suddenly get together on the *Alarm* of her Unexpected *Change*: Nor would I have *You* to forget *your own* gracious Expressions of *Humiliation* and holy *Fear*, *Submission* and *Adoration*, in the transports of your Grief on that sad Occasion. O the *Astonishing Spectacle* we had then had before our Eyes, of the *Vanity* of our *Best Estate* in this Life! What a poor thing are *Riches*, or *Children* and *Families*, or any Earthly Enjoyments to build any *Expectation* on: *Our dayes upon Earth are as a Shadow, and there is no abiding*.²

Many of *You*, my *Good Friends*, are in the Prime of Life, and *some* in your *Youth*, just Entring on a *Vain World*, in *Superior Circumstances* with respect to *Outward Rank* and Estate. Suffer me therefore to *Exhort* *You* to get above these *empty transitory Temptations* that do surround *You*, and endanger you. You have the more need to think often of *Death*, and

1. 1Pe. 3:4 reads, "But [let it be] the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, [even the ornament] of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price" (KJV).

2. 1Ch. 29:15 reads, "For we [are] strangers before thee, and sojourners, as [were] all our fathers: our days on the earth [are] as a shadow, and [there is] none abiding" (KJV).

of *parting* with every pleasant *Object of Sense*; to withdraw your Hearts from things below, and betimes to get that *Faith* in CHRIST, and in the *Life to come*, which is *the Victory that overcometh the World*.³ The more GOD has *given* You of *this* World, the more are you obliged to *devote* your selves to the Service of GOD in your Generation, as *good Stewards* of those *Talents* He has put into your Hands.

Suppose that GOD should *call* one or other of *You* to *die*, as suddenly as He call'd away your *dear* and *blooming Relative* a few days ago, amidst your *Acquisition* of Riches, and just as you have bro't all your *Designs* to bear for this World; have you considered how to give up all these *Abortive* Labours and *frustrated* Hopes? Have you set your Eyes and Heart upon a *Better World*?

I'm sure You must needs agree with me, that this is your *Wisdom* and true Interest, and will be your *Honour* and *Comfort* Living and Dying.

I heartily wish You this *Grace*; and pray GOD to make You great *Blessings* in your Day, to spare you long to live unto His own service and Glory, and to *Establish His Covenant* with your *Children*, whom He gives you to bring up in His *Fear*.⁴

I am with great Affection and Respect,

Your Obliged and Unworthy Servant,
in the Gospel of CHRIST,

Benjamin Colman.

3. Colman is referring to 1Jo. 5:4, which reads, "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, [even] our faith" (KJV).

4. Psa. 132:12 reads, "If thy children will keep my covenant and my testimony that I shall teach them, their children shall also sit upon thy throne for evermore" (KJV).

TO THE
Children
 Of the TOWN.

Judith Sewalls, Apr. 30. 1714.

I take this Opportunity to *Address you*, into whose hands this *Sermon* may come, for your *Souls Good*. You have seen many of your *Own Age* Buried in the *Winter* past; divers of *whom* died very hopefully, and made a gracious End. You have *been Sick* (most of you) *your selves*; and many of you may remember the Religious *Frames* you were then in, and the holy *Desires* and *Purposes* you then had. Some have been so wrought upon by their Danger, that I hope truly they have been bro't home to CHRIST. I wish the number of such were greater.

You are *now*, many of *you*, much *affected* with the *Sudden Death* of Mrs. *Wainwright*; and now while your Hearts are *warm and tender*, I wou'd press you to *lay* it to heart, and receive Instruction from it.

Which of *you* all are more *likely* or *worthy* to live than the *Deceased Child was*? Where is there any One among you *fairer* in Body or in Mind? Which of you have a fairer Prospect for this World than *She* had? But that which was best of all, she appear'd to be *Pious and Gracious*.

I remember well with what delight and *thankfulness* she once and again Entertained the good *Counsels* and *Exhortations* I have given Her about Her *Spiritual State*. I have the *Comfort* now that I did my Duty toward Her in this particular and it much *Endear'd* me to Her. I now call upon *you, Child*, while you read these *Lines*, that you mind your *Soul*, and *pray* to GOD daily, and *fear to Sin*, and make Religion your

Business betimes; remembring the *Words* of the LORD JESUS, which He spake *when He was twelve year old*, Luk. 2. 49. *Wist ye not that I must be about my Fathers Business!*⁵

I have reason to think that the deceased *Child* was accustomed to *Secret Prayer*. They who have had Opportunity to *Observe*, have told me of her careful *Retirements*. Nor may I forget her gracious Care and Concern for her *younger* and *only Sister*, who lay dangerously Sick of a Fever but a few dayes before Her own death: *Lucy*, said she, do you *pray to GOD now for your self? and did you pray before you were taken Sick?* This looks as if *she* were no stranger unto *Prayer* her self. Her *last words* also were to ask the Prayers of Others for Her.

A *Praying Child* is, I hope, a *Gracious One*. *Children*, do you *Pray* to GOD daily for your Precious and Immortal Souls? Will you not be put upon doing so by this Example? May you not die so *suddenly* as not to have *time* to pray at last? Shou'd you not *Adore* the GRACE of GOD that *saves* you? and Improve the space He gives you? and say, as *One* of our Lovely *Children* did to her *Mother* on this Occasion: *GOD has many ways to bring Souls home to Himself, and ... may be this is to be the means of bringing me to Him.*

O that we could see a serious Concern in our Children for their Everlasting Interests? how *wise* and *grave* and *amiable* wou'd they then be? how *happy* and *safe* under the Care and Love of Divine Providence! in what *Honour* and *Esteem* wou'd they pass through the World? How *Useful* and what singular *Blessings* would they be in it? how *pleasant*, easie and cheerful might they *live, free from vanity and the Wounds of guilt!* and in what *peace* might they at last hope to Die?

This *Mercy and Grace* I wou'd in particular wish from GOD unto the *Surviving Sister*, the only *Immediate* remaining *Branch* of this *broken Family*; Beseeching *Almighty* GOD (if it may be His Will) to Restore Her perfectly from Her present *Languishments*, to *Adorn* Her with His Grace, and grant Her *Long to Live*, and be a *Mother in Israel*.

5. Luk. 2:49 reads, "And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" (KJV)

A Devout Contemplation

On the Early

DEATH

Of Pious and Lovely

Children.

JER. IX. 21.

*For Death is come up into our Windows, and is entred into our Palaces, to cut off the Children from without, and the Young men from the Streets.*⁶

How often doth the *Great GOD* repeat his *Calls* to us to look into our *Graves!* and how seasonable is this *Melancholy Subject* ever to us thro' our whole *Life!* The *affecting Strokes* of His Providence return *surprisingly* upon us, every now and then, as the *Clouds after the Rain.*⁷

We have had a *dark* and sorrowful *long Winter* by reason of the *Untimely Deaths* (as we are ready to say) of many of our *dear Children*, and hopeful *Young People*. And now this *last Week* a very *sudden awful Death* has taken away *One of the fairest Flowers in this Garden of GOD;* One of the most *Blooming and Lovely Children* in the *Town or Land*, whether we speak of *Body or Mind*.

6. Jer. 9:21.

7. Most probably refers to Ecc 12:2, which reads, "While the sun, or the light, or the moon, or the stars, be not darkened, nor the clouds return after the rain" (KJV).

I wou'd take *this Occasion* therefore, for the profit both of Elder and Younger Persons, to recollect the *Contemplations* which I have sometimes had on the *Meaning of Divine Providence*, in such grievous distressing Dispensations.

Our *Context* is one of the most *mournful Chapters* that you can find in all the *Holy Scriptures*. *Jeremiah*, the *Weeping Prophet*, does in the most *pathetical* words that *Art* can chuse and lay together, excite Himself and others unto *Holy Sorrow* on the forefight of the Calamities coming upon *Judea* and *Jerusalem*, by the conquering and cruel *Arms* of the King of *Babylon*. He wishes that *his own Head were Waters*, and *his Eyes a fountain of Tears*, that he might weep day and night, for the stain of the *Daughter of his People*. He weeps for their *Sins*, which he therefore Enumerates; and then He weeps *afresh* over the prospect of GOD's judgments, the sorrowful Fruit, and dreadful Punishment of their Sins: in which he must be a *Stock* rather than *Man*, who is not affected with the *Hand and Anger of Divine Providence*.⁸

This was the *bitter Mourning* in the *Context*: v. 15. *Therefore thus saith the LORD of Hosts, the GOD of Israel; Behold, I will feed them, even this people, with Wormwood, and give them water of Gall to drink.* v. 17. *Consider ye, and call for the mourning Women, that they may come,—and let them make haste, and take up a Wailing for us' that our Eyes may run down with tears, and our eye-lids gush out with waters: for a voice of wailing is heard out of Zion! How are we spoiled!—Hear—O ye Women,—and teach your Daughters wailing, and every one her Neighbour Lamentation: for Death is come up into our Windows, and is entred into our Palaces; to cut off the Children from without, and the Young men from the Streets.*⁹

What can be more *soft, passionate and moving*, than the strain of the *Context*? and what *wound up* the strings of sorrow unto this *High Note*, but Death come into their Windows, to cut off the Children and Young people from the Streets! Well does the *Prophet* call for the *tenderest hearts*, and the *shrillest voices*, even of *Women*, to raise the Lamentation on this account.

8. The Biblical story that Colman is referring to is found in Jer. 9:1-26.

9. Jer. 9:15, 17.

All Divine *Judgments* call for our *Sorrowing* under Gods Hand and Rod. While God *distributeth sorrows in his Anger*, our Eyes should *pour out tears* unto God.¹⁰ We ought to *weep* with him that is in *Trouble*, and our *Eyes should mourn* by reason of affliction. But in no *Instance* does *Nature* teach & even force sorrow, more than in *Bereavements* and the Death of Children: This was the voice in *Rama, Rachel weeping for her Children, and would not be comforted, &c.*¹¹ It was said of *Mary, she goeth to the Grave to weep there*; a Melancholy place indeed to draw forth the Tears of Relations.¹²

But I'm aware that many may be *too apt* of themselves to *indulge Grief*. I will forbear therefore to Enlarge any further on the *Context*. Death is come up into our *Windows*: of the Chambers where the Sick lay. There's no locking our Doors against this *Officer*, when he comes to Arrest, or serve his Execution. Or rather, as a *Thief* in the Night *Steals in* at the Window, so does Death often steal as suddenly into our Houses, ere we are aware. Nor does it enter into the *Cottages of the Poor* only, but into the Houses of the Rich, the Dwellings of Rulers, and the *Palaces of Princes*. But that which I shall only attend to is, that it spares not the *tender pleasant Children*, nor the hail and *promising Youths*; These, a most sad part of its Execution, it *cuts off from the Streets*. The *Streets*, where the Young people were wont to *Walk*, and where the Children us'd to *Play*.

All the *Observation* that I shall raise from the Words, is this:

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10. Job. 21:17 reads, "How oft is the candle of the wicked put out! and [how oft] cometh their destruction upon them! [God] distributeth sorrows in his anger" (KJV) ; Job. 16:20 reads, "My friends scorn me: [but] mine eye poureth out [tears] unto God" (KJV).
 11. In Matthew 2, Herod hears of the birth of Christ, and attempts to destroy Jesus by killing every child in Bethlehem. Mat 2:18 reads, "In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping [for] her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not" (KJV).
 12. Jhn. 11:31 reads, "The Jews then which were with her in the house, and comforted her, when they saw Mary, that she rose up hastily and went out, followed her, saying, She goeth unto the grave to weep there" (KJV).

DOCTRINE

That abundance of the Children of Men, and of our most hopeful, pious and promising Children do Die Young.

A very plain, and poor, little Observation you'll be ready to say; what any Child may make, and I would pray *them* to do so. I'm sure, you don't think that I intend to labour in the *proof* of this obvious *Truth*, and Universal Experience of Mankind. There is great *Inequality* as to the length of peoples lives here in the Body, tho' at the *longest* the life of man is very *short*; as a Vapour that endureth but a short time.¹³ There are the *untimely Births which never see the Light*: and many that are *Born alive*, yet only number a *few breaths, hours and days*, and *expire* again, without fulfilling their *Week or Month*.¹⁴ What *brittle* and tender things are our *Babes*, and what multitudes die in *Infancy! Delights, lent* us for a year it may be, and then *taken* (we hope) to the Delights of God for ever. In *Childhood* the blooming flower falls too, and *Autumn* comes almost before the *Spring's* begun. If thro' a million Dangers, mortal to others, we get up to *Youth*, yet how suddenly and often does Death cut down the verdant *budding plant!* And when from Youth we are got to *Manhood*, even then in the prime of our strength we are often snatcht away from Families, from Service, and from all Worldly Enjoyments. Job 21. 23. *The number of his months are cut off in the midst; he dies in his full strength, his Breasts are full of Milk, and his Bones are moistned with Marrow.*¹⁵

Thus is it with the Children of Men; and this *happens alike to all*, both to the *Evil and the Good*. Now my *Design* is with Modesty and Holy Reverence to Enquire into the *Reasons* of Providence in this particular, which tho' it may sometimes appear very dark, and be very grievous to particular persons, *yet certainly* is in it self very *Wise*, and Holy and Gracious.

13. Colman may be alluding to Jam. 4:14, which reads, "Whereas ye know not what [shall be] on the morrow. For what [is] your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away" (KJV).

14. Job. 3:16 reads, "Or as an hidden untimely birth I had not been; as infants [which] never saw light" (KJV).

I am to *Observe* then, that abundance of our *hopeful and lovely* and promising Children, and those too that are *really Pious and Godly* in their Childhood, do Die Young. It always *has been*, and still *is* so. Righteous *Abel*, the *first fruits* of fallen Man to God, the first *Martyr* for Religion, and the *first-born* of the Grave, died Young.¹⁶ *Enoch* was no *Old Saint* in his Day, tho' ripe for Heaven, when God took him. He died not, it's true, but was the *Earnest* to the Old World of the *Resurrection*.¹⁷ The *ten children of Job*, who we hope Inherited their pious Fathers *Sanctity, and Prayers*, died together in their Youth. Heavy the Tydings to their amazed *Parents*—*The House fell upon the Young men, and they are dead, and I only am escaped alone to tell thee*.¹⁸ Sometimes the *Holiest*, and whom God loves best, he takes *soonest*. So it was we know in the peaceful Death of the young Prince *Abijah*. 1 King. 14. 13. *He only of Jeroboam shall come to the Grave, because in him there was found some good thing*.¹⁹ To name no more, Our Blessed *Saviour* himself has *sanctify'd an Early Death* by dying in the *prime* of the Life of Man.

And now give me leave to do some Honour unto the *Divine Providence*, (as it shall enable me) in ordering these Early Deaths. It is a thing very *grievous to us*, lamentable to see, and heavy to bear, and so it should be; yet we may not complain of the *Divine Government*, no not in *this*; however grievous it be to *Grace and Sense* together. Let the *Sovereign* GOD call soon for them that fear him, and are but beginning to serve him, and so are likely to honour him, and be Blessings in the World; whole *Hope and Crown* they are; yet is he easily justified in his doing, and clear in his judging thus. Now that I may begin right on this *Argument*, which is one of the *deep* things of God; Let me say,

15. Colman is actually referring to Job. 21:21, 24, which read, "For what pleasure [hath] he in his house after him, when the number of his months is cut off in the midst? His breasts are full of milk, and his bones are moistened with marrow" (KJV).

16. The story of Cain and Abel is found in Gen. 4:1-26.

17. The story of Enoch is found in Gen 5:1-32.

18. The story of Job and his ten children is found in Job 1:1-22.

19. 1Ki. 14:13 reads, "And all Israel shall mourn for him, and bury him: for he only of Jeroboam shall come to the grave, because in him there is found [some] good thing toward the LORD God of Israel in the house of Jeroboam" (KJV).

1. *The Sovereignty of God* is enough, and instead of a thousand Reasons, to his Creatures in any of the Dispensations of his Providence, which may be dark to them. I'm afraid that the *Sovereignty* of God is not at all conceived of, nor adored by multitudes of Christians, as it ought to be. The *Scripture* every where speaks in the most *exalted strains* that can be about it. And when the *Dispensations* of God are such a surprise and confound our weak Reason and Understanding, then very often instead of going about to satisfy our scruples, and level them to our Capacity, it bids us *worship*, instead of *arguing* about the Unsearchable Councils of Heaven; and contemplating the Greatness of God to be *dumb*. So in Gods dealings with his Servant *Job*, when he and his Friends had been contemplating the possibility of such Inflictions on an Upright person; at last *Elihu* takes up the Argument, and reproves them all for presuming to talk so freely of the Great GOD; asking them if God were to give them Account of what He did or could do? or if they must be dissatisfy'd with the Almighty's Actions when ever they could not account for them? He vouchsafes them no other satisfaction but the Greatness & *Dominion* of God; and then God himself spake afterward out of the *Whirlwind*, it was in the same lofty Style and Reasoning; proper to, and worthy of a God. *Job* 33. 12, 13, 17. 36. 22, 23, &c.²⁰

Very justly may the Great GOD *disdain* to let us reason with him against any Circumstances which He orders for us, either in respect of Life or Death. Shall not the *Clay* ly still under the *Potters* skilful Hand? *Balaam* was provok'd to stand corrected by his *Ass*; and yet the *Ass* taught the Prophet with Justice and Mildness: Yet *Vain Man*, that is born like the Wild Asses Colt, would be wise before God, even to reprove his Maker!²¹

20. *Job* 33:12, "Behold, [in] this thou art not just: I will answer thee, that God is greater than man" (KJV) ; *Job* 33:13, "Why dost thou strive against him? for he giveth not account of any of his matters" (KJV) ; *Job* 33:17, "That he may withdraw man [from his] purpose, and hide pride from man" (KJV) ; *Job* 36:22, "Behold, God exalteth by his power: who teacheth like him?" (KJV) ; *Job* 36:23, "Who hath enjoined him his way? or who can say, Thou hast wrought iniquity?" (KJV).

21. In *Num.* 22:1-41, Balaam's path is obstructed by an invisible Angel of the Lord. Balaam's donkey sees the angel and stops in its tracks, causing Balaam to punish it for stopping in front of the angel that he himself cannot see.

Let me further observe here Two Things.

1. *Life and Death are among those things that absolutely belong to the Divine Sovereignty.* Who but the God of the Spirits of all flesh shall say, when our Souls shall come into these dwellings of flesh, and when leave them? The Key of *Hades* is in his Hand, and it is one of the *Insignia* of his Supream Dominion. The Life he gave is his own, and shall he not do what he will with it?

2. *God is to be resigned to even with respect to the degrees of present Serviceableness, or future Glory.* We should desire indeed a *Distinction* in both *Worlds*, owning our selves unworthy mean while of a Name in either of them. But in the midst of *Usefulness* here, and of the prospect of *Advancement* in a better World, we must bear a spirit of absolute *Submission* if God call us to Die. To do *much* we should always desire, that we have done *no more*, should be our Humiliation; that we have done *any thing* is matter of Thanksgiving, and if it must be no more, we must (like our Famous and Eminent Mr. *Mitchel* when a dying) bless God for the least, which we never deserv'd, and so resign our else desired Life. If we have any place in the *Firmament* of Glory, we must leave it to God to ordain our *magnitude* and *brightness* there; and as one *Star differs from another Star in Glory*, so is the *Resurrection of the Dead*. Now he that telleth the Number of the *Stars*, and calleth them all by Name, has done the same in Numbring the *Blest*, and making them *Vessels of Honour*.

I proceed now to say,

2. *Our lovely, gracious Elect Children cannot be too soon in Heaven.* Happiness and Bliss in the fullness and perfection thereof can never come too soon. If God takes the Elect *Infant* from the *Mothers Breast*, or the *Fathers Knees*, to Himself an infinitely better Father; pray, what loss is it? How blessed is it for the *Babe* that no more days or months were ordained for it in this scorching and freezing world of ours! in this world of Sin and Affliction! Will the Babe pine after the Mothers Breasts, when Angels have taken it in their brighter Arms to carry it to, and lay it in the Bosome of *JESUS*; the Good Shepherd of Souls, who layes the *Lambs* in his Bosome? Surely 'tis best of all to go to an immediate Everlasting Rest, since God ordains it; never

to have felt at all the Evils of guilt or trouble which the Godly are so often groaning under! Well then, we are never too young to be happy: Happiness can never come too soon; that *Surprize* must at last be exceeding *pleasant*.

3. *Sometimes it has been the desire and choice of Holy Children, with submission to the Sovereign Pleasure and Wisdom of God, not to have a long continuance here in the World.* This is a rare thing indeed, yet we lately had an *Instance* of it in our Neighbourhood, in that Excellent *Youth*, the *Son* of Major *Fitch*, whose gracious Example, and lamented Death will not be soon forgotten. It was a pretty frequent *passage* with him, that he saw little in this World to make one desire to live long here. 'Twas a sign that his heart was soon and strangely set on Heavenly Things. This requires some very comfortable degrees of hope and *good assurance* of our Interest in a better Life. There are but few even of the Children of God in advanced years, who upon settled and weighed principles of Devotion, arrive unto an *habitual willingness* to Die. Yet some strange *Instances* of it have been found under the Early Impressions of Divine Grace: The *fear of Sin*, the longing for *freedom* from it, and the desire to be *with Christ*, may sometimes execute even the desire to be *dissolved*, preserving *Resignation* to God: but the *Glorifying* God on Earth, the Serving our Generation according to the Will of God, and the Believing in the *Alsufficiency* of the Grace of God to *keep* us thro' the World, must make Life when prolonged, not only *easie*, but *delightful* to us, and an *Esteemed Mercy* of God to us. Certainly to *abide* in the flesh is very *needful* and *desirable*, while *to live is Christ*: but when we change this *thought*, and can say to our selves—to *me to die is Gain*, it may be difficult not to *verge* too much with the Holy *Apostle* in his desires rather of a dissolution; & to *groan being burdened in this Tabernacle*; knowing that while we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord, Phil. 21. 23. 2 Cor. 5. begin.²² Some Good People have *wish'd* for a *Sudden Death*; but most

22. 2Cr. 5:4 reads, "For we that are in [this] tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life" (KJV).

of the Children of God with great Reason joyn rather in that part of our *Littany*, to be *preserved from it*. However, it very much takes away from the *darkness* of the Dispensation, when it comes to be the matter of a devout persons desire and choice. But these are Extraordinary *Cases*, not to be bro't into *Example*, nor to be commended to our Imitation ; & therefore not to be insisted on.

4. *Possibly God may have consulted the Spiritual advantage of a desirable and gracious Child in its Early Death*. I mean both in respect of *Grace* here, and *Glory* hereafter. Had the Child lived, you know how certainly it had been exposed in this place of sin, temptation and danger: what from the *Snake in the Grass*, latent Indwelling Sin, and that *Adder in the Path*, the Devil and Satan; what from an Insinuating World, and the lusting flesh resisting the *Spirit* in all its heavenly desires. It is a Circumstance of great happiness to be once safely past all these *hazards*, & out of the reach of these mortal Enemies and *fiery darts*; never to be tempted, nor to sin more; but to be confirm'd in a State of Grace, and ascertain'd, posses'd of Everlasting Happiness. Now God only knows how little a longer time might have been improved; how little might have been got by it, how much might have indeed been suffered by it. It is a sad truth, but a certain one, *that many Good people have found little or no advantage to their Spiritual Life by length of time*. They were Converted young, it may be, and if they had died young, they had been in the same place in Heaven, if not in a better, then having liv'd to more years. How often have people gone backward, quench'd the Spirit of Grace, and hurt their own Souls. Take the Instance of *Solomon*; how gloriously did he begin, and outshone in Grac, as he did in Wisdom and Dignity: He was the *Wonder* of the Church, as his *Temple* was of the World: He went before the very *Ministers* of Religion, and the Lords Prophets in zeal and in devotion: and now had he died young, his Grace had been without a *stain* upon it: but he liv'd to show the *frailty* of the Greatest Saint in a State of Worldly *Affluence*, and the hazard there is from *Sensual Objects* in our greatest Attainments here below. I dare not presume to think whether his fall has put him a great way *back in the Lift* of the Glorify'd, his Repentance and Recovery being glorious in

our Eyes; but certainly if his *Graces* had not been brighter above, had he died in his unspotted youth, and before his fall, yet had his *Name* among Saints on Earth been so.

We are *Sailing* in a very tempestuous and uncertain *Sea*, like *Mariners* that sometimes set out with a fair and strong *Gale*, and make half their Passage in a few days; but then they meet with some rough contrary Winds that force 'em *to Ly by* at least, if they are not *driven back*, and have many a League to measure over again, if ever they *make* their Passage at all. If the *Ship* springs a *leak*, tho' it do not founder, but after many hardships the *Port* is gained, yet the Loss and Damage sustained is usually very much. So are there many that Set out well in their Youth, and at last get to Heaven, but it is sorely *shatter'd* and *broken*, through their falls before one temptation and another in their way. The Floods do not *drown* them in perdition, but yet thro' their ill Conduct and foolish Management much of their rich Freight and Lading is *damnify'd* and thrown Overboard. They can show the *Riches* they once had put aboard them, but alas, *canker'd* and marr'd now: they are not when they die, even what they were in their early years, but their *Beauty* marr'd by the advance of *Age*; which tho' it be natural to the Body, yet it is unnatural to the *Immortal Soul*. They die *Penitents* it's true, but not *Proficients*; and tho' they get to Heaven at last, yet no higher there than if they had died in their younger days.

Upon all, say, if it is not very possible that God may graciously have consulted the Spiritual Advantage of many an Elect Vessel of Mercy, in their Early Death. We have no foresight of things to come, but God has the most perfect that can be; and tho' there's no *foresight* of Grace in the Saints before . . . given, but only in the purpose of God to give . . . for in our corrupt nature it never could be at all . . . of his free Gift; yet in the best of Saints there's an easie foresight to us all of Corruption ready to break out upon all Occasions, without Gods restraint and prevention thereof: and to God it is *open and naked*, how good people will act if they come to be in these and those Circumstances. Some God *permits* for wise Ends, and the Good of others, to live and shew the prevalence of Corruption in them, against suitable strivings and measures of

his Grace; and others God *prevents* from being like Instances and *Sufferers*, by a happy Early Death. And tho' he does not say, as to particular persons (and less may we) that this is his End; yet possibly it may be so in the very *Instances* we are mourning over. Indeed for ought we know, and they liv'd they wou'd have *grown* in Grace more and more; and it is meet for us to satisfy our selves after this manner; when the matter is necessarily left so *doubtful* to us, and *hazardous*. But so much for the particular.

5. *The Righteous are sometimes taken away from the Evil to come.* As the Prophet observes, *Isa.* 57. 1. And sometimes it's certain, that Hopeful and Pious Children are so, as *Abijah* was: 1 *King.* 14. 13. And King *Josiah* too, to whom it was promised as a token of Divine Favour; 2 *Kings* 32. 20. *That because his heart was tender and humble before God, therefore he should be gathered early to his Fathers, & his Eyes should not see the Evil that was coming on Judah and Jerusalem.*

Long Life here in this World is unavoidable attended with *many Sorrows*, especially if a person be pious and devout. Mens *own Sins*, and the Sins of *others*, especially of *Relatives*; our *Afflictions* also by *Bodily Pains* and *Sickness*, and by *Bereavements* in the Estate and *Relatives*, multiply Grief upon us thro' our present *Pilgrimage*, and make the days of the years of it very Evil. They that die young are soon out of this *dark and suffering Scene*; if they had liv'd longer, there had been possibly many things which they little foresaw to have imbitter'd their lives to 'em; yea, the very things (many of 'em) wherein they promis'd themselves the most comfort. How often have the *Relatives* that Survive some to bless their *Departed Dead*, saying,—*Blessed are the closed Eyes that never saw these things.* This is true, both as to *Sins* and *Judgments*, and those both *publick* and *private*. For *Instance*, it may seem to us every way to have been happier for *Eli* to have died young, than in his *Age* to have seen the Iniquity of his *Sons*, and their Death in their Sins, together with the Captivity of the *Ark* which he died under the heavy Tydings of. How bitter is it to a Godly person, to live and see Children and Brethren grow up and prove *Apostates* from God, Children of *Belial*, and perishing under the Judicial Strokes of Divine Providence. *It is*

better never to live to bear, than to bring forth these Sons of Sorrow. God sees (says the late Excellent Mr. N Taylor) ‘the rising *Storms* to come, ‘and when they wou’d Overset the *Vessel*, and therefore dispatches the ‘Sailing *Orders*, and provides a safe *Harbour*: His *Greens* he early *Houses* ‘also in a warm place, because they are so tender, that the sharpness of ‘the coming *Weather* wou’d *nip and kill them*. The mean while there’s ‘*Corn* that can endure the cold of *Winter*, and the heat of the *Summer*; ‘and it is fitting that it stand and grow full ripe, and be gather’d when ‘it is *turn’d white for the Harvest*. The hopeful Youth is sometimes taken away in favour *from the Evil to come*.

6. Many things respecting the *Nature of Saving Grace* are to be *learn’d* from, and are *seen in the Early Deaths* of pious and hopeful Young people. As,

1. *It shows us that Grace intends not to secure us a long Life here in the Body.* No, it is the *assimilation* of the Soul unto another Life, and its *preparation* for it: it is to *wean* the Soul from the sensitive life, and to *raise it* above the same: it *points* the Soul unto the life of spirits in holiness and happiness that is *to come*; and on no pretence therefore can it fix the heart down in any desires or prospect of living long here. Indeed, *Grace never shortned any ones life here*, but has prolong’d rather many a mans; *length of days are in her right hand and long life shall she add unto thee*: Prov. 3. 16. There is nothing in a principle of Grace and Holy living, but what tends to the preservation and lengthening out of mans life. It bears antipathy to, and detestation of all those *Intemperances* and vicious *Excesses*, which shorten mens days. It does by *trust and prayer* commit us to the care & blessing of the God of our lives. It desires to live to his Glory; and it secures to us that so far as God sees it best for us, we shall live in his world. But no further can a principle of Grace look to a continuance of the present life. No, the first and chief *Relation* of Divine Grace, and *Benefit* from it is unto a life to come. Col. 3. 3. *For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in GOD.* The *Spiritual Life* only is worthy to be called *our Life*; and *this* is hid with *Christ*; as the life of the *Branches* is hid in the Root: So are our Hopes for Eternity deposited and laid up with *Christ* in Heaven.

2. Again, The Death of pious Children teaches us this also of a *Principle of Grace, that where it once is, the Soul is safe*. Let Death come as *soon* as it will after a persons *Conversion*, when once a Sanctifying Change has passed on him, be he never so young, the Soul is safe. It is indeed *very desirable* to us on many accounts, that there be some good *space* granted to us for the *Exercise* of Grace, and the *Actings* of the Regenerate Life: that so *the Great GOD* may have some Honor and Service from us, the fruits of that Grace which He hath Implanted in us; and *we* some good Evidence and hope of His Grace in us, and of our Title to Eternal Life; that so we may at last die in peace and *Comfort* as well as *Safety*. But this is not *absolutely necessary*: and a person really dies in peace, in a State of Salvation, and goes to Heaven, if a Change be truly wro't in the Soul, tho' God do not spare him any length of time to bring forth the fruits of his Grace. And the Early Deaths of pious *Ones* may satisfie us, *That Salvation depends not on length of time for the continued Exercise of Grace*; tho' it be in its self a Favour of GOD greatly to be desired, if it may be His Will.

3. Hence also does it evidently appear, *that Salvation is not of Works, but of Free Grace altogether*. If it were of Works of Righteousness wro't by us, it were much to be apprehended that they who die young could never be saved. If *Infants* are saved, it must be of free Grace, for these can have no *Works* of their own: no, not so much as one *Act of Faith* are they capable of: and yet *of such is the Kingdom of Heaven*. Multitudes of *them* are sanctify'd and justify'd, and taken to Heaven. In some proportion it is thus with him that dies young: suppose within the *Month* or the *Year* wherein the Grace of God has taken hold of his Heart; when he is but just beginning to live to GOD, is but turning to Him in his own apprehension, and by his own confession has done nothing for Him; but was beginning he hop'd in earnest to think of doing something, & *Now* must be gone: However, he dies in Christ and goes to Him: but then how rich and free is that Grace which saves him? *Where is Boasting?* Where is any life of working so much as to be imagined?

Wherefore to finish this *Head, How amiable and adorable doth this render saving Grace to us!* that however young we die, 'tis possible to be

saved by it; that how soon soever it takes possession of us, it puts us into a secure and happy State. O how lovely and desirable a thing then is it! how very valuable and precious!

See you *One* that has but just begun to seek and serve GOD, and GOD has so suddenly, instantly, presently rewarded and glorified him! when CHRIST his *Judge* shall name this *Child* with honour in the *Last Day*, what can it answer?—LORD, when did I ever serve Thee? What did I ever do for Thee? From the day that thy Grace found me, I had not a year, not a month, not a week (it may be) allowed me to live to honour Thee! No, Gracious LORD! in the day almost wherein thou didst please to *Sanctifie* me thou didst also *Glorifie* me. E'er I cou'd find thy *Grace* in my Soul, I found my self *taken* to thy *Glory*; and as I was but beginning to *seek* thy Mercy, I found my self Embraced in the *Arms* of it.

O what should render GOD & His Grace more amiable to us, than his glorifying it after this manner to the young Penitent, the *Infant Saint*! No sooner born from *Above*, than taken *Thither*.

7. And *lastly*, The Death of those that are pious and gracious in the Youth is of *excellent Use, and great Necessity, to quicken and excite their Acquaintance, Friends and Relations to an instant and careful Preparation for their own Dying Hour*. Many are the *Instructions and Admonitions* in it, both to *Elder* and *Younger* People. It may be of great Service to *Survivors*. And this is a *Reason* worthy of a *Good GOD*, whose care is for the Souls of *many* in his Providential Dealings with One.

Let me then *Observe*, and so make the proper *Application* of the *Doctrine*, in this *Illustration* of it.

1. That to be sure in the Early Death of pious Children, there are many Useful *Admonitions intended to those that are Young*. Younger *Friends and Relatives* should take the *Warnings* of GOD, which are *firstly and directly* meant to them.

You must be admonish'd, *O Young Person*, that you your self *may die soon and suddenly* likewise. You should never see one of your *Own Age* buried, or one younger than your self die, but you should seriously think—'It might have been *my turn* as well, or mine may be the *next*,

and within a *few* days (if not to *day* or to *morrow*) I may follow. What am I better than my *Companion*? or it may be my life is not of half the worth that his or hers was! nor has been half so well improved or redeemed . . . or if it has, yet this makes no difference; since the *best* die young.

See one proof of that *Truth*, Psal. 39. 5. *Verily every man at his best Estate is altogether Vanity*. A Flourishing Youth and Piety met together seem one of the best Estates of Man: the strength of our years united with the strength of Grace. 1 Joh. 2. 14. *I write unto you young men, because ye are strong*, &c. Yet in this *Vigour* of Nature and Grace both, may we suddenly expire and vanish away.

Wherefore *Early Religion is the highest Wisdom, and Interest of all the Children of men*; the most *Important* and necessary thing that can be. You can never begin too soon to think of your Souls, since you may every day look to die. This alone ought to awaken you to *remember your Creator* in the days of your Youth, and as you enter upon this life, to chuse that *Good part* which can never be taken away from you; and to Seek first the Kingdom of God, and his Righteousness. The *Funeral* of every *Infant* or *Child*, calls all the Children in the Streets to be thinking of, and preparing for their own Death: for if you are not too young to Die, neither are you to be *Religious*, and to make your Souls your care.

It *warns* you now in your Youth, that you *need better Friends & Dependence* than any in this World, and a better *Portion* than this World can flatter you withal. For be you in the arms of your *Parents*, or bereav'd of them can you number up a great many *Friends* that heartily respect you, and care for your Interests? Are the *Comforts* of this Life surrounding you and your Worldly *Estate* increasing upon you? Yet a day or an hour may snatch you away from all; while your helpless Friends stand in Amazement and Sorrow about you, to see you expire. *That Child alone is safe & happy, who has the Great GOD for its Father, and Guardian and Portion.*

Children! Let me put it to you, whether you have ever yet began to think of your *Souls*, your *Sins*, your *Saviour*, your *Baptism*, your *Dying*

Hour, and of *Eternity*. Do you *pray*, do you fear to sin, do you take any care to be Saved? O what Reason there is to fear that few of you little consider any thing of this nature! which of you almost has any tho't about Death now in your Childhood? You scarce seem to apprehend it *possible*, and much less do you realize it as very *likely*, that you may die young. Will you never begin to *think*, Young People? not one *sober tho't* of your own Stature in the Grave. GOD *teach* thee betimes so to *number thy days*, as to *apply thy heart unto Wisdom*.

GOD can make the Death of your *Companions* a most awakening and effectual *Sermon* to you: and it may be worth anothers dying to do thy Soul good, and bring thee home to Christ: It *preaches* to thee in a more *affecting manner* than any meer words can, and in the *happy season to Relatives*, when their affections are stirred, and their Souls the more easily come at. And O that our Young people wou'd but hear the good Counsels from the *Funerals* of their pious Friends that die young! how well worth were it their dying, betimes so fasten such Instructions for the Salvation of others.

2. The death of hopeful Children and Young people may be of great Spritual Advantage also to *Elder persons*. *Parents* should be quickened in Holy Living, by the death of their Children; and the *Grey Head* should receive Instruction & Awakening by the fall of the blooming Youth. There are many things said to them that are in *Advanced Age*, in the Death of their *Juniors*.

Are these fallen so *soon*, how *long ago* then might I have been in my Grave? may the *Elder Christian* say. Adore the Sovereign Grace of GOD, that has so long spared you. Had you been cut down then soon, think what had become of you, & where had you been long since? Consider why God spares you. *Shame* your self for your Defects, and *fear*: If the *green tree* be fell'd, laden with Blossoms, or first ripe fruits; what them shall be done to the *dry*? Shall *that* stand always *barren* and unprofitable, to *cumber the Ground*? What? see we a Child Older in Grace, and wiser and better than we in Years? our selves not so ripe for Heaven, as those that were *Unborn* when we were Men & Women! So the *Army of Israel* blush'd when they saw the *ruddy Boy* excel them all in Faith and Valour.

Are so many *Young Ones* in Heaven, and are we *Old* and never like to get thither? How can we bear the tho't? or how shall we when Death comes?

Are so many Young Ones in Heaven, and You *O Aged Believer so little Ready* in your own Account? Your Evidences so little clear? Your Interest in Christ so doubtful? Your Days spun and worn out to so little purpose? How should it quicken you to give all diligence in making your Election sure?

Do so many Younger die in *Christ*, and have not we had all their Opportunities, and more by far than all those which they have so well and timely Improved? How will they rise up in Judgment against us, and condemn us! O fatal *difference* between man and man! *Some* dying young in *Christ*, *others* living old *Christless*.

Take the *Alarm*, *O Dying Aged Sinner*! if one come to thee from the *Dead* thou wilt repent! & that too as we paint the bright *Angels* of GOD with a *Youthful Mein and Air*! let him tell thee with a charming voice of the *Glories* he has *so soon* pass'd into, and invite thee tho' *so late* to seek a part in those unspeakable and Eternal Felicities! What? will not this *Glorious Vision* it self Convert thee! No, tho' one come like Lazarus from the Bosome of Abraham unto you.

You that are *Parents*, be you quickened to *think seriously of dying your selves*. The fruit of your Bodies are already (some of them) in the Grave; how soon may you look to be there to? Death that has already torn out some of your *Bowels* will soon pierce your *Heart*. Parents are so secure and forgetful of their own Mortality, that Death must need lay its cold hand on their Bosome, and take their Babes thence, to awaken 'em: And surely they will sensibly feel themselves Mortal, while they see a part of themselves terr'd already. So *David* graciously improv'd the death of *his Child*,—*I shall go to it*. Say thus, *O Parent*, to thy self: I shall soon follow; and be it thy care (O my Soul) so to improve thy present Sorrows, and the Residue of thy few Evil Dayes in the flesh, that I may meet *mine* whom I have committed to *Christ*, with Joy in His Presence at the last.

Three words of Advice let me leave with *Parents*, respecting their *Children*.

1. To begin betimes to Institute them for GOD. We must give them up to GOD in *Baptism*; and as soon as they are able to learn teach them to know God, and fear Him, and serve Him. Betimes tell 'em of their Precious Souls, and of their Glorious Saviour, and of their Dying Condition. Put the betimes on preparing for Death: they will die never the sooner for it, but may much the better, and you'll have the more peace and comfort in their death, if they are *suddenly* taken from you. Your Children are daily liable to the stroke of Death, where then (O Parent) is your Care or Love or Kindness to them, if you do not what you can to prepare 'em for it! And how reverently ought Children to mind what their Parents say to 'em about their Future and Everlasting Interests.

2. *Let Parents prepare betimes to part* with their lovely Children, and set their *Soul even as a weaned Child*; even before they wean their *Babes* from their Breast. We must look for *Abrahams* trial and Emulate his Faith, Gen. 22. 2. *Take now thy Son, thine only Son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and offer him up to Me.* Our *best* are GOD's Due; What He made for Himself, and *lends* for a while to us. GOD comes into His *Garden*, and plucks which *flower* He pleases, and which but the most *beautiful & fragrant* do men gather? Let the Great GOD take *his own*, & let us make *Abels* acceptable Offering, *the best of our Flock*. The *Shunamite*, that *Great Woman*, had one *wondrous* Son, a special *Gift* of Heaven to her in Reward of her *Piety*; but soon had She the sorrow to see him die, and that very *suddenly*, in her *lap*: She made no *Shriek* in that terrible *Surprise*, nor so much as she'd her *Husband*, the partner of her Joies and Griefs: She went to GOD, i.e. unto his *Prophets* feet, where her humble silent *Action* spake those Anguished which no Words could utter: the mean while her Resignation to the Will of GOD, & her Contentment therein, was most admirable: the *Child was dead*, yet said she,—*All is well*. Give me leave thus to *Pharaphrase* it.

What GOD Ordains is *Well* and *Best*.

It's *Well* with *Ours* when gone to Rest.

It's *Well* with *Us* who stay behind,

If more from Earth and Flesh refin'd,

We're patient, pray'rful, meek, resign'd.

3. *Let us be Comforted and quieted in the Death of hopeful Children.* A Child in Heaven is well provided for, well *dispos'd* of, well *preferr'd*. It has a good *Portion*, is gone to a good *Father*, to a good *Family*, to good *Company*; to an Everlasting Rest and to Infinite Blessedness. The Covenant of God embraces our Children with more tenderness, than our Arms ever did. Blessed are the Dead in Christ, that are soon pass'd from Sin and Sorrow here, to the Eternal Fulness of Holiness and Comfort in the Presence of GOD for ever.

We must not repeat *Jacobs* Error, who supposed himself bereaved, when Joseph was only *Advancing* under the special Favour of Providence in *Another Countrey*. He would needs be an *Inconsolable* Mourner, and go down into the Grave after his Son mourning. But in time he heard of all his Glory in Egypt, (which what was it to the Glory of the least of our Little Ones that behold the Face of God in Heaven) and then the good *Patriarchs Spirit* revived, and he said,—*Joseph my Son is yet alive, I'll go and see him before I die.* Truly, so, *O Christian*, the Child thou mournest over may be now in Heaven an Glorify'd; It is the Hope and Faith it is so: let thy *sinking* Spirit then *revive* and say,—By the *Grace* of God, I will endeavour so to *live*, that I may *See it* in Glory when I *Die*.

F I N I S.

Appendix B

A Solicitous Mother

A Late
L E T T E R
FROM
A solicitous Mother,
To her only Son.
Both living in
NEW ENGLAND

*B O S T O N * N . E .*

Printed and Sold by S. Kneeland and T. Green
Queen St. 1757

Introduction to Appendix B, *A Late Letter from a Solicitous Mother, to her Only Son*. (1746)

While the Solicitous Mother's letter fulfills some of the conventions of the Puritan spiritual narrative, its main concerns are for her son. She traces the path of her own spiritual struggles and conversion, but she turns most of her attention to her son's state of sin and lack of grace. Her letter—it is not a legacy—promises him ultimate happiness once he joins the church as a full member, and she appends two poems by Isaac Watts as a foretaste of her child's heavenly reward, and her own. As opposed to mothers' legacy texts, the mother here remains unidentified. From the text, it is apparent that he is her only child, although the mother's anonymity makes this impossible to confirm. Fulfilling her proper maternal role, she demonstrates great concern for the salvation of her offspring. The mother expresses her fear that God's answering of her prayers for a son, and her subsequent care of the one child with which she was blessed, will have been in vain: "Can I bear the thought that the son that was given me in answer to my prayers ... should be the possession of the devil?" (9)

Unlike the legacy books included in this collection, the mother's letter does not give due attention to spiritual conversion. Her son's wickedness overshadows any discussion of her personal spiritual journey. In particular, the poem that is appended to the letter highlights her overriding purpose for composing the letter to her son: she wants him to recognize the advantages of early conversion and pursue a relationship with Christ. In her effort to encourage conversion, the poem, like James Janeway's *A Token for Children*, emphasizes the possibility of early death and the necessity of early reflection on one's sinful nature. A call from an anonymous mother to an anonymous son to convert, *A Late Letter from a Solicitous Mother* becomes a piece that could be appropriated by the church to promote religious doctrine and individual responsibility for the soul.

Nathaniel Coverly, whose edition we use here, published diverse texts from 1770 until 1803. He printed the anonymous mother's letter in 1800 after it had already been publicly disseminated. Some of his

publications were periodicals, such as the *Plymouth Journal and Gentlemen and Ladies Town and Country Magazine*, but he also printed editions of children's instructional books, including the 1762 version of *The New-England Primer, Improved* and the 1784 edition of *Spiritual Songs for Children*. Interestingly, one of his earliest publications was a reprinting of Mary Rowlandson's *A Narrative of the Captivity, Sufferings and Removes of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson*. The diversity of his publications suggests that he was open to producing texts of varying natures, and that he did not discriminate against a book based on the gender of its author. Many of the works that were published by Coverly were reprints rather than first editions. *A Late Letter from a Solicitous Mother*, then, fits in well with his body of work, as it had been published earlier by other printers and went into multiple editions. The popularity of the letter is evinced by the multiple printers that took interest in disseminating it in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Evidently the anonymous letter was well-received and continued to have an impact as a spiritual guide into the early nineteenth-century.

Copy Text

A Late Letter from a Solicitous Mother To Her Only Son. Both Living in New England went into more than ten editions and multiple reprints across New England. For example, it was reprinted and sold by D. & J. Kneeland, opposite to the prison, in Queen-Street in Boston, in 1763 and 1764, and printed and sold by S. Preston of Amherst in 1797, by Nathaniel Coverly, Junr. of Salem in 1800, by Angier March, of Newburyport in 1802, and by W. & J. Gilman, of Newburyport in 1813. The New England Tract Society in Andover reprinted the book in 1815, 1817, and 1822. Copies of the 1800 edition are held at Newberry Library, American Antiquarian Society, University of Florida, Rutgers University, New York Public Library, and Library of Philadelphia. The New York Public Library holds a copy of the 1802 edition. We use the 1800 edition, held by the Lewis M. Stark Collection at the University of New Hampshire.

A LATE
LETTER
FROM A
SOLICITOUS MOTHER
TO HER ONLY
SON.
BOTH LIVING IN
NEW ENGLAND.

* *
THE TENTH EDITION
* *

SALEM,
PRINTED AND SOLD BY NATHANIEL
COVERLY, J[a]nr. 1800.

A LETTER, &c.

MY DEAR CHILD!

What frame these lines will find you in I know not, but I can assure you they are the overflowings of a heart full of motherly affection to you, and tender concern for your best interests of soul and body, for time and eternity. I trust it is from God that I am inclined to get this letter writ, and that his blessed spirit will direct in the inditing of it, and

accompany the same in his own good time to your heart. If it should not make so deep an impression at present, yet you will lay it up carefully, and the time may come when some of the late councils of your aged dying mother will seem quite otherwise to you than they have hitherto done. I mean if God should spare your life till I am removed from you by death, which is utterly uncertain though I have reason to look for a[...] great change every day. But O how happy should I reckon myself, what reason would I have to admire the infinite riches of free grace and [...] if mine eyes might see the [...] I should catch you in my withered arms, and cry out with good old SIMEON, Now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace!¹ yea, I don't know but I should die with excessive joy at such an unspeakable mercy.

But I must wait upon God, and be reconciled to his sovereign will, though he should never see cause to grant me such a favour in this world, nay, though he should take you away by some sudden and awful stroke, and leave me no grounds at all to hope but that you were gone directly down to everlasting burnings.¹ Aaron and David, and many others better far than myself, have had such trials. And hope through grace, I should be enabled to hold my peace, though it would be far worse than death to me.² I think the mighty power of God has brought me to submission in a case that came nearer to me than even the salvation of my own immortal soul. I trust I have been made willing to acknowledge his justice & righteousness, if he should call me into hell, and have desired that I might never have a hard thought of him there; but still resolved to be in the use of all means, and to seek and strive for mercy as long as I had life and breath; knowing that it would not be worse with me if I should never obtain; and I was terribly afraid I never should. I thought I did not know enough to be saved.

1. Psa. 37:9, "For evildoers shall be cut off: but those that wait upon the LORD, they shall inherit the earth;" Isa. 33:14, "The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?" (KJV).

2. 2 Th. 2:16, "Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given [us] everlasting consolation and good hope through grace" (KJV).

But it was not long after I was bro[‘t] to this resigned frame of spirit before the Lord was pleased to manifest himself graciously and marvelously to me, and to assure me of his everlasting love to my soul.³ O! my thoughts were swallowed up with the love of God in Christ.⁴ And how did I admire free grace! free grace, that God should ever cast an eye of pity on such a vile, guilty, ignorant creature, who I thought did not know enough to be saved: Oh, I was filled brim full of light and love and joy and admiration; such as I have no words to express; or if I had my dear child you could never conceive of it, nor the one thousandth part of it. All the comfort I have ever had in all worldly enjoyments and relations was nothing when compared with that joy unspeakable and full of glory which I was then filled with from one day and week to another.⁵ And I trust it had a transforming effect upon my soul. While I beheld as in glass with open face the glory of the Lord, I was I hope, in some measure changed into the same image from glory to glory, as by the spirit of the Lord.⁶ My affections were taken off from earthly objects, and set on things above, where Christ is.⁷ O Christ was then precious to me, I saw him to be what he really is, the chiefest of ten thousand and altogether lovely.⁸ Sin became inexpressibly odious to me. I mourned for it as for a first born and an only Son. I have experienced what sorrow is for an only Son, and may again. My next concern was for my parents and my yoke-fellow: and O how did I long for their conversion and salvation, and the salvation of every body, O methought I longed that

3. Jer. 31:3, “The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, [saying], Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee” (KJV).

4. Rom. 8:39, “Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (KJV).

5. 1 Pe. 1:8, “Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see [him] not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory” (KJV).

6. 2 Cr. 3:18, “But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, [even] as by the Spirit of the Lord” (KJV).

7. Col. 3:2, “Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth” (KJV).

8. Sgs. 5:10, “My beloved [is] white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand;” Sgs. 5:16, “His mouth [is] most sweet: yea, he [is] altogether lovely. This [is] my beloved, and this [is] my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem” (KJV).

every poor soul should come to Christ; for I saw there was enough in him for the whole world if they would but come to him, and that he was freely willing to accept of them, able and willing to save every one that would come to him. I speak freely to you my dear child, for the spirit of God (which I trust I am in some degree though most unworthy, made a partaker of) is a free spirit. And out of the abundance of the heart the mouth will speak, especially to those we ardently love.⁹ And though I fear you will not now much relish these things yet you may through infinite grace have a new taste given to you, and then your poor mother's relation of her experiences will be sweeter to you than honey and the honey comb; and then you will (perhaps too late) wish for an opportunity of conversing freely with me about the things of God, and would be willing to travel many miles for such an opportunity though all in vain.¹⁰ Or if you should never have a divine taste (which is a shocking and amazing supposition, good had it been for you that you had never been born, if that should be your case) yet your children or others may read these lines long hence to their comfort and edification, and God may be glorified in the world for what he has done for my soul, when I shall be thro' rich free grace praising him in perfection with the spirits of just men made perfect, and the holy angels above.¹¹ I can't but hope this will be my eternal employment, notwithstanding the many weaknesses sinful infirmities and short comings I am chargeable with here.

I have too much left my first love, and in too great a measure lost that lovely sense I once had of spiritual and eternal things; but yet I trust my heart has been right with God in the main. I have though grace loved the habitation of his house, and the place where his honor dwells; and he has graciously been pleased very often to draw near to my soul in his word and ordinances; and then I could say with holy DAVID, One

9. Mat. 12:34, "O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh" (KJV).

10. Psa. 19:10, "More to be desired [are they] than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb" (KJV).

11. Hbr. 12:23, "To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect" (KJV).

day in thy courts is better than a thousand elsewhere.¹² Many a gracious visit have I poor unworthy creature, been favored with from my dear saviour, in the meeting-house where I usually attended, and at places of public worship in other parishes: though once I was apt to think I never should be so sensible of God's presence any where else as I had been under the ministry of our own dear pastor. I have found by my own comfortable experience, that God is not confined to one place or instrument; but can when and where and by what means he pleases, draw near to his poor children, and revive and comfort their souls.

I have been exercised with grievous trials and afflictions, but the Lord has not left me destitute of his supporting and comforting presence. He has been with me in [...] troubles, and in seven, and in particular in that distressing visitation the death of my only son, I was at first almost quite overwhelmed and much discomposed, my passions wrought and were tempestuous, I was like a wild bull in a net but at last the LORD was pleased to shew me his sovereignty how he had an uncontrollable right to do what he pleased with all his creatures, and that composed and calmed my spirit, and when I was brought to a thorough submission, God was pleased to comfort my heart, and to give me a full persuasion that my loss should be made up, and that he would give me another son; and it was unto me according to my faith.¹³ The Lord did visit me mercifully and gave me a son which I took as a token of his love, and I trust was humbly thankful for, and through mercy he has been continued to this day. I have had the satisfaction of seeing him to be endowed with sense and reason, and enjoy a plentiful estate and with a virtuous yoke-fellow and desirable children: all which I acknowledge are great favours, and what I am utterly unworthy of and ought to be humbly thankful for; but yet I am not satisfied with all this: there is one

12. Psa. 26:8, "LORD, I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honour dwelleth;" Psa. 84:10, "For a day in thy courts [is] better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness" (KJV).

13. Isa. 51:20, "Thy sons have fainted, they lie at the head of all the streets, as a wild bull in a net: they are full of the fury of the LORD, the rebuke of thy God;" Mat. 9:29, "Then touched he their eyes, saying, According to your faith be it unto you" (KJV).

thing yet lacking I fear in order to compleat my comfort in my only son. I fear he has not yet secured the one thing needful, even that good part which shall never be taken away from him.¹⁴ What will it profit him to gain the whole world and lose his own soul?¹⁵ riches profit not in the day of wrath, but righteousness delivereth from death.¹⁶ O my dear child! I would address you in the words of King Lemuel's mother to him, Prov, 31. 2, What my son? And what the son of my womb? What the son of my vows? &c.¹⁷ Can I bear the thought that the son that was given me in answer to my prayers, my only son that I bore with so much pain, that I have nursed and brought up with so much care and tenderness night and day, the son that I have so many times prayed and wept over, and counselled and warned; that this beloved son I say, should be the possession and property of the devil, should serve him all his days here, and be miserable as he is and with him in hell-fire forever? How can I bear to think of that dreadful day when I shall see my poor and undone child, if he turn not speedily and thoroughly, stand trembling before the judgment seat of Christ, his face gathering blackness; horror anguish and despair staring through his eye-lids to hear that amazing sentence pronounced on him, Depart ye cursed, &c.¹⁸ To see him seized by mighty angels bound hand and foot with everlasting chains, and cast into a dreadful lake of fire, and the adamantine gates shut and bar'd by him that shutteth, and no man opens?¹⁹ Such thoughts as these

14. Luk. 10:42, "But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her" (KJV).

15. Mar. 8:36, "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" (KJV).

16. Pro. 11:4, "Riches profit not in the day of wrath: but righteousness delivereth from death" (KJV).

17. Pro. 31:1-2, "The words of king Lemuel, the prophecy that his mother taught him. What, my son? And what, the son of my womb? And what, the son of my vows?" (KJV).

18. Joe. 2:6, "Before their face the people shall be much pained: all faces shall gather blackness;" Mat. 25:41, "Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels" (KJV).

19. Rev. 20:15, "And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire;" Rev. 3:7, "And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key

are ready to tear my heart in pieces, though I know if I be so happy as to find mercy of the Lord in that day, I shall have no painful sympathy with you, but shall rather rejoice that God's justice and power will be forever glorified in your condemnation. But how will your heart endure? How can your hands be strong?²⁰ I know you have often heard these things, and had them set forth before you in a far more affecting manner than it is possible for me to represent them; and I know withal, that if I had been in the other world, and seen the terrors and glories of hell and heaven with my bodily eyes, and were come back again with the tongue of an angel to speak of them to you it would have no saving effect. If you hear not Moses and the prophets, neither would you be persuaded though one rose from the dead. And I know too that if the good spirit of God is pleased to accompany a few of my last words to your heart, they will do you more good than all you have ever heard in your life before. You know by sad and long experience how little all the best means signify without the powerful co-operation of God's spirit; and you also know by some experience how means work, how a person feels when the word is set home upon the soul by the spirit in a way of conviction and terror: O that you also knew what his work in regeneration is! what I am aiming at is, to make you sensible how much your dependence is on the sovereign and free spirit of God. The life and death of your precious soul is in his hand; and he acts with an absolute liberty, like the wind which bloweth where and when it listeth; and seeing it is thus, I would fain have you think solemnly how much it concerns you to take heed you don't provoke the spirit finally to forsake you, for then your case is as bad and worse you know, than if you were already in hell.²¹ This I hope and trust is not yet your case; if I knew it were I should have nothing to say to you more about your soul, unless

of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth" (KJV).

20. Eze. 22:14, "Can thine heart endure, or can thine hands be strong, in the days that I shall deal with thee? I the LORD have spoken [it], and will do [it]" (KJV).

21. Jhn. 3:8, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit" (KJV).

it were to caution you not to fill up a greater measure of sin than needs must, and so encrease your treasure of wrath against the day of wrath: but I hope better things concerning you, and things that accompany a possibility of salvation.²² I trust your day of grace is not yet over, and that the spirit of grace has not yet finally left you. And O for your soul's sake, do nothing to grieve him away. Lay aside every weight and the sin that so easily besets you; I need not tell you what it is: conscience points you to it, while you are reading these lines, if it be not asleep. Do my dear child! stir up yourself, shake of sloth and discouragement, and get up and be doing. You don't know how soon a merciful God who delights not in the death of a sinner, but had rather he should turn and live may appear for you, and work effectuality on your soul. I am ready to fear sometimes that you are tempted to give way to desperate discouragements: To say with those in Jeremiah—There is no hope: no: but we have loved strangers and after them we will go.²³ That you are ready to think you have sat so long under the powerful means of grace, and have neglected so many counsels and warnings and examples, especially in the late glorious time and have stifled so many convictions, that now there is no hope for you, you had e'en as good take what comfort you can in this world and trouble yourself no more about another, or at least that it will signify nothing for you to use any means in your present dead, dull frame, till the spirit of God comes more powerfully upon you. But, O dear child! this is delusion all over. Methinks the adversary appears plain, in open sight, as an angel of darkness, in such a temptation as this. O don't hearken to that old deceiver and murderer of souls but realize it that the very reverse of all that he suggests to you is the truth. O say within yourself:

“No. I will not hearken to any of these insinuations, I
will not cast away an immortal soul at this rate; I must be

22. Rom. 2:5, “But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God” (KJV).

23. Jer. 2:25, “Withhold thy foot from being unshod, and thy throat from thirst: but thou sadist, There is no hope: no; for I have loved strangers, and after them will I go” (KJV).

saved; I can't bear to perish forever, and the more sad and dangerous my case is, the more speedy and earnest I will be in seeking out for help, behold now is the accepted time, behold now is the day of salvation!²⁴ if I have lost many precious opportunities and advantages I will lose no more. Is my heart very hard and senseless I will do nothing to make it more so; I will keep out of that company, I will resist those temptations that have been too hard for me. If I cannot do as others do, or as I once could, by reason of the withdraw of God's spirit from me, yet I will do as well as I can. If I cannot pray with the spirit, yet I will pray for the spirit. If I cannot have any comfort in religion and the duties of it, yet I will attend them as a task and a burden till the Lord shall please to give me a better heart. And before I will take no satisfaction in sin and the world, while my case is so dismal with respect to eternity. And indeed how is it possible I should take comfort in any thing while I am in this condition, without I was more hard hearted and desperate than the very devils who believe and tremble?²⁵ how can I relish any worldly employment, or taste any sweetness therein, when I have this thought in my mind that I swallow down the curse of God with every drop and morsel that I take in: That for every drop of mercy I receive from God, and do not improve it for his glory, there is a drop of wrath drop'd into those vials which are shortly to be poured out upon me in eternal vengeance.²⁶ So much as I have glorified myself and lived deliciously so much sorrow and torment will be

24. 2 Cr. 6:2, "(For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succored thee: behold, now [is] the accepted time; behold, now [is] the day of salvation)" (KJV).

25. Jam. 2:19, "Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble" (KJV).

26. Rev. 15:7, "And I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth" (KJV).

given to me.²⁷ I will therefore, by God's help bestir myself. I would think of and improve all the encouragements I have left me. I am yet in the land of the living; there is yet hope concerning me, many thousands of prayers have been made for me, and more of late than ever. My near and dear relations, friends and neighbours have been many of them coming in to Christ, and I have reason to think they have been and are crying to God continually on my behalf, and he is a prayer-hearing God. He has not said to the seed of Jacob, seek ye my face in vain.²⁸ I will believe in hope against hope.²⁹ It may be the Lord is still ready to be gracious to me, has his hands full of all the blessings of the covenant of grace, that I so much need, and am perishing for want of, and only waits till I ask for them. So he tells me in his own word, Math. 7. 7. &c. and in many other texts, which I have been often minded of.³⁰

Some such language I would fain imagine I over-hear you breathing out in your solitary hours, and may the father of mercies hear your meditation!³¹ may he come by his blessed spirit and while you are thus musing cause the fire to burn in your soul, thoroughly awaken you convince, humble, convert and sanctify you. Amen! Amen! Lord grant this for thy dear Son's sake Amen!

And now hoping and trusting that you will no longer delay and trifle with a great and jealous God, an immortal soul, and a never ending

27. Rev. 18:7, "How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her: for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow" (KJV).

28. David was a descendent of Jacob. Psa. 27: 8, "[When thou saidst], Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, LORD, will I seek" (KJV).

29. Rom. 4:18, "Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be" (KJV).

30. Mat. 7:7, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you" (KJV).

31. 2 Cr. 1:3, "Blessed [be] God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort" (KJV).

eternity, but will speedily set about and will never rest a moment till you have made thoro work of turning to God, I shall conclude my long, and I am afraid tedious letter with a word of council and advice to you, on supposition that the Lord should be so infinitely merciful as to hear the prayers of your friends for you and your own for yourself, and should give you good hope through grace that he has wrought the saving change in your soul. And here again I beg you'll take these as the last words of your dying mother, and which are the copy of her very heart and soul, as it now works towards you her dear only Son.

If then you shall be so inexpressibly happy as to receive the Lord Jesus in your heart by faith, O be careful to walk in him.³² You must be continually coming to him every day and hour of your life. You must live upon him every moment. He must be your life, your light, your joy, your trust, your wisdom, righteousness, satisfaction, and every thing. You must never rest without daily communion with him, and communication from him. If he withdraw from you at any time, and hide his face, you must mourn after him and seek him sorrowing, and let nothing else content or satisfy you.³³ The world will on that occasion be making its court to you again, but O you must reject it with indignation. Say to your old idols, get ye hence.³⁴ Resolve that if you can't have comfort in Christ, you will have it in nothing. I must only give a broken hint or two, you will have many better counselors than your poor mother; but I presume you will take particular notice of what comes from her, I know you will do so if you ever come to have your eyes open, and it is with that hope that I now say what I do—You must live to Christ, and for him, as well as live upon him. If ever you truly believe in him, you will give up all you are and have and can do unto him, and you will not only wait to know how [...]ld have you dispose of all [...] You

32. Col. 2:6, "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, [so] walk ye in him" (KJV).

33. Luk. 2:48, "And when they saw him, they were amazed: and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? Behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing" (KJV).

34. Isa. 30:22, "Ye shall defile also the covering of thy graven images of silver, and the ornament of thy molten images of gold: thou shalt cast them away as a menstrous cloth; thou shalt say unto it, Get thee hence" (KJV).

will consider yourself as [...]rd of what God gives you a[...] bountiful and liberal to such as you know the Lord has made his receivers.³⁵ You must live in love: this is the fulfilling of the law, as much as in you lies, you must be peaceably with all men, and do good to all, especially the household of faith.³⁶—But I shall say all in one word, make the word of God, and the wise and holy servants of God, your constant counselors, under the influences of the spirit of God in all your affairs, spiritual and temporal, and do nothing dubious and of importance without their advice and approbation.

I break off my dear child! and leaving you with a God infinitely able and willing to do for you above what I can ask or think.

I subscribe myself,
Your most affectionate and
SOLICITOUS MOTHER,

FINIS.

THE ADVANTAGES OF EARLY RELIGION.

HAPPY's the child whose youngest years,
Receive instruction well;
Who hates the sinner's path, and fears
The road that lead's to hell,

35. Isa. 32:5, "The vile person shall no more be called liberal, nor the churl said [to be] bountiful" (KJV).

36. Rom. 13:10, "Love worketh no ill to his neighbor: therefore love [is] the fulfilling of the law;" Rom. 12:18, "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men;" Gal. 6:10, "As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all [men], especially unto them who are of the household of faith" (KJV).

When we devote our youth to God,
 'Tis pleasing in his eyes;
A flower when offer'd in the bud
 Is no vain sacrifice.

'Tis easier work when we begin
 To fear the Lord betimes;
While sinners that grow old in sin,
 Are hardened in their crimes.

'Twill save us from a thousand snares,
 To mind religion young;
Grace will preserve our following years,
 And make our virtue strong.

To thee almighty God to thee
 Our childhood we resign;
'Twill please us to look back and see
 That our whole lives were thine.

Let the sweet work of prayer and praise,
 Employ my youngest breath;
Thus I'm prepar'd for longer days,
 Or fit for early death.

THOUGHTS ON GOD AND DEATH

There is a GOD that reigns above,
Lord of the heav'n and earth and seas,
 I fear his wrath, I ask his love,
And with my lips I sing his praise,

There is a law which he has writ,

To teach us all what we must do,
My soul to his commands submit,
For they are holy just and true.

There is a gospel of rich grace,
Whence sinners all their comforts draw,
Lord I repent, and seek thy face,
For I have often broke thy law.³⁷

There is an hour when I must die,
Nor do I know how soon 'twill come;
A thousand children young as I
Are call'd by death to hear their doom.

Let me improve the hours I have,
Before the day of grace is fled;
There's no repentance in the grave
Nor pardon offer'd to the dead.

Just as a tree cut down that fell
To North or Southward, there it lies;
So man departs to heav'n or hell,
Fix'd in the state wherein he dies.³⁸

THE END.

37. Pro. 7:15, "Therefore came I forth to meet thee, diligently to seek thy face, and I have found thee" (KJV).

38. Ecc. 11:3, "If the clouds be full of rain, they empty [themselves upon the earth: and if the tree fall toward the south, or toward the north, in the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be" (KJV).

Appendix C

Eliza Thornton

Introduction to Appendix C, *Youthful Religion Exemplified, or A Brief Narrative [of the life] and Happy Death of Eliza Thornton (1821)*

Little is known about Eliza Thornton (1805-1817), and the text provides only limited insight into her life. Textual evidence indicates that Thornton was the daughter of a poor man, and her mother died early in her life. Although Thornton was presumably raised by her father, the narrator indicates that she was also cared for by a “motherly” woman. John Dodington, a local minister who edited the version presented here—and most likely was the narrator of the text—visited the twelve-year-old Eliza as she was dying of consumption, and the story is her legacy as it recounts her conversion at age nine, and then her piety and evangelizing. Having converted at a young age, Thornton demonstrates concern for her father and her companions, and, in her illness, wishes for them to know of God’s grace. The amanuensis emphasizes her exemplary nature, noting that she “sweetly fell asleep in Jesus”; she died of consumption on March 25, 1817 (14).

Composed by an amanuensis rather than Thornton, the text stems from a tradition established by Lady Jane Grey, “the nine days’ queen”. The mid-sixteenth century testimony of Grey, who had resolved to die in faith with dignity, set a precedent for young women on their deathbeds. The legacy book developed in England and America in the following centuries, and girls’ exemplary final exhortations and young conversion narratives negotiated generic boundaries as they became integrated into Sunday School texts. Widely published, specifically in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Sunday School books took on a variety of forms. In London, *Parochial Exercises* was published as a Sunday School book in 1790, and this particular text contains religious lessons, as well as spelling exercises. Other books, such as *Hallowed Songs* (1874), provide guidance for those who instruct children on religious matters, sometimes outlining topics suitable for discussion or including notes for clarification of biblical passages. An evolution of the legacies, the Sunday School genre focuses on giving

children the tools to learn religious tenets and become capable of handling their individual responsibility for their soul.

Eliza Thornton's book, although indebted to the legacy genre, fits in more precisely with the burgeoning Sunday School genre of the milieu. The 1824 extended edition includes "an interesting Sabbath School anecdote," and the legacy was printed in a handful of subsequent children's collections (1). The expanded edition of Thornton's text, *Memoirs of Eliza Thornton; Containing a Narrative of her Life and Happy Death & The Pious Sisters: An Interesting Sabbath School Anecdote*, contains a story of two daughters of a German immigrant who sought out a religious education, attending a Sunday School, in spite of their poor social status. Like the legacies of Hannah Hill and Jane Sumner, the piece on Thornton and the tale of the pious sisters encourage young children to seek out a relationship with God. The Sunday School book format, with illustrations, is inviting and attractive in a way that the legacies are not. Although the death-bed exhortation is included in this particular Sunday School text, its accompaniment by positive accounts of faith provides insight into the shift in popularity from legacy and advice books to the Sunday School book industry.

Copy Text

For Thornton's legacy book, we use the copy of the first edition held by the Harriet Beecher Stowe Center. The book is also in the collections of the Connecticut State Library, Princeton University, and Dartmouth College Library hold copies of this edition. However, the book enjoyed a long popularity as a Sunday School Book, and we include an expanded version of it: *Memoirs of Eliza Thornton; Containing a Narrative of her Life and Happy Death & The Pious Sisters: An Interesting Sabbath School Anecdote*. Concord, NH: J.B. Moore, 1824. This compilation adds to Thornton's legacy the story of two daughters of a German immigrant who overcame poverty to gain an education and found a Sunday School, and several poems by Isaac Watts. The text is illustrated in a manner meant to educate and appeal to children, with a cat on one title page, a drawing of a child's funeral, and pictures of happy children surrounding the poetry.

The book was published again by Jacob Moore in 1825, and also appeared as *Life and death of Eliza Thornton*, Andover: Printed for the New England Tract Society by Flagg and Gould, 1823. The American Antiquarian Society, University of California, Columbia University, Cornell University, and Library of Philadelphia hold copies of this edition. It was included in several editions of the American Tract Society: *Books for the Young*, vol. 2, 1848-51, *Life and Death of Eliza Thornton*, 1830-32, *Eliza Thornton*, 1848, and in Karl Friedrich Gützlaff's *Visit to the Chinese Coast: and other books for the young*, n. d.

MEMOIRS
OF
ELIZA THORNTON;
CONTAINING A NARRATIVE
OF HER
LIFE AND HAPPY DEATH.

A MORNING SONG.

My God who mak'st the sun to know
His proper (?) hour to rise,
And to give light to all below,
Dost (?) send him round the skies:
When from the chambers of the east
His morning race begins,
He never tires nor stops to rest,
But round the world he shines.
So like the sun, would I fulfill
The business of the day;
Begin my work betimes and still
March on my heavenly way[.]
Give me, O Lord, thy earthly grace,
Nor let my soul complain,
That the young morning of my days
Has all been spent in vain.

MEMOIRS OF ELIZA THORNTON.

ELIZA THORNTON was the child of a poor but pious man, who resides not very far from the neighborhood in which Providence has fixed my abode. Her mother died when she was but little more than a twelvemonth old; so that she had not the privilege God has so kindly granted to many of my little [...] – the tender love of a mother who longs to see them holy and happy, and who feels for them such anxious care as I am not able to describe. This loss however, was in a great degree made up to Eliza; for her father happily found a tender, motherly, and pious woman, under whose care he placed her, and who, it appears, acted the part of a mother to her, earnestly seeking to promote the good both of her soul and body. Often did this good woman seriously talk to her about her soul, tell her of her danger as a sinner, her need of a Saviour, and entreat her to devote herself to him early. Eliza remembered her admonitions with gratitude after she was made a subject of divine grace, though at the time they were given, she appears to have paid little or no regard to them.

She had also a father who felt the most anxious desire for her real happiness. Though she did not reside under his roof, he took every opportunity he could find of conversing with her on the state of her soul, and entreating her to ‘remember her Creator in the days of her youth.’¹ Earnestly did he pray that she might, like little Samuel, be called to God while yet a child. It was his custom also, whenever he could, to pray *with* her as well as for her, and make her a witness of his earnest desire and wrestling prayer, that Christ might be her friend and portion.

Little Eliza, it appears, from the account of her father, was always of a meek and quiet disposition. Before she was changed by the grace

1. Ecc. 12:1 reads, “Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them” (KJV).

of God, her demeanor was mild and pleasant, her conduct regular and orderly. Many of you my dear young friends, are probably like her in this respect. You do not perhaps profane God's name, nor break his Sabbaths. You do not keep company with wicked children; you in general speak the truth; you are diligent in attention to your learning; and your behavior on the whole is praiseworthy. All this is very pleasing; but if you have nothing more, you will after all be found wicked children. You may have all this, and yet not love and serve the Lord Jesus.

The child of whom I write was about nine years old, when it pleased God to call her by his grace. The good woman under whose care she was placed, had a little girl of her own, somewhat younger than Eliza, who it appears early sought the Lord. She was however soon transplanted to the celestial paradise, having been afflicted with a consumptive disorder, which early removed her from this wicked world. But though her stay on earth was short, it was the good pleasure of God, ere she was taken, to make the words which dropped from her lips, the means in his hands, of the conversion of the child whose history is before us. The evening before she died, she said to her mother, in the presence of Eliza, 'Mother, I am afraid Eliza is a very wicked girl.' The mother replied, 'Why do you think thus?' She answered, 'I am afraid she *never prays*.' Oh! do pray!' said she, addressing herself to the child. These words at the time they were uttered, made a considerable impression on Eliza's mind; but when she arose in the morning, and found that her young companion had died in the night, the affecting providence so fixed them on her heart, that she felt in such a manner as she had never felt before. Now she was convinced that she was both a prayerless and a graceless child, and that her condition in the sight of God was truly dreadful. She therefore began to cry to him to have mercy upon her. The first thing she prayed for, it appears, was that God would 'create a clean heart, and renew a right spirit in her;' for she was now convinced her heart was 'deceitful and desperately wicked.'² She then entreated

2. Psalm 51:10 reads, "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me" (KJV) ; Jer. 17:9 reads, "The heart [is] deceitful above all [things], and desperately wicked: who can know it?" (KJV)

God that neither she nor her brother might be suffered to 'bring down their father's grey hairs with sorrow to the grave.'³ From this memorable day, it seems she was a completely changed character. She had often heard of Jesus Christ as the only Saviour of sinners, and now she hastened to him, cast herself upon him as a guilty helpless child, and found by sweet experience, that 'his blood cleanseth from all sin;' that 'he is able to save, to the uttermost, all that come unto God by him.'⁴

She wished much to tell her father and her friends around her, what God had done for her soul; but could not find courage to relate it to any one, till she was laid upon a bed of sickness. Her conduct after this was indeed peculiarly dutiful and pleasing; but as mildness and quietness had always marked her deportment, the change wrought in her was not so visible as it otherwise would have been. God, however, was witness of the wonderful alteration his grace had made in her, and graciously marked her as one of his own children.

It was but little more than three years, that this dear child lived to God in this world. In her twelfth year, symptoms of consumption were discovered in her. She had been the subject of a violent cold for some time; but no danger was apprehended, till she one day after a fit of coughing, discharged from her stomach a considerable quantity of blood; from which her weakness gradually increased, till she finished her mortal course.

She had nearly arrived at the last stage of her disorder before the commencement of my acquaintance with her. A member of the church with which I am connected, wished to obtain for her the visits and relief of the Sick Society, belonging to our place of worship. As this could not be effected, owing to her residence being beyond the boundaries of

3. Gen. 44:31 reads, "It shall come to pass, when he seeth that the lad [is] not [with us], that he will die: and thy servants shall bring down the gray hairs of thy servant our father with sorrow to the grave" (KJV).

4. 1Jo. 1:7 reads, "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (KJV) ; Hbr. 7:25 reads, "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them" (KJV).

the visits of the society, I resolved to visit her myself, being told that she was a most interesting child, and that she was very glad to see any christian friend who would call and converse with her on the things of God.

The next day I accordingly visited her abode. I found her extremely ill, and entirely confined to her bed. Death had plainly fixed his mark upon her body. There was, however, a pleasing serenity in her countenance, and something truly engaging in the whole of her aspect. She appeared much pleased to see me, telling me that I was not a stranger to her, for that she had occasionally heard the joyful tidings of salvation from my lips.

After a few inquiries respecting her disorder, I opened the kind of conversation into which I more particularly wished to enter, in the following way: 'Where, think you, my dear, your soul would go, if it should please God to take you from this world by the affliction he has laid upon you?' 'To heaven, Sir, I hope,' she replied in the most meek and striking manner.

'But where do you deserve to go, my child?' 'To hell, Sir.'

'What makes you hope then that you shall go to Heaven?' 'Because Jesus Christ died for poor sinners.'

'Are you then a sinner?' 'Yes, Sir, a very great one.'

'How long is it, my dear, since you first felt yourself a sinner?' 'About three years, Sir.'

She then gave me an account of the manner in which it had pleased God to convince her of her ruined condition, and her need of a Saviour, as before related.

'How kind and gracious is it in Jesus Christ that he will receive little children like you!'

'Yes Sir, he has said, "they that seek him early, shall find him."' Those words have often very much encouraged me.'

'That text, my child, has been a great encouragement to many; to some, who are now in glory.' 'I know it, Sir; it was to that little girl I have been speaking of.'

5. Pro. 8:17 reads, "I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me" (KJV).

‘And do you indeed, my dear, love the Lord Jesus?’ ‘I hope, Sir, I do.’

‘Do you love him as much as you wish to love him.’ ‘Oh no, Sir, I would love him more.’

‘Would you prefer being raised up again from this bed of sickness, or being removed from this world, if God were to put it to your choice?’ ‘I think, Sir, I would rather depart.’

‘What, think you, should you find in heaven that would make you completely happy, were you taken thither?’ ‘I should be with the Lord, Sir, and away from this world of sin, where there is nothing to make me wish to stay.’

Her father, approaching the bed, said, ‘I have offered many prayers, both for this child and her brother; and I hope God has answered me in her.’

‘Oh! my poor brother!’ cried the child, ‘I am afraid he never prays.’

‘Well, my dear,’ said I, ‘you must pray for him. Who can tell what God may do for him?’

‘I do, Sir; but, as I tell him, he must pray for himself, or it will be of no use.’

Throughout this conversation there was nothing at all forward in her manner, though she was very ready to answer every question put to her. She appeared much affected in all she said; and, though young in years, to possess the dignity and firmness of an established christian.

In the course of a few days I renewed my visit. Though so small a space of time had intervened, I found her much weaker than before.

I asked her if she still continued without fear of death, now that she seemed so near the solemn moment of her entrance into the eternal world.

‘Oh yes!’ replied she, ‘many, I know, are afraid of the grave, and do not like the thought of their bodies being devoured by worms; but it is not so with me – I think more of my precious soul, and of the happiness of heaven.’ I saw she was unable to converse, and therefore refrained from putting many questions to her: to those, however, which I did put, she replied in a very satisfactory manner. I found it truly pleasing and

edifying to be with her. Her body was fast sinking to the grave, but her soul was ripening for glory. I felt a conviction that she would quickly sing the song of Moses and the Lamb, on Mount Sion; and humbly hoped I should one day join with her in the delightful exercise.⁶

At my second interview with this interesting child, she appeared to me so near her end, that I had no expectation of again seeing her in the body. In about a week, I was, however, informed that she was still living, and particularly wished to see me once more in this world. The following day I accordingly hastened to her abode. She was now in as reduced a state as she could be and live; her countenance bearing the most evident symptoms of the speedy approach of dissolution.

I asked her whether she still felt a persuasion of her interest in Jesus, and was happy in her soul, now that she was come to the very entrance of the valley of the shadow of death.⁷ She gave me to understand, in reply, that she was filled with joy and peace. A ‘mortal paleness’ was indeed ‘on her cheek,’ but it was manifest that it was connected with ‘glory in her soul.’⁸ When I had prayed with her, I once more solemnly bid her farewell. Grasping my hand with an earnestness which indicated the affection of her soul, she with an unexpected exertion loudly and distinctly said, *‘Farewell, till we meet to part no more.’* I replied in the same words, and departed, never again to see her face in this world, deeply impressed with the solemnity of the scene.

On the evening of the following day, she was gently dismissed from the vale of tears. Her father has furnished me with the following account of the closing scene. “Speaking of her sufferings, she said they were not worth naming, when compared with those of Christ. The

6. Reference to the song of Moses and the Lamb in Rev. 15:3, which reads, “And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous [are] thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true [are] thy ways, thou King of saints” (KJV).

7. Alludes to Psa. 23:4, which reads, “Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou [art] with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me” (KJV).

8. References Hymn 1:19 (Lord at Thy Temple we Appear): “A mortal paleness on my cheek, And glory in my soul.”

day before she died, I was talking to her on the need of being built on a sure foundation; when she looked at me with great earnestness, and said, 'Do you doubt of my safety, father?' She appeared to the very last not to have the least dread of death, but was in a sweet frame of mind, so as to render her condition even enviable. She often cried out, 'Oh! why so long in coming? Happy child! happy child! I shall soon be singing hallelujahs;' adding, 'A mortal paleness on my cheek, but glory in my soul!' A little before she departed, she said in a very low tone, 'I am going.' I replied, 'Yes, my dear, you will now soon be at home.' Asking her whether Christ was still precious, she replied, 'Yes,' in a tone of voice as though she was in full health. Just before her departure, she lifted up her little withered arms to her head, but quickly dropped them, never to rise again; as though she would say, 'Farewell! all is well!' and then sweetly fell asleep in Jesus." Her death took place on Tuesday, March 25, 1817.

THE PIOUS SISTERS.

Soon after the first Sunday School, which included *religious instruction*, was established in Philadelphia, a little girl who lived in the out-skirts of the city, and attended this school, was awakened to a deep and serious concern of mind and began to instruct, and exhort, and pray with the children of her acquaintance, near the place where she dwelt; and to invite them to the Sabbath School. Among the children whom she persuaded to go to the Sabbath School, were two little girls, who were soon distinguished for their docility and attention. They were sisters, one about ten, and the other twelve years of age, daughters of a poor German woman, who supported herself and them by her own industry. When requested to send her children to the Sabbath School she seemed very averse to the proposal, saying that she did not wish them to learn the English language. Upon some persuasion, however, she finally consented. They made very rapid proficiency in the first rudiments, and soon discovered an unusual seriousness and attention of mind; and their

teachers had the satisfaction to see their labors richly compensated, and to find them making advances in the knowledge of gospel truth, and resting their hopes of salvation upon the rock of ages. They gave the most convincing evidence of a change of heart and decision of character. Their walk and conversation were consistent and exemplary; and although their conduct did not partake so much of the prominent ostentatious kind, it was not the less active and conclusive, because it was retired and humble. As soon as they had been brought to taste the sweets of redeeming love, their hearts were deeply affected with the spiritual state of their mother. She was growing old, and her mind was dark and ignorant, and averse to every thing calculated to awaken her to a sense of her sin and danger. The children were very anxious on her account; and various expedients were resorted to, in order to bring her to a knowledge of the truth. Tracts were given to the children to read to her; and certain passages of scripture carefully selected for them to recite in her hearing; all accompanied with the prayers and humble entreaties of these little apostles of truth. Sometimes she would listen to their words, and sometimes she would get angry and bid them desist; and long did they labor with her in these humble means. The Lord was pleased to hear their prayers, and blessed their exertions for the salvation of their mother. She became deeply anxious and began to accompany them to the Sabbath School, and to their little places of social prayer, and became desirous of having a prayer meeting opened in her own house, which was done. The writer had frequent conversation with this woman at the time, and witnessed many of the paroxysms and conflicts of her mind, until she was brought to sit at the feet of a crucified Saviour. She always attributed her conversion to the instrumentality of her children; and once, when conversing with her on the state of her mind, she exclaimed in her German accent, "who would have thought it, Mr. —, that my dear children would have gone down to that little school, and brought these things home to their poor old wicked mother?" These young females were early admitted as communicants in one of our churches, and in due season their mother also, and continued to grow in grace as they grew in years.

After two or three years, circumstances made it expedient that they should remove into the country about fifty miles from the city, where they had some relatives and friends. The children were at first very unwilling to go; they could not abide the thought of giving up their school, social societies, and meetings, and going among strangers where they had neither Sabbath School nor any regular worship. Upon consultation with their friends they were told that the providence of God seemed to point that way, and to have provided this place as an asylum for them, and that perhaps he had something for them to do there. – That they must try to enlighten the poor ignorant children, and tell them what God had done for them.

They soon after removed to this region, and began to look about to see what they could do, but found every thing to dishearten and discourage them; they could find no serious young persons of either sex who would engage with them in establishing a Sabbath School, nor would any of the inhabitants support or patronize them. They determined, however, to undertake the work themselves, relying upon the blessing of God; the writer supplied them with a few tickets, and primary books, and encouraged them to persevere. They procured a small school house, and collected thirty or forty children, organized them into a Sabbath School, and proceeded to instruct them in the same manner they themselves had been taught. At first they met with many difficulties; some of the spectators, even the adults often disturbed them in their devotions; and ridiculed their endeavors to instruct those little wanderers. They were obliged to labor alone for some time, amidst many discouragements and difficulties. – God was pleased, however, to turn the hearts of the opposers and incline several young females and young men to join them, and by patient continuance in their efforts, the school began to flourish, and soon assumed an encouraging decided appearance. As soon as the School was settled, they went into another neighborhood about four miles off, and undertook another; attending to one in the morning and the other in the afternoon; so that they soon had two flourishing schools, containing sixty or seventy scholars each. The inhabitants in other districts round, hearing and seeing the success

and benefits of those schools, and moved by emulation, immediately set about establishing Sunday Schools in their respective places, upon the same plan; so that there were eight more Sabbath Schools in this quarter of the country, growing out of the first two. How wonderful are the ways of divine grace; these two children, who were growing up in ignorance and corruption, and might have been abandoned in wickedness, and pests to society were plucked as little brands from the burning – were awakened and instructed by means of Sabbath Schools – were instrumental in the conversion of their mother, and afterwards of raising ten large flourishing schools in a portion of the country where they had never before been known. And how many souls may hereafter people in the kingdom of heaven, in consequence of these labors, will be known to us only in that day when God maketh up *his jewels*. These young females are still living, and still as much engaged in the cause of Christ as ever; they still continue to adorn their profession, and to walk in all the ways of holy obedience, and the church to which they belong has never had any reason to regret their early admission; nor that its members were among the earliest patrons of Sabbath Schools.

AN EVENING SONG⁹

AND now another day is gone,
I'll sing my Maker's praise;
My comforts every hour make known
His providence and grace.
But how my childhood runs to waste!
My sins how great their sum!
Lord give me pardon for the past,
And strength for days to come.

9. *An Evening Song* written by Isaac Watts (1674-1748) in 1715.

I lay my body down to sleep;
Let angels guard my head;
And through the hours of darkness keep
Their watch around my bed.
With cheerful heart I close my eyes,
Since thou wilt not remove;
And in the morning let me rise,
Rejoicing in thy love.

EXAMPLES OF EARLY PIETY¹⁰

WHAT bless'd examples do I find,
Writ in the word of truth,
Of children who began to mind
Religion in their youth!
Jesus, who reigns above the sky,
And keeps the world in awe,
Was once a child as young as I,
And kept his Father's law.
At twelve years old he talk'd with men,
(The Jews all wondering stand,)
Yet he obey'd his mother then,
And came at her command.
Children a sweet hosanna sung,
And blest their Savior's name;
They gave him honor with their tongue,
While scribes and priests blaspheme.
Samuel the child was wean'd, and brought
To wait upon the Lord;
Young *Timothy* betimes was taught
To know his holy word.

10. *Examples of Early Piety* written by Isaac Watts.

Then why do I so long delay
What others learnt so soon?
Let me not pass another day
Without this work begun.

A SONG FOR THE LORD'S DAY MORNING¹¹

THIS is the day, when Christ arose
So early from the dead:
Why should I keep my eye-lids clos'd,
And waste my hours in bed?
This is the day when Jesus broke
The powers of death and hell;
And shall I still wear Satan's yoke,
And love my sins so well?
To-day with pleasure Christians meet,
To pray and read thy word;
And I would go with cheerful feet,
To learn thy will, O Lord.
I'll leave my sport, to read and pray,
And so prepare for heaven;
O may I love this blessed day
The best of all the seven.

FINIS

11. *For the Lord's Day Morning* by Isaac Watts